Getting Married and the Making of Manhoods in a Ghanaian Zongo.

by

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Abstract.

This thesis is about getting married and the making of manhoods in Sabon Zongo; a Muslim, Hausa enclave in Accra. I elaborate the normative rights and responsibilities of men within idealised relations of consumption, production and exchange, and how they are implicated in accepted and valued notions of manhood. Men achieve and articulate socially accepted and valued, productive and responsible manhoods through marriage by establishing a household of dependents. Irrespective of actual productive activities, women, children and unmarried 'youth' are said to be incapable of meeting their own consumption needs, and so dependent on male household heads, who produce and provide on their behalf. These dependencies are said to justify the status, prestige and authority of married men. Whilst marriage matters to men because it brings about an improvement in how they are socially evaluated, it is seldom easily achieved. Unmarried men must subordinate themselves to the authority of senior men, whose support is necessary if their marital aspirations are to be realised. Thus it is control over reproduction, rather than production and productive resources, which underpins male authority.

However, idealised accounts of manhood, and the marital process through which it is achieved, often contradict what actually happens in practice. I explore men's efforts to reconcile tensions between ideals and actualities. I examine marital pathways as sites of representation, in which men seek to influence the social evaluations made of them by others. I draw on Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980) and De Certeau (1984) to examine how men go about curating and choreographing the marital process, in particular the exchange of marriage goods, and how they seek to manage information for impression management. I show how a convincing performance requires the cooperation of others, including one's notional dependents. This reveals a paradox of dependency; in that such cooperation is not only difficult for men to secure, but may involve compromises that call their very manhoods in to question.

Acknowledgements

"*Do not whine and be complex-ridden, because it is annoying*"

Umberto Eco (2015 p.184)

At various junctures throughout this PhD process, my supervisors have had cause to advise me that "the owl of Minerva flies at dusk". As I write these acknowledgements, it is Eco's words quoted above that hover on the horizon. Foremost amongst the many who have tolerated my complexes and endured my whining are my supervisors, Professor Cecile Jackson and Dr Catherine Locke. I am incredibly fortunate to have benefitted from their supervision. Their intellect, energy and enthusiasm have been fuel for the good times, but it is perhaps their unwavering patience and willingness to scrape me off the ground in the bad for which I am most grateful.

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GLOSSARY OF HAUSA TERMS

In this glossary I have chosen to include only those Hausa language terms that appear frequently in the text. The definitions presented here should be treated as a guide. Fuller explanations are provided in-text where necessary.

Ango	Groom
Amarya	Bride/never married woman/virgin
Arzikin Mutane	Wealth in people
Aure	Wedding
Babariga	Long robe and shawl considered typical of Hausa men.
Base	A semi-formal gathering space for men
Baturi	White/wealthy/fortunate person
Bazawara	Divorced woman
Biki	Network of exchange relationships
Budan Kay	Celebration when well-wishers visit the home of a newly married husband and wife.
Chop	Food, to Eat
Gaysua/Goro	Gift given by a groom's senior male kin to those of the bride which formally initiates the marital process
Gida	Compound/Extended kinship unit
Girma	Respect/Bigness
Hassada	Envy/Jealousy
Iyali	Conjugal unit of husband, wife and dependent children
Karuwai	Prostitute/unmarried/independent woman
Kayan Daki	Wedding gift given to the bride by her mother.
Kosai	Patties or bean cakes made from fried beans
Kudi	Money
Lafiya	Health/well-being/order
Laya	Talisman

Lefe	Gift given a bride by her groom.
Maghrib	Early evening prayer
Mata	Woman
Mutumin	Man
Mutumin Kirki(i)	Good Man
Sadaki	Bridewealth
Sallah	Prayer
Saurayi (sing), Samari (pl)	Unmarried male youth
Tallafi	Adoption
Tro-tro	Minibus
Tuwo	Balls made from starch such as wheat, sorghum or rice typically consumed with soup.
Yara	Daughter
Yaro	Son
Zongo	Predominantly Muslim residential area

Chapter One: The Puzzle

1.1 Introduction: '*Mutumin Kirki*' – The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa

Abu leans his single foam mattress up against the wall and peels back one corner of the chequered linoleum that lines the floor of the small room he shares with two of his younger cousins. Underneath is a grubby white envelope. He picks up the envelope, opens it and shows me the money inside. Abu lives in Sabon Zongo, a Muslim Hausa enclave in urban Accra. Over the last couple of days Abu had been working for me as a research assistant, helping me get to know Zongo better and translating between English and Hausa when my own language skills failed me. I give Abu the money I had promised to pay him. He stuffs it inside the envelope, places it back under the linoleum and returns the mattress to its position on the floor. Though Abu had been appreciative of the chance to earn some extra money, he asked that I keep our transaction a secret. Abu was anxious about what others might think if they knew how much he had saved and what he was saving for.

Alhaji Tanko's flatscreen television takes pride of place in his living room. The armchairs we sit in facing each other are barely two metres apart, pressed up against the white washed walls of his living room. Nevertheless, his voice is calm and quiet and I struggle to hear what he's saying over the sound of the television. Aside from his television, there is little about Alhaji Tanko's modest chamber and hall to set it apart from the houses of other men of a similar age. Alhaji Tanko is in his late fifties and has six children. He is not a rich man, but he has married well and is the head of a reasonably well-thought of household. He oversees the property he and his brothers inherited from their father, but struggles to accommodate the unmarried sons and nephews too old to stay with their mothers. His son Abu is frustrated by this situation. He wants a room of his own, but must share with two of his younger cousins.

With the television rumbling away, Alhaji Tanko tells me how Abu's now deceased grandfather had come to Accra from rural Hausaland some eighty years ago. As a butcher he had easily found work and a place to stay at the well-established Hausa community at Sabon Zongo. He married the daughter of a local Hausa butcher, had several children and decided to settle permanently, building a small compound on land given to him by his father in law.

Abu hoped to achieve many of the things that his grandfather and father had achieved before him. At the time of fieldwork Abu was in his mid-twenties and his unmarried status had become something of a preoccupation. He was desperate to marry, escape his youth and enjoy the benefits of marriage, not least the status and respect accorded married men. However, getting married in Sabon Zongo is difficult. The marital process is a costly affair. Accommodation needs to be found, bride wealth must be paid and gifts must be given. Although it is a father's obligation to meet many of the costs involved in the marital process, Alhaji Tanko had so far been unwilling to endorse his son's plans. Alhaji Tanko claimed Abu was idle, immature and not yet responsible enough to carry the burden of dependent wives and children. Abu disagreed.

Abu thought that if he made a substantial contribution towards his own marriage costs, his father might be convinced of his capacity to provide and set the wheels of the marital process in motion. However, like many young men in Sabon Zongo, Abu found income earning opportunities hard to come by. Most of the money he earnt came from running errands for the senior men in his family, or the occasional day spent driving a motorbike taxi borrowed from an older cousin when he wasn't using it. Of the little he earnt, he saved as much as he could. Stashing it beneath the lino under his mattress.

Like Abu's grandfather, my own route to Sabon Zongo was via Hausaland. I had hoped to undertake research on men and masculinities in rural Kano, but the worsening security situation had curtailed my ambitions. My interest in all things Hausa had lead me to Deborah Pellow's (2002) book about Sabon Zongo and I had become intrigued by this small Muslim Hausa enclave in urban Accra. It seemed like a suitable and far more secure place to undertake fieldwork and pursue my doctoral ambitions.

My earliest encounter with the Hausa came by way of two readings during my undergraduate degree. The first was a short essay entitled 'Mutumin-Kirkiỉ', The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa' by Anthony Kirk-Greene (1974), a linguist, anthropologist and former colonial administrator in Nigerian Hausaland. In his lecture, Kirk-Greene sets out what the Hausa expect of a man if he is to be accorded social and moral standing. Kirk-Greene outlines *mutumin kirkii* – literally 'the good man' – in terms of social deportment: the behaviours that form the basis of social and moral evaluation. The second paper, by Frank Salamone, another distinguished scholar of Hausa culture and society, is entitled 'The Arrow and the Bird: Proverbs in the Solution

of Hausa Conjugal-Conflicts' (1976). Salamone describes how wives take revenge on philandering husbands by publicly mocking them through the use of proverbs. Where Kirk-Greene demonstrates what is expected if one is to be considered a good man, in Salamone's account we see how difficult it can be to keep others convinced that one has met these expectations.

As Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980) argues, an individual seldom exerts total control over the impressions that others have of him. Through Salamone's account, we can observe how conjugality is often permeated by the anxieties that arise from such a lack of control. In the context of conjugality, the relationship between a man and his audience is particularly intimate, and the lines between 'backstage' and 'front stage' precarious. Dropping one's guard, stepping out of character, forgetting or mistiming one's lines have the potential to disrupt or discredit a performance. This precariousness is underlined by the relative ease with which a man's spouse may bring backstage events to a wider audience and the relative authority that her accounts might enjoy. If a husband wishes to be positively evaluated by others he needs to secure his wife's cooperation in favourable performances. The threat of withdrawing such cooperation can be a powerful bargaining chip for a wife in negotiating conjugal relations, as well as the source of considerable anxiety for a husband, who fears that his performances might be discredited. A potent example of such performance anxiety can be found in the importance of sexual proficiency to a Hausa man's status, and his wife's privileged position to account for it (Barkow 1974)[1].

This thesis echoes the broad concerns of Salamone and Kirk-Greene in seeking to elaborate what is involved in becoming a man of social and moral standing. Through an exploration of young men's efforts to navigate the marital process, it asks, what are the qualities and characteristics that form the basis of manhood's definition? What does it take to keep others convinced that such manhood has been achieved? Whose cooperation is required, and how is it secured? What happens when such efforts fail? With these objectives in mind, let me return to Abu and some of his friends, whose lives are very much patterned by these concerns.

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[1]   I suspect that this concern is one with which many non-Hausa men would be able to empathise.

1.2 A Maid in Manhattan at Oakville Town Hall

Abu skips deftly between the traffic and over the gutter without breaking his stride. He pauses and waits for me on the other side of the road. My gait is earnest and clumsy. I stumble through the throng of people and vehicles, cautious of the pockmarks and debris that attempt to outwit my footing. When I catch up with Abu he leads me through a narrow gap between two compounds. We follow a trail of soggy footprints, pressed into the dark earth, where run-off from a blocked gutter has turned dust into mud. We turn a corner at a T-junction, formed by the wall of a third compound, and into a courtyard. At the nearest end of the courtyard a group of elder men sit on white plastic chairs inside a concrete structure chatting. The men wear the loose *babarigas* and cylindrical caps that are typical of the vast swathes of Northern Nigeria and Southern Niger referred to as Hausaland, and from which many of Zongo's inhabitants claim ancestry.

As we approach the elder men, Abu's stride slows. He lowers his body with a slight bend of the knees. He drops his shoulders and turns his chin down towards his neck. His voice sinks to a softer, almost whispered tone. As we exchange greetings with the men, Abu's eyes slip off to one side and come to rest on an imaginary speck on the floor. Though we address the group as a whole, one man seems to have a stronger presence and commands an emphasis to our attentions. We begin with the Arabic "*As salaam alaikum*", peace be with you. Then switching to Hausa we ask after 'well-being', "*kwa lafiya*?" Spiralling down through extended families "*ya gida*?" immediate families "*ya iyali*?" and the individuals that comprise them: "*ya mata*?" – wives; "*ya yaro*?" – children. "*Lafiya[2] lau*" – all is well – is the response to each enquiry, until we conclude with "*Mungodiya Allah*", thanks be to God.

Away from the concrete shack at the far end of the courtyard a woman batters and wrings wet clothes in a large metal bowl. Another woman vigorously pounds cassava in a pestle held firm by another more elderly woman. Two small children spot Abu and I as we make our way across the courtyard. They run over, shrieking and bouncing. Abu barks something at them in Hausa and they scuttle off through a doorway. Against one wall is a block of four showers and opposite the shower is a wooden lean-to,

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[2]   Here my translation of the term '*lafiya*' does not do justice to its complexity or significance. This will be remedied in Chapter Four where I give greater attention to what the concept implies.

hammered together from scraps of greying wood. On a shelf at the front of the shack is a dusty, ageing television set connected to a cable that rises up into a web of wires, spraying outwards above the enclosure and into the adjacent compounds. Several young men, perhaps in their twenties, sit chatting on wooden benches inside. A larger, more rotund man with short dreadlocks sits in front of them on a chair facing the television set. He stands up and introduces himself as Murtala and welcomes me to "Oakville Town Hall". Murtala explains that it takes its name from the adjoining compound, where he and his family live. His uncle had spent some time in Oakville, Canada and upon his return the compound had become known as "Little Oakville". Abu points out Murtala's father, sat with the elder men we had just greeted. One of the other men, Mohammad, interjects. "We call this place Town Hall because we like to discuss".

Abu removes his sandals. He is a slight man and easily squeezes in between his friends on one of the rickety wooden benches. He nudges a dozing man, who looks over to me, straightens himself, shuffles over and invites me to sit. As I take my seat the young men introduce themselves. Murtala returns to his seat. Leaning forward he adjusts the volume on the television set until the distortion silences our chatter. Abu gently rests his hand on my knee. He tells me that we are about to watch one of their favourite television shows; a Latin American telenovela, Maid in Manhattan. "*This is our programme. We like it too much*", he says, pursing his lips and allowing them to hang on the double vowel sound of the 'too' for emphasis.

The men were utterly engrossed in the show. Throughout their viewing they variously cheered, cursed and tutted at the characters; and gasped, fidgeted and clutched at one another in excitement as the events unfolded on the screen. Once the programme had ended, the young men moved the benches outside, forming a horseshoe around a small plastic table. One of the men prepared tea, which we drank whilst discussing the events that took place in the episode.

I asked them what the series was about, hoping to locate the episode I had watched in the show's narrative arc. They explained that the show was about Marisa's efforts to marry Cristobal. Marisa is a humble, hardworking and aspirational Mexican woman trying to make a better life for herself and her son whilst working as a Maid in a luxurious New York hotel. Along the way Marisa falls in love with Cristobal, the son of

a wealthy politician. She hopes to marry Cristobal and live the life that she has always dreamed of. However, standing in the way of her plans are Sara, her avaricious and scheming rival for Cristobal's affections, and Victor, her drinking, gambling and womanising ex-husband and the father of her son Lalo. The series follows Marisa and the twists of fate and moral dilemmas she confronts as she pursues her marital ambitions.

For most of the young men that I met that day, the afternoons at Oakville Town Hall, when Maid in Manhattan is aired, were a regular fixture. I didn't always come to watch the show, but whenever I did the interactions followed an almost identical, even ritualistic format. The men would watch the show inside the wooden shack, before moving outside to discuss what had happened. The show aired around 2 o'clock and was finished by the time of '*Asr*', the afternoon prayer. The conversations would often last for several hours, sometimes beyond the *Maghrib* and even *Isha'a* prayers at around six o'clock and half past seven respectively. The men would perform their ablutions in the adjacent shower block, lay out a large mat and pray together before returning to the benches to continue their conversations.

1.3 Edutainment

I was puzzled by the young men's apparent devotion to the show and the excitement it generated. I wondered what it was about Maid in Manhattan that they found so compelling. When I asked them why they liked the show, they told me it was useful. It was about "life" and so they learned things which were helpful to them in their own lives. I was struck by this response. I had enjoyed the show as a moment of 'fantasy' – fantasy in the sense of being remote, if not entirely removed, from real life. The crisp, polished, picture perfect world and simplistic characters offered respite from what to me felt like the complex, messy and challenging reality of life in Zongo. As I watched the show, the lives depicted in it seemed impossibly distant and different from my own and those of my informants in Zongo. I had located the story and characters in what I construed as bounded geographical and cultural spaces; discrete, distant and in opposition to the world inhabited by my informants. I assumed Muslim Hausa men living in Accra would feel little connection with a show about the trials and tribulations

of a Mexican woman in Manhattan. How could it appear as anything other than 'fantasy'?

The watching of television, however, ought not to be examined in terms of passive, preconstituted viewers and images, but as a reflective and reflexive social practice. This is to say that the act of viewing is constituted in and constitutive of wider social contexts and those who inhabit them (Abu-Lughod 1997, Appa*dura*i 2005). Picking up from Anderson's (2006) argument that the nation-state could be seen as an effect of "imagined communities" cultivated through the proliferation of print media, Appa*dura*i (2005 p.4) argues that electronic media have served to confound many of the hitherto taken-for-granted boundaries upon which these imagined communities relied, such that "image" and "viewer" may be (de)territorialised in various ways. This can be seen in the distinctive ways in which the men at Oakville Town Hall and I identified and located the show's characters. Where I saw migrant Mexican Others in New York, the men at Town Hall saw 'white' people 'like me', who despite living out their lives in the 'West', occupied a reality akin to their own. In contrast to my perception of the show as lacking in realism, or at the very least portraying a world with which I had very little in common, the young men saw themselves and the show as inhabiting the same moral universe; to the extent that it had value as a source of guidance.

Though at the time, I was surprised by the men's remarks, soap opera audiences have often been seen to frame their engagement with such shows as learning experiences. For example, in rural Nigerien Hausaland, Masquelier (2009a) describes how a popular Mexican telenovela, 'Rubi' was perceived as having pedagogic value. Young men and women saw the show as a source of moral instruction and practical guidance. Helping them to make sense of the uncertainties of 'romantic love' and navigate the moral dilemmas it posed for them in a society heavily stratified by class and gender. Weiss (2009) observes a similar scenario in urban Tanzania. He describes how viewers evaluated soap operas, films and other televised media on the basis of their perceived educational merits.

The conversations following each viewing of Maid in Manhattan at Oakville Town Hall were often didactic in tone. The men would discuss the challenges faced by the various characters, how they had responded, whether their behaviour could be adjudged "correct" or not, and how they might have gone about things differently. The men

explained that there were many lessons to be learnt from the show which were directly applicable to their own lives, such as strategies for managing one's emotions, coping with envy, gossip, loss, failure and the difficulties of fulfilling one's responsibilities to others, the importance of patience, self-discipline, piety and the dangers of drinking alcohol. Though many ideas and issues were raised in these conversations, marriage and the difficulties of achieving it appeared to be particularly important. Though different viewers will likely interpret the story in different ways, I suspect that most people in Zongo or elsewhere would broadly agree with Abu and his friends in seeing Marisa's marital aspirations as an important if not central element of the show. I will discuss the particular nuances of the young men's interpretation of the show and its significance later, but for now let me stay with the puzzle as to why these young men seemed to gravitate towards the show.

1.4 Normative Aspirations

As I got to know the men at Town Hall it became apparent that their enthusiasm for Maid in Manhattan was in part a reflection of their own preoccupation with marriage. They expressed diverse aspirations, from becoming professional footballers or businessmen, to working in Europe or North America. However, an ambition to marry was something they all had in common. It was this desire to marry that was a key part of what they enjoyed about the show. While Abu and his friends' enjoyment of the show could at least in part be explained by their marital ambitions, I was curious as to why exactly it was that they wanted, so intensely, to get married. It is this concern that forms the basis of Chapters Four and Five of this thesis, in which I ask: Why do men want to get married?

A preoccupation with marriage is not limited to the men at Oakville Town Hall. Sit at any of Zongo's chop bars, barbershops or 'bases[3]', and other such places where men gather, and the topic of conversation will eventually turn to marriage. It is the subject of sermons, prayers, songs and status updates. Marriage is something that both men and women are expected to aspire to and achieve, and a source of bafflement, anxiety and even suspicion when it is not. Ask a man whether he wants to marry and the

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[3]   See Chapter Two.

answer will always be yes; not infrequently accompanied by an expression of bemusement that one would ask a question with such an obvious answer. The idea that a man would not marry, let alone not want to, is for people in Zongo a bizarre notion. I met a small number of elderly men who had not been married, and yet even they were keen to assert that they were planning to. Marriage thus appears to be a normative ideal. This would seem to go some way towards understanding Abu and his friends' preoccupation with it.

The norms and values which inform the behaviours and beliefs that are expected or accepted in a society cannot be thought of as arbitrary, but must be viewed in the context of broader cosmological orientations concerning the nature of reality, how it is organised, and what members of a society should be or do in relation to it. Here, the insights of gender analysis are useful[4]. From the outset this thesis is concerned with men as a category of the person. Implicit to the notion of the '*mutumin kirkii*', the good man, is that it can be differentiated from non-men, perhaps most obviously women, but also other kinds of men; men who are perhaps not quite so 'good'.

A central trope in the anthropology of personhood has been the idea that categories of the person do not pre-exist or transcend the social contexts in which they are constituted[5]. The processes through which people are differentiated within a society are grounded in broad cosmological orientations manifest in social practice (Ortner 1972, Bourdieu 2007, Douglas 1995, 2010). I explore the social constitution of the

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[4]   A concern with 'men' is explicit in this thesis from the outset. It thus follows that gender analytical approaches ought to provide a useful starting point for analysis. Such approaches are not only valuable on the basis of a common subject matter, but offer a set of conceptual and analytical tools that are useful in interrogating the mechanisms of social (re)production, and so shed light on the particular conundrum of how individual accounts and practices relate to wider social norms and values. Gender analysis is comprised of diverse theoretical, methodological and political orientations, not all of which can be seen to agree with one another all of the time. Nevertheless, there tends to be broad consensus that categories of the person are to some extent socially constructed. I discuss this theme in greater detail in Chapter Three.

[5]   Within gender analysis notions of biology have been called upon in various ways in making sense of gender as a social phenomenon. There is considerable debate as to the extent to which ostensibly biological differences, such as the capacity to give birth, inform gender. Several authors, such as Foucault (1977, 1978), Butler (2011) and Fausto-Sterling (1993) have argued that notions of biological difference are themselves socially constructed. From this point of view gender is seen as the product of social relationships and cannot be entirely reduced to inherent properties of a group or individual (West and Zimmerman 1987, Moore 1994). It thus follows that it is social relationships that inform the judgements that are made as to which categories of person an individual belongs.

person in greater detail in Chapter Three, but for the time being it is enough to say that one of the key objectives of this thesis is to elaborate how accepted and valued notions of manhood in Zongo are framed in a larger social and moral universe. This is the focus of Chapters Four and Five, where I aim to situate the marital desires, aspirations, norms and values expressed by men, in collective representations of how the world is or should be and the place of men within them.

The viewing of Maid in Manhattan at Oakville Town Hall and the discussions that followed it, can be seen as a moment in which norms and values are articulated and cosmological positions alluded to. My initial observations of the Oakville Town Hall discussions demonstrate at least a degree of congruity between widely held norms and values and the expressed marital aspirations of individuals. However, the processes through which norms and values come to shape practices and people's accounts of them remain unclear. That Abu and his friends like Maid in Manhattan because they want to get married, and want to get married because everybody else does so and expects them to do the same, is an unsatisfactory answer to our puzzle. To draw on the language of statistics, we cannot assume causality from correlation. Thus far we have no account of the pressures and process through which the accounts and practices of individuals come to correspond to, and indeed deviate from, widely held social norms and values.

The significance of this concern can be illustrated through the example of '*Sallah*' – prayer. As will be discussed in Chapter Two, most of Zongo's inhabitants are Muslims, meaning morality is often articulated through a discourse of Islam. The five daily *Sallah* are a normative obligation from which men seldom deviate and generally assist one another to fulfil without condition. One man will never decline another who asks for a pot of water for his ablutions, a mat to pray upon and a space to lay it; be they friend, enemy or stranger. Prayer is clearly a potent norm, and one that it is embedded in the very social fabric of Zongo, exerting a considerable influence on the temporal, spatial and moral order of social life there. Indeed, as mentioned above, the post-viewing discussions of Maid in Manhattan at Oakville Town Hall are punctuated by the call to prayer, and meal times, bedtimes and the working day are all oriented towards adherence to this normative obligation.

Yet despite this obligation to conform, and the embeddedness of the means by which such conformity is achieved, prayer does not seem to grip the subjectivities of men to the same extent as marriage. Men express an obligation to conform to both prayer and marriage as normative expectations, but where prayer is a taken-for-granted event, marriage is the subject of unparalleled expressions of desire and preoccupation amongst men. The question here, then, is: What are the particular social entailments that lead to the expression of marriage as an intensified desire amongst young men? The status of marriage as a normative ideal does not in and of itself explain why specific individuals should express desire for it, why it should be so widely discussed, nor why it should be such a pervasive preoccupation for young men. Why do some normative ideals seem to exert a particular influence on the things that people say and do? How can we make sense of the relationship between collective representations of marriage as important, and the importance that men like Abu and his friends attach to it as individuals? How do we account for the particular subjective attachments which seem to permeate talk about marriage and make Maid in Manhattan such compelling viewing?

1.5 The Dramaturgical Self: Imagining Selves and Others

A concern with subjectivity brings to the fore a number of ideas which inform my analysis. The relationship between social organisation and individual subjectivity has long been an important focus in social theory. It is not within the scope of this thesis to enter into debates concerning the nature or validity of the self as an ontological principle. However, it is necessary to briefly outline the notion of self at play in this thesis and the analytical framework it gives rise to. These ideas will be revisited and elaborated in greater detail throughout this thesis, but it is perhaps helpful to bring one or two of the most important ideas into the foreground so as to orient the reader. I deploy a notion of the self as both individuated and valued. Though I take Mauss (1985) as my entry point into the situational analyses of Erving Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980), this thesis follows in the footsteps of Durkheim (1964, 2014) who examines the puzzle of the coherence of the self in modernity.

Drawing on Durkheim's argument that the individual self is an effect of modernity, Mauss (1985) posits a distinction between an individuated personal consciousness or '*moi*' and the social self or '*personne*'. Mauss sees the '*moi*' as a kind of pre-social

biological given of the individual. In contrast, the '*personne*' can be thought of as the culturally specific concepts of the person, embodied in social institutions such as religious institutions, kinship systems and law. In effect, '*personne*' refers to the sets of ideas and beliefs about what it means to be a person and how these beliefs relate to social expectations concerning an individual's behaviours. The debate within the social sciences concerning the extent to which individual behaviours are structurally defined is an enduring and lively one. However, I situate my discussion under the premise that the individual self is neither an entirely autonomous agent nor mere structural effect. I see the boundaries between Mauss' '*moi*' and '*personne*' as analytical constructs rather than ontological fact, in the sense that socially constituted and culturally variable notions of the self and the sense of personal consciousness are mutually constitutive in a manner akin to Goffman's (1956) '*dramaturgical self*'. The term dramaturgical self serves as a way of marrying Mauss' '*moi*' and '*personne*' together as the sense of self (re)produced *through* interaction with others. Thus the dramaturgical self, whilst individuated, is subject to a degree of fluidity, contingent upon the particular relations and representations at stake in specific social interactions.

However, although an individual's sense of self may be more or less fluid, he may value and so become emotionally attached to or desirous of a particular sense of self at a given moment in time. He may lack a sense of self-worth or self-esteem when his sense of himself is at odds with his own, or indeed his society's, wider expectations concerning what a person ought to be or behave like. Furthermore, he may feel anxious when a particular sense of self is under threat. Consequently, individuals are often preoccupied, albeit subconsciously, with their sense of 'self-worth'; the sense of who they are and the value they attach to it. I use the term subjective attachment to refer to an individuals' desire for self-worth and its realisation in the coherence of '*personne*' and '*moi*'. In short, I assume that people do not only value and desire a certain image of themselves, but require that such a self-image be validated by others.

People desire the things that establish, reinforce and validate their sense of self-worth. Particular objects may operate as symbols of socially recognised achievements or personal characteristics; for example, consumer goods, exam certificates and military medals may stand to represent desirable or valued personal qualities such as financial prowess, intellectual ability or bravery in combat. The symbolic content and value of

such objects will vary from context to context, and from person to person, but the point is that certain objects serve to reinforce, or indeed undermine, a person's sense of self as aligned with social expectations as to what qualifies a person as being of worth. Of course, a sense of self is not only invested in the acquisition or accumulation of specific material things, nor can the symbolic value of such things be divorced from the wider social contexts in which their meanings are constituted (Douglas and Isherwood 1979, Appa*dura*i 1988, Miller 2005a, 2005b). Crucially, a sense of self is achieved through relations with others, and so is implicated in how one person behaves in another's presence. It is this idea that underpins Goffman's (1956, 2005) borrowing of Durkheim's (1964) notion of the self as 'sacred'; as ritual object cared for in social interaction. Indeed, one of the principle objectives of Goffman's microanalyses is to elaborate the forms of ritual through which the self is honoured (and dishonoured) in the immediacy of face-to-face social encounters.

Goffman (1956, 2005) argues that because people care about selves and selves are socially constituted through social interactions, social behaviour is at least to some extent directed towards sustaining and cultivating the self. Through interpersonal behaviour an individual influences the impressions that others have of him, but also the impression he has of himself. The image that an individual has of himself may be reinforced, revised or adapted when he encounters the judgements of others in social interaction. Goffman calls these efforts to influence the perceptions of others so as to cultivate a particular sense of self "impression management" (Goffman 1956 p.49). The key point here is that we might begin to make sense of Abu and his friends' preoccupation with marriage and why they find Maid in Manhattan so compelling by examining the viewing of the show as a context of impression management in which personal significance is at stake.

However, before turning this lens to my analysis, I'd like to consider a further point, which can also be seen as the legacy of Durkheim and Mauss, specifically the ways in which modernity might be seen to impinge upon the processes through which the self is constituted. Although I am ambivalent about the view of modernity as linear, put forward by Durkheim (1964, 2014) and later Mauss (1985), there is something to be said for the idea of 'modernity' as fostering a particular emphasis on the individuated

self[6]. This idea is picked up in the work of Appa*dura*i (2005) and Weiss (2009). Of particular interest are their ideas about the confluence of fantasy and desire in the social practice of 'imagination' as 'self-making'. I have already touched upon Appadurai's (2005) concern with the proliferation of electronic media and how it can be seen to reconfigure the kinds of imagined communities in which individuals situate themselves. At the centre of Appa*dura*i's argument is a notion of modernity as a shift in both means and scale of cultural flows. According to Appa*dura*i, mass mediation and migration have generated increasingly diffuse, unstable and yet prolific circuits of cultural (re)production. This profusion of imagery exposes individuals to an expanding range of social referents with implications for the constitution of subjectivities[7]. On the one hand, this renders centres of representation uncertain, offering new resources and possibilities for the imagining and thus making of selves and others. On the other hand, it can also be seen to foster anxieties, as people attempt to forge a sense of identity and 'belonging' in circuits of representation characterised by economic, political and cultural inequalities, such that it is not only the immediacy of inequalities between oneself and one's neighbours which have the potential to impinge upon one's sense of self-worth, but how one identifies and locates oneself in larger 'imagined communities'.

This can be seen in Weiss' (2009) account of Tanzanian barbershops as an effect of young men's engagements with globalised imagery of the mass media. Weiss' informants do not merely passively consume, mimic, nor even appropriate ostensibly globalised cultural influences, but actively participate in the making and remaking of representations of the wider world and their location within it. The young men's encounter with the globalised imageries of hip-hop provides fuel for the imagination of

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[6] Both Durkheim (1964, 2014) and Mauss (1985) saw 'tradition' and 'modernity' as occupying two ends of a spectrum. Simple, small scale societies at one end and complex large scale societies at the other. Ostensibly 'traditional' societies were characterised by the relative absence of social differentiation and emphasised a sociocentric notion of the person. In contrast, the division of labour in large, complex societies demanded specialisation and thus differentiation was vital to social solidarity. The assumption was that traditional societies would eventually become more complex with the passage of time and develop a similar emphasis on individuation.

[7] The social pressures described here might be seen as characteristically postmodern in the sense that the focus is on the proliferation and diffusion of social referents. However, unlike many concepts of postmodernity, which have often emphasised the fragmentation and indeterminacy of the self, Appa*dura*i retains a notion of individual subjectivity as coherent even if fluid (see Appa*dura*i 2005 p.201).

selves and others enacted in everyday practices such as haircare, dress and language. However, Weiss observes that commentaries on inequality and constraint are central to these imaginings. Weiss argues that young men's description of themselves as 'thugs', a term drawn from hip-hop culture which connotes 'toughness' in the face of adversity and conflict, serves to articulate their sense of themselves as part of an imagined yet marginalised community where toughness is not only desirable but necessary to survive[8].

Goffman's interest in the micromechanics of face-to-face interaction might seem to be distant from the global encounters which frame Appadurai and Weiss' analyses. However, Appadurai and Weiss's concerns echo those of Goffman in the sense that they are similarly concerned with the ways in which selves are constituted through engagement with collective representations and imaginings of how the world is or should be. When drawn together, these ideas suggest that the viewing of Maid in Manhattan can be seen as a productive resource, a process of 'imagining', through which selves, others and the worlds they inhabit are not only understood and navigated, but also made. This idea raises a number of questions. What kinds of self-images are the men at Oakville Town Hall hoping to cultivate or sustain through the viewing of Maid in Manhattan, and why? How do they go about trying to achieve them and what opportunities and constraints do they encounter in the process? As will be elaborated in the analysis to follow, when taken beyond the context of the viewing of Maid in Manhattan these questions speak to the overarching theme of this thesis: Why does marriage matter, and how does it mediate the making of manhood?

1.6 When the Heart is Hungry: Marriage and the Desire for Manhood.

"Asa zuchia ta chi, shi ya kawo ji'n yungwa – To make the heart eat is to bring a feeling of hunger" (Hausa Proverb[9]).

Goffman's (1956) idea of the dramaturgical self as an effect of social interaction raises the question of what kinds of persons and selves are at stake in marriage. Marriage has often been observed as a site in which gendered categories of the person are

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[8]   See also Newell (2012) for a similar account focused on dress amongst young men in Ivory Coast.

[9] Merrick (1905 p17).

(re)produced. Marital status frequently operates as a means to differentiate between categories of men and different types of masculinity; for instance, in the view of marriage as a ritual marking an individual's transition from youth to manhood (Smith 1959, Olawoye et al 2004, Van Gennep 2011). However, categories of the person cannot be thought of as mere labelling systems; they inform as much as describe a person's relations with others. For example, by establishing or redefining an individual's relationship to a specific household or kin group. This is perhaps most evident where marriage involves changes in residency and a concomitant shift in relations of consumption, production and exchange. For example, in Northern Nigerian Hausaland, upon becoming a wife, a woman typically leaves her paternal household for a room provided for her by her husband. She enters seclusion, ceases to have contact with men other than her husband and is expected to care for the domestic needs of her husband and children. Their husbands sleep in their wife's or wives' rooms, for whom they are expected to provide clothing and food to cook with (Schildkraut 1982, Cooper 1997, Robson 2000, 2006, Weimann 2009).

The key point here is that marriage may invoke not only changes in the particular category of person with which an individual is associated, but also different normative expectations concerning an individual's entitlements and responsibilities and the kinds of social activities that they are expected to pursue. The implication here is that Abu and his friends' desire to marry might reflect a larger preoccupation with selfhood – of being and becoming a certain kind of person, and realising a particular relationship.

This idea is significant in the context of a development studies concerned with social justice and equality as integral to notions of well-being. The cosmological orientations that prevail in a society do not just differentiate between people, but hierarchically organise them. Judgements as to who qualifies as a particular kind of person are not only embedded in prevailing cosmologies, but have political implications which impinge upon individual well-being. This is evident in the fact that some categories of the person are accorded greater prestige and authority than others (Ortner 1972, Bourdieu 1984, 2007, Douglas 1995, Cornwall and Lindisfarne 2003). This has often been observed in the notional authority and privileged access to resources of married household heads relative to unmarried youths (see for example Aguilar 1998, Abbink and Van Kessel 2005, Perry 2009). Relations of status and authority can be seen to influence an individual's well-being, not least by affecting the esteem they accord

themselves or are accorded by others, but also in enabling or constraining participation in specific activities and mediating access to social, political and economic resources. In light of these observations, we might hypothesise that marriage is important for Abu and his friends because it confers a personhood that they see as being desirable or advantageous. This would be consistent with observations made in other Hausa-derived societies, where marriage has been observed as a rite of passage demarcating youth from adult manhood (Barkow 1974, Cooper 1995, Masquelier 2005, 2009b). Such transitions often also imply a hierarchical ordering in terms of differences in social practice and the social value that such practices are afforded. I explore this idea in Chapter Three, but for now it is enough to say that status, privilege and authority arise from the inherent entanglement of who you are with what you do. The implication here is that *mutumin kirki* is not merely a man, but a man who does being a man well, who performs manhood convincingly. With this notion in mind let us return to Abu and his friends.

For the men at Town Hall, the central theme of Maid in Manhattan was marriage. However, they did not only express a general interest in the show's theme, but were also explicit in stating that they saw the show as informative. They could relate to the particular social and moral dilemmas that were raised in the show in terms of their own social practice. They saw it as a source of guidance, as a way of learning about how to conduct oneself correctly when faced with similar challenges.

If being a certain sort of person is at least in part constituted by the things that a person says or does, then the young men's concern with what is and is not 'good' behaviour can be seen as a discussion of what is involved in being a good person. Though the lessons that the men derived from the show were various, it was marriage that was paramount amongst them. We can see this preoccupation as evident in how the young men identified with Marisa's struggle to achieve her marital ambitions, claiming that getting married was also difficult for men in Zongo. They empathised with Marisa's seemingly endless battle with Sara's efforts to sabotage her romance with Cristobal. They drew a parallel with their own lives, claiming that the marital pathways of many men in Zongo had been similarly scuppered by an envious rival. They cited stories of girlfriends who had been lured away by 'charms' and other kinds of magic, and men who had been poisoned or cursed by a competitor. They also saw Marisa's marital ambitions as being impinged upon by the low status conferred to her by her occupation

as a maid. This dilemma was encapsulated in an example, drawn upon by Murtala, from an earlier episode in the series, in which Marisa first encounters Cristobal.

Here, Cristobal stumbles upon Marisa as she tries on an expensive dress belonging to a wealthy guest. Cristobal does not realise that Marisa is a maid, and invites her to go for a walk with him. During their walk they fall in love. However, Marisa is uncertain whether Cristobal loves her for who she 'really' is, and agonises over what might happen if her humble circumstances were to be revealed. When reflecting on this dilemma, the men at Town Hall explained how on the one hand, the dress serves to deceive Cristobal by concealing her poverty; but on the other, it reveals a 'true self', ordinarily obscured by her working attire.

The young men observing Marisa's dilemma claimed that they experienced a parallel concern in their own marital efforts. They claimed that women often misjudged them as unviable husbands on the basis of their relative poverty, whilst being seduced by richer men who despite their wealth lacked the moral propriety to fulfil their familial obligations. Here, the young men's concerns resonate with Goffman (1980, 2005), in that being a good person and having others believe it may not always be quite the same thing. An individual's circumstances may be more or less advantageous to cultivating certain impressions, not least in that others may come to exert a considerable influence on the presentation of self that one would like to give. The young men argued that Marisa's ex-husband Victor had a lot to do with her troubles, in that he reneged on his duty to provide for his son and thus the burden fell unjustly on Marisa. Marisa's poverty was not of her own doing, but of her deadbeat ex-husband's failure to fulfil his moral obligations.

Abu and his friends expressed firm disapproval of men who prioritised their own wants and needs before those of their wives and children for whom they were responsible. Their own fathers and senior kin were not exempt from such condemnation. They felt that while they were expected to be at the beck and call of senior men, these same senior men were failing to live up to their side of the bargain. This was especially evident in the context of marriage where they emphasised that securing the '*sadakî*', the payment made by a groom's father to that of the bride, was a particular obstacle.

Take, for example, Mohammad. When I asked him why he had not yet married he responded,

"*My father don't support me. He just like chop and go[10]. He say go do this thing. Buy units* [mobile phone credit]. *Buy tuwo. Take letter this man. Collect money this man. I go. Sometimes far far place. Kasoa, Madina, even Takoradi. I go...Me I don't have unit. I don't get money. I don't get chop* [food]*. I ask him. He just say go and come* [back later]*...Me I do my duty…Still always I must to go to search for money for something for me myself to chop…. How I go make sadaki? I don't get money for chop*"

Other young men similarly complained that their fathers fell short of their responsibility to provide *sadaki*. Even when they had managed to secure the *sadaki* there was no guarantee that it would be accepted by the bride's father, who might demand a greater sum. Young men claimed that elder men were demanding prohibitively high *sadaki* payments for their daughters, whilst offering little support to their own sons, who asserted that they were unable to raise the money themselves. It was the demand for high *sadaki* payments that they claimed kept them from marrying in good time. Furthermore, young men frequently asserted that whilst money was increasingly hard to come by, the gifts demanded by women, before they would agree to marry, were becoming ever costlier. Even when a prospective bride had accepted a proposal, they claimed there was no guarantee that the marriage would actually take place; contingent as it was upon meeting further demands, made by the bride and her kin, for increasingly high prestationary payments and extravagant weddings.

From the above examples we can see that, although young men wanted to get married, they also described it as something difficult to achieve. Such difficulty might explain why young men like Abu and his friends seem to be so preoccupied with it; all the more so if the proposition stands that marriage is important to the masculine categories of the person that they see as being most desirable or advantageous.

To sum up, it can be convincingly argued that Maid in Manhattan appeals to Abu and his friends because they are able to identify with what they perceive as being the themes of the show, in particular marriage. Furthermore, the show and the discussions that followed it provided an opportunity to articulate and reflect upon the particular

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[10] "*Chop and go*" is used to describe attending an event, such as a wedding or naming ceremony, with the sole purpose of taking advantage of the free food and without paying respects to the event's hosts.

challenges that they themselves faced in pursuit of marriage and ways to overcome them.

Clearly we need to know much more about the men at Oakville Town Hall and the extent to which marriage is important to social life in Sabon Zongo before drawing any firm conclusions. The extent to which marriage is significant to advantageous or desirable categories of the person is as yet to be ascertained, but there are a number of other issues that need to be considered if this explanation is to prove entirely satisfactory. In the first instance, we need to reconsider the ways in which the accounts provided by the men at Town Hall reflect the reality of social life in Zongo.

1.7 Performance Anxieties

As Goffman (1974) argues, we cannot see the things that people say and do as being independent of the social situations in which they occur. This is not to say that the things that people say and do are without significance beyond a specific social situation, but that what is articulated and how, is contingent upon the structure of the interaction in which they are produced. A number of considerations can be derived from Goffman that might help us more adequately interpret the accounts provided by Abu and his friends.

First of all, Goffman (1974) argues that social interaction is subject to norms concerning the kinds of behaviours and forms of talk that are and are not appropriate in specific social situations. Take for example the noticeable differences in Abu's demeanour when amongst his friends and when passing the elder men in the concrete structure. His energetic fidgeting stopped, he dropped his shoulders and lowered his chin. He spoke in a softer tone and more formal register. We can see this change in Abu's deportment as a response to the distinct normative expectations of particular social situations. There are a variety of ways in which adherence to such norms might be enforced. For example, when Murtala turns the volume on the television up to the point of distortion, the other men end their conversations and turn their attention to the

television set. Murtala's actions might be interpreted as a means of enforcing the kinds of behaviour that are acceptable when watching the show[11].

Secondly, Goffman (1974) argues that the things that people say in a given social situation may be aimed at a variety of social objectives quite apart from describing a particular set of circumstances. An individual may see a particular representation, or indeed misrepresentation, of his circumstances as being more or less advantageous to the objectives he is hoping to achieve in a particular social encounter. The key point here is that we cannot make sense of an individual's account solely on the basis of its descriptive content, but must take into account what they might have invested in producing it.

The implications of this argument are twofold. First of all, we cannot ascertain whether marriage is difficult to achieve or not on the basis of Abu and his friend's assertions alone. Secondly, regardless of whether marriage is difficult to achieve or not, other motivations might be at play in the production of such accounts. We need to know more before drawing any firm conclusions as to what motivates Abu and his friends to produce the particular accounts that they do. However, we can argue that the things that people say or do in a social situation are, at least in part, motivated by the effect that they hope they will have on others. As described above, Goffman calls these efforts to influence the perceptions of others so as to be congruous with our own social objectives 'impression management' (Goffman 1956, 1974, 1980). So the question here is, what kind of effects are young men like Abu hoping to achieve when they produce the particular accounts that they do?

Abu and his friends were clearly concerned with how they might be perceived by others[12]. We can see this concern reflected in the way in which Murtala related Marisa's encounter with Cristobal whilst wearing an expensive dress to the difficulties they themselves faced in convincing others of their viability as husbands. The young men clearly felt that they needed to appear to be a certain kind of man in order to be

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[11]　　Clearly we would need to know more before being certain of this particular interpretation. However, the point here is to illustrate an analytical process, rather than establish Murtala's intentions.

[12]　　This is not to say that social interaction can be reduced to the pursuit of a particular self-presentation, but we might surmise that the specific accounts and practices observed at Oakville Town Hall are at least in part motivated by a desire to create impressions themselves that they see as desirable or favourable.

considered viable husbands and realise their marital ambitions. However, impression management is not merely about representing an image of oneself that stands apart from an innate and unflinching 'who I really am', but integral to the processes through which the image we have of ourselves is constituted. This brings us back to the 'dramaturgical self' (Goffman 1956, 1974). Thus impression management is just as much about the image that one has of one's self, as it is the perceptions of others; or to put it another way, the sense of self that is achieved through relations with others. Thus Goffman's dramaturgical self is reflexively constituted through social interaction. The concept of impression management provides a way of talking about the efforts people make to cultivate a particular image and thus sense of his or her self. The idea that people value particular self-images implies that the self is something that is not only constituted and managed in social interaction, but also cared for.

Goffman (1967 p.5.) uses the term "face" to describe the "positive social value a person effectively claims for himself" during a social encounter. Face can be seen as the relationship between a person's desired or preferred self-image and the image that others have of him. When a particular self-image is publicly discredited, that person suffers a 'loss of face'; the social value that he is able to claim for himself is diminished[13]. A salient example can be drawn from Salamone's (1976) exposition of conjugal conflicts in Hausaland, where control over women is central to accepted and valued notions of manhood. Husbands are expected to control their wives and wives are expected to obey their husbands. Husbands value an image of themselves as the kind of men who fulfil this expectation. Consequently, a husband avoids arguing with his wife in public, as to do so would discredit the self-image he would like to claim for himself.

With this idea in mind, one way of interpreting Mohammed's anger at his father might be as a response to a 'wounded' or uncertain self-image. When Mohammed frames the running of errands on behalf of his father as doing his "duty", he is claiming an image of himself as the kind of person who does what is expected of him. Furthermore, Mohammed asserts that his father ought to reward his efforts by providing him with

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[13]   Impression management is seldom a one-shot game. Keeping one's audience, and oneself, convinced of a particular self-image, requires constant policing of one's own conduct and the conduct of others. If an individual wants to avoid a loss of face, he must avoid social situations in which his self-presentations might be discredited.

sadaki. But Mohammed's father does not meet his expectations of reciprocity. Mohammed seems to be saying that his father neither recognises nor values his actions. If self-image is a function of one's interactions with others, then we might interpret Mohammed's anger as a response to his father's failure to validate the image that he seeks to claim for himself[14]. Mohammed hasn't suffered a loss of face in the way that Salamone's (ibid) husbands might have done when caught in the midst of an argument, but he has thus far failed to "gain face"; the self-image he has been trying to cultivate through his relations with others has not as yet been realised. Both these examples illustrate how a concern with self-image permeates social interaction. However, we can take this analysis further by returning to the idea that social practice speaks to larger social and moral orders. An argumentative wife not only implies a husband who lacks control, but calls into question the ideological principles that underlie such social expectations. When others express disapproval of a husband who fails to control his wife, they are making a statement about how they perceive the world is or should be; i.e. that women ought to be subject to the authority of men. What we see in this example is that self-image is linked to a set of social expectations, grounded in wider social and moral orders and ritualised in norms of social conduct – in this case the avoidance of public arguments.

1.8 Conclusion: The Analyis to Follow.

"*Thus, when the individual presents himself before others, his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society, more so, in fact, than does his behaviour as a whole. To the degree that a performance highlights the common official values of the society in which it occurs, we may look upon it, in the manner of Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, as a ceremony—as an expressive rejuvenation and reaffirmation of the moral values of the community. Furthermore, in so far as the expressive bias of performances comes to be accepted as reality, then*

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[14]   "A person may be said to have, or be in, or *mai*ntain face when the line he effectively takes presents an image of him that is internally consistent, that is supported by judgements and evidence conveyed by other participants, and that is confirmed by evidence conveyed through impersonal agencies in the situation. At such times the person's face clearly is not something lodged in or on the body, but rather something that is diffusely located in the flow of the events in the encounter and becomes manifest only when these events are read and interpreted for the appraisals expressed in them". (Goffman 1967 p.7).

that which is accepted at the moment as reality will have some of the characteristics of a celebration. To stay in one's room away from the place where the party is given, or away from where the practitioner attends to his client, is to stay away from where reality is being performed. The world, in truth, is a wedding". Goffman (1956 p.60).

This chapter has been framed by two interrelated questions. In the first instance, I was interested in making sense of why Abu and his friends found Maid in Manhattan such compelling viewing. I have gone some way towards answering this question, by suggesting that the show provides a vehicle through which they were able to articulate their marital aspirations and the obstacles which seemed to frustrate them, whilst attempting to exonerate themselves from the pitfalls of failure. It is in this sense that the viewing of Maid in Manhattan can be seen as a 'performance'. When interpreted as a platform for impression management, the men's conduct can be seen not only as an attempt to present themselves favourably to Others, but alludes to the normative reference points against which male prestige and status are evaluated.

My second question relates to why marriage matters in the first place. I have put forward a tentative hypothesis, that marriage is a normative aspiration upon which socially accepted and valued manhoods rely. Clearly, if this argument is to prove convincing we need to know more about the social significance of marriage in Zongo. As was discussed earlier, some normative expectations seem to grip the subjectivities of men more than others. Whilst both prayer and marriage are expectations which are taken for granted, marriage is the subject of desire. This raised the question of what else might be at stake in marriage. I argued that the marital desires, aspirations, norms and values expressed by men needed to be situated in collective representations of how the world is or should be. It is this concern which frames Chapters Three, Four and Five of this thesis.

I have already touched upon the idea of marriage as a rite of passage, through which adult manhood is achieved (Kirk-Green 1974, Cooper 1995, Masquelier 2005). Chapter Three explores this idea further, where I provide a brief overview of how a relationship between marriage and manhood has been conceived within the context of a wider anthropological and gender analytical literature. This literature review serves as the springboard into my own analysis. In Chapters Four and Five, I set out how marriage is invoked in notions of manhood in Sabon Zongo. I begin Chapter Four by

describing the ways in which young unmarried men are talked about in Zongo. I elaborate the notion of '*samari*' as unmarried youth and describe the ways in which young men are associated with social and moral disorder.

In Chapter Five I show how these moral discourses speak to wider cosmologies and the ideological content they contain within them. At the heart of these moral commentaries are relations of production, consumption and exchange, which hierarchically organise men and women. The idea of youth as morally troubling, operates to make the notion of 'productive' and 'responsible' manhood meaningful, and so desirable as a position of relative prestige and status. Consistent with what I have proposed in this chapter, and the literature surveyed in Chapter Three, I demonstrate how marriage is the central mechanism through which the relations distinguishing youth from manhood are brought into being. This is achieved through an analysis of the domestic space and the relations between those who inhabit it. I show how marriage relates to household morphology and mediates the different rights, responsibilities and statuses of men within and beyond the kinship group.

This brings me back to Goffman (1956) and the idea that people have a range of investments in social interaction, which pattern the kinds of things that they say and do. I have already argued that amongst these investments is the sense of self that participants are hoping to construe from them. In turn I argued that the social value of a particular self-image was a function of social expectations which are themselves foregrounded in wider ideas about how the world is or should be. In Chapters Four and Five, I show how it is the pursuit of the prestige and status derived from idealised relations of production, consumption and exchange which underpins young men like Abu's desire to marry. Chapters Four and Five can be seen as an elaboration of the idea of manhood in Zongo, the larger ideologies and orders it implies and how they inform men's quest for personal significance. What emerges from this analysis is an idealised account of marriage as a linear process through which youth make the transition to the forms of socially accepted and valued manhood.

However, this trajectory seems rather one way; we have a notion of social behaviour and personal self-worth as emergent from some overarching normative order. As we shall see in Chapter Three, through a reading of DeCerteau's (1984) work as an eschewal of the passive or 'docile' subject, the idea of such organisational principles

as totalising is called into question, drawing our attention to the negotiations, manoeuvres and machinations that may take place within them.

Thus, never far away in my analysis is a concern with how individuals situate themselves within these orders as agents; how individuals navigate and make use of dominant ideologies of manhood and the social expectations associated with them. This idea gains emphasis in Chapter Six. The initial aim of Chapter Six was to elaborate the ideas men held about what constitutes the ideal bride. I attempted to evaluate the extent to which men manage to fulfil their aspirations for marriages to desirable brides. I present some basic statistical data concerning who men actually marry as reported by individuals, but find my attempt to map ideals onto actualities are thwarted by men's efforts to conceal or evade categorizing their own brides as anything other than the ideal bride, even when I had good reason to suspect the contrary. Though my efforts to reconcile ideals and actualities are left wanting, my analysis reveals that how a bride is perceived by others clearly matters to men. This idea alludes to marriage and the marital process as sites of representation in which male prestige and status are at stake.

Chapters Seven and Eight hone in on this concern through an elaboration of the marital process. In Chapter Seven, I describe what people in Zongo say the marital process ought to look like, what it involves, where and when it takes place, who does what and why. I show how in Zongo, the marital process is marked by a series of formalised social interactions or 'rituals', in which marriage goods are exchanged, without which a marriage cannot be said to have taken place. I elaborate the significance of marriage goods as described by men. I draw out how these significances relate to accepted and valued notions of manhood and how the status and prestige of individual men is implied by them.

I have already argued that we needed to consider what is actually being expressed in accounts such as those provided by the men at Oakville Town Hall and the ways in which they reflect the reality of social life in Zongo. Accounts of what the marital process should and should not look like clearly represent only a partial view. Such accounts might operate as 'official scripts', sets of expectations and ideals, normative reference points for the kinds of beliefs and behaviours that are accepted or approved of. However, we must be cautious of assuming that they correspond to actual marital

practices. Indeed, I find significant differences between idealised discourses of marital pathways and what actually takes place in practice.

Having established the 'ideal' in Chapter Seven, Chapter Eight seeks to explain how and why actual marital practices correspond or deviate from idealised or normative accounts of the marital process. If the marital process is as difficult to negotiate as Abu and his friend's claim, we might expect a degree of divergence from official scripts. As we have already seen above, Mohammad's anger at his father's failure to provide *sadaki* indicates how a marital pathway is contingent upon relationships with others. I show how marital processes involve complex relationships between multiple stakeholders, with diverse and sometimes competing ideals and interests, as well as varying degrees of influence, playing a part. Crucially, I show how and why public perceptions of a groom's status and worth are at stake in the exchange of marriage goods, and how such exchanges are perceived by others. I show how men seek to manage the performance and reception of the marital process and to enlist others in the co-production of positive social evaluations. With Goffman and DeCerteau in mind, I make the case for the marital process as a site of self-making.

Before I embark upon my analysis it is perhaps necessary to say a little more about Sabon Zongo and my experience of living there – where it is, how I arrived there, how the data was produced and how my interpretation of it has shaped my analysis.

Chapter Two: Walking in the Zongo

2.1 Locating Zongo

This Chapter has three objectives. First, to provide an introduction to Sabon Zongo, spatially locating and defining Sabon Zongo and what it means to the people who inhabit it; second, to situate my analysis within a specific social, spatial and historical context;[15] and third, to give an account of how I was located in Zongo, and the decisions I made during my research. This chapter owes a great deal to the work of Deborah Pellow (1985, 1999, 2002, 2007). It is Pellow's book '*Landlords and Lodgers'* (2002), which led me to Zongo, and is the source of much of the historical data which makes my own analysis possible. I provide a brief portrait of Zongo: where it is, what it looks like, and who lives there. I describe how Zongo's inhabitants locate themselves in – and navigate through – Zongo, highlighting the spatial designations that recall its particular history.

I draw heavily on Pellow's work to situate the contemporary cultural landscape of Zongo in its history as a place for 'strangers'. I elaborate the historical forces which have shaped Zongo's 'character' as a place apart from, but firmly rooted in, the regional development of Accra. I describe how the idea of Muslims as 'strangers', with limited land rights, has informed what it means to be both Muslim and Hausa in Accra, and how they have converged in what Pellow (2002) terms "*Zongwanci*" – a particular culture and character pertaining to Sabon Zongo's inhabitants. I then turn my attention to Sabon Zongo's Chieftaincy. I describe the formal structure of the Chieftaincy, the rights and responsibilities it entails, and the norms of reciprocity and exchange that underpin them.

I track formal political structures in contemporary Zongo back to its founding in the early 20th Century. I describe how the formal authority of the Chieftaincy has been foregrounded in the control over land and housing enjoyed by men from specific

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[15] I recognise that what constitutes context is inextricable from my reading of it. I have chosen to separate these two concerns for the sake of style and structure. In Sections 2.9 – 2.14 I discuss how I locate myself in this context and the particular sorts of social experience and relationships that have produced what constitutes the data for this thesis.

lineages. The title of Pellow's (2002) book "Landlords and Lodgers" alludes to the importance of these differential land rights and how they are brought to bear on social organisation. I draw out the importance of land rights to formal political hierarchies and how housing serves as political currency used to recruit followers and legitimate claims to authority. However, I also note an inherent fragility in this relationship, derived from the diverse mechanisms through which land and other forms of property are transferred. With the help of Pellow's (ibid) rich genealogical histories, I describe how the formal authority of the Chieftaincy has been reinforced through marital alliances between landholding lineages. I also describe how the Bako Chieftaincy has sought legitimacy from powerful external institutions.

Though Pellow's emphasis differs from my own, there are many aspects of her analysis that are relevant to this thesis. I draw the themes raised in this chapter together to discuss how Pellow's account of social-spatial organisation in Zongo informs my exploration of the questions raised in Chapter One. I ask, how might Pellow's landlord/lodger distinction inform my own account of male-male relations? What are the demands of my own analysis of manhoods in Zongo? How and why does Pellow's account leave them unfulfilled?

2.2 Origins of Zongo.

Mallam Bako was a Katsinawa[16] Muslim Hausa who had been resident in the congested Muslim enclave at Zongo Lane. In 1907, the Jamestown Mantse[17] Ababio awarded Mallam Bako custodianship of a swathe of land on Accra's western periphery. The area would become known as Sabon Zongo. He allocated plots of land to the men who were or would become his followers. By the second decade of the 20th Century, many of Mallam Bako's followers had relocated to Sabon Zongo. Each of the men brought with him his own family and followers, to whom Bako and his followers made further allocations of land as sub-custodians. (Pellow 1985, 2002, Rain et al 2011). Sabon Zongo is only about two miles from Zongo Lane, but at the time of its founding it was a rural setting. Over the last 100 or so years, Zongo has been absorbed into Accra's expanding urban landscape (Pellow 2002, Rain 2011). Sabon Zongo now lies

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[16]   From Katsina in Nigeria. 'Awa' is the suffix added to a place name to indicate origins.
[17] Mantse refers to the traditional ruler of the Ga.

nestled between two other neighbourhoods; Lartibiorkioshie and Abossey Okai. Accra's busy Ring Road skirts its Eastern edge, demarcating the formal boundary between Accra Central and Accra West within the larger administrative district of the Accra Metropolitan Area (Engstrom et al 2013). Together with Market Lane to the South, Oblogo Road to the North, and Eduardo Mondlane Road to the West, Zongo's boundaries form a crude rectangle (see Map 1).

Photograph 1. Harmattan Avenue with Abokin Ango Mosque in Background.

Map 1. Sabon Zongo, Accra Central and Western Periphery.
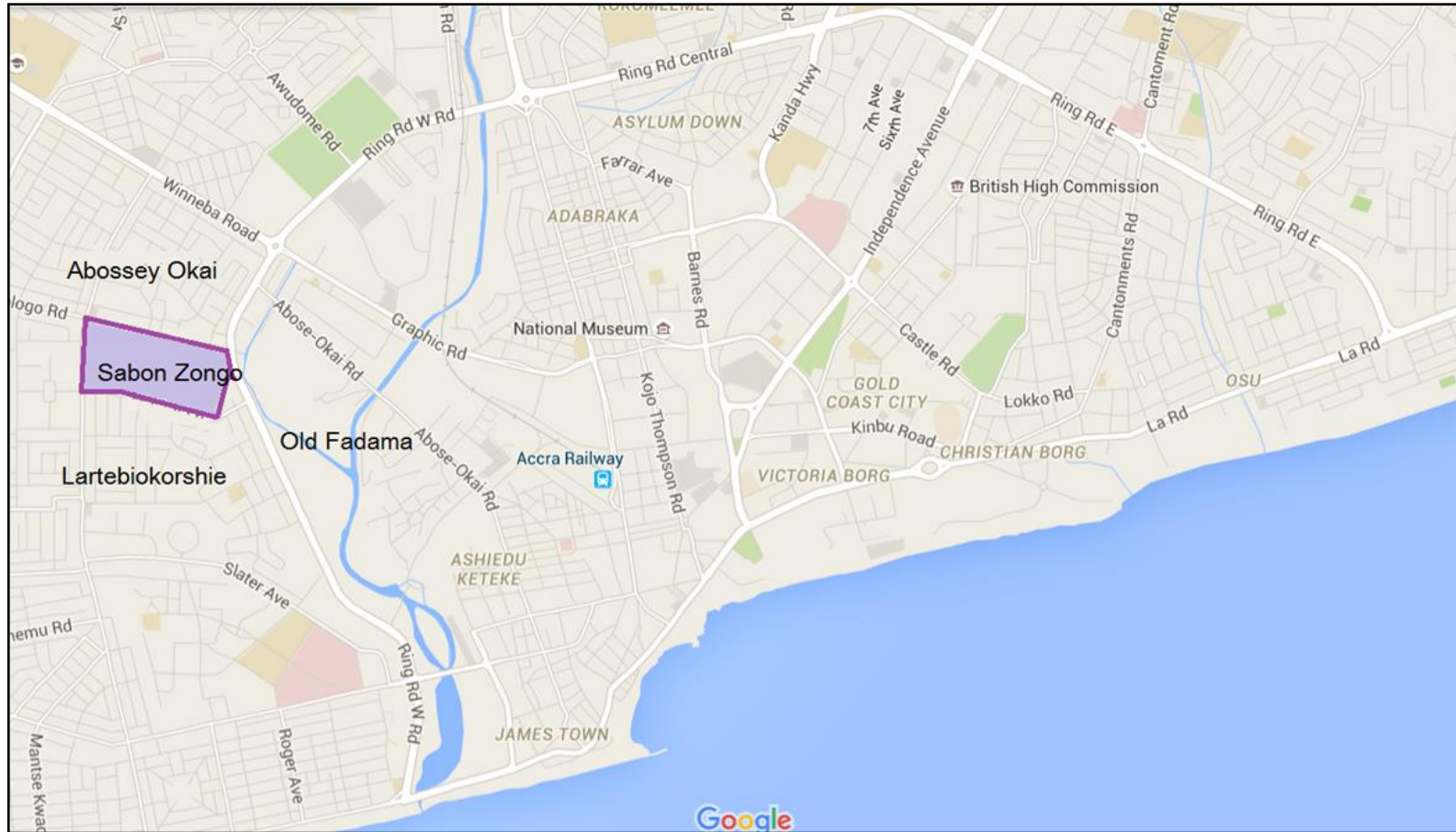
Adapted from Google Maps (2015a).

Zongo's Northern boundary is about 900 metres long, demarcated by Oblogo Road running East/West. Along the North/South axis, Harmattan Avenue runs about 500 metres through the middle of Zongo linking Oblogo Road to Market Lane; it is the only tarmacked road within Zongo's boundaries. Harmattan Road is thought of by many as Zongo's main road and is more commonly referred to as Mallam Bako Road within the neighbourhood. Another important road is Korle Bu Street which runs through the middle of Zongo roughly parallel to Oblogo Road. Sabon Zongo is subdivided into four areas, Kan Tudu, Gangare, Municipal and Ayigbetown, which converge at the intersection of Harmattan Avenue and Korle Bu Street at the Abokin *Ango* Mosque, also known as 'Dogoo Masalaci' meaning 'Tall Mosque' (see Map 2).

Under the influence of the British colonial administration, Zongo was initially designed around a gridded system of streets and avenues (Pellow 2002). Many of these roads have gradually grown narrower with the encroachment of buildings, leaving a network of passageways or 'lungu' only traversable on foot or motorbike. Harmattan Road and Korle Bu Street might be thought of as Zongo's main thoroughfares. However, most movement is "lungu lungu" – on foot via the haphazard alleyways that wind their way through Zongo.

2.3 Living Arrangements: Social-Spatial Organisation

When I first arrived in Sabon Zongo, I attempted to navigate using a map I had printed from Google Earth. There are no roads signs in Zongo, and when asking for directions, many people were baffled when I referred to Harmattan or Volta Avenue. Instead of road names, it is the history of Zongo, and the etching of that history upon spatial designations within its boundaries, which serve as the principle means of location. For example, in Kan Tudu people locate themselves relative to Gidan Mallam Bako, the compound built by Sabon Zongo's founder, or Abokin Ango Masalaci, the mosque built by Mallam Abokin Ango, who had followed Mallam Bako to Sabon Zongo from Zongo Lane. Within Gangare, different areas are denoted as Unguwa Kariki, where Ali Musa Kariki was first allocated land by Mallam Bako; Unguwa Zabarma, an area historically inhabited by those with Nigerien Zabarma ancestry; *Gaskiya*, where the now crumbling

concrete shell of what was once *Gaskiya* Cinema[18] can be found. In Municipal, people refer to Unguwa Makafi[19], an area set aside by Mallam Bako for blind people to build houses and still populated by a large number of blind people and their families. In Ayigbetown, people might refer to Chief's House, where the current Chief Yahaya lives; or Unguwa Kutare[20], where people with leprosy and polio once resided. During my time in Zongo, I lived in Kan Tudu, in a room about midway between Ankobra Avenue and Harmattan Avenue, but arrived at via a passageway on Market Lane.

Photograph 2. Korle Bu Street with Abokin Ango Mosque in background.

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[18]   Gaskiya Cinema had been built by an Akan man who had been leased land by the Bako's
[19]   Makafi literally means blind.
[20]   Kutare literally means leper.

Map. 2. Sabon Zongo and Selected Landmarks.
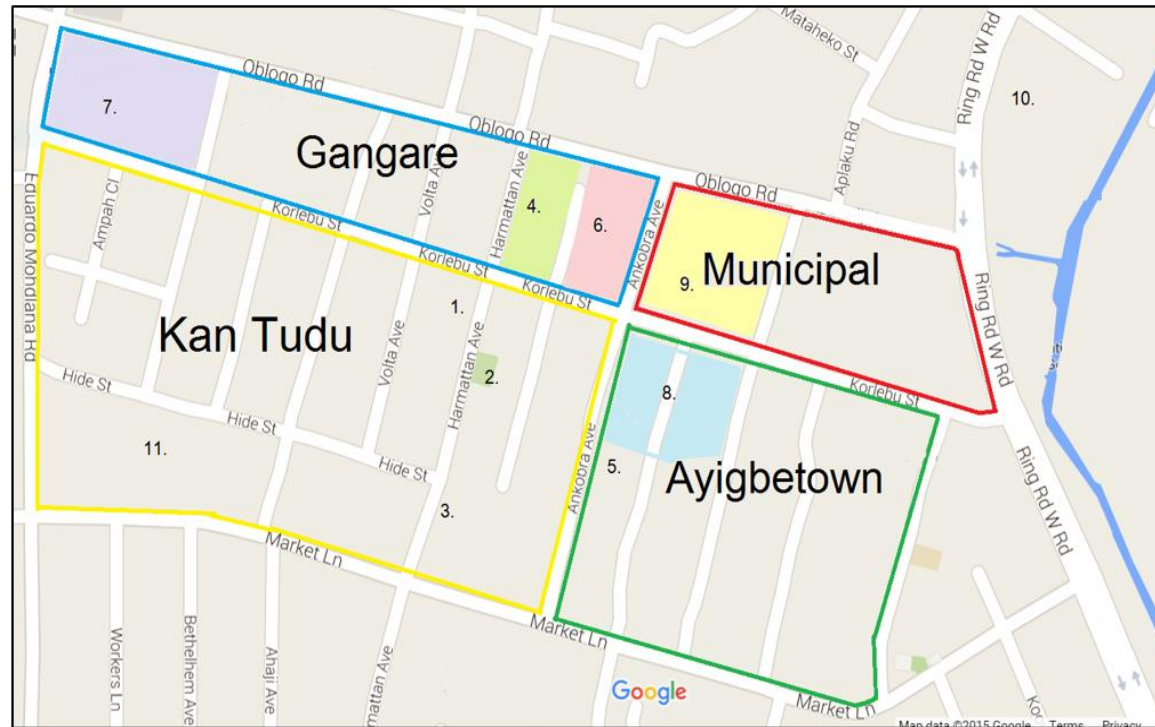
1.	Abokin Ango Mosque	5. Chief's House	9. Unguwa Makafi
2.	Night Market Square	6. Gaskiya	10. Accra Central Mosque
3.	Gidan Mallam Bako/Chief's Palace	7. Unguwa Zabrama	11. Da-Awatul Islamic Primary School
4.	Unguwa Kariki	8. Unguwa Kutare	

North

Adapted from Google Maps (2015b).

Photographs 3 and 4. 'Lungu'.

Zongo covers an area of approximately 0.3 square kilometres or 30 hectares (Pellow 1985, Owusu 2010, Engstrom 2013). Squeezed into this space are somewhere between 18,000 and 25,000 inhabitants[21]. There are clearly more people living in Zongo now than when its founders first settled the area, but in the absence of reliable data it is difficult to get an idea of how Zongo's population has changed, not least in terms of population density. This is not altogether surprising in that Zongo's origins are firmly grounded in the movements of migrants and traders who travelled the trade

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[21]   These figures represent the approximate upper and lower ends of sources which have ventured to be more specific. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS 2005), Sabon Zongo had 21,507 inhabitants in 2002. A more recent survey by the Accra Municipal Assembly gives the figure of 18,616 (AMA 2006). The 2010 census suggests a population approaching 25,000 (Engstrom et al 2013). Though this represents a significant margin of error, it is doubtful whether a more precise figure is achievable given the particularities of Zongo's demographic composition (see section 2.5 below) and the methodological challenges of collecting population data. The difficulties of defining who should and should not be counted, and the complex social factors which influence who actually ends up being counted, mean that population data for Accra is at best questionable (Grant 2006, Engstrom et al2013).

routes between Hausaland and pre-colonial Ghana (Schildkraut 1970, Peil 1974, Pellow 2002). Pellow (2002 p.115) described how during her time in Zongo there was a "continual flow of long-term temporary residents". This remains the case today. Many of Zongo's inhabitants come and go between various locations across West Africa, in particular between Zongo and the area historically referred to as Hausaland. People also go back and forth between Chad, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Libya, Brazil and Northern Europe, to name but a few of many well-furrowed paths. Some people spend just a few days in Zongo; others remain for months, or even years. Amongst the most itinerant are the beggars, traders and Mallamai who come and go between Zongo, Hausaland and other Hausa communities in West Africa, staying for longer or shorter periods of time and with varying degrees of regularity. Even Zongo's notionally more permanent inhabitants maintain links to disparate parts of West Africa. It is not unusual for men and women in Zongo to have a spouse or children elsewhere, sometimes in one of Accra's other Zongos, such as Nima, Madina or Kasoa, but also occasionally further afield, such as in Kano, Lome or Lagos. The combination of transience and transnational relations means that it is hard to decide who qualifies as resident in Zongo. Indeed, an important part of Zongo's identity for residents and non-residents alike is the idea of Zongo as a place for 'strangers'; a place for Muslim migrants whose cultural ancestry is elsewhere (Pellow 2002).

Alongside the paved roads that mark its periphery, the sense of crowdedness and distinctive architecture make it easy to discern where Zongo ends and adjacent neighbourhoods begin. Unlike Lartibiorkioshie and Abossey Okai, there are few multi-story buildings in Zongo. Most buildings are constructed from a variable combination of cement blocks, wood and corrugated metal sheeting. Those who can afford it live in concrete block constructions with shuttered windows and metal roofs. At the other extreme, the poorest quality dwellings are made of little more than a few planks of scavenged wood precariously balanced against the side of an adjacent more robust building.

Photograph 5. Street in Kan Tudu. Some of Zongo's larger streets have cement guttering to carry waste water away, but these are often blocked with refuse such that they are prone to flooding. On other streets, channels have been cut in the mud or else waste water simply runs through the street[22].

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[22]   Poor sanitation is only one of a number of challenges faced by people in Zongo, but perhaps that which has gained the most attention from outside observers. Songsore (2009 p.75) describes Sabon Zongo as being one of the most "environmentally deprived communities" in Greater Accra. Out of 91 communities, Zongo was categorised as one of twelve in which the environmental health context was categorised as "absolute deprivation". This is echoed by Owusu (2010), who argues that Sabon Zongo lags behind the rest of Accra in terms of the development of basic sanitation services and infrastructure.

Few would dispute that Sabon Zongo is incredibly crowded when compared to other residential areas of Accra[23]. This is most apparent around the time of the Al-Maghreb, or sunset prayer. At this time, Zongo's main thoroughfares swell with people performing their ablutions, taking their evening meal, shopping, socialising and making their way to and from mosque. Zongo's main streets are far quieter during the day. The locus of activity shifts away from the main streets and into the maze of alleys and courtyards where shade can be found to work, rest or pray. It took me some time to adapt to this routine. However, the sense of over-crowdedness is perhaps most evident in the density of living spaces.

Photograph 6. Photo taken from the interior courtyard of a more affluent compound facing two separate dwellings.

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[23]   Based on figures from the Accra Municipal Authority, Owusu (2010) calculates average population density at 141 and 620 persons per hectare (0.01 km2) for the Accra Metropolitan Area and Sabon Zongo respectively. A later report (AMA 2010) identified Sabon Zongo as being one of 15 communities, (of the 79 that make up the Accra Metropolitan Area), with a population density in excess of 300 persons per hectare (30,000 per km 2), with an average of 74 persons per hectare (7,400 persons per km2) for the Metropolitan area as a whole.

When Mallam Bako and his followers established Sabon Zongo, they built compounds reminiscent of those that might be found in Hausaland where 'respectable' femininities have often been associated with confinement to the domestic space. '*Auren kulle*' – marriage of seclusion – has increasingly become the ideal in Northern Nigeria. Contact between women and non-kin men is precluded by women's confinement to the compound. Even when auren kulle is not practiced, relations between men and women are framed by norms of avoidance. Such avoidance was demarcated in the internal structure of the compound with clearly defined spaces for married and unmarried men, and women. Rooms were built around a central courtyard with a single entrance via a '*zaure*' or entrance chamber. Though married men slept in the compound, their domain was that of the *zaure*, or else the street. The courtyard was principally the domain of women who ran small businesses and undertook their domestic tasks. The *zaure* served as an intermediary space between the compound and the 'public' domain, where compound men could interact with other men whilst preserving the sanctity of the notionally feminine compound interior[24].

There is no longer room to build such compounds. Though I am unable to determine the trajectory of population growth with any certainty, there is clearly great demand for living space[25]. A very small number of people have managed to build upwards, adding a second story to existing dwellings to accommodate expanding families and make room for tenants. Sometimes additional rooms have been built onto exterior walls or within the compound courtyard. However, seemingly intractable disputes over land rights, lack of space and resources means that Zongo's residents tend to create new living spaces by dividing existing rooms into ever smaller spaces. Many of the original compounds, and the rooms and courtyards that comprised them, have been partitioned, and new entrances and passageways added. Courtyards have contracted; the *zaure* has disappeared; living spaces have become incredibly small and congested[26].

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[24]   See Schildkrout (1982), Callaway (1984), Robson (2000, 2006), Kudoadzi (2014).
[25]   We cannot entirely discount the effects of demand for non-residential property. A number of my informants had partitioned rooms to create shops or store rooms.
[26]   Pellow (2002) has documented this process in great detail.

Photograph 7. Exterior Dwelling. Structures are often added to the exterior wall of a larger compound which may be used as living space or for commercial activities. (Courtesy Helen Morrissey).

Photograph 8. Dwelling Constructed in Compound Courtyard.

Though seclusion and avoidance remain an ideal, this pattern of residential development has had far-reaching consequences for gender relations and their spatial manifestations, thrusting what would once have been contained within the boundaries of the compound into the public domain. Perhaps the most obvious indicator of these changes is the disappearance of auren kulle[27], the demise of which is lamented by many of Zongo's inhabitants, both male and female. An important point to draw out here is that in the absence of private space, it has become more difficult for men to evade the public gaze, with the effect that their behaviour becomes subject to greater scrutiny that it might have been previously.

Though still dominated by women, compound courtyards are no longer the sole preserve of women from specific kinship units, but shared spaces in which men and women from different households intermingle. A degree of gender segregation is preserved by going about some activities at different times of day. Before the sun has risen, when men are yet to rise, women queue with their towels at Zongo's public showers and toilets; the men take their turn once the women have begun their daily chores. Nevertheless, many activities such as cooking, eating and clothes washing, which once took place within the privacy of the family compound, now take place in shared courtyards or else the street. This is not to say that men and women interact freely. It is ill-thought of for married women to spend unaccompanied or unobserved time with men other than their husbands, even their husband's kinsmen. For example, one of my neighbours used to regularly take food to her husband's father, but the two of them would never be left alone in the room. Similarly, women who sell food from a compound courtyard do so in groups. My own contact with women was similarly curtailed. Whilst I was able to meet and talk with men one-to-one, my conversations with women were nearly always in public, under the watchful eye of someone else, or otherwise in secret. The exception was elderly (post-menopausal) women, whose interactions with men are less restricted[28].

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[27]   A number of Pellow's (2002) older informants recalled how auren kulle had been prevalent in Zongo's earliest days. During my time in Zongo I met only one woman who had experienced auren kulle, and this had been more than forty years ago when living in Kano with her now divorced husband.

[28]   Norms concerning interactions between men and women have been extensively described and discussed elsewhere in Hausaland. See for example, Pittin (1984), Robson (2000).

Photograph 9. Wooden Dwelling. Washing hangs outside a wooden room constructed in a shared courtyard.

Married men still sleep in their wives' rooms, but in the absence of a *zaure*, the street has become the principle venue of male-male social interaction. Though I was often invited into people's houses, I was seldom allowed to see inside the bedroom, which remains the most personal and intimate space of a man's wife. Even a husband's access to a bedroom is limited, and a wife will likely complain about a husband who lingers there too long. Bearing in mind that many people do not have the luxury of a two room dwelling, spaces such as Oakville Town Hall can be seen to take on a function equivalent to that of the *zaure*. I came to know many of my informants by hanging out at 'bases' – homosocial spaces where men would frequently gather. A barbershop, video centre or any other predominantly male business might also operate as a base for the owner and his friends. However, bases are ordinarily established in notionally public spaces, such as a derelict or partially constructed building, outside a mosque or under a tree.

Many bases are well established and maintained. Some bases, such as Oakville Town Hall, are decorated with posters, and are furnished with plastic chairs, a stove to

prepare tea on and a television set. Many bases have relatively formal identities, which are embodied in names and mottos. However, the basic criteria for a base is a patch of shade and something to sit on.

When I first arrived in Zongo, I found it difficult to discern the boundaries between public and private space. I spent much of my time wandering Zongo's main streets where my presence was most obviously acceptable. Though driven by uncertainty rather than calculation, this was not an entirely unfruitful strategy. I got to know many people in Zongo when buying my breakfast or through conversations with the curious who wanted to know what I was doing sitting on the roadside. However, the kinds of encounters that take place on Zongo's main streets do not lend themselves to getting to know people. Most people on these streets are busy moving from A to B or purchasing goods to take elsewhere. Eventually I grew a little bolder and started to explore the lungos and courtyards, where a much wider variety of activities take place. Unable to differentiate between public thoroughfare and private courtyard meant I often found myself in places I shouldn't have been. Of course, boundaries of any sort are often only noticeable when they are broken. I was obviously a stranger by virtue of my skin tone and general appearance of bafflement. When I intruded on private space people generally assumed I was lost, forgave me my *faux pas,* and politely corrected me hough there were occasions when my transgressions rubbed someone up the wrong way or I found myself caught up in a disagreement.

Photograph 10. 'Base'. Young men watch television at one of Zongo's many 'bases'.

The absence of alternative living space means that many men pass large parts of the day at one base or another. However, this is also a function of norms concerning the gendered division of labour. As a man without 'outside' work, I was expected to do the same; and accordingly, I did so. In Chapters Four, Five and Six we will see how ideals and expectations concerning the division of labour are central to the realisation of accepted and valued masculinity in Zongo. For the time being, it is enough to say that women are expected to direct their labour towards reproductive activities within the household, such as cooking, cleaning and raising of children. In contrast, men are expected to generate the income needed to provide for dependent wives and children. As we shall see later, realities seldom reflect this dualism[29]. Under- and unemployment and an associated lack of income are pervasive problems for men in Zongo such that this expectation is not always easily realised.

2.4 Making Ends Meet

Many of my informants stressed that it was better to engage in a range of income generating activities rather than rely on a single occupation or source of income[30]. This is reflected in men often engaging in a range of occupations. For example, one of my informants worked as a scrap metal collector and occasionally as a plasterer when such work was available. Another worked at a plastic bag factory by day, and as a Koranic teacher at weekends. Amongst the most common jobs which might make up these permutations were motorbike taxi driver, mechanic, electrician, security guard, cleaner, carpenter, medicine seller, tailor, butcher, Mallam, Koranic teacher, musician or praise singer, nail cutter, beggar and various kinds of manual labourer and factory worker. There were also men who made money from livestock keeping, money changing or lending and mobile phone repairs. Others operated or worked at video centres, clothes shops or travel agents.

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[29]   Not least in the fact that though notionally the dependants of their husbands and fathers, lots of women have their own sources of income. For example, many women prepare and sell food. Others operate kiosks where they sell items such as sachets of drinking water, soap, snacks, cosmetics and other household goods. A number of women import electronic goods from Togo or cloth from Nigeria.

[30]   This is exemplified in the popular adage *'gida biyu maganin gobara'* – literally, two houses is the medicine for fire – which broadly equates to 'don't put all your eggs in one basket'.

Photograph 11. Livestock. Livestock keeping is one of several income generating activities engaged in by men in Zongo. Men with only a few livestock will often pay shepherds or men with larger herds to look after them.

Some men have inherited housing and make money by renting it out to tenants. Others have turned access to a water pipe into income, by selling water or charging for use of a toilet or shower[31]. As we shall see in Chapters Five and Six, pre- and post-mortem inheritance of housing and other kinds intergenerational transfers are extremely important for men, particularly those with precarious livelihoods. Senior men are expected to assist their juniors. It is ill-thought of to decline a man food, especially one's kinsmen. Many of my informants had low if not precarious personal incomes and relied upon wealthier others to meet their daily needs. Many of my own relationships in Zongo were subject to the same expectation. When someone from the base went to fetch bread or tea I was expected to pay for it. If I went to eat at a chop bar I would invariably be accompanied by one of my informants whose food I would pay for. Conversely, when I spent time with an elder or other senior man we would eat from the same bowl and he would settle the bill. Zongo-specific income data is patchy if not

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[31]   The standard charge for a bucket of water was 10 pesewas. Use of a shower was 50 pesewas. Use of a toilet for defecation was 20 pesewas. There was normally no charge for urination or for a small pot of water to perform ablutions. At the time of fieldwork, 20 Pesewas was approximately 0.05 dollars (www.oanda.com 2015).

unreliable[32], but it is safe to say that within the context of Accra, many of Sabon Zongo's inhabitants struggle to make ends meet. As was touched upon in the previous chapter, the precariousness of men's incomes has consequences for the marital process. In the following chapter I discuss this further in light of a literature which has drawn attention to the impact of large scale social change on the achievement of marriage. In Chapters Seven and Eight I return to this theme in the context of the marital process and men's efforts to secure the resources necessary for a successful marriage.

2.5 Islam in Zongo

Photograph 12. Tafseer outside Abokin Ango Mosque.

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[32]   According to AMA data, Accra's mean household income is US$ 8.86 per day. Sabon Zongo is grouped with Nima and Korle Gonno as the lowest income neighbourhoods with an average household income of US$ 3.5 per day (AMA/CHF International 2010). Based on the exchange rate of approximately $1 US to 4 GHS at the time of fieldwork (Oanda.com 2015), in Zongo a kilo of rice cost approximately $3.50/14 GHS, a standard meal of *tuwo* and stew purchased from a street vendor cost about $1/4GHS perhaps 1 or 2 GHS more if served with meat.

As is the case in other Zongos, Islam pervades every aspect of social life in Zongo. The majority of Muslims in Zongo identify as followers of Tijjaniyah Islam, though there are also some followers of Ahli-Sunnah[33], which is particularly popular amongst more recent migrants from Niger. Followers of Ahli-Sunna often talk disparagingly of Tijjaniyah, claiming that the Tijjaniyah is a corruption of Islam as evident in their obsession with spirits and sorcery, materialist orientation, idolatry and enthusiasm for elaborate *Mawlid*[34] celebrations. Conversely, those who follow the Tijjaniyah tend to regard Ahli-Sunnah as a somewhat austere and oppressive version of Islam prone to literal and overly legalistic interpretations of scripture, and neglectful of spiritual experience. Though Alhi-Sunnah has risen to prominence in large parts of Hausaphone West-Africa[35], it exerts little influence on Zongo's religious landscape. There are a handful of mosques and makarantas which are seen as more closely associated with Alhi-Sunna, but they represent a small proportion of Zongo's many Islamic institutions. People forge friendships and business relationships, and even marry, with little regard for sectarian differences.

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[33]   Ahli Sunnah is associated with the reformist movement of Salafist Islam, which emphasises a jurisprudential interpretation of the Quran, Hadith and Sunna as a means to 'purify' Islam of external influences. In contrast, the Tijjaniyah movement is associated with Sufism and is characterised by an ethos of flexibility into which a range of beliefs, 'traditions' and interests can be accommodated (Paden 1973, Hiskett 1984, Samwini 2006, Dumbe 2013).

[34]   *Mawlid* is the celebration of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday, but *Mawlid* are also held for important Muslim figures such as Sheik Ibrahim Nyass (1900-75) who is widely regarded as the spiritual leader of the Tijjaniyah movement in Ghana (Dumbe 2013), and the present National Chief Imam of Ghana, Sheik Osman Nuhu Sharabutu.

[35]   See Last (2005) and Masquelier2009).

Photograph 13. Mural of Sheik Ibrahim Nyass (1900-1975), an important figure in the Tijjaniyah movement.

Though Islam in West Africa is characterised by syncretism[36], there are many parallels between the practice of Islam in Sabon Zongo and other Muslim societies, not least the five daily prayers or '*sallah*'. As mentioned in Chapter One, prayer is a normative obligation from which men seldom deviate. Though prayer may be conducted in private, people often pray together. Alongside Zongo's dozens of mosques, there are many spaces for people to gather together and pray. Most compounds will have an area set aside for prayer, demarcated by prayer mats and the plastic tea pots used to perform ablutions[37]. Zongo's many 'makaranta' – or Islamic schools – double up as mosques or places to celebrate Muslim festivals such as *Mawlid* or attend *Tafseer*. Prayer is clearly a potent norm, and one embedded in the very social fabric of Zongo. It exerts a considerable influence on the temporal, spatial and moral order of social life in Zongo. Meal times, bedtimes and the working day are all oriented towards adherence to this normative obligation. During my fieldwork in Zongo, it often felt like the only indicators of the passage of time were the five daily prayers and the airing of certain television shows.

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[36]   See Last (1976, 1981), hiskett (1984, 1994), Dumbe (2013), James (2014).
[37]   Zongo's few Christian residents do not have to go far to find a place to worship. Though there are no churches within Zongo itself, there are many churches nearby in Lartibiorkioshie and Abossey Okai.

A notion of Islam is clearly important to social life in Zongo. However, the role of Islam is perhaps most important to my analysis as a discourse through which moralities are articulated and social evaluations are made. I began this thesis with reference to Kirk-Greene's (1974) essay '*Mutumin Kirkii,* The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa'. Kirk-Greene described how for the Hausa, *kirki* or 'goodness' is a moral concept inextricably bound to Islam. He described how a man must demonstrate '*karamci*' (generosity), '*hakuri*' (patience), '*kunya*' (humility), '*girma*' (respect), '*gaskiya*' (truth) and '*amana*' (trust), if he is to be considered a man of moral standing. For the Hausa, it is these characteristics which give expression to '*adali*' – fear of God – as the overarching and indispensable foundation of moral virtue (Kirk-Greene 1974). As this thesis progresses we will see how men in Zongo are socially evaluated on the basis of a similar set of criteria. However, I am less concerned with defining Islam in Zongo than with how moral discourses are put to work in processes of social evaluation. My focus is not on Islam as doctrine, as a set of rigid moral principles, but how people might make use of discourses of Islam to frame their behaviours and the behaviours of others in moral terms, and the social evaluations that arise from doing so. This theme will be revisited throughout this thesis as I explore manhood as a social and moral status. However, before embarking on this endeavour it is necessary to briefly discuss how the practice of Islam informs Sabon Zongo's relationship with the wider Accra. Important here are the ways that Islam permeates notions of ethnic identity, specifically an idea of '*hausaness*', or '*gargajin bahaushe*'[38] that many of Sabon Zongo's inhabitants claim sets them apart from Accra's other Zongo communities.

2.6 '*Zongwanci*': The Convergence of Islam and Hausa

"*The Zongo Community in Kumasi are angry over growing xenophobia and ethnic discrimination after a leading member of the community was denied a passport because of his ethnic identity and origin. The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) was said to have argued that, there is nothing called Hausa tribe in Ghana and therefore anybody who has his/her ethnic origin outside Ghana is not a Ghanaian. "Being in Ghana for more than 300 years does not make you a Ghanaian".*

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[38] Gargajin bahaushe literally translates as 'traditional Hausa', but implies something akin to 'true' Hausaness.

This came to light at a well attended press conference in Kumasi by the Zongo Community calling on the government to clarify the position of members of their tribe in Ghana. The Chairman of the Zongo Community in Kumasi, Alhaji S. M. Shariff, told a press conference that they are dreading the ongoing consequences of this year's voter's registration exercise, as they fear a problem of citizenship and identity, which they experienced during the population census exercise in 2010, will re-occur again".

Modernghana.com 28th March 2012.

"*In contradistinction to the majority of the city, which is predominantly Christian, Western in orientation and outward-looking, the Muslim communities are insular and inward-looking and represent a kind of ghettoization that occurred both by accident and by design and produced the third-class or slum-class Zongo*".

(Pellow 2002 p38).

"In Kano when I was small small boy my grandmother she would call. Come come today we have shinkafa [rice]. *Oh how we jump. Running and jumping to the house. You see in Kano we have rice, but it is not the cheap one like dawa* [guinea corn]. *Dawa is the normal food there. Me I like shinkafa more than any foods. That is why I chop shinkafa. But in Zongo the normal one is dawa. That one is our food. The Hausa food."*

Interview with Alhaji Musa (Sabon Zongo, Accra, October 2012)[39].

There is a popular caricature of Accra's Zongos as 'bounded communities' - peculiar islands of Muslim insularity and exclusiveness running against the grain of an increasingly cosmopolitan Accra. However, my feeling is that such notions are mistaken in being based on a set of problematic assumptions as to what an outward orientation should look like. There is an element of truth to the claim that many of the ostensibly 'western' influences which have come to shape the cultural landscape of Accra do not seem to have penetrated Sabon Zongo in quite the same way as many

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[39] Alhaji Musa is now in his forties and lives in the Unguwa Kariki neighbourhood of Sabon Zongo. Alhaji Musa was born in Sabon Zongo, but when he was around six years old his father sent him to live with his widowed grandmother in Kano, Nigeria to learn Arabic and study the Quran. Children sent away from the parental home to study Islam are are known as 'almajirai'. I am told by my informants in Sabon Zongo that this practice is less common now. Nevertheless, there remains a belief that Islamic knowledge is best sought outside Ghana, preferably in Northern Nigeria where Muslim scholars and teachers are said to be amongst the most knowledgable.

other neighbourhoods[40]. However, to elide cosmopolitanism with westernisation is problematic on many levels, not least in that it fails to capture the dynamics of cultural consumption as productive processes of transformation involving synthesis, appropriation and representation (see Hannerz 1996, Weiss 2009).

Throughout this thesis I will provide many examples of how Zongo's inhabitants actively make use of cultural artefacts to (re)produce and represent themselves and others in specific ways. However, the focus of this section is on how the inhabitants of Sabon Zongo draw upon cultural reference points that transcend the boundaries of Accra, even Ghana, giving rise to a distinctive 'local' identity and character, expressed in Sabon Zongo vernacular as "*zongwanci*" and elaborated by Deborah Pellow in her book '*Landlords and Lodgers*' (2002). As will become clear in this chapter, Zongwanci emerges from ideas about what being Muslim and Hausa in urban Accra means for people living in Sabon Zongo.

Accra is Ghana's largest and arguably most cosmopolitan city, where cultural flows collide, fragment and intersect, giving birth to a shifting bricolage of social and cultural frames through which people might come to view and make sense of themselves and others, forge ideals and aspirations and go about their everyday lives (Langevang 2008, Quayson 2014). This can be seen in the ways that Maid in Manhattan serves as lens through which Abu and his friends interpret and articulate their own social realities. However, the 'West' is but one of a number of 'imagined communities' whose presence can be felt in Sabon Zongo's cultural landscape. Perhaps most significant are social and cultural affinities with the parts of Northern Nigeria and Southern Niger historically referred to as Hausaland, such as those expressed in the quote from my informant Alhaji Musa above.

Sabon Zongo may be distinctive from other neighbourhoods in Accra, including other Zongos, but it is certainly not isolated or inward looking. Indeed, that Alhaji Musa's account of his dietary preferences is framed in terms of his memories of a childhood spent in Northern Nigeria alludes to a 'deterritorialised' identity, in which 'imaginings' of place may be as significant to social identities as geographical proximity (Appadurai 1988). It is not within the scope of this thesis to discuss how and why a notion of

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[40] See for example Quayson's (2014) study of the ways in which 'transnationalism' and 'globalisation' have shaped the upmarket neighbourhood of Osu.

Hausaness has become so central to identities and relationships in Sabon Zongo in detail. However, it is necessary to say something about the legacy of the Hausa presence in Ghana and why ideas about what it means to be Hausa in Sabon Zongo remain an important backdrop in my efforts to make sense of the marital practices explored in the chapters to follow.

The Hausa in Precolonial Ghana.

There has long been a significant Hausa presence in Ghana. Long before the emergence of the modern nation state, Accra's establishment as colonial capital and the arrival of Europeans, trade routes had been established by Hausa merchants across West Africa and beyond, linking precolonial centres of commerce, political and military power, such as Yendi (Eades 1993 p.25), Tamale (MacGaffey 2009), the Asante Kingdom (Abaka 2009), and the Habe States, which would later merge to become the Sokoto Caliphate under the rule of Usman dan Fodio (Last 1977, Lovejoy 1971, 1980). For example, MacGaffey (2009) describes how Hausa traders came to dominate the iron trade and blacksmithing in Tamale through monopoly of trade routes linking the pre-colonial Dagbon kingdom, the Hausa States and iron-working region of Bassar in what is now Togo. The Hausa also operated many of the markets and staging posts pivotal to the slave trade, moving people, kola and currency between the Northern Sahel and Southern coastal regions of West Africa (Lovejoy 1980, Perbi 1992, Austin 2005, Agamba 2006, Samwini 2006).

Hausa control over trade routes helped to established the economic power of Hausa traders and migrants, but also enabled the movement of Muslim scholars and teachers from Hausaland throughout the region. On the back of their mercantile power, the Hausa came to occupy positions of authority and influence within both migrant trading communities and religious institutions. Though in many, if not most, majority Muslim areas the Hausa constituted a minority, Hausa men were amongst the most respected and influential Imams, often holding positions of formal religious authority (Lovejoy 1971, 1980, Eades 1993, Pellow 2002, Samwini 2006, Soeters 2012). Indeed, Samwini (2006) describes how the social and economic power of Hausa merchants and traders during the 18th Century enabled the rise to prominence of a Hausa variant of Islam that eventually led to the demise of Wangara Islam with roots in Timbuktu, which had previously dominated the region.

Many Hausa Imams were literate in Arabic, assumed to have a sophisticated understanding of the Quran and speak from a position of religious authority and so were treated with a degree of reverence (Trimingham 1975). In predominantly non-Muslim areas Hausa men were often appointed as Chief Imams or 'Headmen' of Muslims (Schildkraut 1978, Lovejoy 1981, Pellow 2002). A pattern that to some extent continues today as we shall see below. Under the weight of this influence Islam took on a markedly Hausa flavour (Eades 1993, Samwini 2006, Bierlich 2007). This perhaps explains the association of the Hausa language with Islam in Ghana. Indeed, as Lentz (2006) notes, Hausa has become ubiquitous as a second language and long been a marker of learnedness, prestige and power amongst Muslims in Ghana.

As can be seen in Lovejoy's (1980) examination of the 18th and 19th Century kola trade, the trade routes established by the Hausa across West Africa fostered an enduring Hausa influence in Northern Ghana. Alongside elements of religious practice, and language, music, dress and architecture were amongst the social exports brought to Ghana by migrant Hausa (Adamu 1978). Prussin (1969) describes how the Hausa have had a significant influence on architecture in the region as local elites adopted Hausa building styles which had become associated with social, economic and political prosperity[41]. Bierlich's (2007) account of health and healing amongst the Dagomba of Northern Ghana, shows the indelible mark of Hausa influence, with many medical terms articulated in the Hausa language and a demonstrable resemblance to healing cultures in Hausaland[42].

Those who have examined notions of Hausa culture and identity and their historical movements across West Africa have described processes of both expansion and absorption. As Hausa people have migrated they have not simply brought their culture with them, but rather have brought forth a process of amalgamation in which diverse peoples and practices are absorbed into an expanding notion of Hausa identity and culture given expression through the practice of Islam (Adamu 1978, Sutton 1979, Jaggar 2010, Rossi and Haour 2010). However, whilst cultural flows work both ways, the combined forces of economic and religious power helped foster a pervasive Hausa

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[41] See also Schwerdtfeger (2007) and DeLancey's (2016) accounts of Hausa influence on architecture in West Africa.

[42] This can be seen in a comparative reading of Bierlich's (2007) study in Dagombaland and Wall's (1988) medical anthropological work in Northern Nigeria. For example, in the moral connotations of the Hausa language term for wealth 'arziki' (Bierlich 2007 p.140, Wall 1988 p.39).

influence on the social, cultural and political landscape of what would later become Northern Ghana and Muslim communities in Ghana's southern regions. The influence of the Hausa have been particularly prominent in shaping religious institutions and practices in Ghana and so it is perhaps not surprising that that many ostensibly Islamic practices bear a resemblance to those that would be found in Hausaland (Adamu 1978, Hiskett 1984, 1994, Samwini 2006).

The Hausa in Accra

Islam has been present on West Africa's coast for hundreds of years, long before a cluster of Ga speaking villages began to coalesce to form Accra, and certainly prior to 1877, when the city became the capital of the British Gold Coast colonies (Lovejoy 1971, Grant and Yankson 2003, Pellow 2002, Skinner 2009). As in other parts of Ghana, the Hausa had been particularly influential amongst Muslims in coastal regions, due to their prominence within the slave and kola trades (Lovejoy 1971, 1980).

With the arrival of Europeans, the influence of the Hausa was to some extent reinforced. Following the coming of the British and conquest of Asante in the late 19th Century, the Muslim presence in the South grew. An increasing number of traders from the North sought to establish themselves in southern towns such as Kumasi, Nkawkaw and Koforidua, but also in the coastal trading centres of Cape Coast, Sekondi and eventually Accra. The prosperity of coastal regions also attracted migrant labourers from the Muslim Sahel. They were joined by members of the Gold Coast Constabulary, a militia formed by the British amongst which the Hausa were particularly numerous and Hausa served as the lingua franca (Lovejoy 1971, Adamu 1978, Schildkraut 1978, Pellow 2002, Soeters 2012).

Whilst it certainly wasn't only the Hausa who migrated to the South, indeed they were a minority amongst other Muslims groups, their influence endured. The British made use of pre-colonial institutions in an effort to establish a colonial administration, including those which had accorded the Hausa status within religious institutions. In areas, such as Kumasi and Accra the positions of Chief Imam and Muslim headmen, traditionally occupied by Hausa men were formalised and incorporated into colonial administrative structures (Schildkraut 1978, Pellow 2002). In Accra as in many southern towns, the Hausa retained their influence within the Muslim community

through their dominance of religious institutions, close economic and political ties with the British, and prominence within the Gold Coast Constabulary. As a consequence of this political dominance, within the context of Accra, a sense of ethnic identity was developed and sustained amongst Muslims which subsumed multifarious ethnic affiliations, social and cultural practices under the rubric of Hausa, such that the terms Muslim, migrant and Hausa have often been seen as synonymous (Peil 1971, Kropp-Dakubu 1997, Pellow 2002).

The social and cultural influence of the Hausa, in particular their dominance of religious institutions might go some way towards explaining similarities in marital practices amongst Muslims in Accra. For example, it is worth noting that in Northern Ghana Dagomba marriages are seldom accompanied by substantial prestationary payments (Goody and Tambiah 1973, Bierlich 2007). However, where marriages occur between Hausa and Dagomba in Sabon Zongo the marital process appear to conform to the same prestationary principles as those where both husband and wife are Hausa. Indeed, according to my informants in Sabon Zongo, intermarriage between Muslim ethnic groups was generally unproblematic because they followed broadly similar marital practices and had similar ideals as to what conjugality contract ought to involve.

Sabon Zongo is a Hausa term which translates as 'New Camp'. In Accra the term Zongo has come to mean a place for 'strangers'; more specifically predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods, such as Nima, Kotobabi, Mamobi and indeed Sabon Zongo[43]. The use of a Hausa language term to denote these areas not only alludes to the importance of Hausa cultural influence in Ghana and the tethering together of migrant, Muslim and Northern identities, but a particular relationship between Zongo inhabitants and the wider Accra.

Though there had for centuries been a significant Muslim presence in the area, Accra was founded on the territory of the predominantly non-Muslim Ga. Under the influence of the British colonial administration, differences between Muslim groups were downplayed whilst those between Muslims and non-Muslims were brought into relief. The colonial administration regarded the Ga, Fante and Akan speaking people of the South as 'natives', whilst Muslims remained 'migrants' or 'aliens' from the North (Peil

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[43] This usage is not limited to Accra. See for example Schildkraut's (1978) account of identity formation in Kumasi's Sabon Zongo.

1971, Pellow 2002, Kropp-Dakubu 1997). Even before the arrival of the British, Muslim migrants and traders had tended to settle in close proximity to one another on land allocated them by the Ga Stools. However, colonial planning initiatives served to reinforce a distinction between migrant and native communities and their spatial organisation. As was often the case in West African cities[44], particular areas of Accra were formally designated as 'strangers' quarters. Alongside other Muslims, Hausas were concentrated in these areas to be joined overtime by some of the 'local' population who had converted to Islam[45]. It is these areas that became known as 'Zongos' (Peil 1971, Kropp-Dakubu 1997, Pellow 2002, Agyei-Mensah and Owusu 2012).

Whilst not without its variations in practice, zongo inhabitants had Islam in common. A collective identity came to solidify around a distinction between Muslim 'migrants' and non-Muslim 'natives', played out spatially in the designation of Zongos as a place for 'strangers'. Within the context of this relationship, the term Hausa emerged as shorthand for an assortment social identities (Peil 1971 Ntewusu 2005, Quayson 2014).

However, as Quayson (2014) notes, each Zongo is demographically distinctive and ethnic affiliations and differences matter. The population of Accra's Zongos cannot be collapsed into a homogeneous whole. Although in the broader context of contemporary Accra the term Hausa has to some extent become divorced from its associations with Hausaland, the same cannot be said for Sabon Zongo. In Sabon Zongo, Hausaland remains an important presence in ideas about what it means to be Hausa, such that the term not only serves to articulate a relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, but mark Sabon Zongo as distinctive from other Zongos in Accra. In order to make sense of the particular connotations of the notion of Hausa in present day Sabon Zongo, it is necessary to revisit Accra during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries and the political cleavages which had emerged in Accra's central Zongos.

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[44] See Cohen (1969), Peil (1974), Smith (1997), Fourchard (2009), Agyei-Mensah and Owusu (2012).
[45] That 'bako' is the Hausa word for stranger, might lead one to wonder whether Mallam Bako and his father Nenu Bako's names are derived from their status. Though I am unable to find any source to corroborate the idea.

Being Hausa in Sabon Zongo

In the period preceding the establishment of Sabon Zongo, Accra's Hausa population had been concentrated in the predominantly Muslim but ethnically mixed Zongos at Zongo Lane, Okaishie and Horse Road (Pellow 1985, 1999, 2002, Hanretta 2011 Mumuni 2002, Skinner 2009). Under the weight of a growing population, Accra's original zongos became congested. Factions formed and rivalries developed as their leaders competed for power and influence. Tensions between Accra's Muslim inhabitants were often articulated through discourses of ethnic identity. For example, many non-Hausa Muslims resented Hausa dominance of religious institutions; not least the position of Chief Imam, which had long been occupied by Nigerian Hausa. One of the most important factions was led by Mallam Nenu and Mallam Garuba, two Hausa men who had migrated from Katsina in Northern Nigeria. They enjoyed considerable influence amongst Accra's Muslims, in particular those who identified as Nigerian Hausa (Pellow 2002). Mallam Nenu Bako was Chief Imam of Central Accra, and Mallam Garuba was his assistant (Odoom 1971, Pellow 2002). When Nenu died, Mallam Garuba became Chief Imam and Mallam Bako, Nenu's son, his assistant. Mallam Bako and Mallam Garuba had been keen to leave Accra's overcrowded Zongo Lane, to escape the rivalries and infighting. They sought to establish a community of Hausa in the image of Nigerian Hausaland, unpolluted by 'foreign' cultural influences (Pellow 2002). To some extent their ambitions were successful.

Though Sabon Zongo was at least initially dominated by Hausa migrants from Northern Nigeria (Pellow 2002), the population is more mixed in the present day. Based on data from the 2000 Ghanaian Population and Housing Census, Agyei-Mensah and Owusu (2010) described Zongo's ethnic composition as being 36.7% Akan, 13.8% Mole-Dagbon, 11.7% Ewe, 11.3% Ga and the remaining 26.4% as 'Other'. These figures would seem to support Pellow's (2002) suggestion that the proportion of Hausa residents has declined in Zongo as Muslims from Northern Ghana and elsewhere have taken up residence in the area. These observations immediately raise questions as to whether a notion of Hausa makes for a suitable backdrop to this study at all. Certainly Agyei-Mensah and Owusu's (ibid) figures made for uncomfortable reading when I first encountered them upon my return from fieldwork[46].

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[46]   I am for a number of reasons sceptical of Agyei-Mensah and Owusu's (2009) analysis. The purpose of their analysis was to investigate the extent of ethnic segregation in Accra. I

However, I would argue that their analysis has little bearing on my contention that this study is well-situated in the context of a wider literature concerned with the Hausa. As a means to make my argument, let me present the case of one of my informants, Issa.

During my initial relatively formal interview with Issa, he described himself as Hausa. However, as I got to know Issa during my fieldwork I learned that his ancestry was mixed. His maternal ancestry was in Northern Nigeria, but his paternal grandparents had been Dagomba from Northern Ghana. Issa explained that though neither he nor his father denied their Dagomba roots, they had always identified as Hausa because the lifestyle they lived as Muslims was closer to that of Hausa than Dagomba, who he claimed had not perfected a truly Islamic way of life. Given this complex narrative of ethnic affiliation, one would wonder how Issa might report his ethnic identity to somebody administering a census. Would he have been recorded as part of the 13.8% Mole-Dagbon or included in the 26.4% 'Other'?

The work of Schildkraut (1978) in Kumasi Zongo is insightful here. Schildkraut (1978) describes how disparate migrant groups have been incorporated into a common Zongo culture. According to Schildkraut first generation migrants, in particular Mossi migrants from Northern Ghana, became socially, economically and politically integrated into Zongo life by establishing ties of fictive kinship with Kumasi's Muslim elites. These affinities were gradually replaced by actual kinship ties fomented in marriage. Crucially, Schildkraut observes how many of the cultural practices that would have been familiar to Mossi society in Northern Ghana, including language, have receded into the background whilst Muslim Hausa ideals have come to predominate.

We have already seen how Sabon Zongo's founders sough to establish a 'Hausa' community in the image of Hausaland. As we shall see throughout this chapter, the social, economic and political power of Hausa men in Sabon Zongo has been grounded in their control over land. This perhaps explains the enduring hegemony of ostensibly Hausa ideals in Sabon Zongo, despite the existence of disparate ethnic identities.

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would argue that implicit to Agyei-Mensah and Owusu's (ibid) study is an essentialist idea of ethnic identity as singular – as being an inherent and fixed property of the individual.

The key point here is that expressions of ethnic identity and the social and cultural practices which come to be associated with them play out in the context of local hierarchies. Consequently, we need to be careful about what we infer from statements of personal identity. As discussed in Chapter One, the things that people say and do are informed by the exigencies of the particular social situation in which they find themselves (Goffman 1956, 1974, 1980). An individual may find cause to adopt, negate, emphasise or downplay different identities.

Quite apart from Hausa, Sabon Zongo's inhabitants can be seen to (re)produce a range of ethnic identities including Fulani, Ewe, Ga, Dagomba, Zabarma, Asante and others. My own data suggests that the proportion of people in Sabon Zongo who would claim an exclusively Nigerien or Nigerian Hausa ancestry is indeed relatively small, *but* there are very few people who do not in some way identify with a notion of Hausa; including the many inhabitants who trace ancestry to Northern Ghana, where historical ties to Hausaland and the presence of a large and influential Hausa population have shaped the cultural landscape, in particular the practice of Islam.

As an ethnic identity, being 'Hausa' is not only socially constructed but also performative, such that the idea of Hausa is perhaps more precisely defined as a cultural 'frame' or reference point through which a bricolage of cultural practices come to be expressed. Issa claims a Hausa identity, amongst others, not because of where his ancestors were born, but through a particular set of social practices, not least those associated with Islam. Issa's example serves to illustrate a fluidity, contingency and multifariousness of ethnic identity not picked up on in Agyei-Mensah and Owusu's (2009) analysis. This does not necessarily mean that their results are wrong, but simply that in seeking to evaluate the ethnic composition of Sabon Zongo their findings might be more illuminating when situated within an account of the political exigencies at play in expressions of ethnic identity.

In the wider context of Accra, a degree of stigma and opprobrium has often been attached to Muslim Hausa such that an inhabitant of Zongo might seek to disassociate from such an identity[47]. Indeed, as is apparent in the quote from modernghana.com at

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[47] The experiences of the 1969 Aliens Compliance Order, which saw many of Accra's Muslim Hausa expelled from Ghana, reverberate in the present day, and is one of a number of reasons why a resident of Sabon Zongo might be unwilling to formally identify as Hausa in the presence of the Ghanaian state or its agents. Enacted by then Prime Minister Kofi Abrefa Busia, the Aliens Compliance Order saw the mass expulsion of 'non-Ghanaians',

the start of this section, it may at times make sense to refute a Hausa identity in an effort to access the benefits of formal citizenship such as electoral representation.

As will become apparent throughout this thesis in some social situations it may be advantageous to assert a Hausa identity and in other social situations less so. Indeed, as we shall see in sections 2.6 and 2.7 of this chapter, particular expressions of identity may be required in order to tap into the political networks through which social, political and economic resources necessary for marriage can be secured.

In the present day many aspects of Sabon Zongo's social and cultural life resemble that which would be found in Northern Nigeria. Its language, food, architecture, clothing, and relative deprivation serve to differentiate Sabon Zongo from the surrounding non-Muslim neighbourhoods, but it is the emphasis on a particular notion of Hausaness which calls upon on social and cultural affinities with Hausaland that distinguishes it from Accra's other Zongos. This social and cultural landscape is perhaps the legacy of its founders' roots in Hausaland. That the conflicts and cleavages which occurred in Accra's central Zongos at the end of the 19th Century developed along ethnic lines, implies a sharpening of a sharpening of ethnic identities. This may explain why a distinctive notion of Hausa identity more closely tethered to affinities with Hausaland seems to have (re)emerged in Sabon Zongo.

Despite the seemingly limitless possibilities presented by the context of urban Accra in modernity, Hausaland is a time and place with which many of Zongo's inhabitants identify. Most of Sabon Zongo's residents have never set foot in in Hausaland and yet ideas about what it means to be Hausa were important social and cultural reference points for many of my informants, not least the many young men for whom a notion of Hausaness is prominent in their expressions of identity. At first glance this would seem to run counter to the idea of modernity as presenting limitless possibilities for identity formation. However, consistent with the notion of 'deterritorialisation' (Appadurai 1988 see Chapter 1), it might be argued that there has been a sharpening of a Hausa ethnic

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defined as those whose mothers had not been born in Ghana (Peil 1971, 1974, Henckaerts 1995, Apter 2015). Though this did not necessarily mean automatic expulsion of all those who identified as Hausa, surrounding the act was a pervasive discourse of Hausas as non-Ghanaian, such that they bore the brunt of popular anger, forced evictions and appropriation of property (Peil 1974). During my own time in Accra I often encountered people who had extremely negative views of Hausa. Indeed, young men in Zongo would claim that when going for a job it was normally best to identify as anything but Hausa as many employers considered the Hausa to be dishonest, lazy and unreliable.

identity and entrenching of particular social practices, as 'local' political exigencies play out in a social and cultural field no longer limited by spatial proximity. Sabon Zongo is an 'enclave' in the sense that it is socially and culturally distinctive from other parts of Accra, including other Zongos, but it's cultural topography is characteristically 'modern' in the ways that its inhabitants' have forged affinities, real and imagined, with a geographically distant Hausaland.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of undertaking fieldwork in Zongo is the extraordinarily rich culinary culture. Ghanaian staples such as kenkey (steamed maize) and fufu (pounded yam) are readily available and popular, but amongst the most popular cuisine are those dishes which resemble those found in Northern Nigeria. Crucially, the notion of particular foods as being Hausa is important to people in Zongo. As with the consumption of any material good, food is one means through which social relationships are created and sustained, identities expressed, groups defined and terms of membership established. The quote from Alhaji Musa above resonates with Pellow's contention that the consumption and definition of certain foods as Hausa is one means through which people in Sabon Zongo forge affinities with Hausaland and make them concrete in the practice of everyday life (Pellow 2007).

Where kenkey is described as Ga food, and fufu as Asante food, by contrast *tuwo dawa miyan kuka* (balls of pounded and steamed guinea corn with baobab leaf soup), *kosai* and koko (millet porridge with fried maize balls) and other Hausa staples are described as "*our food*". In fact, Zongo is one of the only places in Accra where many of these notionally Hausa foods are readily available.

Photographs 14. 'Masara' balls of maize typically consumed with stew.

Photograph 15. Preparation of stew.

The Hausa influence is also felt in formal political structures. As we shall below, Zongo's Chieftaincy has been modelled on the Hausa Emirates of Northern Nigeria. Formal political titles, such as Madawaki, Yeroma and Sarkin Fada correspond to those that would be found in the Hausa Emirates of Nigeria (see table 2 below). Furthermore, the *Sallah* Remix owes much to the Northern Nigerian Durbar, where an Emir's officials also parade on horseback and make declarations of allegiance (see Apter 1999, 2002; and Griswold and Bhadmus 2013).

As this thesis progresses we will see how many aspects of social life in Zongo are reminiscent of Hausaland. Pellow argues that it is the entanglement of '*Hausaness*' with Islam which gives Zongo its particular character or ethos, for which she coins the term "*Zongwanci*" (2002 p12). The implication here is that in seeking to make sense of social life in Zongo, insights might be gained from the broader Hausa Studies literature.

Of course, it is not only Hausa influences which shape Sabon Zongo's cultural landscape. The presence of kenkey, kente, hip-life, hip-hop and Hollywood clearly suggest otherwise. Furthermore, many social practices, norms and institutions appear

to be major departures from those that would be found in Hausaland, but they are framed by Sabon Zongo's inhabitants as Hausa nevertheless. *Zongwanci* can be seen as the glue that binds Zongo's inhabitants together and makes the idea of Sabon Zongo as a Hausa 'community' meaningful to those who live there (Pellow 2002). As touched upon earlier, Nigerian Hausa had exerted considerable influence in the political life of Accra's central Zongos. During the late 19th and early 20th Centuries this influence was challenged as men competed for positions of political power. It was at least in part as response to these cleavages that Mallam Bako and his followers sought to establish a specifically Hausa 'community' (Pellow 2002). It is perhaps not surprising, then, that much like its architecture, formal political hierarchies in Zongo are reminiscent of those that would be found in Northern Nigeria. However, as will be see in the following section, this ethos does not only bind but also stratifies.

2.7 The High Table at *Sallah* Remix

Photograph 16. The High Table. From left to right: Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu Sharubutu, The National Chief Imam; George Nii Adama Tackie, The Ga Mantse; Sarki Yahaya Hamisu Bako, Chief of Sabon Zongo; Hajj Shuibu, Deputy Chief Imam.

The annual Durbar or '*Sallah* Remix' is held in Zongo a few weeks after Eid-al-fitr. At one time the celebration had been held on the day of Eid itself. More recently competition between Accra's various Zongos, as to who could hold the most spectacular celebration, has led to the Durbar seldom coinciding with Eid. Instead, each Zongo agrees to hold its Durbar on successive weekends. The Durbar takes

place in addition to the more modest celebrations of Eid-el-Fitr. The celebrations begin with a parade which snakes its way from the Accra Central Mosque just inside Accra's Ring Road and along Oblogo Road. Oblogo Road demarcates the boundary between Abossey Okai to the North and Sabon Zongo to the South. It then turns left into Sabon Zongo onto Harmattan Avenue or 'Mallam Bako's Street', one of the few paved roads within Sabon Zongo. As it works its way along the road, it passes Zongo's tallest building, the Abokin Ango Mosque, through Gangare, 'the Down', and Unguwa Zabrama, until it arrives at Night Market square in the heart of Kan Tudu or 'Hill Top'. At the core of the procession are Zongo's sub-chiefs and their supporters: The Omonhene, Asante Chief; Igbe Papa, Ewe Chief; Sarkin Fawa, Chief Butcher; Sarki Wanzam, Chief Barber; Sarki Makafi, the Chief of the blind – to name but a few of Zongo's many sub-Chiefs.

Several flatbed trucks and pick-ups with sound systems accompany the procession blaring out a clashing combination of Azonto, techno, prayer music and the clatter and boom of Zongo's maroki – praise singers – and Asante drummers. Women cluster around the sound systems dancing, ululating and twirling handkerchiefs. Groups of women dance together wearing matching cloth, indicating that they are friends in '*biki*'. Men's friendship groups, 'bases' and associations like Mahama Fun Club and Asafo have printed matching t-shirts and parade down the street together. Most young men simply wear their best clothes: either jeans and t-shirts or more traditional Hausa wear. Many have had *babariga* tailored especially for the occasion. Amongst the most impressively dressed are the young men who ride horses. Their clothes emulate those that might be seen at Durbar in Hausaland: large flowing *babariga* and heads wrapped in turbans. Others have opted for a more unusual style. One man is wearing a cowboy hat and neckerchief with what appears to be the protective armour an ice hockey player wears. Another man wears a batman costume complete with cape, but with a maroon fez instead of face mask. There are at least thirty horses in the procession. Few of the riders seem to have much experience with a horse, and struggle to keep control of them. As the horses plough through the crowds, people rush into kiosks and fall into gutters as they seek to avoid being trampled. The swarms of people follow the parade until it arrives at the night market.

Photograph 17. The Omonhene Zongo stands atop his palanquin as he is carried through Zongo for Sallah Remix.

At the night market a stage and canopy have been erected upon which various dignitaries sit in front of an open parade area. On either side hundreds of people are seated on plastic chairs, sheltered from the sun by ragged canopies. One side is designated for women and the other for men so as to prevent excessive 'mingling' in the intoxicating festival atmosphere. Facing towards the stage, it resembles something of a tiered football stand. On the main stage or 'high table'[48] sit various dignitaries from across Accra. In the middle of the front row, sitting in a cloth draped armchair is the National Chief Imam, the event's most prestigious guest. Sat to the right of the Imam is the Ga Mantse, within whose dominion Sabon Zongo falls. Next to the Mantse is Sarki Yahaya Bako, the Chief of Zongo. I barely recognise him – his head wrapped in a turban and his eyes are concealed behind dark aviator style sunglasses. To the left hand side of the stage is Alhaji Sule Bako, nicknamed 'Power'. Power is the eldest son of the former chief, the current chief's nephew, and erstwhile rival for the Chieftaincy. Alongside them sit the Hausa Chief of Accra, the Dagomba Chief and the Chief of Nima Zongo, and several of Accra's other Muslim Headmen. Seated in front of the stage are Zongo's 'manyan Gari', elders from prominent households who make up the Zongo 'Fadawa' or council. All of them are dressed in traditional Hausa clothing. The

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[48]   An actual table does not feature on the stage.

Dogari's *babariga*, divided into bright red and green quarters much like those I had seen worn by The Emir of Kano's Dogari, is particularly distinctive. Those seated on and in front of the stage are arguably the most powerful and respected people in Zongo. In front of the stage a group of youths with sticks zealously beat children and younger boys in an effort clear space for the arrival of Zongo's sub-Chiefs. One-by-one each of the sub-Chiefs approaches the stage, bows to one knee and raises a clenched fist and thumb, then pronounces "*ranka dede*" – may your life be long – before peeling off to take a seat on either side of the stage. Once the sub-Chiefs have paid their respects, men who have recently completed hajj approach the stage and bow. I ask my research assistant Hamisu why the well-dressed men on horses have not presented themselves to the Chief. He tells me that though they look "big", they are "nobody", from "nowhere". In many people's view, it is those seated on or around the stage that are the most influential and respected people in Zongo.

Though its form has varied, and its influence waxed and waned, Chieftaincy has been an important part of Hausa political culture since at least the 15th Century if not longer (Last 1967, Smith 1978 1997, Miles 1987, Iliffe 2005, Umar 2013)[49]. An important feature of this political culture has been a distinction between '*talakawa*' – commoners – and '*masu sarauta*' – noblemen – which informs the prestige and status of individual men (Smith 1959, Hill 1972, Miles 1987, Arnould 1989, Coles and Mack 1991, Gaudio 2011)[50].

In 2011, I undertook a small research project in Kano State, Nigeria. When it comes to research permissions, people are somewhat relaxed with regards the Nigerian Federal Government. However, the same cannot be said of attitudes towards the Kano Emirate. Before any research could take place it was necessary to secure permission from the Emir of Kano. This was achieved by way of a visit to the Emir's Secretariat, submitting a written application, specifying the nature of the research and listing the specific villages where it would be undertaken. The Secretariat is a large busy compound in central Kano. Various sub-Chiefs, ward heads and functionaries mill about amongst the Emir's *Dogarai* or security guards. I sat in a small waiting room

[49] Chieftaincy is a recurrent reference in historical texts, but the specifics of its structure and significance are clearly difficult to ascertain.
[50] The talakawa/sarauta distinction may for a number of reasons not always be as salient in rural contexts as is in towns and cities (Manvell 2005).

before being granted an audience with the Emir's Secretary, to whom I submitted my application. Once my application had been accepted, I was given a letter signed by the Emir's Secretary on the Emir's behalf, stating that I had formal permission to carry out my research. When I arrived in each village I would go to the house of the local Chief or ward head, present my letter and a 'gift'. Invariably the Chief had anticipated my arrival, having already been advised by one of the Emir's messengers the day before. The process is marked by expressions of deference. Social encounters with holders of office involve bowing, 'gifting' and praising of the office holder and their Emir. In Kano, as might be expected in a realm spanning more than 20,000 sq. km and with a population in excess of ten million (ADB 2014), such office holders are numerous.

Sabon Zongo neither falls within nor answers to the Hausa Emirates. In terms of the wider political order of the Ghanaian State and local Ga Mantsemei, the Zongo Chieftaincy is much less important than its equivalents have been in Northern Nigeria. Nevertheless, many elements of Hausa political culture are replicated in Zongo's Chieftaincy, albeit on a much smaller scale (Pellow 2002). When seeking to undertake research in Zongo, the procedures one needs to follow are not entirely dissimilar to those I had encountered in Nigeria. There are far fewer intermediaries involved, and it is reasonably straightforward to gain an audience with the Chief in person, but gifts must still be given and bows performed in much the same way as in Kano. The first port of call for any visitor to Zongo is the Chief's house, the gate to which is always attended by one of his older sons, who act as the Chief's personal assistants or stewards. They greet visitors, hear their concerns, schedule meetings with the Chief if required, or else direct them towards another official to deal with the matter. At least once a week, the Chief and a number of his officials and followers walk from his house in Ayigbetown, through Sabon Zongo to the 'Chief's Palace'[51] in Kan Tudu, where he meets with the 'Fadawa' or council. The Fadawa is comprised of 'manyan gari', or town elders – the senior men from Zongo's most prominent households – many of whom hold formal titles akin to those typically found in the Hausaland. It is these men who sit at the High Table at *Sallah* Remix.

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[51]   The last two Sarkin Zongo have not resided in the Chief's Palace.

Mallam Bako had been appointed custodian by the Ga Mantse and served as Sabon Zongo's de facto headman. However, it wasn't until his eldest son Idrissu Bako succeeded him in 1933 that Accra's other Muslim headmen and the British colonial administration formally recognised the position of Sarkin Sabon Zongo and the structure of the present day Chieftaincy was established (Pellow 2002). Idrissu assembled a Fadawa comprised of Zongo's manyan gari – the senior men from Zongo's most prominent households – and awarded many of them titles derived from those that would be found in Hausaland. Idrissu allocated the titles typically held and inherited by an Emir's kinsmen (see Smith 1960) to men within the Bako lineage who had settled at Sabon Zongo.

Table 1. Sabon Zongo Chiefs

Mallam Mohammad Bako	1893-1933
Mallam Idrissu Bako	1933-1969
Mallam Lebo Bako	1969 – 1981
Mallam Sha'aibu Bako	1981 - 2001
Mallam Yahaya Bako	2001 - Present

With the exception of Lebo Bako, the position of Sarkin Zongo has followed a patrilineal line, inherited by the eldest willing[52] male within the Bako line. Other subordinate positions are allocated between the Chief's brothers, adult sons and nephews, and are also kept within the Bako lineage. If the holder of a subordinate position dies, the title is allocated to another Bako man by whichever Bako reigns as Chief at the time. The positions of Galadima and Yeroma serve to illustrate this process[53]. Under Idrissu, his half-brother Hamisu performed the role of Galadima and his nephew Sha'aibu (son of Idrissu's full brother Lawal) served as Yeroma. When Idrissu died in 1969, he was succeeded by Lebo the eldest grandson of Mallam Bako,

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[52]   There have been a number of occasions when the eldest Bako male has declined the Chieftaincy. For example, when Chief Idrissu died in 1969, Hamisu Bako was the eldest Bako male but declined the Chieftaincy saying he was too old (Pellow 2002). Inussa Bako also declined the Chieftaincy in 2001 when Chief Sha'aibu died.

[53]   See Pellow (2002) for further examples.

son of his brother Lawal and Sha'aibu's elder brother[54]. Under Chief Lebo, Sha'aibu remained Yeroma, but Hamisu stood down as Galadima. Lebo appointed his cousin, Inussa, Hamisu's eldest son, Galadima. Inussa has remained in this position under three chiefs; Lebo, Sha'aibu and now Yahaya. After Lebo's death in 1981, his younger brother Sha'aibu became Chief and so vacated the position of Yeroma. Chief Sha'aibu appointed his cousin Yahaya, (his uncle Hamisu's son and Inussa's brother) Yeroma. When Sha'aibu died in 2001, Yahaya became Chief and his brother Abdulahi became Yeroma[55].

Idrissu Bako also gave positions to prominent men from Zongo's founding lineages, and it is generally accepted that there should always be non-Bako's on the Fadawa. Though Idrissu did not formally define rights of succession for these positions, many of them remain within specific lineages and have been passed-on according to the same principles of patrilineal succession as those held within the Bako lineage. These principles are often etched into space through place names. For example, the position of Sarkin Fada, first held by Ali Musa Kariki's son Musa, is currently held by his grandson Abdulahi Kariki. Abdulahi lives in the compound built by Ali Musa Kariki, which has been known as Gidan Sarkin Fada since Musa first took up the position. Similarly, Gidan Waziri refers to the house of Alhaji Badamase whose lineage has held the position of Waziri for successive generations[56].

In Hausaland, titles have been associated with specific duties or functions (Smith 1952, 1997) as is reflected in Table 2, below. In Zongo, various titles are allocated to the manyan gari of the Fadawa, but it is seldom the case that specific duties are attached to them, with most titleholders performing broadly similar functions. They accompany the Chief to important events in Accra, such as meetings of the Council of Zongo Chiefs, engagements with Government officials, ceremonial occasions such as major Islamic festivals, the appointment of Chiefs or dignitaries, as well as weddings and funerals. Within Zongo, they will accompany the Chief to the many wedding days, naming ceremonies and funerals which take place there, or they will represent him in

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[54] Most of Idrissu's brothers had died and those that were alive declined the Chieftaincy on the basis that they were too old (Pellow 2002).

[55] According to Sarki Yahaya, he could have chosen any Bako man as Yeroma, but he decided to appoint his younger brother Abdulahi to the position. He felt that the tradition started by Lebo was a good one as his brother might one day succeed him and would benefit from the experience of holding the position.

[56] See Pellow (2002).

his absence. They will arbitrate in disputes and decide upon sanctions when required. They will also regularly attend council to discuss affairs in Zongo and facilitate action if necessary. They are the Chief's closest, most influential and important advisers, and they act as his intermediaries, and speak and act on his behalf. For example, the Chief is invited to most weddings in Zongo. Although he accepts many invitations, he attends very few weddings in person; instead an elder of the fadawa or other sub-chief will represent him. As is customary at a wedding, the names of notable guests are read out at the commencement of the ceremony. Whether or not the Chief himself is physically in attendance, his name will be announced alongside that of his representative, who speaks and acts in his stead.

Subordinate to the Fadawa are Zongo's many sub-Chiefs. Again, Hausaland provides the model, with sub-chiefs as the formal representatives of and principle authority within particular social groups. There are recognised chiefs for specific occupations, such as butchers, barber surgeons, tailors and scrap metal collectors; as well as for ethnic identities such as the Dagomba, Frafra, Zabarma and Akan, and for other types of social group considered to share a collective identity and interests, such as the blind, the lame, and the young. Some of these groups replicate the structure of the Hausa fadawa. For example, alongside a Chief, the Dagomba, butchers and blind all have a Waziri, Galadima and Madawaki. Some groups deviate from this structure or have no formal office below the level of Chief. For example, Zongo's Akan Chief is referred to by the title Omonhene Zongo, the traditional title given to an Akan Paramount Chief, rather than Sarkin Akan. Omonhene Zongo is the only formal office specifically concerned with Akan people in Zongo. In a similar vein, the Sarkin Wanzam is the only formal office pertaining to barbers. Whilst a Sub-Chief's rights and responsibilities may be formally defined, who exactly falls within his constituency and when is often less certain. This is partly a result of the inherently malleable nature of collective identities. As described earlier, individuals occupy multiple overlapping identities. A person may be variously identified as a Muslim, Hausa, Dagomba, butcher, scrap metal collector and youth; the particular identity given emphasis at any one time is contingent upon the social situation and the relationships at play, when the boundaries between collective and individual identities are often blurred. As a result, a sub-chief's constituency may be more ambiguous than the rigidities of its formal definition imply.

Table.2. Customary Hausa Office Holders.

Title	Meaning/'Function'
Alkali	Judge. Advises Chief on Islamic Law.
Sarkin Fada	Major-domo and Head of the Chief's Council.
Madawaki	In charge of horses.
Salama	Greets the Chief's visitors. Schedules audiences with the Chief.
Majidade	Expresses 'Chief's happiness'.
Ubandoma	Announces arrival of Chief.
Galadima	Senior Councillor.
Yarima	Official under the chief.
Waziri	Deputy (Vizier).
Maaji	Treasurer.
Dogari	Bodyguard/Head of security.

Adapted from Bargery (2002), Smith (1978, 1997) Pellow (2002)[57].

The kinds of issues each sub-Chief will deal with varies, but they do have some common responsibilities. Much like the men of the fadawa, sub-Chiefs mediate disputes, witness weddings, attend funerals and so on. These encounters are framed by norms of reciprocity. A commoner seeking an audience with the Chief or one of his dignitaries will be expected to provide a gift, perhaps money, meat or fruit. A gift is given to a dignitary when he attends an event organised by his political inferiors. Similarly, it is standard practice for visitors to Zongo to give the Chief a bag of rice[58]. Though it is hard to know the specific sums involved, it would seem that they vary depending on the rank of the official, prestige of the occasion and the giver's means. In addition, Sub-Chiefs are responsible for collecting contributions towards the upkeep

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[57]   The meanings and functions of these terms are subject to considerable historical and geographical variation. It is thus perhaps inevitable that the interpretations and translations offered by different sources do not always agree. Even when they do, the extent of equivalence is uncertain. For instance, the title madawaki is derived from *Mai* Doki; *mai* meaning master and doki meaning horse (Bargery n.d). The title madawaki has endured, but his responsibility for leading an Emirs' cavalry into war (see Smith 1960, Hogendorn 1980, Last 1980, Davidson 2014) perhaps less so. Nevertheless, Madawaki has endured as an important title in Hausa political culture.

[58]   I became aware of this custom only by observing the arrival of other visitors to Zongo. When I first met the Chief I gave him 50 Cedis, and a football jersey to each of his sons.

and ceremonial expenses of the Chieftaincy from their constituents. For example, when a member of the Chief's household marries, contributions towards expenses will be provided by his sub-Chiefs, who in turn raises the funds from their constituents. A sub-Chief's responsibility for collecting contributions from his constituents is accompanied by a corresponding entitlement to retain a portion of any such income for himself.

The flow of goods is not always upwards in these hierarchies. A sub-chief is expected to contribute towards the ceremonial expenses of his constituents, such as funeral costs and wedding expenses, and to assist them in times of need. For example, when a blind man arrives in Zongo, the Sarkin Makafi organises his lodging. Similarly, when one of my informants, a butcher who had recently migrated from Katsina, fell ill and was unable to work, the Sarkin Fawa provided the money to pay for medicine. Though forms of assistance vary, it is primarily political services that elite men provide for their juniors. The Chief, Manyan Gari of the fadawa and sub-Chiefs are expected to represent the interests of their constituents and provide access to political resources and services. Take for example the case of Gibril.

Gibril works as a tailor from a small kiosk some five minutes' walk from his home. In Zongo, as in many Muslim societies, people often buy new clothes to celebrate Eid-el-Fitr. At the start of Ramadan, Gibril had decided to upgrade to an electrical sewing machine, so as to make the most of the increased demand for clothing. However, Gibril's kiosk lacked an electricity supply. He had asked the kiosk owner, who lived in the adjacent compound, whether he might connect to his electricity and pay him something in return. The kiosk owner declined, and so Gibril decided to carry out his tailoring at home. As many people do during Ramadan, Gibril worked at night when he wasn't fasting and was therefore least fatigued. However, Gibril's Christian Ewe neighbours complained that they were unable to sleep because of the noise. They took their complaint to one of Zongo's Manyan Gari, who was also their compound *Mai Gida* or landlord. Gibril was summoned to the *Mai Gida*'s house such that they could find a solution. The *Mai Gida* advised Gibril's neighbour that he and his family lived in a Muslim neighbourhood and so ought to respect their customs. Nevertheless, he recognised that Gibril's neighbours needed their sleep if they were to be able to work during the day and that the problem could be solved if Gibril's kiosk could be connected to an electricity supply. Using his authority as Manyan Gari, he sent for the

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kiosk owner who had declined Gibril an electricity connection. The kiosk owner explained that he had refused Gibril a connection as he doubted his ability to pay[59]. The *Mai Gida* resolved that the kiosk owner should allow Gibril to connect to his electricity and that he would act as his guarantor. To avoid any disputes over payments, the *Mai Gida* would act as a witness. Gibril was told to bring the money to the *Mai Gida* every month for the kiosk's owner to come and collect it. Gibril agreed to pay the kiosk owner five Cedis (GHS) per month, plus "something extra" for the *Mai Gida*. As a further expression of thanks, Gibril agreed to sew several designs for the *Mai Gida* without charge.

As is apparent in the above, reciprocal exchange is at the core of the relationships between office holders and their constituents. Just as goods may flow between junior and senior men in either direction, so does political support. In return for representing his constituents' interests and fulfilling his responsibilities to them, a Chief or other dignitary can expect his formal status to be recognised through public expressions of deference. As we shall see below, housing has been a particularly important currency in these exchanges.

2.8 'Landlords and Lodgers'

Kinship amongst the Hausa is acknowledged as bilateral. Affective ties with maternal kin are valued and encouraged and may have considerable social, economic and political significance (Smith 1952, 1957, Manvell 2005). However, in terms of household composition and lineage affiliation it is patrilineal descent and virilocality which have the greatest emphasis. Married women reside in the accommodation provided them by their husbands. Divorced women and those who are yet to marry reside in the paternal home. As we shall see in Chapter Five, a husband is obliged to provide his wife with a room. When a man marries for the first time, his senior lineage men are expected to contribute land, money and other materials needed to establish a marital home whether or not the bride has property of her own. The key point here is that a Hausa man intending to enlarge his household must first increase his housing space so as to accommodate wives and children (Smith 1952, Hill 1972, Schwerdtfeger 1982, Arnould 1984, Cooper 1997). In many West African cities

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[59]   Many electricity connections are illegal, but sometimes a person may get a legal metered connection and allow others to connect for a fee.

population growth, land scarcity and limited rights to land have made it difficult for Muslim Hausa populations to realise this requirement[60]. Crucially, in contexts where housing is scarce or difficult to access, people have often been able to convert control over housing into political influence[61]. It is this idea that frames Pellow's (2002) historical analysis of social-spatial relations in Zongo and is alluded to in the title of her book, *Landlords and Lodgers*.

During the colonial period, though Muslim Hausa had long been present in Accra, much of Accra and the lands that surround it fell under the authority of the non-Muslim Ga Mantse or chiefs. As 'Strangers', Accra's Muslims lacked the land rights necessary to expand their living space beyond Accra's congested central Zongos. The Mantse seldom sold land[62], but were sometimes willing to grant custodianship to non-Ga (Peil 1971, 1974, Pellow 1985, 2002). Custodianship meant being accountable to the Ga Mantse[63], but also came with the right to retain or distribute usufructory rights to others (Pellow 2002, Grant 2006, Gillespie 2016). Following an outbreak of plague in central Accra in 1907, the British were eager to instigate a plan for urban renewal which involved demolition of housing in Accra's central Zongos. Under the influence of the British, the Ga Mantse began to award custodial land rights to prominent men from Accra's established Zongos. Mallam Bako seized upon this as an opportunity to secure custodianship of the land upon which Sabon Zongo could be established (Pellow 1985,

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[60]   Similar scenarios have been described by Cohen (1969) in Ibadan, Hill (1966) and later Schildkrout (1978) in Kumasi.

[61]   For example, Peil (1974) describes how with the enactment of the 1969 Aliens Compliance Order, the widely held perception that Muslims were 'non-indigenous' to Accra meant that they were particularly vulnerable to the threat of appropriations or demolition of housing and other property and even expulsion from the city. In order to secure their housing, they relied on the support of those who had influence within state institutions and whose land rights were more secure. More recently, Paller (2015) has examined informal political structures in Old Fadama, a settlement in Central Accra with a particularly contentious legal status, largely inhabited by first generation migrants from Northern Ghana. Paller elaborates how political power has accrued to those who have been able to make use of formal and informal political networks to secure housing for themselves and others (see also Grant 2006, Afenah 2009).

[62]   According to the customary Ga tenure system, land was collectively owned by a community, not only of the living but also of deceased ancestors and yet to be born descendants. Land was inalienable from this community and merely administered by the Mantse on their behalf. The prevalence of this system has declined, but not altogether disappeared. As with other customary tenure systems in Ghana it has been incorporated into state legislation (Quarcoopome 1992, Parker 2000, Gillespie 2016) and is not infrequently appealed to in land disputes (see Kasanga et al 1996 for examples).

[63]   For example, by preventing excessive noise making on festival days (Pellow 2002, Grant 2006).

2002). Mallam Bako began to allocate land to his friends, family and followers. Aside from his own sons, daughters and other kinsmen, amongst the first to arrive in Zongo were Ali Musa Kariki, a Hausa man from Kano; Abokin Ango, a friend of Mallam Bako's who had lived at Zongo Lane; and Mallam Garuba's two sons, Badamase and Salisu. There was also Haruna Bawa Allah, an herbalist from Sokoto; the barber surgeon Wansa Damaley, who arrived in Accra via Ashanti; and Dan Kambari and Mohammadu Al'Wali, who had been friends with Mallam Bako's father Nenu.

Accra's population has continued to grow, and demand for housing now is as great if not greater than it has ever been. Control over land and access to housing remains an important source of political power (Engstrom et al 2013, Paller 2015). Given this relationship between land and power it is not surprising that it is the descendants of Zongo's founding patriarchs who hold positions on the 'Fadawa' and are seated at the High Table, which might be taken to imply a stable political system. However, the pomp and ceremony of *Sallah* Remix belies a degree of fragility to this relationship in present day Zongo.

Chieftaincy and custodianship always coincide in a single individual. Land, on the other hand, has a tendency to become fragmented. When Mallam Bako and his followers first settled Zongo, they derived influence from their ability to allocate land. The moment they made further allocations to other men, this influence began to become diluted.

This has had implications for the Chieftaincy in that the influence associated with control over land is in tension with the transfer of formal authority within the structures of the Chieftaincy. Whilst rights to land may be partitioned and transferred in a variety of ways – such as through gifting, sale, rental or inheritance – Chieftaincy always follows a patrilineal line, transferred as it is to the eldest male within the Bako lineage. Control over land, and the wider social influence that is derived from that control, has to some extent dissipated away from the Chieftaincy. The same applies to the authority enjoyed by Zongo's other landholding lineages.

To some extent this potential has been mitigated by keeping land within lineage control. Landholders in Zongo have generally preferred to rent or loan land rather than sell or gift it to others so as to prevent it from becoming permanently alienated from lineage control.

Marriage has been important in Zongo as a mechanism of alliance; it has been, and continues to be, a means to shore up political loyalties by making and remaking the bonds forged between Zongo's landholding lineages and to incorporate powerful, potentially competing lineages into centres of power (Pellow 2002).

As Mallam Bako's followers arrived in Zongo their families became interwoven through marriage. For the Hausa polygamy is both acceptable and desirable, and divorce is reasonably commonplace[64]. Mallam Bako alone married nine times, divorced twice and had thirty-seven children, so it is perhaps not surprising that the genealogical ties between Zongo's founding lineages are incredibly complex – it is certainly not within the scope of this thesis to elaborate them anywhere near exhaustively. Furthermore, Pellow (2002) has outlined a number of these intermarriages in great detail. Nevertheless, it is worth examining a few examples to illustrate the point.

The Bako-Garuba alliance was reinforced through inter-marriages between the two households and their followers as can be seen in figure 1 below. Mallam Garuba died shortly after being allocated land by Mallam Bako. The land allocated to Garuba was inherited by his sons, Salisu and Badamase. Salisu married Mallam Bako's half-sister Hajiya Meri. Badamase married both Mallam Bako's cousin Adama, and daughter, Mariam. Mallam Bako's son Hamisu married Mallam Garuba's grand-daughter Laraba. Ali Musa's grandson, Abdullahi married Mallam Bako's granddaughter, Antu. Abokin Ango's son Musa married Badamase and Adama's daughter Amina. Wansa Damaley married Abokin Ango's daughter Abu. Dan Kambari married Badamase's half-sister Nana and Mohammadu Al'Wali married Mallam Bako's daughter Hajiya Marya (Pellow 2002).

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[64]	Though as we shall see in Chapter 6, polygyny and divorce both seem to be on the decline in Zongo.

Figure 1. Interconnections of the Founding Families.
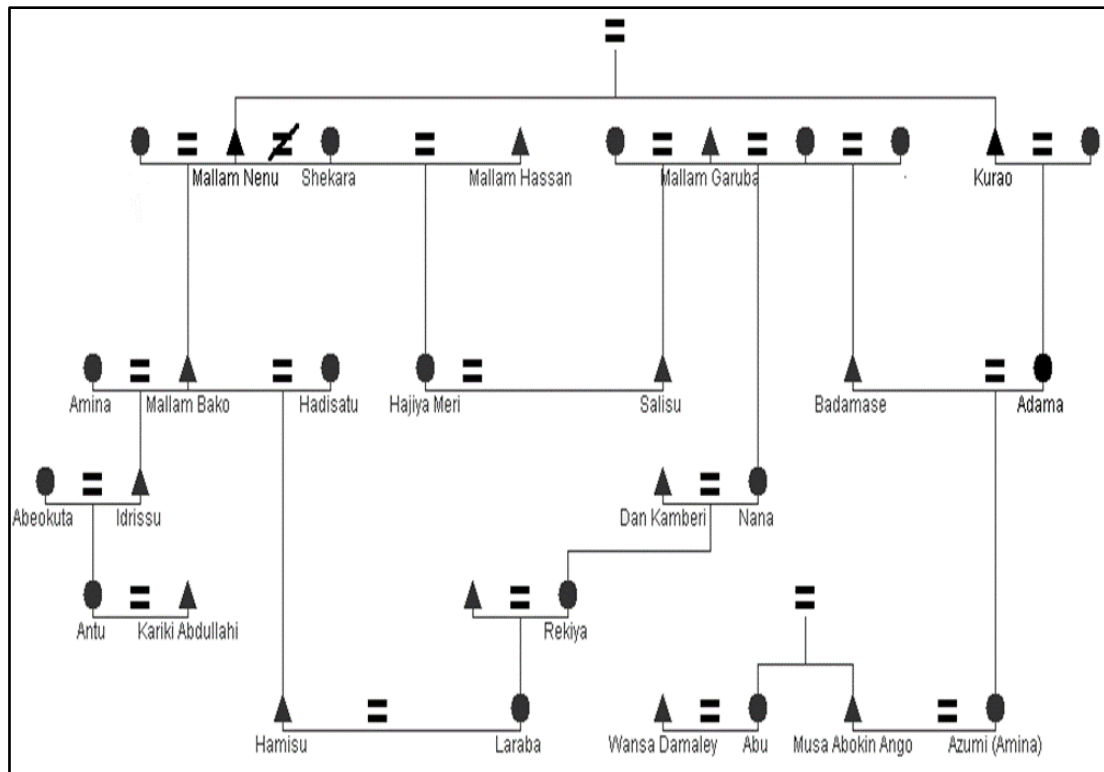
Adapted from Pellow 2002. p101.

Figure 2. Selected Marriages within the Bako lineage.
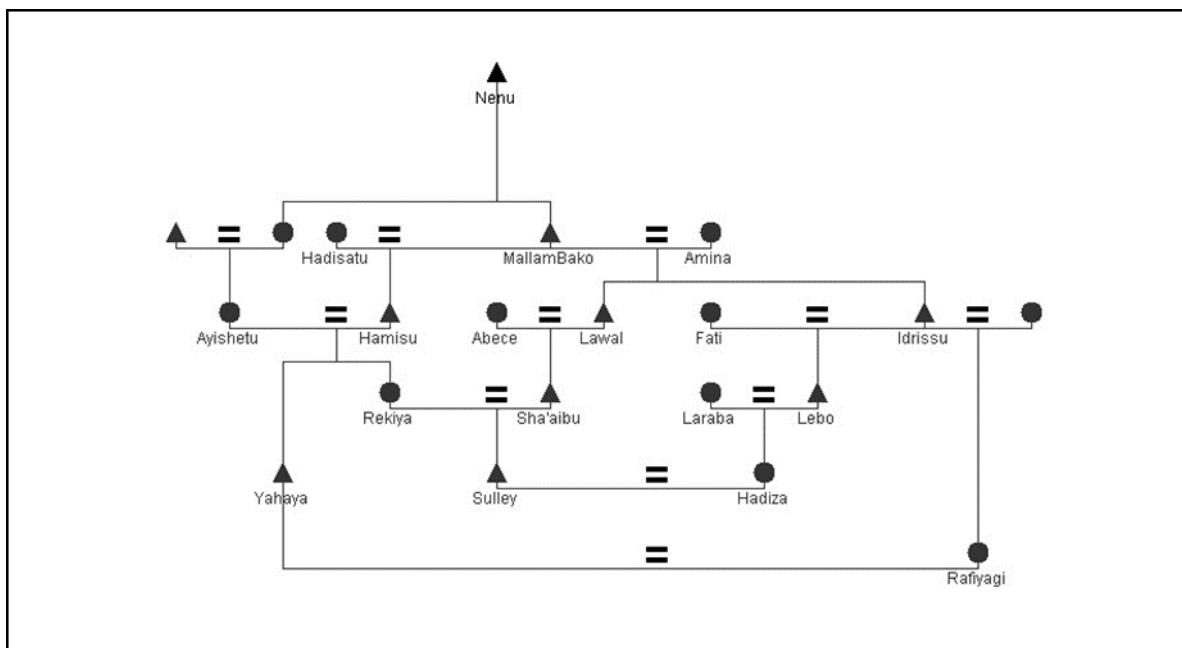
The Hausa have long practiced '*auren gida*' – intra-familial marriages between cousins (see Greenberg 1947, Smith 1952, Barkow 1972). Though less common amongst more recent generations[65], this custom has been widely practiced in Zongo. For example, Chief Yahaya Bako is married to his uncle Idrissu's youngest daughter, Rafiyagi. Yahaya's sister, Rekiya was married to Sha'aibu Bako, his uncle Lawal's son. Sha'aibu's son Sulley is married to Hadiza, the daughter of his uncle Lebo[66]. Yahaya's father Hamisu was married to Ayishetu, the daughter of Mallam Bako's sister.

Pellow (2002) argues that these marriages have been important to the consolidation of influence within Zongo's founding lineages: first of all, by keeping land, and the influence derived from control over it, within specific lineages; and second, as a means to establish and reinforce political loyalties.

Though marriage has clearly been important to relationships between Zongo's founding lineages, they have not rendered the Bako Chieftaincy entirely immune to contest. As different men have managed to gain control over land, rivalries have developed and factions have formed in a manner akin to those that emerged in Central Accra at the turn of the 20th Century. When the Chieftaincy has been challenged, the Bako Chiefs have often looked to external institutions such as the Ga Mantse, colonial and postcolonial state to reinforce the legitimacy of their authority[67].

The most enduring rivalry has been between the Bako and Damaley lineages. It was Mallam Bako who had first allocated land to Wansa Damaley, but once allocated it was no longer under Bako control. Much like Mallam Bako, the Damaleys managed to convert land into influence. On several occasions, Damaley men have drawn on the political support of their many tenants to contest the Bako Chieftaincy, albeit unsuccessfully.

For example, many people in Zongo supported Wansa Damaley's grandson Adamu when he contested the Chieftaincy of Lebo Bako in the late 1970s. The Bakos and Damaleys both had land, but Adamu Damaley's popularity in Zongo had been buttressed by the financial backing of Alhaji Maicancan, a wealthy Hausa man who

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[65]   See Chapter Seven.
[66]   Not Chief Lebo, but the son of Lawal, but Lebo son of Idrissu.
[67]   Since the death of Chief Sha'aibu Bako the Damaley/Bako rivalry has been overshadowed by conflicts within the Bako Lineage, not least between Yahaya and Sulley.

was himself manoeuvring to become the Hausa Chief of Accra. Adamu expanded his network of followers beyond those that relied on the Damaleys for housing. As well as sponsoring weddings, funerals and other such ceremonial events, he funded and organised the construction of water pipes and gutters and the resurfacing of roads. According to one now elderly Damaley supporter, the Bakos had only ever looked after their own friends and kinsmen, but Adamu took care of everybody. "*If you don't have money then Alhaji Adamu he help you. Money for funeral, for hospital, he help you. Even if you are Bako supporter he help you. When Nigeria boys come Ghana everybody say go to Alhaji Adamu. He find you job. He find you house*". There was little that Lebo Bako could do to undermine Adamu Damaley's popular support within Zongo. However, Chief Lebo had documentary evidence of Mallam Bako's appointment as custodian, the ratification of the Chieftaincy and rights of succession under Idrissu, and most importantly the support of the Ga Mantse. Lebo took Damaley to court and won.

In the context of differential land rights, control over land often serves as political currency. As access to housing is exchanged for political support, political capital accrues to those who control land. It is these political elites that Pellow is talking about when she uses the term landlords, and those who depend on them for housing which she refers to as lodgers. Pellow (2002) argues that the relationships which have emerged from these transactions have been fundamental to social organisation in Zongo. The landlord/lodger binary implies not only residential statuses but the wider political statuses which have emerged from different relationships to land.

As has been described above, the formal authority of the Bako Chieftaincy can be seen to have emerged from a context of differential land rights, in which access to housing could be exchanged for political support. The limited land rights enjoyed by Accra's Muslim Hausa meant that Mallam Bako was able to exploit his position as custodian to recruit followers by allocating land to men seeking space to establish or expand their households. These men were able to attract their own followers by virtue of their ability to make further allocations of land to other men (Pellow ibid). Although it is still Bako men who dominate as landlords, land has become fragmented. Men from other lineages have gained access to land and joined the ranks of Zongo's landlords. Much like Mallam Bako, these men have been able to convert control over land into influence, on a number of occasions challenging the formal authority of the

Bako Chieftaincy. These challenges have to some extent been mitigated by marriage, as a means to forge political alliances and absorb potential competitors. External institutions have also been important, in particular the support of the Ga Mantse who had originally appointed Mallam Bako as custodian of Sabon Zongo. Though the Bako Chieftaincy draws legitimacy from this formal recognition, custodianship no longer implies monopoly control over land.

These relationships are embodied in the Bako Chieftaincy. Chief Yahaya and his Bako kinsmen might be seen as representing the apex of a hierarchy of exchange relations cascading down from the High Table to the Fadawa, through the sub-Chieftaincies and into the crowds of followers below. This hierarchical ordering receives further legitimacy within a wider social and political order: the support of external institutions represented by figures such as the Chief Imam, the Ga Mantse, and the various Headmen from Accra's other Muslim Zongos, amongst others.

2.9 Departures

Pellow's argument that the landlord/lodger distinction is fundamental to social organisation in Zongo is convincing. Many of Pellow's findings remain consistent with my own more recent observations; or at the very least during my own stay in Zongo I encountered very little to dissuade me from agreeing with her conclusions. However, though many forms of social difference and sameness can be seen to converge upon the landlord/lodger distinction, we cannot assume that every aspect of social life in Zongo can ultimately be reduced to it. This is where my objectives differ from Pellow's. Pellow describes how social-spatial relationships and the identities forged in them cohere in the notion of *Zongwanci*. I seek to elaborate the relationships that cohere in notions of manhood.

The landlord/lodger distinction is clearly important to social organisation in Zongo in that it describes how a particular set of hierarchies have emerged from the coupling of demand for housing with the difficulty of accessing it. However, it does not explain why this demand exists in the first place. I began section 2.7 of this chapter with the idea that a Hausa man must secure additional living space if he is to enlarge his household and that the demand for housing was at least in part driven by this requirement. What remains unexplained is why expanding a household seems to matter so much for men.

This alludes to the conundrum presented in Chapter One of this thesis as to what is at stake for men when they seek to constitute particular kinds of household relationships. Why is expanding a household desirable and how might this be seen to inform men's desire to marry? Conversely, if demand for housing is driven by a desire to expand a household, why are landlords willing to forgo housing to recruit followers? Why are such exchanges so central to Zongo's political economy?

That successive generations of Zongo's landholding lineages have forged alliances through marriage suggests that marriage contains within it some sort of ideological or normative apparatus that establishes, defines and regulates certain sorts of relationships that are of value to those who participate in it. This speaks to a number of important questions raised in Chapter One: What does this ideological content look like? How and why does marriage give it substance in actual social relationships? What do these relationships look like? In what ways might the hope of realising these relationships inform men's desperation to marry?

When construed as a binary relationship between lineage groups, the landlord/lodger distinction does not fully account for differentiation with such groupings. I briefly described how intergenerational transfers were important to men, particularly those with low or unreliable sources of income. I then touched upon some of the norms concerning transfers of property and housing in the context of marriage. Whether or not the bride has property of her own, her husband is expected to provide her with a room to live in. When a man marries for the first time, his senior lineage men are expected to help him fulfil this obligation. A number of important ideas emerge here which are not captured within the landlord/lodger binary.

First of all, within the same lineage different individuals may be subject to distinct sets of normative obligations and entitlements concerning the transfer of housing and other kinds of property. This brings intra-household relationships to the fore. We have already seen how the authority of the Bako Chieftaincy has been underlined by control over housing. To what extent might similar relationships be at play within the individual household? This raises a number of questions about the structure and morphology of households and lineages and how, why and when resources are transferred within them. In Chapter Five I describe these relationships in detail. I ask, who is expected to provide what, to whom, and when? Who has access to and control over resources?

What kinds of power relations are invoked in their transfer? How can the answers to these questions be brought to bear on relations between men and the processes through which accepted and valued notions of masculinity are realised? To once again draw on the example of the Bako Chieftaincy, the relationship between formal hierarchies, resource control and the exercise of authority may not always be straightforward. In Chapters Seven and Eight I examine the complex processes through which intra-household resource transfers are negotiated and represented, and go on to investigate the larger question of whether and how normative authority translates into actual influence. What is actually going on when informants 'talk' of power, prestige and status? Can we assume that power and influence align with their representations? What might this mean for the idea that particular manhoods operate as positions of power and status, and of marriage as a rite of passage through which they are achieved? The following chapters of this thesis will address these concerns. However, before embarking upon this analysis, it is necessary to say something about how I was located in Zongo.

2.10 Arrival

"…*man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun.*" (Geertz 2000 p5.)

In 2012, as part of an MRes in Development Studies, I undertook fieldwork in rural Kano State, Nigeria. The objective of the study was to find out something about men's health beliefs and behaviours. I carried out a series of interviews and focus groups, in which I asked people what kind of health problems were common in their villages, when they last felt unwell and what they did to feel better. I came back with the idea that when men talked about health in focus groups they were concerned with how their audiences evaluated their character. However, my ability to interpret these narratives was constrained by my limited understanding of the wider social context. This was not simply a question of needing more 'contextual' data, but a clearer understanding of the part I had played in these narratives. It is this idea that has prompted me to try and take a more ethnographic approach to this thesis. The aim of the following paragraphs is to give a brief outline of the decisions I have made *en-route* to producing this thesis and situate them in my relations with others in the field.

Shortly after I returned home from Northern Nigeria, Kano was engulfed in a wave of violence. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued an advisory against all travel to Kano and the feasibility of extended fieldwork became uncertain. Although, as described above, Northern Nigeria can be thought of as the social and cultural heartland of the Hausa, there are well-studied populations of people identifying as Hausa throughout West Africa (see for example Cohen 1969, Pellow 2002, Youngstedt 2004, Manvell 2005). Having read Pellow's (2002) book, and following a conversation with my friend Adam Manvell, who had studied the migratory paths of Nigerien Hausa (Manvell 2005, 2006), Sabon Zongo seemed like a good alternative. Accra had for some time been 'safe' and 'stable' and my interest in Hausa studies would remain relevant.

I had never been to Ghana, but a Ghanaian friend put me in touch with her brother in Accra, who offered to show me around the city once I got there. I arrived in Accra in March 2012. I met with my friend's brother, himself a Hausa-speaker, who offered to take me to Zongo and help out if there were any language difficulties. We drove into Zongo, parked the car, and I asked the first person I saw where I could find the Chief. We were directed to the Chief's house, where we were greeted by one his sons, who took my friend and I inside to meet the Chief. I explained to the Chief what it was I was hoping to do. He granted me permission to stay in Zongo and asked one of his sons to find me a room.

The next day, one of his sons called to tell me that they had found me a flat on Oblogo Road and that I ought to come and have a look at it. The flat was on the second floor of a three story building. By the standards of most accommodation in Zongo, the room looked secure and comfortable. It had its own flush toilet, a ceiling fan and glass windows, which limited the noise from the busy road outside. As enticing as the flat may have been, it was socially and geographically peripheral. I asked whether they might be able to find somewhere more centrally located and more akin to the accommodation occupied by other people in Zongo. One of the Chief's sons said he knew of a room in Kan Tudu, but advised that as a westerner accustomed to more comfortable accommodation, I might find it difficult to live there. He showed me to a room in one of Zongo's oldest compounds and I decided to stay. The Chief's sons arranged an electricity supply, and found a carpenter to repair the roof and fit a

lockable door. I had access to a tap from which to fetch water to wash with, but otherwise made use of the same amenities as most people in Zongo.

I spent about twelve months living in Zongo and just over a total of fifteen months undertaking fieldwork there. Throughout my time in Zongo, I was well looked after and certainly never felt in any danger, but the Chief's son was right. I did find it difficult living in Zongo. I often felt suffocated by people and noise, and was generally hot, tired and uncomfortable. For the sake of my nerves, I made two trips back to the UK to take a break and mull over my experience. For the final three months of fieldwork, I decided to find lodging elsewhere. An American expat offered me a comfortable room in his home in western Accra. During this time, I made daily trips into Zongo, only occasionally spending the night.

2.11 Getting to Know People

My fieldwork was principally ethnographic, by which I mean the data I have drawn upon in my analysis are derived from spending time in Zongo, interacting with people and observing what they got up to (Wagner 1981, James 1999, Geertz 2000, West 2008). I also undertook a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Most of these took place in the early stages of fieldwork and were an important means by which I got to know people.

When I first arrived in Zongo I was shown around by one of the Chief's sons. As he was the only person I knew in Zongo, and because his English and Hausa were good, I asked whether he might be able to arrange some interviews for me and to assist as an interpreter. He agreed and set about organising interviews with his friends, family and other people he knew. These interviews served as formal introductions – an opportunity to introduce myself to people, explain what it was I was doing, get an idea of how my presence might be received in Zongo, and lay the ground for the ongoing relationships necessary for my research.

As has already been discussed, Islam is an important part of everyday life in Zongo. When I first arrived in Zongo, I made a point of visiting as many mosques as I could. I presented myself to the Mallams who oversaw them and asked whether I might be able to say a few words about myself and why I was in Zongo before their next sermon.

Standing before the congregation, I would hold up my notebook and explain why they might see me writing in it. I told people where I lived and gave out my number so they could find me if they wanted to.

Though I got to know a lot of people through these relatively formal introductions made at the mosque, in focus groups and interviews, I also met people by just wandering around Zongo. People in Zongo are generally friendly to strangers, especially a clumsy white man who, is a cause for curiosity, if not adjudged a potential money-making opportunity – in Zongo, whiteness is often taken as indicative of access to wealth[68].Men would approach me and ask after my business in Zongo. People would holler at me across the street, asking where I was going or would invite me to sit with them. They would introduce me to their friends and families, invite me to weddings, naming days and funerals. Over time I got to know more and more people in Zongo, such that wherever I found myself there was always somebody around I already knew or had at the very least met. Some people I got to know well enough that it was neither awkward nor unwelcome for me to accompany them as they went about their daily lives in Zongo.

Zongo is far too populous for me to have met everybody, let alone to have got to know them well. However, it is important to highlight the fact that of those people I did get to know, the vast majority were men. As described above, there are a range of norms which impinge upon interactions between men and women. Women are firmly discouraged from spending unaccompanied or unobserved time with men other than their husbands. This was a major limitation on my fieldwork and in part explains the relative absence of women's voices in my thesis.

I did employ an unmarried Christian woman as research assistant. She was able to introduce me to other women and facilitate several interviews, but even so it was difficult to find women prepared to talk to me other than in public, where personal opinions were likely tempered by the public gaze. There were a number of women in Zongo who I got to know well enough to meet them in private, albeit discretely. Indeed, there were one or two women who became good friends, and who were amongst my most trusted informants. I am wary of talking about how I met these women or relating

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[68]   I was often known simply as 'Bature'. Though often used interchangeably to mean foreigner, the term carries with it connotations of wealth and prosperity.

what I learnt from them in specific detail. If anyone were to find out or even suspect who these women were, the consequences for them would likely be negative. Though what I learned from these women has informed my analysis, the fact remains that I know far too little to be able to say a great deal about how women feel about the issues raised in this thesis.

Like the "Nuer's cows, who were observed but also did not speak" (Ardener 2006 p.50), the women in this thesis are muted in the sense that their voices are barely heard in a narrative which emphasises the perspectives of men. This limitation is important – regrettable, perhaps – and is even ethically questionable. I am under no illusion that my account can be taken as anything other than partial. However, ethnographic representations are by their very nature partial, contingent upon the positionality of those who produce them. The important thing is to account for these positions in making sense of the ethnographic encounter, or at the very least do one's best to make them visible to others (Clifford 1986, Abu-Lughod 2000). Men's perspectives are privileged in my account, in the sense that this thesis is about men's perspectives. However, I do not grant them the authority of remaining 'unmarked', as the authors of universally applicable accounts of social experience in Zongo. Whilst this does not justify the absence of women's voices, it does at least help lay the ground for a conversation.

Though I have been as careful as possible about disclosing the identities of my female informants, I have also chosen to anonymise most of the men who feature in this account. Though I thank my research assistants in my acknowledgements, I have excluded or concealed their names in the body of the text, such that responsibility for errors or ill-judgements remains my own and they should not suffer the consequences. I have preserved names and other such details in the case of political figures performing public roles, such as the Chief at *Sallah* Remix or where information has been drawn from publicly available accounts. Otherwise I have changed names, and obscured or omitted discriminating details which may reveal or allude to identities. It is my view that I have not concealed anything that might be analytically important, but the fact remains that some of my informants wish to be disassociated from their specific accounts. There are other occasions when my observations and how I have written about them might be embarrassing or hazardous for those that feature in them

and so I have made an effort to conceal identities or insert one or two red herrings so as to throw a suspicious reader off the scent.

2.12 Setting Up Base

Throughout the course of my fieldwork, I undertook 118 interviews and 12 focus groups, of which the vast majority – 112 interviews and 8 focus groups – were with men. These figures should not be construed as the sum total of all people spoken with in, but merely those who I interacted with in the formal context of an interview or focus group. Interviews and focus groups were important as a means to meet people, but they also provided many valuable insights which have informed my analysis. Therefore, it is necessary to say something about how I approached these social encounters and have gone about interpreting the data produced in them.

Though I conducted some interviews on my own, the majority were conducted with the help of research assistants, who would find respondents, organise interviews and assist as interpreters. Employing one of the Chief's sons felt like a good way to reciprocate for the help that he had already offered, but it was also advantageous. As the Chief's son, he was an important gatekeeper, enabling access to the elite men of the Chieftaincy and Zongo's landholding lineages. However, there were also disadvantages in that I was principally meeting people from landholding households closely aligned with the Chieftaincy[69]. Furthermore, as a high ranking man close to the centre of formal political power, I thought it likely the presence of a Chief's son would shape the responses of my informants in ways that might not be helpful. Consequently, it was necessary to employ other research assistants, who would enable access to different sections of the Zongo population. I talk about how I came to meet and employ these research assistants in greater detail below; for now, it is enough to say that all of the research assistants were residents in Zongo, who I had come to know in the course of fieldwork. They were selected on the basis of their proficiency in English and

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[69] One of Pellow's (2002) key informants, Sulley Bako, the Chief's nephew and one of Zongo's most respected and influential men was a notable absence on the Chief's son's itinerary. Upon the death of Sha'aibu in 2001, both Yahaya and Sulley claimed the Chieftaincy. Though relations are no longer as hostile as they once were, interactions between the men tend to be limited to formal occasions such as the *Sallah* Remix and meetings of the Fadawa when a particularly important issue is at stake.

Hausa, their availability, and my perceptions of their need for the work. As well as taking notes, I recorded all of the formal focus groups and interviews on a digital recorder.

My initial interviews and focus groups were semi-structured, focusing on health beliefs and behaviours. I would open by explaining what it was I was doing in Zongo and why I had asked to interview the respondent. Some of these interviews took the form of a life history; others were more specifically focused on health related concerns; most were a combination of the two.

Initially I saw these interviews as uninteresting and their content superficial. This was neither surprising nor particularly disappointing. My technique left a lot to be desired, the atmosphere was often staid or awkward and interviewees seemed reluctant to talk in much detail. I accepted that these encounters were little more than introductions. The nitty gritty of my fieldwork would be through participating in and observing the everyday lives of people in Zongo. When I say everyday life, I mean to imply activities and interactions less explicitly or rigidly defined as data collection.

I went to mosque, played football (badly), chatted at the public toilets, video centres, chop bars, barbershops and bases and just generally hung out with people in Zongo, watching what was going on, making notes and discussing my ideas and observations with others. In a context of pervasive underemployment, I was often received as a welcome distraction by men trying to keep boredom at bay. This identifies an inherent contradiction in my role as participant observer: as a distraction from boredom, I was by definition disrupting events.

Within a few weeks of being in Zongo, I knew a lot of people. Indeed, so many people that it became overwhelming. I found myself pulled in different directions as different people wanted me to come and spend time with them. Whilst I welcomed this expanding network of informants, I needed to strike a balance between quality and quantity. As already discussed, bases are an important focal point in the lives of men. I decided a useful strategy to begin with would be to focus my attention on a handful of bases and the men who assembled at them. I hadn't been in Zongo long and so had little idea about what might differentiate one base from another in terms of the larger stratifications at play. I thought that a base's location might be important as well as the age of its attendees. This was little more than speculation, but I sought to

establish myself at bases in disparate parts of Zongo occupied by men of different ages. However, the most important influence in deciding which bases to focus on, was the extent to which its inhabitants seemed receptive to or at the very least unperturbed by my presence.

I am cautious of calling this a 'sampling strategy' as to do so would over-emphasise the degree to which my decision was calculated at the time. It's probably more accurate to say that I at least initially spent time at the bases I felt most welcome. It was by accident more than design that I happened to know men of different ages and at disparate locations. I merely chose to foster some of these relationships more than others, guided by some speculation as to the differences that might be important. Given this uncertainty, I made a point of maintaining relationships with men at as many bases as possible so as to keep my options open.

I carried a notebook, mobile phone and digital sound recorder. As well as interviews I recorded a lot of my everyday social interaction. When I arrived at a base I would sometimes remove the recorder from my top pocket, put it down somewhere conspicuous and ask whether I could leave it to record. Most of the time people were happy to let me do this, but there were times when they objected, changed their minds, asked that I turn off the recorder or erase a particular recording, and I did so.

Most of my data was recorded using a notebook or else my phone. Although I was fearful of forgetting things or failing to record something that might be important later on, it was also often impractical to write in a notebook. I found it nigh on impossible to write in a notepad whilst walking, let alone playing football. Aside from these impracticalities, producing a notebook or recorder from one's pocket or bag tends to influence social interaction. Writing in a notepad is unusual behaviour in Zongo, and so feverish note-taking tended to shift attention away from the topic which had sparked my note-taking to the note-taking itself – though this often stimulated other interesting and useful conversations. It is quite normal, however, to take out one's phone whilst in the throes of social interaction, and so using a phone to make notes tends to have less impact upon the trajectory of an interaction.

Though I used my phone, notebook and diary to record observations in the moment, I also kept a diary. At the end of each day I would write down an outline of what I had done, what had interested me, and what might be worthwhile following up. I also

recorded more reflective, personal feelings about my experience in the field: what had made me happy or uncomfortable and other such musings. I am often better at articulating my thoughts and feelings verbally than in text, and so I sometimes made these notes on my sound recorder. However, I had to be cautious about doing this as I was aware that others were listening[70].

Over time I came to realise that though health issues were important to people in Zongo, marriage was a far more pervasive concern. Once I had switched my attention from health to marriage, I revisited my original interviews and realised their value. I still winced at my lack of self-consciousness, my blunt and impatient efforts to engineer the conversation towards health. However, once I began to focus on what interviewees *were* rather than were *not* saying, a narrative emerged which was consistent with the preoccupation with marriage I had encountered elsewhere.

2.13 Trying to Learn a Language

My Hausa was and remains rudimentary, barely good enough to converse freely in Hausa let alone apprehend the nuances of a conversation[71]. Many people in Zongo have excellent English. Nevertheless, I relied heavily on interpreters and often got lost in the flow of conversation when conducted solely in Hausa.

Concern has often been raised regarding the extent to which non-native speakers are able to make valid interpretations of meaning in languages that are not their own. The basis of this concern is the inherently complex relationship between translation and interpretation. It has been argued that specific ideas may not always find equivalence across languages and that the process of translation risks distorting or even erasing a term's significance (Duranti 1997, Temple and Young 2004, Salzmann et al 2014). In the context of my own fieldwork this concern is immediately salient. One only has to spend five minutes in Zongo to realise that Hausa is the primary medium of communication, and two minutes observing my clumsy stammerings to realise that my command of the language is at best functional. However, it is my perception that my

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[70]   I assure my reader that this is not merely a case of paranoia. I encountered a number of secretive eavesdroppers during my time in Zongo, whose intentions were not always benign.

[71]   I have learnt Spanish to the point of fluency and so am well aware of the fact that I was missing out on a lot by virtue of my linguistic incompetence in Hausa.

linguistic deficiency impairs, but does not entirely invalidate my account of social life in Zongo.

Even if the immediate environment is predominantly Hausaphone, it is perhaps more accurate to define Zongo's inhabitants as living in a multilingual world, where communication requires negotiating significance across languages. Everyday life involves a great many social interactions between Hausa and non-Hausa speakers. There are few non-Hausa speakers resident in Zongo, but there are many people who come to Zongo for one reason or another and speak little or no Hausa[72]. For example, Zongo's 'boka mallam', Islamic healers, scrap dealers and butchers have clients who speak a variety of languages. Most of the market traders, 'chemical sellers' or pharmacists that work in Zongo speak Twi; the language of instruction at the primary school is English; and many of the provision stores are owned and run by women from the surrounding neighbourhoods who speak Ga, Fante or Ewe. It is often, though not always, the case that the medium of communication in these interactions is English. Translation between Hausa in English is a fact of social life in Zongo and not unique to my interactions with people as a researcher. Having spent some time with a renowned Hausa herbalist and Akan pharmacist early on in my research, it was apparent that people in Zongo are accustomed to articulating sometimes complex thoughts, feelings and ideas in languages quite apart from Hausa and do so with not inconsiderable success.

Seeing how translations operate, the kinds of equivalences that people found between Hausa and English was in and of itself informative. The process of translation involves defining a word or concept in one language in the terms of another. This process in its essence is about establishing the boundaries of signification, of establishing what a particular term can and cannot be taken to mean. The process of establishing these boundaries brings them into relief and helps make explicit those things that inhere in their untranslated form. This will be seen in my effort to make sense of a number of Hausa terms such as '*lafiya*' and '*samari*' amongst others[73].

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[72]   According to Kropp-Dakubu (2009) Hausa is the first language of only 0.7% Accra's population, and a second language for 7.7%. English, by contrast, is the first language for 4.9% and a second language for 89.2%.
[73]   See Chapters Four and Five.

Ethnography is an act of interpretation, of drawing out meanings from the fieldwork experience and making them coherent to others (Geertz 2000). I would argue that the processes of translation and interpretation involved in learning a language are not only analogous to the ethnographic process, but an integral part of it. Hence, whilst I tried to make the most of my position as a language learner, I recognise that many significances will have slipped through the net of my linguistic deficiencies.

The account of social life that I provide in this thesis does not rely upon those social interactions that took place in English, nor lone attempts to converse in Hausa. I would generally have one or two key informants at each base who would help me when I didn't understand something. They were also those I employed as research assistants to help out with interviews and focus groups. These were the men I got to know particularly well and with whom I spent the most time. It is their voices which are most prominent in this thesis.

2.14 Opportunity Costs: The Role of Reciprocity in Fieldwork

Before I embarked on fieldwork I sought and was granted ethical approval by the University of East Anglia International Development Ethics Committee. In my application I wrote:

"*... a small amount of Nigerian Naira will be given to participants in cash at the end of focus groups, surveys and interviews to compensate for the time they have given*".

Reciprocity is a powerful, pervasive yet not uncontested ethic in social research (Edwards and Mauthner 2002, Huisman 2008, Maiter et al 2008). Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to debate or define the meaning and merits of reciprocity as an ethical standard, the idea that participants should be compensated for their time alludes to the value that I have placed on reciprocity in fieldwork. However, this ethic was more difficult to engage with than I had anticipated prior to entering the field.

Reciprocity and exchange are major themes in this thesis, and so my treatment of them here is brief in order not to get bogged down in detail which will be elaborated in the course of this thesis. For the moment, it is enough to say that reciprocity is embedded in wider social relationships such that the nature and value of what is being transferred, and the terms of exchange, are not only complex, but imbued with various

kinds of asymmetries. Consequently, reciprocity seldom equates to an egalitarian relationship.

People in Zongo have encountered researchers before. Sometimes these researchers have been part of larger projects with tangible benefits for the area, such as the construction of gutters and public toilets. One of the first things people in Zongo would ask me, is whether I was undertaking my research with a particular project in mind. I was explicit that this was not my intention and that my research was motivated by other ideas for which the benefits for individuals in Zongo were at best uncertain[74]. People did not see this as a reason not to participate, but it did mean that my research offered few concrete incentives for them to do so. Many people in Zongo said that they thought my learning was a noble endeavour and were kind, helpful and encouraging. Nevertheless, in Zongo, as elsewhere, if one person does something for another he will expect them to return the favour at some point.

In the context of focus groups and interviews, I would give those who participated money. As has already been discussed above, these encounters could not be seen as discrete. The end of an interview or focus group did not signal the termination of a one-off transaction in which all dues had been paid, but initiated an expectation – indeed obligation – to participate in further exchanges. This is especially important given the context of a sustained period of fieldwork. I had not just dropped in for a single interview and disappeared back to the UK never to be seen again. I was a feature of my informants' daily lives. The boundaries between interview and casual conversation were anything but clear. Moreover, these expectations were not only at play in my relationships with those who had participated in formally defined interviews and focus groups. They also applied with the many other individuals I encountered throughout the course of my fieldwork.

I bought bread and tea when spending time at a base, medicine when someone was ill, helped with money for school fees and uniforms and contributed to wedding expenses. I was trying to fulfil what I thought were my social and moral obligations as

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[74] From the outset I have felt morally ambivalent about my research. I still subscribe to values of social justice and equality as underpinning my research, but I have become increasingly less certain as to what these might actually look like and in what ways my research contributes towards this agenda. Furthermore, my informants and I seldom agreed as to what positive social change might look like. Most people in Zongo see my lofty ideas of social justice and equality as for the best part irrelevant to them personally.

a researcher undertaking an essentially extractive endeavour. However, these exchanges and the ways I was participating in them were not merely matters of moral obligation, but political practices. As was apparent in my discussion of the entailments of gender for social interaction, my social identity and position were implicated in and by relations with others. My analysis is derived from data produced through these relations and so my analysis needs be read in light of them.

In Zongo as anywhere, different kinds of people are subject to different social expectations which inform how individuals come to be positioned in social hierarchies. As could be seen in the example of the Chieftaincy, exchanges of political and economic support are an important feature of these hierarchies in Zongo. Senior men are expected to provide social, political and economic support for their juniors. In turn, junior men are expected to submit to their authority. From the moment I arrived in Zongo, people set about locating me in these structures.

I was by no means considered an elite, but I was perceived by many in Zongo as somebody who had a degree of wealth and influence. Consequently, I was located towards the upper end of the social hierarchy and was accorded a degree of prestige and authority. For innumerable reasons, not least my own sense of unworthiness, I was uncomfortable with this position and often sought to resist it[75]. I also spent time with men who were by all accounts my social superiors. Though I found the company of these men challenging for different reasons, I generally found it easier to be deferential to others than to be deferred to myself. As has already been touched on, holding such a position comes with responsibilities, not least towards one's social inferiors, who expect their deference to be rewarded. That I neither wanted, enjoyed, nor expected to be treated with deference was for the best part irrelevant. I was expected to meet my social obligations. Of course, most of the time I was interacting with men in murkier territory, where status differentials are less discrete and social expectations are more uncertain. As we shall see later, marital status is an important marker of status. That I was unmarried, yet perceived as wealthy and influential meant

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[75]   For example, there were a number of events at which I was honoured with a seat at the High Table. I would scurry off into the crowd or linger discretely at the back with the younger men. This strategy was not always successful. Somebody would be sent out to find me. I would be put back in my place and have to endure embarrassment. Ironically, my attempts to evade the High Table were perceived as a sign of modesty, a trait widely regarded as admirable, which only served to reinforce the idea that I was a man of good character, worthy of praise and respect.

that my status was often ambiguous. This ambiguity accorded me a degree of freedom in terms of who I was able to interact with, and in what ways. For example, being unmarried enabled me to interact with low status unmarried men on a more equal footing, whilst at the same time my education and perceived affluence were important levellers when in the company of married men who were otherwise my social superiors.

2.15 How to Make Friends and Disappoint People: Insights Achieved through Failure

Sometimes, the expectations people had of me were explicit or obvious, such as when paying research assistants or when asked to make a donation to the cost of repairs at a mosque I frequented. There were occasions when I was unwilling or unable to meet people's explicitly stated expectations. Indeed, people often called upon a notion of normative reciprocity as a means to engage the social, political and economic resources to which I was presumed to have access but didn't; I was asked variously, for example, for large amounts of money, cars, visas, plane tickets and jobs. By contrast, a lot of the time it was difficult to work out what my obligations were, to whom I was obligated, and why. Some people tried and were indeed successful at exploiting my naivety, but my feeling is that these occasions were relatively rare.

My transgressions and failures were many; most people were forgiving. They adjusted their expectations when I explained why I was unable to meet them, or else helped me understand my errors and how best to make amends for them. There were some who did not see my explanations as credible and came to treat me as any man considered a mean and miserly liar. I was not unaffected by these accusations, even when I thought they were misguided or unreasonable. There were moments when I was hurt or felt guilty about disappointing people. Whilst I never set out to disappoint people, let alone cause offence, my innumerable *faux pas* were hugely informative. I gradually came to understand the nuances of reciprocity and the trials and tribulations involved in meeting one's social expectations. Given my own experience of life in Zongo, it is perhaps not surprising that disappointment and failure have emerged as important themes in my thesis.

Chapter Three: The Meaning of Marriage

The principle objective of this chapter is to provide a brief overview of some of the ways marriage has been thought about in anthropology and how my thesis hopes to add to this thinking. The literature on marriage is far too vast to provide a comprehensive survey, so it is inevitable that the picture I provide is partial and selective. Furthermore, though I have loosely hung my review on the frame of chronology, I hasten to add that this is merely a means to structure the text, rather than indicative of a linear conceptual progression within the literature over time[76]. It is neither the aim nor indeed within the scope of this thesis to provide an 'archaeology' of marriage within anthropology. Nevertheless, briefly setting out the various directions from which anthropological analyses have approached marriage is useful, in that it enables an exposition of the particular methodological leanings that inform my thesis. This thesis does not hope to definitively put the idea of marriage to bed once and for all, nor does it intend to do away with it altogether, but instead provides an account of marriage that unsettles the terms that have hitherto formed the basis of its analysis. Specifically, I seek to propose an alternative approach to thinking about how people form attachments to particular meanings of marriage and how these attachments pattern the things that people say and do.

3.1 Alliance or Descent? Structural Functionalism and Marriage

Marriage has long been a staple ingredient of anthropology. In the early 20thCentury, anthropologists were concerned with the organisation of small-scale societies. In the presumed absence of large scale institutions such as a state, anthropologists saw kinship as the principal structure around which societies were politically organised (Borneman 1996, Carsten 2004). The question then was with how marriage mediated kinship and organised society. What does marriage *do,* such that a society is enabled to function? It is perhaps as a consequence of this concern that analyses of marriage

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[76] The anthropology of marriage, indeed anthropology in general, has seldom conformed to such linearity and has often resisted narratives that have attempted to do so.

have tended to centre on the kinds of rights and obligations marriage entails. Take for example the oft-cited definition from Notes and Queries (Murdock 1959 p.110):

"*Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized legitimate offspring of both parents*". Notice that key to this definition are notions of gender and consanguinity as organisational principles.

This definition can and indeed has been problematized in many ways. For example, Gough (1959) doubted whether marriage's role in legitimating consanguinal paternity was always important. She described polyandrous marriage amongst the Nayar as a case in which consanguinity may not always have been very significant to social fatherhood. Similarly, citing 'ghost marriage' amongst the Nuer as an example, Bell (1997) questioned the insistence upon consanguinity to legitimate parenthood as well as the gender identities of a marriage's constituents. However, the central idea remains that marriage serves to articulate and legitimate rights and responsibilities between parents, their progeny (however they might be defined) and a wider social group. The question then is what end do these rights and obligations serve?

Within this paradigm, many scholars have had something to say on the social functions of marriage[77], but it is perhaps Radcliffe-Brown and Levi-Straus who might be thought of as most prominent in a debate concerning whether it was alliance or descent that operated as the principal for the social function of marriage. The analyses of structural-functionalism, such as those of Levi-Strauss (1969) and Radcliffe-Brown (1950), are important in bringing into view how marriage cannot be seen as a determinate phenomenon, but instead is inseparable from broader social relationships and institutions.

For Radcliffe-Brown (ibid), it was descent that was most at stake; marriage was seen as a way of regulating biological reproduction: "*An African marries because he wants children. The most important part of the 'value' of a woman is her child-bearing capacity*" (1950. p51). Marriage, here, is a means through which men can be certain that they indeed have children, and that their descent group has been sustained. However, for Radcliffe-Brown and other structural functionalists, what was important

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[77]   Examples of structural-functionalist interpretations abound and are as such too numerous to list here in full. However, Mogey (1963), Eggan and Scott (1965), and Riviere (1971) can all be considered to typify this approach.

was not the 'preferences' or 'attachments' that individual men might have for children, or as is my interest marriage, but the role that marriage plays in descent as a principle of social organisation in the absence of large institutions such as a state that might have performed this function in more 'complex' societies.

The work of Levi-Strauss (1969) is markedly different to that of Radcliffe-Brown, in that where the latter saw the cognitive or psychological dimensions of marriage as being to some degree independent of social organisation, Levi-Strauss was concerned with what these larger structural arrangements might say about the underlying structures of the mind.

For Levi-Strauss, marriage was less about descent than it was about alliance and social differentiation. He made the case for the 'incest taboo' as the basis of culture. Social differentiation was the first act of culture, in that it was what distinguished human kind from animals or 'nature'. This was manifest in the universality of an incest taboo. This, he argued, reflected an opposition between nature and culture as fundamental cognitive structure from which marriage arises as a mechanism of social organisation.

3.2 Accounting for Women

Despite the differences between Radcliffe-Brown and Levi-Strauss, an important parallel can be found in their preoccupation with marriage as being linked to wider social structures. Marriage was described in terms of the sets of culturally sanctioned rights, entitlements and obligations. Marriage mattered as a means of establishing a relationship between kin and as an articulation of rights, responsibilities and entitlements that centred on social and sexual reproduction of a social group. It is thus perhaps no surprise that one outcome of these approaches was the analysis of marriage as a form of exchange. Many scholars working within this paradigm were concerned with the exchange of marriage goods and how they might operate to cement contractual obligations between those variously related to the bride and groom, and to provide stability to the social order (see for example Fortes (1962), Goody and Goody 1967, Goody and Tambiah 1973).

As argued by Van Baal (1970), these kinds of analyses tend towards describing the role of women in marriage in terms of 'gifts' or 'commodities' circulated as political

resource. For example, debates surrounding bridewealth and dowry centre on the distinct forms of political organisation that are argued to underpin them[78]. The position of women within these exchanges largely evade scrutiny. Even in ethnographies of matrilineal societies, such as those of Melanesia, analyses of marriage's role in political organisation focus on men as centres of representation and ascribe women an auxiliary albeit essential function as those who biologically reproduce the kinship ties that organise social relations between groups of men[79]. Women are 'merely' wives or mothers; the conduits of social organisation rather than active participants in its constitution. Marriage is seen as a mechanism through which their sexual and reproductive functions are circulated within masculine systems of political organisation (Van Baal 1975, Carsten 2004).

A number of scholars have highlighted the inadequacy of these narratives to account for the position of women, raising dual concerns about how processes of social organisation as well as the interpretations made of them might be gendered. Ortner (1972), Van Baal (1975), Pateman (1988), Collier (1987), Young et al. (1981), are just some of those who have sought to address these concerns in an international context, as will be discussed below. Many of these authors offer a sharp critique of development policy, practice and the academic field of development studies itself, arguing that analyses of women's positions and roles in development have failed to address the issue of women's subordination[80]. These analyses repositioned women in accounts of marriage and marital processes, decentring the masculinist representations that had predominated and bringing relations between women and men firmly into view. This was achieved by shifting the analytical focus from macro-level political organisation to interrogate conjugality and domestic organisation, where the work of reproduction was argued to take place (Moore 1995). Through these analyses, attention was drawn to how marriage mediated relations of domination and

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[78]   According to Goody and Tambiah (1973), societies in which bridewealth is practised tend to emphasise unilineal kinship in which descent takes primacy. Marriage is thus primarily about gaining access to women's reproductive capacities as a means to *main*tain and perpetuate a lineage. In contrast, dowry societies in their emphasis on bilateral kinship deploy marriage as a means to establish kin relations and hence as a mechanism of alliance.

[79]   One notable, but contested exception being that of Margaret Mead (1963), who claimed that Chambri women often occupied positions of significant power.

[80]   Within development studies this was reflected in the movement from 'Women in Development' (WID) to 'Gender and Development', (GAD) (Miller and Razavi 1995).

subordination between men and women, often in terms of differential access to and control over resources; for example, through inheritance, residential forms and divisions of labour (Moore 1995, Carsten 2004).

Ann Whitehead's (1981) often cited analysis of Kusasi domestic economy in rural Ghana is emblematic of this shift in approach. Whitehead observed how a husband's authority within a Kusasi household is grounded in his juridical status as breadwinner. However, Whitehead argued that this position is not an outcome of actual contributions to household consumption made by individuals, but an ideology of gender that defines and values the labour of men and women differently[81]. The effect of Whitehead's argument is to unsettle the idea of marriage as a 'jural' contract – a set of prescribed rules governing marriage, the marital process, spouse selection and marital relations. This resonates with Comaroff's (1980) critique of structural-functionalist accounts of marriage and the marital process, in which it is asserted that the jural dimensions of marriage are overemphasised in earlier accounts.

"*This dimension is central to established anthropological conceptions: whatever other differences may be expressed concerning its analysis the conjugal bond is almost universally regarded as a jurally constituted and contractually defined relationship, a view grounded firmly in the concepts of western jurisprudence. Despite growing evidence in the shortcomings of this approach, marriage continues to be seen as a "bundle of rights" and bridewealth as the instrument of their production and/or exchange*". (Comaroff 1980. p.18).

Whitehead's response to this jural emphasis was to offer a notion of the 'conjugal contract'; the normative rather than jural articulation of entitlements and responsibilities mediating the distribution of resources between spouses. In line with this critique, the 1980s saw a flurry of feminist scholarship that sought to examine conjugality as a normative apparatus: a mechanism through which ideologies of gender difference are established and sustained (see for example Whitehead 1981, Maher, 1981, Pateman 1988). A number of scholars sought to examine what the relations were that made the very idea of man and woman meaningful as distinct

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[81] For example, Kusasi women can and do farm, but because the staple crop millet is only grown on land owned by men, women are not regarded as farmers, regardless of any actual labour that they contribute towards its production (Whitehead 1981).

categories of the person such that the subordination of women was accepted or 'naturalised' (see for example MacCormack 1980, Strathern 1988, Ortner and Whitehead 1981). This emphasis was captured in Sherry Ortner and Harriet Whitehead's edited collection, 'Sexual Meanings': The cultural construction of Gender and Sexuality (1981). The contributors drew attention to the diversity of forms that gender difference seemed to take in different social and cultural contexts. They attempted to challenge the ontological assumption of man and woman as discrete pre-biological categories, investigating them as symbolic categories, themselves constituted in and through social relations. As will be shown below, these analyses were not without their problems. However, their significance lies in ushering in a change in emphasis from a view of men and women as pre-given biological categories –sex – to the symbolic systems and social relations – gender – that give them meaning.

"*…natural features of gender, and natural processes of sex and reproduction, furnish only a suggestive and ambiguous backdrop to the cultural organization of gender and sexuality. What gender is, what men and women are, what sorts of relations do or should obtain between them – all of these notions do not simply reflect or elaborate upon biological "givens", but are largely products of social and cultural processes. The very emphasis on the biological factor within different cultural traditions is variable; some cultures claim that male-female differences are almost entirely biologically grounded, whereas others give biological differences, or supposed biological differences, very little emphasis.*" (Ortner and Whitehead 1981 p.1).

In another example, Goodale (1980) describes how for the Kaulong of Papua New Guinea conjugality is central to the constitution of gender difference as manifest in the symbolic and spatial separation of men and women that occurs post marriage.

The position adopted by Ortner and Whitehead, and by Goodale – that marriage is an ideological apparatus that constructs gender difference – has important implications for this thesis.

It thus follows that in the context of marriage, it is not only the terms of the 'contract' that are disadvantageous to women, but the ideological positions from which they are interpreted and negotiated. This is to say that certain gender ideologies are articulated through the idea of marriage which operate to subordinate the interests of women to

those of men. For example, women's roles within and relations to the household as wives and mothers, binds women to the household as well as other social institutions in different ways to men as husbands and fathers (see Stolcke 1981, Pateman 1992) [82].

3.3 Multiple Identities and Intersectionality

Feminist scholarship, which saw female solidarity as a political imperative in the struggle for social justice and equality, not infrequently backgrounded relations between women. Though not without its political merits[83], the emphasis was often on women as a category without internal differentiation, foregrounding their relations with men and the challenges faced under the structural constraints of patriarchy. This brought women's roles and investments in marriage into view, and dwelt upon the extent to which they may or may not be in accordance with those of men. However, though relations between men and women were brought into the analyses, those between women and women within wider gender orders were under-examined (Cornwall 2007a).

A number of authors have at various times picked up this trail. Collier (1987), Mason (1988) Jankowiak and Sudakov, et al (2005), are amongst those who have demonstrated how relations between women are implicated in marriage. Examples salient for this thesis can be found in the work of both Cooper's (1995) and Masquelier's (2004) analyses of marriage amongst the Hausa. They observed how marriage forms part of a network of exchange relations through which women forge relations with other women. These relations are also important for relations between women and men as a means for women to establish social, material and economic security independent of their husbands. Masquelier (ibid) and Cooper (ibid) expanded the analysis of marriage beyond masculine-centric notions of kinship to the much broader array of social relationships that may be involved, including those between

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[82]   This argument is echoed in Sen (1987), who argues that women's interests are often wholly subsumed into a household unit as wives and mothers and thus subordinated to those of their husbands and children.

[83]   See for example Spivak (1996), Danius, Jonsson and Spivak (1993).

women whose relationships with one another may or may not be described in terms of kinship or descent.

Crucially, relations between women as mediated by marriage are no less subject to hierarchical organisation than those between men and women. Collier (1987) observes how within polygamous marriages not all brides can be considered equals. Competition and conflict is often a feature of relations between co-wives, and bridewealth often serves as an index of a woman's social value and prestige. Through a comparative analysis of marriage amongst North American Kiowa and Kachin of Burma, Collier demonstrated how the relative statuses of individual women within a household informed and were informed by the marital process. Again, exchange was the focus: Collier showed how the statuses of women might be mediated by and in the transfer of marriage goods. This is echoed in Cooper (1995) and Masquelier (2004), who described the exchange of goods in the marital process in terms of how they reflect individual women's efforts to claim a valued social identity for themselves relative to other women. For example, Masquelier (2004), interrogated the importance attached to the gifting of a bed to a bride by her mother upon marriage. A mother acquires such a bed via female friends, kin and peers who contribute in expectation that their assistance will be reciprocated upon marriage of their own daughters. Acquiring a bed becomes a social reference point mediating relations between women. Because a woman's status is seen as a function of the depth and breadth of her social networks, judgements as to the 'value' of the bed reflect evaluations of a bride and her mother's status relative to other women as well as men.

3.4 Locating Agency

Thus far we have seen how marriage operates as a site in which gender identity and power are manifested. In contrast to the structural-functionalist vision of marriage as a mechanism for the reproduction of a harmonious social order, feminist scholarship of the 1980s examined the tensions and conflicts of conjugality, alerting us to conjugal relations as sites in which relations of inequality, subordination and domination between both women and men, and women and women, are played out. However, in opening up new avenues for research and political action, many scholars found the conceptual and analytical toolkits with which to undertake them wanting, as reflected

in an ongoing concern with how to locate agency within enduring inequalities and injustices (see for example Moore 1988, 1995, 2007 Alcoff and Potter 1993, Reader 2007).

For Ann Whitehead (1981) conjugality was framed by a notion of power relations as a tug of war between men and women over access to and control over resources; thus power was perceived as residing with those who captured the greatest share of household resources such as land and labour. Marriage was seen as an inequitable institution because it operated in favour of men, who enjoyed the greatest material benefits with the least expenditure. Whitehead's example is illustrative of a number of problems that can be argued to pervade the scholarship of the era.

First of all, early 1980s feminist accounts tended to frame gender inequality in terms of the material disadvantages faced by women. Clearly, within development studies material wealth and poverty matter. Many aspects of well-being are certainly more easily realised when one is not in poverty. However, Jackson (1996) and Cornwall (2002, 2007b) argue that although material wealth may be instrumental in realising equality, giving primacy to economic or material dimensions threatens to elide not only the wider social relations that underlie the multifarious means and modes of gender injustice, but also the spaces in which autonomy and freedom might be realised.

This brings us to a second concern with this particular school of thought, and what can be argued as an overly structuralist approach. Even those who had emphasised symbolic rather than material dimensions of inequality tended towards reifying symbolic systems as transcendent structures. As Borneman (1996) argues, the efforts of 1980s feminist scholarship tended to displace rather than dissolve biological dualisms. For example, Ortner's (1972) argument that male and female were cultural elaborations rooted in dichotomous notions of nature and culture, struggles to pull away from biological essentialisms by grounding such difference in biological reproduction[84] (Macormack 1980).

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[84]   A number of scholars have gone on to argue that notions of gender too often rely on the fixity of biological sex. Of course bodies and biologies are far from irrelevant to human social experience. However, ascribing biologies the status of originating principle threatens to elide the complex relationships through which epistemic certainties are constituted and the experience of dissonance and diversity within them. See for example West and Zimmerman

The question, then, is how to locate an escape route from the constraints of patriarchal social structures? The difficulty here is that women's subordination is argued to reside in patriarchy as either symbolic and/or material structural arrangement, leaving us with women who are not only the victims of structural disadvantage and ill-being, but devoid of the kinds of subjectivity and agency that are necessary to influence marital practices in their favour (Kabeer 1997, Jackson 2012).

Jackson (ibid) suggests that the absence of women's agency in these narratives needs to be challenged. By presenting us with a case study of changing marital practices amongst Zimbabwean Shona, Jackson describes how changing economic conditions have made the bridewealth transactions, which formerly established and legitimated the conjugal contract, more difficult to achieve. She locates women's agency in how they have made use of this situation to strengthen their bargaining positions relative to that of their husbands and kin in negotiating the conjugal contract, thereby gaining a degree of personal independence. By detailing the historical fluidity of marriage and the rights and obligations within it, Jackson (ibid) questions the extent to which it can be seen as an apparatus of structural constraint. By demonstrating how marriage has changed, she is able to ask what role women might have had in changing it, and to what extent these changes might work in their favour. Similarly, Kandiyoti (1988) and Kabeer (1997) have both described how Bangladeshi women, who have found work in Bangladesh's garment industry managed to strengthen their bargaining positions within marriages, escape abusive marriages or postpone marriage altogether.

These observations bring a concern with agency into view in a way that had been lacking in the accounts provided in earlier feminist scholarship. Crucially, this suggests that positions of 'notional' subordination may not be entirely devoid of possibilities for agency. I will return to this issue below, where I discuss the tensions between structure and agency in greater detail. Beforehand, I would like to turn my attention to men, who are after all the focus of this thesis, and how masculinity has been conceived of in the literature.

(1987), Foucault (1978), Csordas (1990), Grosz (1993), Lock (1993), Fausto-Sterling (1993), Moore (1994, 2007) Butler (2011).

3.5 Men, Masculinities and Marriage

This thesis is explicit in its interest in men and marriage, but thus far I have made no mention of how men and masculinity have been thought about in the literature. This omission is in part a result of trying to roughly trace the chronological trajectory of anthropological thinking about marriage, within which men and masculinity as an explicit focus of analysis has only relatively recently emerged.

As we have already seen, the major contribution of early 1980s feminist scholarship has been in locating women's subordination in conceptions of gender as a set of social and cultural relationships. Clearly, though, it is not only women who inhabit this terrain, but also men. Efforts to unravel the social significance of men and masculinity have come from several angles.

Gender analytical and feminist scholarship have drawn attention to the ways in which major social transformations, such as colonialism, slavery, neoliberalism and 'globalisation' have reconfigured gender relations and identities in African societies. However, whilst women have emerged as a major research focus in development studies and increasingly in policy and practice, there had until recently been a tendency to leave men and masculinities by the wayside. This is hardly surprising, given that the political project of early 1980's feminism was to draw attention to the women's experiences of social change, largely ignored by development studies and social analyses of Africa more broadly, which had left man as the 'unmarked' category (Morrell 1998).

With the emergence of the field of men and masculinities, there has been an upsurge in interest in African men and their experiences of gender. Particular attention has been drawn to the ways in which relations with and between men and women, their identities, aspirations and desires have shaped and been shaped by large scale social change in Africa. A number of authors have examined how notions of manhood were reconfigured in colonial encounters.

McKittrick (2003) describes how in Namibian Ovamboland precolonial manhoods were defined by control over the allocation of productive assets, including labour but in particular cattle, with 'fathers' who distributed cattle to sons at the apex of masculine hierarchies. These hierarchies were brought into tension with colonial efforts to extend wage labour, opening up new opportunities for young men to establish herds

independently of their fathers. Whilst paternal authority was seen to endure, albeit to a lesser degree, notions of adult manhood became less closely tethered to control over cattle, with greater emphasis placed on affective ties and filial loyalty as markers of masculine status.

In the same volume, Mann (2003) explores the challenge of reintegration faced by Malian veterans from the French army in the 1950's. He describes how many veterans came home to find themselves held in disdain by their peers, who had by staying at home, marrying, establishing a household and becoming learned in Islam, achieved a socially accepted and valued adult manhood. Mann observes how religious fissions, sometimes leading to violent disputes, were broadly aligned with these differential statuses. He argues that the veteran's support for a reinterpretation of the Quran and religious practice was an act of rebellion against their social superiors, for whom status was in part vested in claiming knowledge of Islam, but was also an effort to establish an Islam through which they could assert terms of moral propriety amenable to their own status. As we shall see in this thesis, ideas about gender are not infrequently articulated through religious discourses and practices. In a manner consistent with Douglas (2010, 2013), notions of the sacred and profane can often be seen to mark out the boundaries of the normative.

Analyses of men and masculinities in present day Africa have often been framed by the impact of neoliberalism. A particular emphasis has been on the ways in which neoliberalism has come to impinge upon many of the social practices and institutions seen as pivotal to the realisation of productive and responsible manhood – not least marriage, which in many African societies endures as the principle marker of manhood. For example, Silberschmidt (1999) and Cornwall's (2002) accounts, situated in Kenya and Nigeria respectively, highlight how economic decline, brought about by neoliberal economic policies, has impacted upon established gender orders, specifically relations between women and men. Cornwall and Silberschmidt describe how masculine authority rests upon an enduring ideal of men as providers, and yet such ideals are increasingly difficult to achieve in contexts in which income earning opportunities for women have expanded whilst those of men seem to have diminished. One effect of this changing socioeconomic context is the calling into question not only the manhoods of those men who fail to provide, but the very ideology of men's authority over women.

Similar themes can be seen in Miescher's (2005) text, 'Making Men in Ghana', based on narratives of eight Akan elders in Kwahu Region. Miescher structures these accounts according to the various life stages of men, childhood, education, employment and marriage, eventually arriving at the status of respected elder. However, these life stages and the norms, ideals and expectations they imply do not occur in a vacuum. Miescher shows they have been shaped by major social transformations such as Kwahu's breakaway from the Asante state, the arrival of Presbyterianism and Western education, colonialism, the demise of slavery and emergence of the postcolonial state. Through these accounts Miescher reveals an important dialectic; established gender orders are not merely flattened by large scale social institutions and major social events, but part of a complex tapestry of social arrangements, influencing how these institutions and events are received and shaping the trajectory of change. This is evident in the case of the 'big man', an elite masculinity grounded in the ability to distribute the spoils of political power in return for political support[85]. Miescher argues that though the means through which such a status is achieved have changed, for example warfare playing a less central role, the notion of big man remains a prominent form of elite masculinity in Ghana's contemporary political landscape.

Miescher also raises an important methodological concern as to what these accounts actually tell us about the history of men and masculinities in Ghana. He argues that the narratives provided by the men ought not be construed as prima facie accounts of the past, but self-conscious performances invested with the social exigencies of the present (Miescher 2005 p 152); in particular, the need to portray one's past in ways that give meaning and value to one's experience of being a man in the present. This resonates closely with my own interpretation of the accounts provided by my informants in Zongo and my motive for using Goffman's (1956, 1974, 1980) 'dramaturgical self' as an analytical frame.

Men and masculinities have not gone unstudied in Accra. Much like Mckittrick's (2003) analysis in Namibia discussed above, Akyeampong (2000) describes how urbanisation and migration presented both men and women with new opportunities to accumulate capital in early 20th Century Ghana. Gerontocratic authority was unsettled

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[85] See Chapter Five for a more substantial discussion of wealth-in-people.

as young men's dependency on their elders was reduced. However, income earning opportunities also opened up for women. Women were able to trade in the colonial market economy, deploy their sexuality to gain access to the resources of wealthy men and assert a degree of autonomy outside established conjugal forms. Whilst senior men exerted less control over the marital affairs of their juniors, women were increasingly influential in establishing the terms of their marriages or even resisting marriage altogether. This presented a dilemma for men whose status relied on the accumulation of wives to assert their own status as 'big men'. Disgruntled by these shifts in the balance of power, men bemoaned women's accumulation as the product of an immoral and sexualised materialism. In Chapter Six of this thesis we will see how a similar narrative can be seen to frame the ways men in Sabon Zongo evaluate prospective brides.

Writing in the context of Madina, a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Accra, Langevang (2008) describes how marriage is desirable as an important marker of adult manhood. In order to marry, young men must find the resources to pay for wedding costs and set up a household, but they must also engage in costly and uncertain courtships. Langevang shows us how hard it can be to meet these requirements in a context of economic instability and pervasive unemployment. Furthermore, young men are often disappointed when a promising courtship is usurped by a wealthier or more generous suitor. At the same time for many materially poor women, trade in a sexual economy, where material promises often go unfulfilled by the men that make them, is the least unviable option.

A similar theme plays out in Overa's (2007) analysis in contemporary Accra. Overa (2007) examines how structural adjustment has influenced the ways in which the informal economy is gendered. Overa describes how greater income earning opportunities for women have arisen alongside a demise in the opportunities for men. This has not only left women with the burden of providing for dependent children, but for adult husbands and sons unable to provide for themselves. Indeed, according to Overa, though marriage persists as a social and moral ideal for both men and women, many women have reached the conclusion that husbands might well be something they could do without. Conversely, men are left struggling to meet women's costly demands for cash and goods or else lament their failure to meet social expectations of a productive and responsible manhood.

A number of scholars argued that far from the patriarchal dividend as a universal reward for all men, gender relations could be seen to present a number of well-being challenges specific to men. This was argued from the point of view of analyses of men and masculinity exploring the effects of particular representations of accepted and valued notions of masculinity and the pressures on men to live up to them. For example, a number of scholars observed how gendered labour practices presented specific challenges for men's health, such as exposure to physically demanding, dangerous or risky labour (Jackson 1999, Walter and Bourgois, et al, 2004, Zseleczky, Christie et al 2014). Others have described how in contexts where physical and mental strength are seen as indicative of socially accepted and valued manhood, men endure ill-being and fail to seek healthcare in an effort to meet social expectations (Courtenay 2000, Robertson 2007, Gough and Robertson 2009). These analyses draw attention to the particular vulnerabilities encountered by men as they seek to fulfil the normative expectations of masculine roles, but they also raise questions concerning which men can actually be seen to reap the rewards of patriarchy. This is not to say that there has been a levelling of the playing field, or women have gained the upper hand, but simply that the rules of the game have changed, presenting different opportunities and constraints for different people at different moments in time.

Those working within post-colonial studies and queer theory have argued that there are multiple ways of experiencing or identifying with a notion of masculinity, which may be divergently accepted and valued (Connell 2005). The intersections of gender with other forms of social differentiation, such as sexual orientation, ethnicity and class could be seen to structure relations between men. For example, the institutionalisation of work place homophobia (Van de Meer 2003, Embrick and Walther et al 2007) and the rewarding of heteronormativity through higher salaries (Hodges and Budig 2010), were deployed as examples of how different forms of masculinity were differentially valued and hierarchically organised.

For some time now, the idea that masculinities matter has been gaining momentum within development studies, as well as in policy and practice contexts. A recurrent theme has been a perceived 'crisis of masculinities', in which large scale transformations in political or economic relations are said to impinge upon men's ability

to realise social recognised forms of masculinity (Silberschmidt 1999, Cleaver 2002, Cornwall, Edström and Greig 2011). The argument here is that there is an increasing disjuncture between the normative expectations associated with valued forms of masculinity and the everyday realities of young men's lives, which present few opportunities for the attainment of acceptable manhood. Thus many men remain marginal to the social categories that accord men power and privilege. The argument has often been made that men's participation in high risk sexual practices (Lindegger and Durrheim 2001, Bujra 2002, Izugbara and Okal 2011), in armed conflict (Dolan 2002, Harris 2012), and other forms of physical violence (Kersten 1996, Akpinar 2003, Veit et al 2011, V4C 2015) emerge from an inability to fulfil social expectations of manhood and the frustration and uncertainty it produces.

It is perhaps not surprising that the idea of gender as an axis of subordination and ill-being for men as well as women was met with a degree of ambivalence. Within development studies some were concerned that this repositioning of men and masculinity might detract from the hard-fought and ongoing battle to bring the structural subordination of women to the development agenda; but there was also a growing awareness that men and masculinities needed to be better understood as part of the nexus of relationships through which gender injustice and inequality are sustained (Cleaver 2002, Cornwall 2011). A recent interest has therefore emerged in how to account for men and masculinity within the analytical frame of gender analysis and the kind of conceptual and analytical approaches needed to deconstruct men's relationships to notions of masculinity whilst not losing sight of them as potential sites of power and privilege.

The concept of 'hegemonic masculinities' developed by Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985) grabbed the attention of those working within gender analysis, by arguing that it was the hierarchical organisation of forms of masculinity that established and reinforced the structures that came to subordinate women. Connell (2005) defines hegemonic masculinity as follows;

"*The concept of hegemony…refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life. At any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the*

problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 2005 p.77).

"*Hegemony relates to cultural dominance in the society as a whole. Within that overall framework there are specific gender relations of dominance and subordination between groups of men*" (Connell 2005 p.78).

From Connell's point of view hegemonic masculinity is a term that can be applied to describe the cultural practices that sustain men's domination of women and other men. Key to the notion of hegemonic masculinity is the idea that cultural ideals of masculinity operate as normative mechanisms that legitimate the dominance of some men over others (Connell 2005). Connell argues that, whether or not embodied by actual men, hegemonic masculinities represent cultural ideals concerning the qualities that men ought to possess and the kinds of relationships that they should have with other people. Thus hegemonic forms of masculinity serve as benchmarks against which men are defined, evaluated and ranked. There are norms that confer status and privilege to men when they are seen to conform to this ideal type, and sanctions when they deviate from it.

Marriage has been a recurrent theme in these discussions, often described as a necessary but increasingly elusive requirement for the attainment of recognised manhood. For example, in the context of Hausaphone Niger, Masquelier (2005) describes how increasing bridewealth payments and declining incomes make the attainment of adult masculinity, for which marriage is a marker, difficult for many young men. Similarly, in her analysis of changing marriage practices in Kenya's Kisii District, Silbershmidt (1999) observes how men's inability to meet bridewealth payments has led to more tenuous unions in which men struggle to assert the control over wives that is central to idealised notions of masculinity. This she argues has led to men seeking to assert masculine identities through the pursuit of multiple sexual relationships and aggression towards women.

What these examples demonstrate is that marriage can be an important part of the process through which idealised forms of masculinity are realised by individual men. These idealised masculinities might be described as hegemonic in that they provide the dominant representations of what men are supposed to be or do. However, whilst I recognise that the development of the concept of hegemonic masculinity has drawn

attention to a paucity of thinking about men and gender, I have some reservations about using the term to frame my own analysis.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that part of the value of the notion of hegemonic masculinity is that it remains open to interpretation and elaboration from various analytical perspectives. The flipside of this is that term has become somewhat slippery. Whilst use of the term hegemonic masculinity has proliferated, its applications have remained highly variable, and this has left the term open to a degree of ambiguity, perhaps even fungibility.

One of the numerous critiques that has been levied at the term has been how it has often been used in ways that correlate with and/or confound idealised notions of masculinity, positions of social dominance and the mechanisms through which they are (re)produced (Beasely 2008). This can be seen in the tendency to use hegemonic masculinity to describe a typology of socially exalted masculine qualities and characteristics (Jefferson 2002, Moller 2007). When the term is deployed in this way, idealised or accepted notions of masculinity are seen as the basis for the ordinal ranking of men in terms of degrees of correspondence to normative ideals of masculinity. Such ranking is assumed to produce directly correlative relations of domination and subordination in which authority and privilege are distributed along a spectrum of masculinities (and femininities). Here, we find idealised masculinity as the most revered, desired and powerful form of masculinity at one end; and the most deviant, despised and subordinated form at the other. The problem here is the assumption that power and privilege are conferred by default to those who most closely resemble idealised or valued forms of masculinity and establish their authority over those who do not (Moller 2007)[86]. Consequently, the mere presence of idealised masculinities amid diversely recognised and valued masculinities is assumed to directly map onto relationships of subordination and domination. As we shall see below, from the point of view of De Certeau (1984), one might argue that this conflates *representations* of accepted and valued forms of masculinity as positions of

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[86] Connell (2006) herself asserts that the characteristics and behaviours of dominant men may not always correspond to idealised or valued forms of masculinity. However, as a number of authors have argued, Connell uses the term interchangeably to denote ideal types of masculinity, socially dominant men, and the mechanisms of men's social dominance (Beasely 2008).

dominance with actual relationships of domination and subordination and the mechanisms through which they are (re)produced.

3.6 The Cock that Crows when the Hen Has Laid the Egg: What do Ideals Actually Do?

"*The fact that the codification of the rules and the supervision of their observance very often are male prerogatives should not lead us to make the mistake of the cock perched on the hedge crowing because the hen laid an egg*". (Van Baal 1975 p.299/300).

The above quote speaks to two of the concerns of this thesis: first, my concern with how subordination and domination, prestige and status are articulated through gender relations and identities, in particular notions of manhood; and second, the extent to which representations of who does and does not have power may or may not be congruous with actual social relationships.

Van Baal (ibid) examines the case of Melanesian and Australian women who flee in apparent terror upon hearing the 'magic flutes' and bullroarers played by men in religious ceremonies. Van Baal is sceptical as to whether fear of the magic flutes can be interpreted as a symbolic manifestation of the subordination of women. He argues that women's screams may not be expressions of terror but cooperative performances in male fantasies of power. From this jumping off point, Van Baal interrogates Levi-Strauss' (1969) emphasis on women as 'objects' exchanged between men through marriage. Van Baal questions the extent to which being an 'object' of exchange necessarily equates to a position of passivity. Though not denying that the terms of marriage and the marital process may often be largely unfavourable to women, Van Baal suggests that women may derive some advantages from adopting the position as an object of exchange and thus willingly choose to do so. For example, Van Baal argues that marriage establishes a debt between wife-giver and -receiver. It is the establishment of this debt that enables the wife-giver to make claims upon the recipient. However, the wife-giver relies in this exchange on the wife performing her duties as a wife should, such that the debt can be sustained. This in turn affords the gifted bride a degree of leverage over her paternal kin. The point here is that male

fantasies of power rely on female cooperation and so present a paradox: withholding a scream, or failing to acknowledge the performance at all, represents a latent power.

We can observe a similar paradox within the context of Hausa conjugality. As discussed in Chapter One, Barkow (1974) describes how valued forms of masculinity amongst the Hausa emphasise a man's sexual potency and the extent of his control over women. However, as can be construed from Salamone's (1976) account, it is far more difficult for a man to assert his sexual potency or claim authority over his wife if she provides an account to the contrary. Consequently, a husband may at times have to subordinate himself to the demands of his wife if he is to secure her cooperation.

Women might well have a low social position, but performing this position does not necessarily amount to an abject powerlessness in the face of male social control. This is not to say domination is illusory or that coercion (for example, by means of physical violence or intimidation) is not utilised by a husband to ensure his wife's cooperation, but simply that to assume that this is always the case risks papering over the contradictions which inhere in representations of dependency and control.

Within most societies the marital process is marked by a set of formalised social interactions or 'rituals', without which a marriage cannot be said to have taken place. Each interaction carries with it a set of norms that signal what is going on to participants and the kind of conduct that is appropriate. Clearly individuals may not always conform to such norms or even interpret situations in the same way. Nevertheless, some degree of consistency is necessary for marriage to operate as a coherent or meaningful institution within a society, even if only as a normative reference point against which the practices of individuals can be deemed as deviant or not. However, as can be seen in the example taken from Van Baal (1975), women are able to deploy their agency through a normative discourse that renders it invisible or at the very least unacknowledged. This idea resonates with De Certeau's (1984) concepts of 'strategies' and 'tactics'[87].

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[87]   De Certeau writes against the backdrop of Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1977) and Foucault (1977), who posit a structurally imposed rationality that determines the beliefs and practices that an individual follow. De Certeau does not entirely disagree with Bourdieu's and Foucault's assessments of the means of social control or discipline. He does however argue that such control cannot be seen as absolute. From this jumping-off point, he looks to examine the inverse of Foucault and Bourdieu. He argues that Foucault and Bourdieu's emphasis on the production of discipline fails to account for and elucidate the productions of the people who it

Strategies can be thought of as the ways in which normative or naturalised discourses and practices operate as disciplinary techniques – the mechanisms through which large scale systems of social organisation or structures exert social control. In contrast, tactics are the unlabelled or unacknowledged everyday practices of social agents who make use of dominant discourses to evade or subvert them. De Certeau's (1984) concept of strategies and tactics avoids reducing individual action to structural impositions, be they symbolic or material, and so gives us a way of thinking about subordination, domination, agency and constraint that more adequately accounts for structure and agency as a relationship rather than as opposing forces. For instance, the discursive constitution of women as commodities, passive 'objects' exchanged by men through marriage, serves to censor acknowledgement of female agency, whilst providing a platform for its realisation.

This idea should not be taken to diminish the fact that individual action is often subject to structural constraint, but it does suggest that such constraint is seldom absolute – that there may be pockets of space in which relations of domination and subordination can be negotiated. However perhaps the most important thing to be learned here is that the very representation of constraint may be of tactical utility in providing a veil behind which subversion and resistance might take place. Compliance or complicity may be imposed, but also performed in efforts to gain a tactical advantage.

Of course such tactical manoeuvres are not solely the preserve of women. Masculinities – if we take this to mean the sets of ideas about what men should be or do – might well be a source of anxiety for men struggling to live up to them, and a means through which some men are able to exert control over others. Nevertheless, it is possible that representation of specific masculinities and indeed men as dominant

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is argued to discipline. *"…this "microphysics of power" privileges the productive apparatus (which produces the "discipline"), even though it discerns in "education" a system of "repression" and shows how, from the wings as it were, silent technologies determine or short-circuit institutional stage directions. If it is true that the grid of "discipline" is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also "miniscule" and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what "ways of operating" form the counterpart, on the consumer's (or "dominee's"?) side, of the mute processes that organize the establishment of socioeconomic order".* Michel de Certeau. The Practice of Everyday Life (1984 p. xiv).

or subordinate might operate paradoxically as positions from which actual relations of domination can be negotiated.

As was discussed in the case of the viewing of Maid in Manhattan, people actively engage with representation as agents, rather than passive recipients of pre-constituted systems of meaning. It is in line with this idea that my thesis focuses on the agency of consumption – the ways in which prevailing ideals of marriage and the marital process are made use of by men as agents. Thus my analysis seeks to open up the analysis of marriage, by examining marriage not only as a rite of passage through which particular forms of masculinity are achieved by men, but as a site of performance and representation in which relations between men and women are negotiated.

Given a long tradition within anthropology of erasing, or at the very least failing to acknowledge, the diversity of masculinities that exist alongside heteronormative forms, often normalised within the literature, one can argue that there is a political imperative to account for and give voice to ostensibly 'deviant' masculinities. However, this is not my project. Not because I disagree with this political objective, but because I believe that further unpacking how people navigate and negotiate the heteronormative is an important part of achieving it. I do not deny that men may seek social and sexual satisfaction outside the prevailing heteronormative order. Clearly, in seeking to define the normative, it is important to draw out where boundaries lie and how they are policed. However, my aim is to identify the resistances *within* the normative, and so it is both necessary and inevitable that greater emphasis is laid upon those men who, at least at first glance, would seem to conform to the established order.

Chapter Four: Transitions from Youth

4.1 The Problem with 'Youth'

The Imam called my research assistant and I to the front of the mosque and introduced me to the crowd which had assembled for Friday prayers. He briefly recounted the history of Zongo to his congregation, recalling in particular how the settlement had been founded by 'strangers'. As strangers and Muslims themselves, it was both their duty and tradition to make me feel welcome. He advised them to treat me with courtesy and assist me in my research if they could. Once I had been introduced, the Imam directed my research assistant and I to one side of the mosque where we took a seat on the floor next to Mallam Hassan.

Mallam Hassan lives in the southernmost part of Zongo known as Unguwa Makafi – 'blind area' – so called after a former chief allocated a large plot of land to accommodate the blind beggars that come and go from Zongo and where many blind people reside to this day. Unguwa Makafi is about as far away as one can get from Kan Tudu, and is home to many mosques of its own. Nevertheless, Mallam Hassan attends prayers in Kan Tudu at least once a day, making the journey with the aid of a walking stick and his ten-year-old grandson's shoulder. Getting to Mallam Hassan's house is not easy. Once you step off the unpaved road that marks its boundary, Unguwa Makafi is a claustrophobic and chaotic place. Its buckled and warped timber structures are crammed tightly together, much like the residents who slumber inside of them. The twisting passages are seldom wider than the outstretched arms of those who rely upon tactility to navigate them. I lack the grace and agility of the women who swing through the alleyways with baskets atop their heads. I have to concentrate if I am to keep my footing whilst negotiating the young men squatted over charcoal stoves and gaunt faced 'junkies' who sway and clatter from the doors of the 'bunkers[88]', guarded by the stern-eyed area boys that serve them.

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[88]   Unguwa Makafi is home to a number of 'bunkers', rooms that are used for the sale and consumption of drugs. It was not possible to verify the nature of what was being consumed, but they were described by their users as cocaine, crack, heroin, cannabis and 'gadagi' (a tea brewed from various herbs and pharmaceutical medicines).

Mallam Hassan's two concrete rooms are sparse, but relatively spacious and orderly when compared to others in the area. He sits in an old armchair that faces towards the door. Mallam says that he is sixty-five, but he appears much older than other men in Zongo of a similar age. Mallam Hassan is suffering with a sickness he calls 'piles', but the symptoms and their severity seem to be at odds with those that might be associated with such a condition in the west. He swills down a cup of dark brown liquid. He tells me it is "black medicine" or "Africa Medicine", which he takes to soothe stomach cramps and ease diarrhoea. He says that his sickness has weakened him. I observe that his frame is wiry and movements weary, except during occasional moments of agitation when he vi*goro*usly stabs at the air with a walking stick.

"You see these youth. The youth these days, doing nothing. Just sitting, roaming, smoking this thing… this thing wee [cannabis]. It is not good to sit all day. What good are you doing just sitting? Nothing. You see yourself they are just doing nothing. Nothing I tell you… They don't respect. These days there is no respect. They don't respect their fathers. Smoking this wee… They don't like work. They are lazy. They are lazy. Go and do something. They are not active. It's not hard [if] you are well. You understand. You have strong. Strength. Try to get small money. Buy things and sell. Even paper, sell. It's a job. Go to spare parts, go to scraps. Go sell the iron rod. There is money. Only see they are lazy. They are lazy. They don't move".

I had asked Mallam Hassan about how Zongo had changed over the years. The response was largely negative – a narrative of moral decline, of a community falling apart, ridden with social and moral degeneracy. According to Mallam Hassan the cause of this problem has been "modern life". He explained how Zongo had once been a peaceful and orderly village far from Ghana's emergent capital. The only thing that they had had to worry about were the hyenas that occasionally wandered into the village at night. But Accra had urbanised and expanded, swallowing up the marshlands and rivers, until eventually consuming Zongo itself, and transforming it in the process from rural community to urban enclave in the heart of Accra. As Zongo had been drawn into this "modern" world, its traditions and values had become corrupted by new temptations and desires. According to Mallam Hassan, this was most apparent in the behaviour of Zongo's young men. He claimed that young men respected neither their elders nor their traditions. They no longer went to mosque or did their duty for their families and the community. They were only interested in mobile phones and

motorbikes and the "easy money" that could be used to obtain them. Islam was fading in Zongo, as young men sought to indulge their desire for consumer goods, casual sex and an easy meal, through criminal and occult practices such as drug dealing, stealing and sorcery.

Substance abuse and violence in Zongo are relatively rare, or at least are well concealed; but what there is of it is disproportionately concentrated in Unguwa Makafi. I found it easy to empathise with Mallam Hassan's discomfort. Throughout fieldwork I struggled to cope with what felt like an endless barrage of noise that whittled away at my sleep and my sanity. Unguwa Makafi's narrow passages had the advantage of limiting the motorbike noise. Nevertheless, my own room in Zongo's Kan Tudu area seemed positively serene when sitting within Mallam Hassan's modest living room and the whirlwind of noise that seemed to engulf it. His drug addled neighbours scrapped and shouted to a distorted soundtrack of gangster rap, reggaeton and hip-life, which rumbled through the cinderblock walls.

Mallam Hassan's surroundings no doubt inform his account and the fervency with which it was delivered. However, his narrative is far from unusual in the sense that the idea of youth is frequently framed in terms of being an immoral condition. There is a prevailing discourse of young men as being a problem, as conducting themselves in a manner that threatens the social and moral well-being of Zongo as a whole. Many of Zongo's inhabitants insist that it is in a state of moral decline. This decline is seen as being not only manifest in, but driven by the immorality of its young men. Perhaps unsurprisingly, morality and its purported decline is often articulated in terms of Islam, the dominant religion in Zongo.

"*Allah ya taimake mu. Ya Zongo ba da lafiya*," – "God help us. There is no longer peace in Zongo" – my neighbour would say when she had heard news of someone caught stealing, fighting, performing "rituals" or some other moral transgression. "*Where is Islam*", lamented another man. "*Me myself I don't see it. In Zongo there is no Islam. We the Hausas we are the ones who are bringing it to Ghana. Senegal, Nigeria there is Islam, but in Zongo we don't do it. These youth they don't know Koran. They don't pray. They are only thinking in money. In motorbike*".

Such narratives of young men as reneging on their Islamic duties in pursuit of the facile trappings of modernity were common. Young men were described as spending their

days shouting, stealing, fighting and fornicating. They were said to occupy themselves with thundering through Zongo's narrow lanes on motorbikes, or else "dodging" work and "chasing shadows"[89] whilst failing to attend mosque, observe Ramadan and abstain from extra-marital sex and the consumption of drugs and alcohol. '*Lafiya*' – peace, balance and order (Wall 1988) – was seen as being unsettled by the behaviours of young men, who lacked patience '*hakurî*', humility '*kunya*' and respect '*girma*' for their elders. If the narratives of elder men like Mallam Hassan are to be believed, immorality and deviance brew at the bases of young men like hot tea.

Perhaps unsurprisingly this discourse of youth as an immoral condition is most prevalent amongst elder men and women; but there are many young men who, to various degrees, reproduce this discourse. Take for example Farouk, one of Zongo's Sarkin *Samari* or 'Youth Chiefs', who stressed the need for Islamic youth organisations to counter the problems brought about by increasingly wayward youth[90]. Even the young men at Oakville Town Hall remarked upon the demise of morality amongst Zongo's youth. This perception of youth as a problem can be seen to extend beyond the confines of Sabon Zongo itself. Television, radio and newspapers often feature stories about the latest efforts to combat the indiscipline and immorality of youth in Zongos throughout Ghana[91].

4.2 The Moral Meanings of Youth

Two key points emerge from the above narratives that help us interpret the social interactions that take place at Oakville Town Hall. Amongst the first things that we can learn from the accounts provided above is that for people in Zongo the notion of youth is meaningful. The term implies a set of widely accepted expectations and assumptions about the individuals or groups that are associated with it. When one

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[89]   To 'chase shadows' is to spend a lot of time in the same place, only moving so as to stay in the shade and avoid the heat of the sun.

[90]   Farouk seemed to hope that I would fund such organisations, and believed himself to be the ideal custodian for their administration.

[91]   See for example PeaceFM (2012). "Centre to tackle indiscipline among Zongo youth inaugurated". Salam/Joy Radio (2013) "Muslims urged to respect authority". Daily Graphic (2012) "Chief Imam warns Zongo youth against electoral violence". Daily Graphic (2013) "Dr Nsor calls for crusade against indiscipline".

person uses the term to describe another, he can be reasonably confident that his audience will have a rough idea as to the sort of person he is trying to describe, the things that they say and do, and the relationships that they are likely to have with others, without the speaker needing to go into detail. This is not to say that the term will always be understood in exactly the same way, nor that such understandings are necessarily conscious, but simply that as with any term, there must be some level of agreement as to what is implied by it or else it ceases to be useful in social interaction.

In the Gananci Hausa of Zongo the words most frequently used to signify 'youth' are 'samari' (plural) and 'saurayi' (singular)[92]. What is interesting for this thesis is that there is no feminine singular form of the word. There is considerable variation across Hausa dialects as to how particular nouns are gendered (Newman 1979, Jaggar 2001)[93]; however, in this instance the gendered form of Gananci Hausa words for youth is not merely a case of grammatical construction. Young women are referred to as *yarinya*, meaning girl, up until marriage. The masculine equivalent *yaro*, meaning boy, is reserved for preadolescence. Upon adolescence they are referred to as *saurayi*. On occasion the plural form 'samari' may be used to refer to a group of men and women, but it is never used to describe a group comprised only of women. *Samari* is an almost uniquely masculine notion.

The second point which emerges from the narratives of moral decline recounted above is one that has already been touched upon in Chapter One: not all categories of the person are accorded the same social value. An individual might be accorded lesser or greater prestige, status or authority depending upon the particular category of the person that they are associated with. Such hierarchical ordering is often articulated in terms of differences in social practice and the social value that such practices are accorded (West and Zimmerman 1987, Butler 1988, 2011). This is to say that status, privilege and authority arise from the entanglement of who you are with what you do.

This thesis is concerned with elaborating the '*mutumin kirkii*' in Zongo: the terms against which the man of social and moral standing can be defined. Though I have as

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[92]   This is consistent with the translations found in both Bargery's (2002) and Awde's (1996) dictionaries.

[93]   For example, Kananci - Kano Hausa - tends to make much greater use of gendered noun constructions than does Sakkwatanci – Sokoto Hausa (Jagger 2001).

yet to establish what constitutes the good man in Zongo, the key point here is that for many people in Zongo – and indeed beyond – young men are a problem. The notion of youth is often articulated in negative terms, seen as embodying undesirable qualities and carrying associations with problematic anti-social behaviours. Mallam Hassan expresses disdain for youth and characterises them as lazy; their activities are portrayed as meaningless, immoral and even dangerous. If the good man is to be thought of as a man of social and moral standing, the notion of youth is at odds with it.

These narratives of miscreant youth seem to be at odds with my experience of social life in Zongo and my own observations of young men's behaviours, not least in the case of Abu and his friends at Oakville Town Hall. Though one of Abu's friends told me that he very occasionally smoked cannabis to relax, the men at Oakville Town Hall could hardly be described as moral deviants on anyone's terms. Certainly the serious and studious conversations about religion and morality that take place at Oakville Town Hall seemed to be at odds with the kind of social and moral delinquency described by many as characteristic of young men. When asked, most people in Zongo concede that not all young men can be tarred with the same brush. People often talk about individual young men in positive terms. Indeed, there are some youth, such as Mallam Farouk, whose behaviours are described as exemplary. Nevertheless, in popular discourse, good youth remain the exception rather than the rule, such that the notion of youth appears antithetical to *mutumin kirkii*.

4.3 '*Lafiya*': Perceptions of Order

In Zongo, notions of social and moral order are expressed through a discourse of Islam. However, as has been observed elsewhere of Hausaland[94], Islam is just one element in a syncretic setting, in which we find a range of beliefs and practices with diverse cultural antecedents brought to bear in the act of social and moral judgement. Here, the notion of *lafiya* is significant. In general parlance the term functions in much the same way as 'good' or 'well' in English. For example, '*kwa lafiya*?' is a standard greeting in Gananci Hausa meaning 'how are you?'. '*Lafiya lau*' is the appropriate

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[94]   See for example Wall (1988), Last (1976, 1979, 1981, 2004).

response, and broadly equates to 'very well'. Similarly, when asking after somebody's family ('*ya iyali*?'), household ('*ya gida*?'), or work ('*ya aiki*?'), one can expect the same reply. *Lafiya* however is a noun, rather than an adjective or adverb, and thus perhaps more precisely translated as wellness or goodness. To form the negative, *lafiya* is conjugated with '*ban da*' and implies an absence of wellness and/or goodness. For example, the phrase '*ba shi da lafiya*' can mean either 'he is sick' (without wellness) or 'he is a bad person' (without goodness).

As has been observed by anthropologists in a variety of cultural settings[95], notions of wellness and goodness seldom constitute discrete and unrelated categories. This is well illustrated in Hausa understandings of health and illness. For the Hausa, wellness is firmly rooted in moral goodness, and ill-being is generally the result of wrong-doing (Last 1976, 1981, Wall 1988). During my time in Zongo I often heard people attribute sickness or injury to an envious rival's curse, or neglect of the prayers through which God's protection is secured. As I came to know Zongo's inhabitants, it became clear that evaluations concerning *lafiya* or its absence were often motivated as much by the commentator's personal politics as they were by the moral conduct of another person[96]. Indeed, as is evident in Wall's (1988 p.334) definition of *lafiya* as "the fundamental, proper order of things", it is a concept with profoundly political connotations. Social orders and their boundaries are encoded in narratives of moral danger. The attachment of immorality to specific people and things makes social orders concrete: the threat of moral transgression and destabilisation marks out where social boundaries lie (Douglas 2010). For the Hausa, this order is articulated through the notion of *lafiya*. Those whose behaviours are aligned with received norms of moral and social conduct are rewarded by God with *lafiya*. Conversely, those who transgress or deviate from such norms incur God's wrath, or at the very least fail to gain his favour; they experience a lack of *lafiya*, either as direct punishment from God, or in the absence of his protection are left vulnerable to the malevolence of others.

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[95] For examples from Africa, see Moore and Sanders (2003). For analysis from America and the Middle East, see Good (2003). Hausa-specific examples include Wall (1988) and Last (1976, 1981, 1979).

[96] This has been similarly observed by Murray Last (1979) in his analysis of an ambiguous condition known as 'gishiri', meaning 'salt' amongst non-Muslim Maguzawa Hausa. Last argued that the increasing prevalence of gishiri was derived from its utility as a 'cognitive catch-all' that prevented moral speculation.

Implicit to this notion is the perception that order and stability are the positive ideal state of things, whilst disorder and instability are highly undesirable. When *lafiya* is lacking, this underlying order is unsettled and disorder prevails. This is to say that moral orders imply social orders. Furthermore, if as Douglas (2010) suggests, moral dangers are necessary if moral orders are to be made concrete, then the notion of '*mutumin kirkii*' – the man of social and moral standing – necessarily requires socially and morally dangerous persons as constituent referents. As is evident from the account provided above, in Zongo young men are amongst those dangerous and destabilising persons that might make the notion of the *mutumin kirkii* meaningful.

4.4 Behaviour in Public Places

It is hard to imagine that the young men at Oakville Town Hall are unaffected by this discourse. We might reasonably assume that few individuals would wish to be accorded the status of youth and would see it as more desirable or advantageous to be considered otherwise. This goes some way towards explaining why Abu and his friends valued watching and discussing Maid in Manhattan together. At this point it is necessary to remind ourselves that narratives or discourses cannot be reduced to their descriptive content, but must be examined in terms of their social effects. That a particular discourse seems to be at odds with reality does not mean that it is without social implications. As Goffman (1974, 1980) argues, to enter a social situation is to subject oneself to social evaluation. Others will make judgements as to the kind of person one is and how one is to be regarded on the basis of the information they have available to them at the time, including how one behaves in public. Consequently, in the knowledge that their reputations are at stake, people (consciously and unconsciously) monitor and adjust their behaviours so as to create a positive impression of themselves to others. There may be greater or lesser incentive to produce a given self-presentation in particular circumstances. It would make little sense for Abu's pot-smoking friend to smoke in the presence of others whom he suspects might form a negative impression of him on the basis of such behaviour. The effects of a particular self-presentation are seldom confined to the social situations in which they occur. Hence, even when in the company of other smokers, who might look more favourably upon his smoking, our smoker endeavours to undertake his smoking

discretely, such that word of his smoking does not spread and discredit the reputation he has created for himself elsewhere. Conversely, when a specific impression is broadly regarded as positive an individual might seek to foster it in a context in which it is most easily achieved in the hope that it will carry over to another.

As a relatively conspicuous social interaction, the collective activity of viewing and discussing Maid in Manhattan provides a stage for impression management. The movement of benches from inside the shack into the relatively public space of the opening makes their conversations audible and visible to others whose social evaluations they might seek to influence. Though I am reluctant to reduce rearranging the furniture to an impression management strategy exclusively, it is clear that conducting conversations out of view within the shack or indeed watching the show alone in the privacy of their own rooms would not yield the same advantages. In their relatively public, serious and studious conversations, Abu and his friends not only condemn the immorality of Victor, Sara and other characters in Maid in Manhattan, but also implicitly demonstrate their eschewal of the immoral behaviours ordinarily associated with youth, and therefore distance themselves from the low status accorded such a category.

Of course, that a particular set of norms are widely accepted does not mean that all men make an effort to conform to them. Every culture has its deviant subcultures, with norms and values diverging from those that are most prevalent in wider society; Unguwa Makafi, with its drug takers, noise makers and shadow chasers, is by no means an anomaly. However, if a young man wishes to be regarded as *mutumin kirkii* – and most men in Zongo do – then he might logically seek to create distance between himself and the notion 'youth' by behaving in ways that foster an alternative definition of his character. It is thus not surprising that the behaviours of Abu and his friends seem to be at odds with received discourses of youth. In Abu and his friends' viewing of Maid in Manhattan we can see an effort to distance themselves from the low prestige status of youth. Though we have seen that the category of youth is constituted in relation to socially and morally questionable behaviours, the central question remains: what constitutes *mutumin kirkii* and the moral behaviours it is associated with? As the following chapters unfold it will become apparent that the discourse that links immorality to youth is crucial for making sense of young men's marital aspirations as a process through which accepted and valued manhood is achieved.

4.5 Marriage and Social Maturity

As has been argued above, categories of the person operate as designations of sameness and difference. This is to say that there must be other types of people who are not youth from which those who are designated as such can be distinguished. It thus follows that the notion of youth might be elucidated through an elaboration of the categories of person that are constituted in opposition to it. At this point the narrative of Abdulahi is useful, in that he defines youth in terms of what it is not and exemplifies a notion of 'manhood' that is frequently expressed in Zongo.

I met Abdulahi through a group of butchers from Niger who gathered at a rusting shipping container in Unguwa Kariki. The young men worked together at the meat market near to the lagoon and referred to Abdulahi as "*boss*". When I asked the men what they meant, they explained that Abdulahi was their "*father*" in Zongo. Abdulahi had been born in Zongo, but his father had come from Maradi in Niger. Abdulahi maintained many connections with his paternal village. Many of the young men who gathered at the container were the sons of Abdulahi's friends or relatives in Niger. They had come to Accra to work and Abdulahi would help them find work and a room to live in.

In my interviews in Zongo I often asked people whether they thought Zongo had changed; I posed this question to Abdulahi. He told me about how when he was younger he had gathered with other young Nigerien boys at Zongo's Market Square to participate in wrestling contests. Abdulahi was now in his fifties, but remained a large, thick-set man. I imagined that he would still make a formidable wrestling opponent and so asked him whether he still wrestled. Abdulahi gently rolled his head and smiled as if to signify the absurdity of a question with such an obvious answer.

"*I don't wrestle now. I have cow(s) and goat(s). I am serious. Wrestling, that is matter for samari, for the youth…. Ina girma ne. You understand me. I am grown. I have respect. I am married. I have four children all boys. I must to put the food on the table. I don't have time for wrestling, for ball, for those things*."

It is understandable that my question is somewhat absurd for Abdulahi. From the point of view of most people in Zongo, he is obviously not the kind of person that would wrestle. He no longer wrestles because he is no longer a youth. He asserts that he has "grown", implying that he has become something more than *samari*. He imbues

the notion with transience, as a condition or period in life that he once occupied but has now exceeded, passed through or left behind. In this respect Abdulahi claims a social maturity for himself that he and indeed others in Zongo regard as being superior to that of *samari*. He has "respect", *girma*. He is too well thought of by others to be considered a youth.

Abdulahi's account can be seen to exemplify many others produced during my fieldwork encounters in Zongo. Abdulahi mentions a number of characteristics that differentiate him from youth, including his status as a father, the gender of children, his responsibility for putting "food on the table" and that he no longer wrestles or plays football. Consistent with my hypothesis presented in Chapter One, and observations made in other Hausa-derived societies, marriage and the domestic relations it implies are central to accepted and valued notions of manhood.

It is notable that neither age nor physical stature were amongst the qualities mentioned by Abdulahi. There would appear to be no necessary contradistinction between the notion of *samari* and '*tsufa*' (agedness). Indeed, I came to know a number of men who were senior in years and yet were referred to as *samari*. Moreover, for a man to be *tsufa* and *samari* can be a source of considerable stigma and ridicule. In Zongo there are few elder men who have never married, but those I came to know complained of taunting and bullying by other men. Indeed, it would seem to be the case that regardless of age, a low status – even stigma – is accorded to those men who have yet to marry. Take for example the case of Mallam Malolo.

Mallam Malolo lived a life of self-imposed seclusion, seldom venturing outside of the small room he had inherited from his father. I came to know Mallam Malolo after encountering him on midnight visits to one of Sabon Zongo's public toilets. My own desire for relative privacy in what can be a very noisy, crowded and filthy environment meant that I favoured the middle of the night for bathroom visits when fewer people would be around. Mallam Malolo would visit the bathroom at similar times. I learnt that Mallam Malolo's bathroom habits were informed by a more general aversion to social encounters.

As I gradually got to know Mallam Malolo and came to observe him on those few social occasions in which he would venture into public, it became apparent that his self-imposed seclusion was a result of endless taunting and bullying by other, many of

them younger men, who would mock his unmarried status, heckling him with the derogatory '*tuzuru*', meaning bachelor. Several of my neighbours claimed that Mallam Malolo was engaged in witchcraft and cautioned against spending time with him for fear that I might be cursed or become the victim of one of the evil spirits he spent time with.

Mallam Malolo was in his sixties, but garnered limited respect from men his own age. He was not regarded with the respect normally accorded an elder, and he was excluded from political functions. He was never reserved a seat at the high table, or even a plastic chair, at important social events such as *Mawlid*, or the opening of a new mosque, that men of his age and lineage would ordinarily receive. There was one event, a campaign for peace during the elections held at *Gaskiya* Cinema, when Mallam Malolo had ventured out. When I visited Mallam Malolo after the event he was explicit in his frustration and sadness at observing his married kinsmen, some younger than he, sat atop a large stage, while he was forced to struggle for a view with other 'youth' at the back of the building. When Mallam Malolo did socialise, it was with the younger and somewhat more sympathetic men at a base near to his room. Despite his senior years, Mallam Malolo remained a *samari* on account of his unmarried status. Though the vast majority of elder men in Zongo have at some time been married, it is not unusual for those who have never married to be treated with disdain. As was evident in the discussion of Chieftaincy in Chapter Two, status varies between men in a number of ways, but the distinction between married man and never married youth is an important one. It is only through marriage that the accepted and valued manhoods are achieved.

4.6 Conclusions: In Search of Respect

This chapter began with Mallam Hassan's account of change in Sabon Zongo. Like many people in Zongo, Mallam Hassan described Zongo as undergoing a moral decline, driven by the immoral proclivities of young men. Work-shy and unproductive, young men were said to have turned to criminal and occult practices as a means to satiate their desire for the trappings of 'modernity'. They disregarded Islam and the traditional authority of their elders. Lacking patience, humility and respect, they conducted themselves in a manner antithetical to *lafiya* – the ideal of peace, balance

and order. Though this narrative was pervasive in Zongo, it seemed inconsistent with my own experience, not least my time spent with young men like Abu and his friends, who similarly lamented the degeneracy of youth.

In seeking to make sense of this apparent disjuncture, I drew upon Douglas' (2010) idea that moral discourses imply social orders. The notion of *lafiya* – the social and moral order ordained by God – was important here in that the idea of youth as not only transgressive, but destabilising of *lafiya*, could be seen as a way of marking out social boundaries and making social orders concrete. I posited that the notion of youth might be important as a constituent referent of *mutumin kirkii*; that the notion of youth as immoral might operate as 'Other' against which the man of social and moral standing could be distinguished.

I sought to examine how this idea might be brought to bear on my interpretation of the events that took place at Oakville Town Hall. Given the extent to which young men are the subjects of such considerable moral ire, I though it unlikely that anybody would want to be associated with such a category of the person. I argued that the relatively conspicuous viewing of Maid in Manhattan might be conceived of as a stage for impression management in which the young men assert their morality through their commentary on the show. This chimes with the idea of imagination as a social practice of self-making, first raised in Chapter One. Drawing on Appa*durai* (2005) and Weiss (2009), it might be argued that Abu and his friends make themselves through the 'imagining' of Maid in Manhattan and Sabon Zongo as occupying the same moral universe. By imagining affinities and enmities with heroes and villains whose behaviours can be condoned or condemned, they create a platform from which to publicly reject conduct widely regarded as immoral in Zongo and thus disassociate themselves from a notion of youth framed by a discourse of a propensity to immorality.

The notion of youth could be seen as a socially and morally reprehensible category of the person, and so in opposition to the *mutumin kirkii*. However, this merely served as a statement of what the *mutumin kirkii* is not. The question remained as to what constituted *mutumin kirkii* and the moral behaviours it is associated with. Within Abdulahi's narrative it was possible to discern a notion of manhood constituted in opposition to youth. Amongst the various qualities and characteristics deployed by Abdulahi in distinguishing himself from youth were a set of domestic relations in which

marriage was implicated. This would appear consistent with my suggestion in Chapter One, and observations made in other Hausa derived societies, that marriage and the domestic relations it implies are central to accepted and valued notions of manhood in Zongo.

From this point of view, we can see why Abu and the other men at Oakville Town Hall seem to be so preoccupied with marriage. Marriage is a normative ideal. It is something that all men are expected to achieve, but the impetus for conformity to this norm is provided by the low prestige accorded to those who have not as yet achieved it. To be an unmarried youth is to be negatively evaluated by others. Marriage is a mechanism through which an individual distances himself from the less desirable condition of being a youth. Getting married connotes an improvement in one's social standing, to be better thought of by others than if one remains an unmarried youth. However, given the concept of the dramaturgical self, as a reflexive and reflective self-image constituted in social interaction (Goffman 1956, 1974, 1980), one might argue that marriage is the subject of intensified desire amongst young men because its absence serves to impinge upon their sense of self-worth.

In the following chapter I seek to take this idea further, by elaborating the ideological underpinnings of *mutumin kirkii* as a man of social and moral standing and the ways in which marriage might be at play in it. As was discussed in Chapter Three, marriage has often been seen as a rite of passage, initiating significant transformations in men's social relations within and beyond the domestic space. Therefore, the next chapter takes as its jumping off point the social organisation of domestic space in Zongo. Here, I explore how marriage and the domestic relations associated with it are implicated in notions of manhood in Zongo.

Chapter Five: Responsible Manhoods

5.1 Marriage and Household Morphology in Zongo

The stack of concrete blocks outside Dauda's room grew as the four young men ferried them one-by-one from the back of the taxi into the compound. Dauda stood watching, occasionally snapping at the men to be careful, to drop the blocks gently so as not to break them. Dauda was soon to be married. His father had made the necessary prestationary payments to the bride's father. Only the '*sadaki*' or bridewealth to be exchanged at the formal wedding ceremony remained outstanding. Dauda's room was within his father's compound. He had hoped to find a tenant for his room and rent a larger chamber and hall for him and his wife elsewhere in Zongo. However, money was short and so he had decided to remain where he was and use the blocks to build a chamber onto the front of the single room given to him by his father. He explained that once he had married and his wife had come to live with him his room would be out of bounds to all except he, his wife and eventually his children, and so it was necessary to build a chamber so that he could continue to entertain visitors. Dauda had already begun the internal renovations. He had concealed the wiring in plastic tracking and painted the walls a lurid green. A 2011 calendar featuring a photo of Sheik Ibrahim Niass[97] was pinned to one wall, and a poster of Michael Essien[98] with his wife and several cars to the other. Dauda explained that there was a lot left to do for the house to be ready for his wife, but "*small small*" – little by little – he was making progress and things ought to be set in time for the wedding when she would be brought to his room.

Marriage in Zongo is patrilocal. Upon marriage a wife leaves her paternal residence and moves into a room provided by her husband and his kinsmen. A bride's residence is but one change in domestic arrangements amongst many brought about by marriage. As is the case elsewhere in Hausaland, notions of relatedness and the

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[97]   A notable leader in the Tijaniyyah order.

[98]   A former Chelsea player from Ghana.

various rights, obligations and entitlements they imply are at the heart of social organisation. Marriage, as an articulation of relatedness, initiates a number of changes in domestic relations with social consequences extending beyond the walls of the conjugal living space and into the realm of public politics.

As discussed in Chapters One and Three, gender analyses have often examined domestic relations as a key site in which the social constitution and organisation of gender takes place. Domestic arrangements amongst the Hausa have not been excluded from such analyses. The work of Smith (1952), Hill (1972), Callaway (1987), Cooper (1997) and Pellow (2002) represent just a few examples of analyses which have sought to examine domestic relations amongst the Hausa. Anthropologists have often argued that the ways in which space is organised tells us a lot about the organisational principles of a society (see for example Bourdieu 2007, Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2007). In his analysis of Hausa domestic economy Smith (1952) argues that understanding the physical space of the compound is a necessary precursor to making sense of the position of men in the domestic economy that is at the heart of Hausa social life (Smith 1952). This idea is clearly pertinent to the Hausa '*gida*' – a term referring to both a physical domestic space and system of domestic organisation defined in terms of kinship. Therefore, the '*gida*' or household makes for a logical starting point in my effort to make sense of how marriage and the domestic relations associated with it are implicated in notions of manhood in Zongo.

I begin by examining how these relationships have been elaborated in the wider Hausa studies literature, and the extent to which continuities can be found with my own observations in Zongo. The form and structure of Hausa domestic relations have been observed and described in great detail. This is not to assume that these observations are directly transferable to Zongo, nor does it position this thesis as a comparative analysis. Many of these observations have been found to be broadly consistent across the Hausa cultural world. It thus follows that the terminology and structure of the household as has been observed in Hausaland is a logical point from which to launch my enquiries, even if only to conclude that their insights may not be entirely applicable in the context of Zongo.

Let me begin by presenting the '*gida*' and '*iyali*' as distinct levels of kinship grouping, how they map onto the physical space of the compound, the different rights,

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responsibilities and statuses of the men who inhabit it and what they reveal about notions of manhood in Zongo. As we shall see, the physical structure of the compound plays out the normative principles governing relationships between the constituents of a co-residential kin group, particularly in terms of gender, generation and marital status.

5.2 The Hausa Gida

Residential spaces and the relations that they imply have been a mainstay of the Hausa studies literature. The diagram of the typical Hausa compound below is taken from Smith's (1952 p.17) analysis of domestic economy in rural Zaria, a study undertaken in 1949-50, when Northern Nigeria was under British colonial administration. As is evident in the literature, residential formations amongst the Hausa have remained remarkably consistent over space and time[99]. Many of the essential elements of the compound's physical structure, as recorded by Smith (ibid), endure in present day Hausaland and other locales where significant Hausa populations can be found.

The term *gida* denotes the physical space of the Hausa compound, which is composed of several partitioned habitations or 'sassa' as illustrated in the diagram below. A compound is ordinarily enclosed by a surrounding wall, with entry via the '*zaure*' – a small room, hut or enclosure. The *zaure* is a relatively public – though predominantly male – space, where the household's senior men entertain guests and undertake their day-to-day affairs. Beyond the *zaure* is the '*kofar gida*', or forecourt in which the sleeping quarters of unmarried men and male visitors can be found. The *kofar gida* is separated from the '*cikin gida*', or inner forecourt. The *cikin gida* is a primarily female space, generally off-limits to male non-kin. Within the *cikin gida* are the *sassa* partitions, as well as cooking spots, and when wife seclusion or '*auren kulle*' (see below) is practised, a latrine and well (Smith 1952, Pellow 2002).

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[99]   See Smith (1952) for an account relating to Zaria; Hill (1972) for Katsina; Cooper (1997) and Manvell (2005) for Maradi; Cohen (1969) for Ibadan; Arnould (1984) for Zinder; Moughtin (1964) and Werthmann (2002) for Kano; and Pellow (2008) for Accra.

The compound is typically, though not always, inhabited by patrilineal kin. The general congruity of kinship and co-residency means that the term *gida* may also be used to refer to the patrilineal kin group itself (Smith 1952, Pellow 2002)[100]. Each sassa is occupied by an individual '*iyali*'. The *iyali* can be thought of as nuclear conjugal unit: a husband, his wife, their dependent children, and sometimes the husband's elderly mother (M G Smith 1952, Hill 1972, Arnould 1984, Pellow 2002)[101].

There are rigid norms concerning the division and use of space within the *gida*. Who has access to where, when and for what reason is defined in terms of gender, generation and marital status, often articulated through a discourse of Islam (Moughtin 1964). At its most extreme such gender segregation involves the seclusion of married women, or 'auren kulle', within the domestic compound. Kulle is not universally practised amongst the Hausa, and what the seclusion actually involves varies; nevertheless, it remains an ideal to which many people, both men and women, aspire (Callaway 1987, Sule and Starratt 1991, Pellow 2002). However, whether or not some form of kulle is practised, the spatial segregation of gender is an important feature of the compound's internal structure. It is divided into separate spaces for males and females with marriage mediating the spaces in which inter-gender interactions are acceptable.

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[100]   So as to avoid confusion I will use the term *gida* for the kin group rather than the compound unless otherwise specified. As we shall see this distinction is most necessary in the context of Zongo where residential patterns within the patrilineal kin group are perhaps more variable, but the compound re*main*s an important social, political and economic institution.

[101]   Though patrilineality is emphasised in compound composition, kinship amongst the Hausa is widely acknowledged as bilateral. Affective ties with maternal kin are valued and encouraged and may have considerable social and political significance (Smith 1965, Manvell 2005).

Figure 3. The Typical Hausa Gida
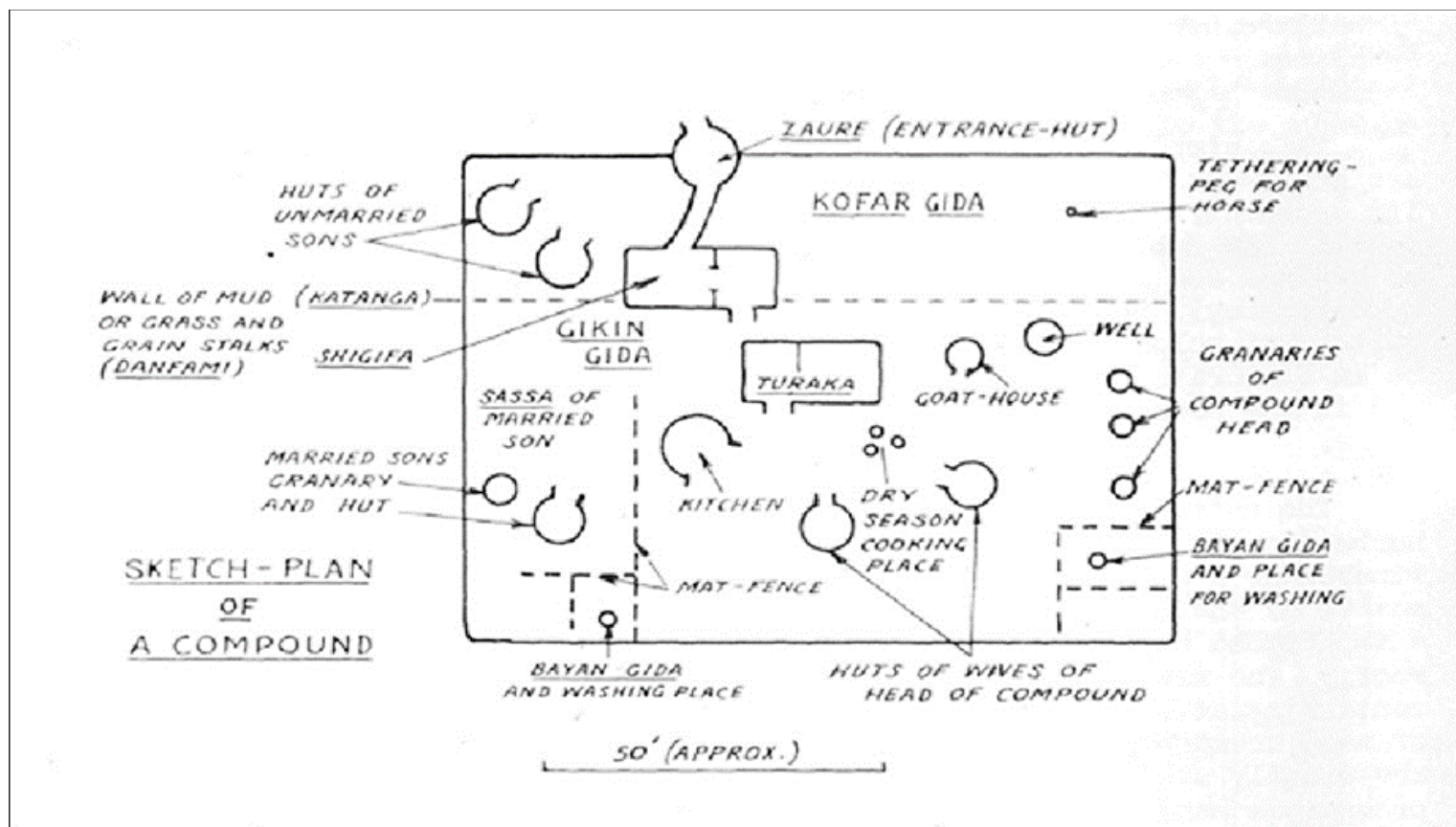
Smith (1952 p.17).

Figure 4. The 'Gida' Co-residential Kinship Group
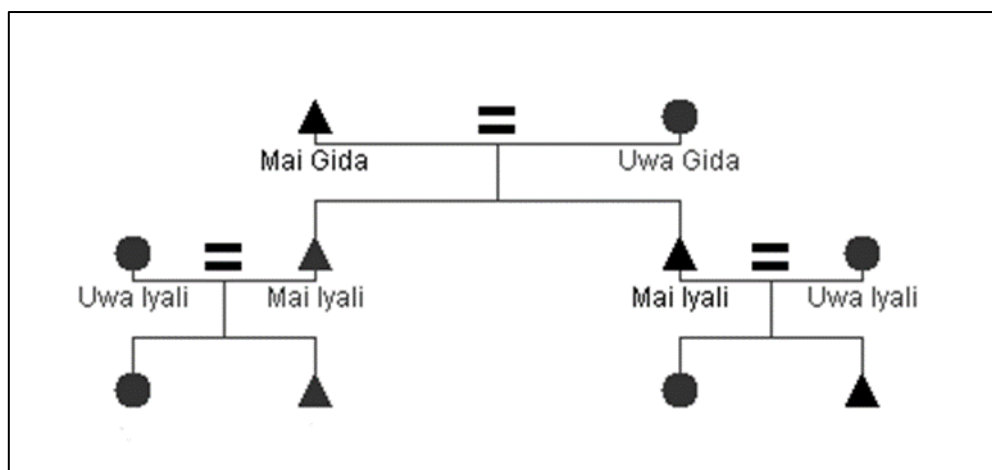
At the apex of the diagram are the mai gida (head of household) and his wife the uwa gida. The level below is composed of their two married sons, who are the mai iyali heads of their respective family units. The lowest level is composed of the young children of the iyali. Each iyali, occupies a partition or 'sassa' within the compound. Married daughters are not shown as marriage is generally virilocal meaning that upon marriage daughters form part of their husband's iyali and relocate to his compound.

When marriage is monogamous, the husband will sleep with his wife in an individual room within the sassa. In the case of polygamous marriages, each wife will have her own room. She will not be expected to share her quarters with anybody other than her husband and children (Sule and Starratt 1991). Though a wife might entertain female visitors in her room, it is off-limits to all men other than her husband and pre-adolescent sons[102]. A polygamously married man is expected to regard his wives equally and so sleeps in the rooms of his various wives on a rotating basis[103]. Children tend to enjoy free reign of the compound and may or may not sleep in their mothers' room. However, it is regarded as taboo for a son to sleep in his mother's room once he has reached adolescence. Therefore at least one room within the compound, ordinarily within the *kofar gida*, is allocated to unmarried men, *samari* and male visitors. A room within the cikin *gida* is often allocated to unmarried daughters; but daughters may sleep within

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[102]   It is noteworthy that adoption ('*tallafi*') is common amongst the Hausa; and though consanguinity is not a precondition for adoption, it is generally restricted to members of same kinship group.

[103]   For a husband to sleep in the room of one wife more frequently than he does another is interpreted as a sign of preference and thus is ill-thought of. Such preference may be considered legitimate grounds for a wife to seek a divorce (Hill 1972, Cooper 1995).

their mother's room until marriage when they will move to their husband's compound (Cooper 1995, Pellow 2002).

As described above, the *zaure* is primarily a male space, but senior men in wealthier households – in particular the '*mai gida*' or head of household – may have rooms of their own that are set apart from their wives' quarters known as *turaka*. The *turaka* provides a space for men away from the relatively public space of the *zaure* (Smith 1952).

5.3 The *Gida* in Zongo

In Zongo as in Hausaland the *iyali* is thought of as a cohabiting conjugal unit with its unmarried children (though the term sassa is not part of common parlance in Zongo). The *iyali*'s dwelling usually consists of at least one room for sleeping[104], generally off-limits to male non-kin, and a living room used for eating and entertaining visitors[105]. Though the *iyali* seems to take by-and-large the same form in Zongo and Hausaland, there are major differences in the structure of the compound, the division and use of space within it, and its relationship to the *gida* kinship group.

In Zongo the term *gida* is also used to denote a physical compound. However, there is less frequently correspondence between the compound's residents and *gida* kinship group. Instead, a compound is composed of various habitations occupied by people who may or may not identify with one another in terms of kinship. My own room in Zongo was within a larger compound that had been built by one of Zongo's founding patriarchs. Many of the compound's residents claimed to be descended from his lineage, but there were equally many – if not more – who did not. For example, included amongst my immediate neighbours were several Tuareg beggars, four Zabrama men who had recently migrated from Niger and an Ewe lady whose Hausa husband rented the room for her, but seldom spent time there.

It is often the case that a compound is inhabited by a variety of people with vastly different backgrounds and relationships to each other, as well as to Zongo. A

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[104]   Referred to as *dakin kwana* – literally 'sleeping room'.

[105]   Referred to as *dakin taruwa* – literally gathering room.

correspondence between compound and *gida* is most often found in households belonging to Zongo's wealthiest and most politically powerful men. These men are often the descendants of Zongo's founding patriarchs whose landholdings are largest and constitute what Pellow (2002) has described as a landlord class. However, even in these compounds there are a large number of tenants, and long- and short-term visitors.

As described in Chapter Two, the Zongo compound would have at one time more closely resembled those typically found in Hausaland[106]. Land scarcity, in tandem with population pressures, leaves residents with few options to increase their living space – a scenario not uncommon in many of Accra's Zongos (Pellow 2002). A handful of wealthier households have built a second story on top of an existing structure. If there is space, residents might build additional rooms extending further into the compound, as in the case of Dauda, or sometimes even the street. Given the difficulties of securing space to build outwards, a more common scenario is the partitioning of existing rooms into smaller and smaller subdivisions.

One long-term elderly resident recalled how my room was one of several that had been constructed within what had once been the *cikin gida*. Many people referred to the cluster of dwellings that occupied the same area as the *cikin gida*, but the term implied neither the social nor spatial relationships that one would expect to find in Hausaland. The term was instead little more than an echo of the compound's historical inhabitants and patterns of residency, which had come to serve as a means of orientation.

My own room was a mixed concrete, timber and metal construction about three metres by three metres. In Zongo I often felt suffocated, and my small room offered little respite from the heat and noise. I had once moaned about the size of my living space and its lack of a window to Muntaka, one of my informants. With good reason, Muntaka laughed at me and then took me to his own room. Muntaka's room was a baking hot concrete oven without windows. When it rained it was water rather than speckles of daylight which crept in through the gaps in the rusting corrugated iron rooftop. The floor was covered with a piece of foam with a pillow at one end. The room was not

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[106]   Pellow (2002) observes that this is a consistent feature of Zongos in Accra.

quite long enough to lay down in and too small to accommodate Muntaka and his few personal possessions at the same time. If there wasn't a small pile of clothes and shoes outside his door when I called round to visit, I would know he wasn't at home. Muntaka and his three brothers had each been given a room by their father within the same portion of the compound. His father now lived in Kasoa, a more recently established and less densely populated Zongo about an hour by *tro-tro*[107] from Accra. He owned five or six other rooms in Zongo, most of which were rented to tenants. Muntaka's situation is not unusual in Zongo, as new living quarters are squeezed out of ever-shrinking spaces. Muntaka, however, by his own admission was fortunate in that at the very least he had his own room. Most young men in Zongo share a room with other unmarried male kin or else rent a room with friends. Shared rooms are generally larger, though it is not unheard of for a room to be too small to accommodate all of its inhabitants, and for the issue of who sleeps where and when to be the subject of some negotiation.

Throughout Sabon Zongo. the original compound structure has dissolved into small rooms and narrow alleyways. *Zaure*s are few; *turaka* are non-existent. Many if not most *iyali* have only one room, and the communal spaces of the compounds are shrinking. As described in Chapter Two, one effect of this pattern of residential development is that a great deal of male-male social interaction takes place in the street or other relatively public spaces, such as at Zongo's many bases. Mallam Hassan's account of Zongo as a disorderly place[108] is perhaps not surprising, given that men's social lives have moved out of the compound and in to the street. Young men also complain about the lack of space in Zongo. Most young men say they enjoy living with friends or kin, but they also look forward to having a room of their own. Private accommodation has the obvious benefits of peace and privacy, but its principle value resides in being a necessity for marriage. When a man marries for the first time, his senior kin are expected to help him find suitable accommodation. There is no moral principle that stands against a man renting a room without their support if he has the means to do so. However, given the scarcity and relatively high cost of renting or

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107   Mini-bus.
108   See Chapter Four.

buying a room, unmarried men generally rely on their senior kinsmen to provide them with a room or the means to rent one.

Dauda's room had been a single room when his father had given it to him and he had inhabited it quite happily for several years. Now that he was about to marry he felt that he needed a larger room more suitable for a cohabiting couple. Though his father agreed to this, he had been unable to provide Dauda with alternative accommodation, and so instead granted him permission to extend the existing dwelling into the compound's communal space. As far as I am aware, Dauda's kin had been supportive of his endeavours. His uncles and older brothers had provided him with materials, and the youngest men in the household had been ordered to contribute their labour. However, it is not always the case that things run so smoothly.

The allocation of rooms is frequently the cause of tensions within a kin group. A *mai gida* is generally regarded as custodian rather than owner of a *gida*'s property. He is simply responsible for distributing land amongst those who are entitled to it. Thus it is generally ill-thought of for a *mai gida* to sell land, even if he holds the legal title. A young man with a very small room or no room at all will likely protest when a *mai gida* rents out a room to tenants or allocates it to one of his other kin. Take for example the case of Danladi, whose sale of land has become something of an enduring saga in Zongo. Danladi was the *mai gida* of a large and prestigious lineage in Zongo and the custodian of the household's property. Danladi had refused to give any of his three sons a room. He had instead decided to secretly sell all the land and use the money to build a house for himself elsewhere. Needless to say Danladi's own sons were greatly angered by his actions, but he was also thoroughly despised by his other kinsmen, who felt similarly entitled to a share of the property.

5.4 Gida as Kin Group

Within the *gida*, the term '*mai gida*' is used to denote the most senior male in terms of generation, age and social maturity (Hill 1972). Marriage in Hausaland is patrilocal, and so the *mai gida* is related to the other men in the *gida* as either father, grandfather, uncle or eldest brother. Depending upon their marital status these men will be either *mai iyali* or *samari*. The former being a married head of an *iyali* unit, and the latter an unmarried youth. These terms are relative and may often overlap. A *mai gida* is

necessarily *mai iyali* of his own conjugal unit and in certain circumstances, such as in the presence of a yet more senior kinsmen, the term *mai gida* is reserved for his senior.

The *mai gida* is the formal point of contact between external authorities, such as the Chieftaincy or State, and the compound's inhabitants. For example, he is generally responsible for collecting and paying taxes that relate to the compound. Much like Schwerdtfeger (1982) described in the Northern Nigerian city of Zaria, compounds in Zongo are often referred to by the name of the *mai gida* as a reflection of this formal status. However, for the time being it is the *mai gida*'s relationship to others within the *gida*, specifically junior men that is my focus.

Within the Hausa studies literature, the practice of '*gandu*' has often been observed as the idealised form of household relations of production, exemplifying the organisational principles that hierarchically organise men within the *gida* (Hill 1972, Cooper 1995). *Gandu* therefore offers itself as a useful starting point for the current investigation. I draw much of the following analysis from Hill (1972) and Smith (1952), whose accounts of *gandu* are arguably the most thorough. My description below arguably presents an overly stable image of *gandu*. The institution has changed both in terms of the prevalence of its practice and broader social significance. One would struggle to find incidence of *gandu* in the present day. Nevertheless, the social and moral underpinnings of *gandu* resonate closely with domestic organisation in contemporary Hausaland (Cooper 1993, 1995). Thus *gandu* provides a frame through which to examine inter-generational relationships in Zongo.

As described above, the *iyali* can be thought of as a husband and his dependent wives and children, including his unmarried sons regardless of age. In its simplest form, collective agricultural practice takes place at the level of *iyali*, with the *iyali*'s various constituents undertaking farming and food preparation together under the authority of the *mai iyali.* When the first of a *mai iyali*'s sons marries, the structure of the household changes. A son establishes his own conjugal unit such that his father, whilst re*mai*ning *mai iyali* of his own conjugal unit, becomes *mai gida* – the head of a multiple *iyali* household (Smith 1952). Upon marriage, a son is provided with a room for him and his wife, and a parcel of land or '*gayauna*' to farm so as to sustain his newly established *iyali*. However, married sons may continue to farm with their fathers, such that the unit

of production is the *gida*. When farming is undertaken at the level of the *gida* it is referred to as '*gandu*' (Hill 1972).

In its ideal form, *gandu* involves the pooling of labour from the various *iyali* that constitute the *gida* to meet their combined subsistence needs during the rainy season. Other forms of economic activity often take place alongside *gandu*, including own account farming, wage labour and numerous other occupations and trades (Smith 1955, Hill 1972, Arnould 1984).

The basic precept of *gandu* is that it is a collective exercise ostensibly undertaken in the interest of the *gida* as a whole (Cooper 1995). As far as the Hausa are concerned deference to one's seniors and duty to one's kin are central tenets of Islam and thus important characteristics of *mutumin kirkii* (Smith 1959, Barkow 1974, Salamone 2005). Consequently, there is a strong normative pull towards participation (Hill 1972, Cooper 1995). Though *gandu* is a collective endeavour, this is not to say that it is egalitarian. There are significant differences between individuals in terms of their access to and control over resources, including labour, and the goods that are produced from them (Hill 1972, Cooper 1995). This can be seen as the basis upon which men are hierarchically organised within a kinship group. At the apex of this hierarchy are *mai gida*, who exert the greatest control over the *gida*'s productive activities and resources, and who make decisions concerning how the outputs of production are to be distributed between the various *iyali* and other individuals who may have participated. Within the *iyali*, the hierarchical structure of the *gandu* is replicated at a smaller scale. The *mai iyali* has a right to the labour of his wives and unmarried sons, and is principle decision maker in terms of the allocation of resources derived from *gandu* (Hill 1972).

Generally speaking, it is the *mai gida* who is responsible for mobilising and organising the *gida*'s labour for *gandu*, and who distributes the outputs amongst the various *iyali* units and unmarried sons that have participated. This may take the form of grain, or cash from its sale, but also clothing, the payment of taxes, and crucially contributions towards wedding expenses. Such expenses include the necessary prestationary payments such as bridewealth or '*sadaki*', a room for the newly married couple and land to farm as *gayauna* (Hill 1972). I will go into these costs in greater detail in Chapters Seven and Eight, but for the time being it is enough to say that marriage is

a costly endeavour and sons rely heavily upon their fathers to meet the expense. In this respect *gandu* is important to the *gida*'s morphology, in that it is through *gandu* that a son finds the resources to marry and establish his own household.

Gandu is typically limited to the rainy season when most agricultural activity takes place. Once the rainy season has come to an end, production undergoes a shift in emphasis from the *gida* to the *iyali*. During the dry season it is the *mai iyali* who is normatively responsible for meeting the subsistence needs of its various constituents. The *iyali* will subsist from their own land holdings and/or '*gayauna*' – land allocated to them by the *gandu* head or *mai gida* which is distinguished from that which is collectively farmed by the *gandu* unit. Farming may take place alongside other trades or occupations should such opportunities exist. Alongside food, cash, payment of marital expenses and taxes, a *gandu* head is obliged to provide junior men with *gayauna* during the farming season (Hill 1972).

In this sense the *gandu* can be seen as an intergenerational contract in which junior men provide senior men with labour in return for the resources necessary to establish and sustain their own households. However, this relationship is seldom a voluntary or equitable exchange of labour for resources. Though *gandu* land and its outputs are notionally the collective property of a household, senior men derive considerable authority from their control over how its outputs are distributed. This control means that an unmarried man seeking a bride must gain the favour of his senior kin by submitting to their authority if he is to secure the resources necessary for marriage (Hill 1972, Solivetti 1994).

Though a father is obliged to make a contribution to his son's wedding expenses, the eventual sum will largely be a function of his generosity and ability to muster further contributions from friends and kin (Hill 1972, Goddard 1973). The relatively high cost of marriage means sons are often dependent upon their fathers to meet wedding expenses. This informs the balance of incentives motivating participation in *gandu*. A son's dependence on his father's assistance provides the incentive for a son to submit to his father's demands, even if his father's efforts to fulfil his wider *gandu* obligations are lacking. However, material wealth is of only limited value in terms of a man's prestige and status, and as such other social imperatives are brought to bear on how resources ultimately come to be allocated.

5.5 '*Arzkin Mutane*': Wealth in People

"Kowa ya bi a bi shi - Whoever follows in loyalty will also be followed" (Hausa proverb).[109]

At this point it is necessary to introduce the notion of '*arzikin mutane*' – a concept that broadly equates to wealth in people. Wealth in people refers to the notion that the number of one's dependants or followers mediates prestige, power and status (Miers and Kopytoff 1979, Bledsoe 1980). Anthropologists have observed that in many parts of Africa, wealth in people is so fundamental to the attainment of status, and that status is so greatly desired, that the accumulation of people often takes precedence over the accumulation of things (Guyer 1995, 2004). This is certainly the case for the Hausa. High social recognition is reflected in the notion of *arzikin mutane*, making it of fundamental importance to this study (Smith 1952).

The possession of material wealth is only related to status insofar as it is converted into *arzikin mutane*. Indeed, it has often been argued that wealth in people and the status derived from it is valued so highly amongst the Hausa that many men are willing to forgo personal material wealth in pursuit of it (Smith 1955, Kirk-Green 1974). For a man[110], *arzikin mutane* is demonstrated by his ability to mobilize labour and control and subordinate a large number of persons as dependants (Arnould 1984, 1989, Cooper 1995). Both marriage and *gandu* can be seen as mechanisms through which a man cultivates wealth-in-people.

Gandu can be seen as an archetypal form of *arzikin mutane* and therefore as an important source of prestige and status for men. Thus there is an incentive for *gandu* heads to sustain as large a *gandu* unit as possible (Goddard 1943, Hill 1972). Though in some cases a *gandu* unit may be composed of non-kin, an important mechanism by which a *mai gandu* enlarges his *gandu* unit is by having sons and recruiting them into the *gandu* unit. In line with the moral norms of Islam, extra-marital sex is frowned upon such that a man's reputation is diminished by sons born outside of wedlock (Solivetti 1994). Thus marriage is necessary if a *mai gandu* is to enlarge his *gandu*, whilst at the same time keeping his reputation as a man of moral standing intact.

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[109] Aminu (2003 p.12)
[110]   *Arzikin mutane* has slightly different connotations for women.

Marriage is not only a means to enlarge a *gandu*, but is in and of itself a manifestation of *arzikin mutane*. The notions of family ('*iyali*'), household ('*gida*') and the married man's status within them as master or owner ('*mai*'), make explicit the contingency of men's statuses on their relationship to a household unit composed of their putative dependants and subordinates. To be *mai iyali* or *mai gida* is to be responsible for providing for a family or household of dependants. Broadly speaking, greater prestige is conferred upon *mai gida* than *mai iyali*. The relative depth and breadth of the kinship groups that depend upon them, and over which they exert authority, imply differential *arzikin mutane* to different *mai*. It is not surprising that at the bottom of this hierarchical ordering of men are *samari*. By virtue of their unmarried status they have no formal dependants over which they can be seen to hold authority. They are themselves the dependants and subordinates of *mai iyali* and *mai gida*. Elder men who have yet to marry are for the best part disdained (Solivetti 1994). These status effects explain why sons are often eager to participate in *gandu*. In order to improve his status, to become *mai iyali*, a *saurayi* needs to marry. Participation in *gandu* is a means through which *samari* access the resources, held by senior lineage men, with which to establish their own households and cultivate *arzikin mutane*. This is reflected in household morphology in that for a man to marry is to move from a room shared with other unmarried men to one shared with his wife. This reflects a change in his position relative to the *gida* unit. Though once married a son may continue to participate in *gandu*, he is no longer solely defined in terms of his dependency on the senior men within the *gida*, but establishes his own *iyali* comprised of his notional dependants.

When their fathers die, brothers may continue to farm in fraternal *gandu*, with the eldest married brother as *mai gida*. However, it is more often the case that junior men, irked by the idea of submitting to a brother's authority, claim (in line with Islam law) a portion of their father's land as inheritance and choose to farm on their own account (Hill 1972).

There are several key points that I would draw out from the above before moving on to examine some of the issues presented by this analysis. First of all, *arzikin mutane* is important to male prestige and status. Though material wealth matters for many reasons, its social value is principally as a means to accumulate wealth in people (Smith 1952). At the centre of *arzikin mutane* are relations of dependency and subordination. Being *mai gida* – the head of an extended kinship group composed of

dependants – is to occupy a position of prestige and status. Conversely being *saurayi*, an unmarried youth, or worse still an elderly bachelor or '*tuzuru*' – neither of whom have formally recognised dependants – is a position of low social status. This brings me to my second key point. Marriage serves as both a demonstration of and means to cultivate *arzikin mutane*. Upon his first marriage, a man ceases to be a youth and becomes *mai iyali*. He is no longer solely identified as his father's dependant, but is the head of his own conjugal unit with dependants of his own. However, in pursuing the marriages which bring about this change in status, young men depend heavily upon the senior lineage men, who control access to the necessary resources. Expressions of deference are thus necessary if junior men are to secure the support of their seniors.

At this point it is important to highlight a key issue in the account of *gandu* provided above. As Cooper (1995) argues, the emphasis in accounts of *gandu* has often tended towards production. A particular issue arising from this narrative is the assumed congruity between units of production and consumption – that the individuals within the *iyali* unit 'eat from the same pot' (Cooper 1995)[111]. However, there are significant differences between the individual constituents of the *iyali* in terms of the obligation to contribute to, and entitlement to consume from such a pot.

Normative expectations concerning men's and women's contributions to household upkeep are defined and differentiated within the terms of an Islamic conjugal contract. Husbands meet their wives' consumption needs – defined as cooking, cleaning, childrearing as well as sexual services – in return for reproductive labour. A husband or wife's failure to fulfil these normative obligations is regarded as legitimate grounds for divorce (Hill 1972, Solivetti 1994, Cooper 1995). Whilst often underplayed by men, the productive activities of Hausa women have been well documented[112]. Nevertheless, regardless of their actual incomes, women remain under lesser obligation to make the product of such activities available for consumption by other members of the household (Hill 1969, Callaway 1987, Cooper 1997, Robson 2000, 2006).

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[111]   See for example Schwerdtfeger (1982), Ross et al (1996), Etkin (2002).

[112]   See for example Hill (1969), Barkow (1972), Jackson (1978), Schildkrout (1982), Callaway (1984), Coles and Mack (1991), Cooper (1995), Pittin (2002).

Similarly, young men might engage in a range of economic activities quite apart from those undertaken at the request of senior lineage men. For example, many young men combined work on household land with waged agricultural labour, trade or a craft such as butchery, leatherwork or metalsmithing (Hill 1972, Solivetti 1994). Senior men are normatively expected to provide for junior men, but unlike women, junior men are required to make a contribution to a household's productive efforts. As long as a father fulfils his obligations to his sons, he has a right to their labour. When a son's independent income is significant, contributions in the form of cash or goods may be given in lieu of labour (Hill 1972, Yusuf et al 2003, Robson 2004, Clough 2014).

Key here is that the productive apparatus and outputs under the notional control of *mai gida* and *mai iyali* do not constitute the sum total of economic activities. They may not even be the principal means by which a household sustains itself. They are, however, those to which each and every member of a household, including young men, can claim an entitlement.

A *mai gida* may use his monopoly of the outputs of *gandu* to fund further marriages for himself and enhance his status by recruiting dependent wives and children. However, the incentives for a son to remain in *gandu* are diminished when a father is unwilling or unable to contribute to wedding expenses. Thus *mai gandu* must also meet junior men's demands for wives and the land, accommodation and prestationary payments required to obtain them. If a *gandu* head fails to fulfil his obligations to junior men, then they may withdraw their labour leading to the dissolution of the *gandu* and the *mai gida*'s status with it (Hill 1972, Solivetti 1994).

The demise of *gandu* has been explained by the relative availability and viability of agriculture versus more lucrative off-farm economic activities (Hill 1972, Goddard 1973, Yusuf et al 2011). Though opinions differ as to the particular composition of such push and pull factors, it is generally accepted that the incentives for young men to participate in *gandu* have diminished significantly. *Gandu*'s decline has been associated with a reconfiguration of inter-generational relationships within the household and the structure of socio-economic structures that underpin them. Young men's reduced dependency on senior men is seen as unsettling gerontocratic authority. The balance of normative entitlements and responsibilities and an individual's capacity to meet them can be seen to inform the extent to which a head of

household can exercise his authority. Nevertheless, the notion of senior men as providers responsible for dependant and subordinate others endures as an idealised, if illusory, standard to which men are expected to aspire and remains central to the hierarchical ordering of manhoods. What emerges here is a disjuncture between notional and actual dependencies. This reveals a paradoxical interweaving of dependencies, in that the *arzikin mutane* of senior men and the status it confers relies upon the deference and subordination of dependant others, including junior men. Something that junior men may withdraw if senior men fail to provide adequate incentives to cooperate. These ideas can be seen to similarly frame inter-generational relations and the tensions that permeate them in Zongo.

5.6 Inter-Generational Relationships

In terms of kinship, Hausa notions of *mai gida*, *mai iyali* and *saurayi* re*mai*n extant in Zongo. As described above, the *iyali* can be thought of as a co-residential conjugal unit and its unmarried children, and the *gida* a group composed of multiple *iyali* of the same patrilineage. The *mai iyali* and *mai gida* are the senior males of the respective kinship units. As in Hausaland, the *mai iyali* is described in no uncertain terms as the person responsible for providing accommodation, clothing and food for his wives and children. This norm is perhaps most evident in the apparent failure of many men to conform to it.

Like many married women, Hawa often complained that her husband was failing to fulfil his "duty" as provider and that her husband was "not a good husband". Hawa earned sufficient income from her 'chop bar' to participate in an extensive *biki* network and was able to purchase relatively expensive goods such as jewellery and perfume. Nevertheless, Hawa and her husband Musa frequently fought. Hawa would chase Musa from her room into the shared compound, publicly ridiculing Musa with complaints that he was so useless that she had had to clothe and feed her children herself. Though people disapproved of Hawa's lack of 'shame', it was Musa's neglect and inability to control his wife that caused the greatest consternation. Complaints such as Hawa's are not unusual in Zongo. Many married men might publicly regard such complaints as ill-founded, or derived from their wives' failure to recognise the difficulties they faced finding the "daily bread" in the "modern world". Nevertheless, a

central preoccupation for married men is to be seen by others as fulfilling their obligation to provide for dependant wives and children. As we can see in the above example, the *mai iyali* is normatively responsible for providing for his *iyali* unit in much the same way as he would be in Hausaland, even if many men fail to fulfil this role to their wives' satisfaction.

For most people in Zongo, the term *gandu* is meaningless. One respondent told me that he knew a man in Kumasi by the name of Alhaji *Gandu*, but made no mention of it as an agricultural practice or indeed any other form of household organisation. *Gandu* was familiar to some of the recent Hausa and Zabrama migrants and itinerant workers from Niger, who tended to live in a cluster of rooms in Unguwa Zabrama and Unguwa Makafi. A number of these young men explained that they would return to Niger for '*damina*' – rainy season, sometime in April or May – to farm land in their home villages and spend Ramadan with their families[113]. As an agricultural practice, *gandu* is clearly untenable in Zongo, whose location in Accra's urban heart means that there is no land to farm. Though some wealthier Fulani men keep cattle which are grazed down at the lagoon, there is little in the way of an agricultural economy and its associated seasonal variations in production. This perhaps explains why the *mai iyali* remains responsible for the *iyali*'s upkeep throughout the year.

Furthermore, for the best part the *iyali*'s economic activities are independent of the *gida* as a whole. Important exceptions to this are the most well-established butchers and a number of Zongo's scrap dealers. For example, most of the men from Gidan Aliku live with their families in a cluster of dwellings, which although not all within the same compound centre on a single workspace, where animals are slaughtered. These men make their living from butchery or various related trades such as tanning, sandal making, cooking and selling kebabs. Similarly, Alhaji Mohammadu's sons and grandsons all play a part in in his scrap dealing business. They live with their wives

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[113]   Regrettably, I did not gather specific data on the population of migrant workers from Niger and their periods of residency in Zongo. However, I did notice that one of the rooms generally occupied by young Nigerien nail cutters in Unguwa Makafi became noticeably less crowded between May and November. Samaila, an older man who lived permanently in the room, told me that the young boys had gone to Niger for farming and Ramadan. I was unable to confirm the destinations of most of these men and the reasons that they had departed, except in the case of one young man who returned to Zongo and told me that he had gone home to marry. Nevertheless, this fluctuation in population would seem to be broadly consistent with Manvell's (2005) observations in Niger.

and children in several rooms built around a large pile of scrap metal. Alhaji Mohammadu is a second generation migrant with ancestral roots in Nigeria. He tells me that he prefers to have his kinsmen nearby so as to ensure that there is always somebody to keep a watchful eye over the assembled goods.

It is important to note that, compared to other forms of economic activity in Zongo, these are relatively profitable, large scale enterprises, requiring large amounts of labour. The demand for labour and the ability to pay means that both households employ a large number of men not limited to their own kin. However, most economic activities in Zongo take place on a much smaller scale such that these cases represent the exception rather than the rule. Sometimes sons inherit their father's trade or occupation, but in most cases they carry out such activities independently. In short, there is little in the way of collective economic activity at the level of the *gidagida*. The implication here is that the *mai gida* retains limited involvement and thus control over the household's economic activities. It thus follows that the economic dependencies, which in Hausaland shore up the *mai gida*'s authority over junior men, would seem to be lacking in Zongo. This situation is bolstered by the relative rarity of the *gida* as a co-residential unit.

Though a *mai gida* nearly always lives with his own wives, unmarried daughters and young children, the same cannot be said for his other kin. Spatial and economic constraints often mean that individual *iyali* and older unmarried sons are scattered across Zongo's neighbourhoods. This informs relationships within the *gida* and the scope of the *mai gida*'s authority. Wives from the same *gida*, even the same *iyali*, are seldom co-resident in the same compound. Women can and do share activities such as cooking, cleaning and childrearing. A *mai iyali*'s wife may prepare food for his father or other senior kinsman, especially if he or his wife is elderly, infirm or deceased. Children may sleep in the room of his father's kinsmen and eat wherever they choose. Men can and do eat at the homes of their kinsmen. A man ought not to refuse his brother, father or their children food. If her husband is absent, though, a wife might turn his kinsmen away or claim that there is no food, particularly if his visits become too regular.

Every other day Sadat would come and visit his wife, Halima, who lived in a room near to my own. When Sadat came by he would often invite me to eat with him, and

sometimes his brother Suwallam. Halima was a great cook and with the permission of her husband, Halima said that she could cook for me in the evenings. I would give Halima money to buy ingredients, which she would use to prepare food for me and any visitors I might have. Suwallam regularly came to visit and we would eat the food Halima had prepared together. As his visits became more frequent, Halima started to claim that there was no food. Knowing full well that there was food, I was confused; but I thought it better to raise the issue with Halima when Suwallam was not around. When I asked her why she had declined him food, she explained that Suwallam was not giving money to his own wife for food, and that he would make more effort to do so if he could not find food for himself elsewhere. She advised me against refusing him food myself as this would be disrespectful. She said that it would be better for her to talk to her own husband, who would in turn tell his father, whose duty it was to make sure Suwallam was not neglecting his domestic responsibilities, and to help him to meet them if need be.

Some days later, Suwallam came to visit and told me that his daughter was suffering from malaria and asked whether I might be able to give him money for medicine. I had no money to hand but said I would come to see him the following day. I was unsure about the veracity of Suwallam's claims and so felt ambivalent about giving him money. Nevertheless, my sensitivities about being duped were outweighed by the possibility that his daughter might well be sick.

The next day I called by Suwallam's room to give him some money only to find that he was not around. However, I found his brother Sadat nearby. I enquired after the health of Suwallam's daughter, and asked if Sadat could give the money to his brother. Sadat's face went from confused, to angry, to ashamed. He told me that Suwallam's daughter was not sick and apologised profusely for his brother's dishonesty. Sadat explained that Suwallam had already been told by his father to stop eating food at my house; that I should not give Suwallam anything; and if he came asking for food, money or medicine then I should tell either him or his father immediately. I tried to alleviate Sadat's anguish by telling him he ought not to worry and it was not a big deal. He explained that Suwallam's dishonesty was no small matter. He had brought shame on his kin by allowing others to think they did not support him. Even if Suwallam's daughter were sick and he didn't have the means to support her, it would not be a matter for strangers. His father would be the one to take care of things.

A number of insights emerge from the above example. As is the case in Hausaland, the upkeep and well-being of the *iyali* is primarily the *mai iyali*'s responsibility. As is evident in the case of both Musa and Suwallam, men who fail to meet the obligations of their position tend to be ill-thought-of by others. However, in the event that a *mai iyali* is unable to meet these responsibilities then the *mai gida* is expected to assist him. In the event that it is a lack of means that is the problem, then the *mai gida* is obliged to assist him. If, however the *mai iyali* is unwilling to meet his responsibilities, a *mai gida* is expected to intervene and encourage him to adjust his behaviour accordingly.

Much like in Hausaland, the *mai gida* retains notional authority over the *mai iyali* within his *gida*. The *mai gida* is responsible for coordinating the various *iyali*'s efforts towards sustaining the *gida*'s *lafiya*. Sickness, poverty and quarrelling are the antithesis of *lafiya*, and thus indicate that a *mai gida* has lost his grip on a household's affairs. When an individual or *iyali* is seen to be suffering, the *gida*'s *lafiya* is called into question; people wonder as to the extent of peace, balance and order within a household. Doubt is cast over the social and moral standing of the household and the conduct of the individuals who constitute it. It is thus not surprising that Sadat was upset by Suwallam's behaviour: Suwallam not only calls into question his father's willingness and capacity to support him, but the responsible manhoods of his kinsmen, including Sadat himself. However, keeping an eye on one's subordinates and imposing one's authority is not always easy. As is evident in Suwallam's visits to my room to ask for money having already been told not to by his father, it is often difficult for a *mai gida* to keep tabs on the activities of those under his authority. Much of a *iyali*'s activities take place out of sight of the *mai gida* who relies on others to inform him of what goes on within them.

Whether or not successful in exercising his authority, a *mai gida* is regarded as normatively responsible for the well-being of the various *iyali* that constitute the *gida*, and is expected to hold at least a degree of authority over the conduct of his sons. A key difference between *samari*, *mai iyali* and *mai gida* are their entitlements and obligations to others within a household, and the status and authority that is derived from them. Whilst *mai iyali* and *mai gida* are subject to a range of obligations which may not always be easy to achieve, they derive prestige and status from being notionally responsible for dependent others and the authority they hold over them.

Samari, as unmarried men, with no formal dependants, stand upon the lowest rung in the hierarchical ordering of men within the *iyali* and *gida*. Thus underpinning the differential status of men is the social value accorded to the act of providing for others.

Mallam Hassan and Abdulahi's narratives, which we encountered in Chapter Four, are linked as expressions of the particular social value accorded to different forms of social practice and the categories of the person with which they are associated. Abdulahi's marital status, his responsibility for 'putting food on the table', and his rejection of wrestling can be seen as assertions of responsible manhood and the qualities that are required for realising it. Conversely, Mallam Hassan's claims that Sabon Zongo's youth are lazy, and their activities meaningless, can be seen as an expression of the low social value accorded the status of youth relative to that of the married man in his provider role. In contrast to *mai gida* and *mai iyali*, *samari* – unmarried 'youth' – are said to have few responsibilities to others, and the activities that they engage in are regarded as less meaningful, being as they are centred on personal gratification and whim rather than the patience, self-discipline and sacrifice required for *mai*ntaining a household in its proper condition. Even when a person who is not a *mai iyali* or *mai gida* does contribute materially to the provisioning of the household – for example, junior men, wives or daughters who through their personal incomes contribute food or other provisions voluntarily – it does not count. These material contributions are not recognised as provisioning, and are not taken to constitute an identity of provider – junior males and women re*mai*n 'consumers'.

5.7 Conclusions: The Domestication of Men

I began this chapter with an elaboration of the domestic space in Hausaland. In Hausaland, household organisation centres on two levels of kinship. The basic kinship unit is referred to as the *iyali*. The *iyali* consists of a man, his wife, their unmarried children, and sometimes the husband's elderly mother. The extended kinship group is referred to as the *gida*, and is composed of multiple patrilineally related *iyali*. The term *gida* also denotes the physical space of the compound and the extended kinship unit which inhabits it, which are co-extensive: within the compound each conjugal unit and any dependent children inhabit their own dwelling space or sassa. A separate area of

the compound is set aside for unmarried men. When a man marries, he and his newly established *iyali* move into their own sassa.

Kinship in Zongo broadly conforms to the same organisational principles as are seen in Hausaland: patrilineally related *iyali* form the basis of the extended *gida* kinship group. However, perhaps due to population pressure and the scarcity of land, the *gida* kinship unit is seldom congruous with the compound. The various *iyali* and individuals which constitute the *gida* reside in disparate locations throughout Zongo. Nevertheless, the normative expectations concerning the role of men within the household re*main* broadly consistent with those found in Hausaland.

The conjugal contract is articulated through a discourse of Islam in which a husband has a moral duty to provide for his dependent wives and children, who are on account of their dependency his social inferiors. The married man's authority is reflected in his position as *mai iyali* or *mai gida*. A *mai iyali* is responsible for maintaining *lafiya* within the *iyali* – for providing all that is necessary for peace, prosperity and order to prevail. Similarly, the *mai gida* is the senior male within the *gida* and ultimately responsible for the various *iyali* within it. The *mai gida* is typically the most senior male within the *gida* in terms of age, generation and marital status. A *mai gida* is expected to intervene when a *mai iyali* is unwilling or unable to fulfil his responsibilities. Thus within a household, men are differentiated on the basis of their normative responsibilities to its constituents. This ideology finds its expression in the notion of *arzikin mutane*, or wealth in people. A man's status is a function of his *arzikin mutane*, demonstrated by the extent of his political and social control over his dependants. Within this moral discourse, sex outside of wedlock is considered morally reprehensible. Consequently, though an unmarried man can work, father children and support dependants, he only derives status from doing so when within the bounds of marriage.

Marriage and the domestic relations it implies are central to accepted and valued notions of manhood. Marriage is crucial in reconfiguring the position of men within the *iyali* and *gida*, and underpins their status and authority relative to others. Upon marriage a man ceases to be a dependent youth and becomes *mai iyali*. He establishes his own conjugal unit comprised of his notional dependants and asserts a productive and responsible manhood.

Furthermore, marriage is the institution through which the ideal qualities and characteristics of socially accepted and valued notions of manhood – such as wisdom, self-discipline and piety – are made manifest. Marriage defines and enacts significant change in the life of a man. It brings into being different social relationships, requiring and ascribing different personal characteristics to those that are expected of an unmarried '*samari*' or youth. Wrestling, football and other such '*batu maras muhimmanci*' – 'trivialities' – are displaced by more serious matters: work, provisioning and maintaining '*lafiya*' – peace, balance and order – in the household. Thus marriage brings about an improvement in a man's social and moral standing. It is thus not surprising that young men like Abu and Dauda are so keen to marry, and elder unmarried men like Mallam Malolo lament their failings so deeply.

As was observed through the lens of *gandu*, in Hausaland inter-generational relationships are central to young men's efforts to realise their marital ambitions. The *mai iyali* and *mai gida* enjoy privileged access to resources and control how they are distributed between the household's various constituents. Unmarried men often rely heavily upon the contributions from senior kinsmen to meet their wedding expenses, not least the relatively high cost of providing a room for his bride and the various prestationary payments. This dependency underpins the authority of senior men over their junior kinsmen. For junior men to secure the resources needed to marry they must often subordinate themselves to the authority of senior kinsmen. This scenario raises questions concerning the authority of senior men in Zongo. Given the relative absence of economic production undertaken at the level of the *gida*, and the apparent incongruity of compound and *gida* as a residential unit, one might expect the *gida* to be less cohesive in Zongo than in Hausaland, and the authority of the *mai gida* less relevant. In fact, the inverse is true. The *mai gida* re*mai*ns a position of considerable prestige and authority within a kinship group. As we shall see in the following chapter, this is partly explained by the significance of the position in social and political relations beyond the kinship group.

However, perhaps the most important point here is that male authority does not rest on production and command of productive resources like land, but instead on the command of social reproduction. In Zongo, social reproduction, specifically marriage, requires space – rooms for marriage to be conducted in, and to house married women, who will go on to produce wealth in people through biological reproduction. Thus, the

mai gida's authority is derived from his influence over the processes through which men secure residential property and marriage. I return to this point in Chapters Seven and Eight, where I examine the marital process in greater detail. I ask; How do men go about getting married and realising the idealised provider masculinities which form the basis of socially recognised competent manhood? I find that in Zongo, as in Hausaland, young men's pursuit of responsible manhoods involves the negotiation of intergenerational relationships and the interweaving dependencies that frame them.

Chapter Six: Brides

6.1 Virgin Brides and Home-Used Televisions

This chapter is about who men want to marry. It links the last two chapters, which were about why men want to marry, to the next chapter, which is about how they go about doing so. In Chapters Four and Five we saw how marriage is important for men because it is by becoming married that they realise accepted and valued manhood. This chapter is important because when I later come to interpret the marital process in terms of how men try to cultivate particular self-images by representing their marriages in particular ways, we need to have at least some idea of what kind of image they might be aiming for. This chapter is about how and why brides fit into this image.

In Chapter One I described how my viewing of Maid in Manhattan had contrasted with that of the men at Oakville Town Hall. Where I had perceived a disjuncture between the world of Maid in Manhattan and life in Sabon Zongo, Abu and his friends had woven their viewing of the show into a narrative allied with their own realities. This is not to say that the young men saw Maid in Manhattan as a mirror image of life in Sabon Zongo. They often remarked on obvious differences such as in clothing and language, the cars people drove, the clothes they wore and the houses they lived in. Nevertheless, this did not seem to undermine their interpretation of the show as occupying a common social and moral universe. Clearly I cannot know what the men talked about in my absence, but it seemed that my concern with how they identified with the show shifted the territory of conversation towards disjuncture. However, the discontinuities that most interested Abu and his friends were not those between their own lives and Maid in Manhattan, but how the account I gave of my own life seemed to be at odds with their expectations.

Of course, people in Zongo are aware that people from different places inhabit different cultural contexts. They are receptive to the idea that 'Others' elsewhere may or may not share their values. There were many times when the men at Oakville Town Hall and I disagreed on things, such as the social and moral implications of same-sex marriage, drinking alcohol or evolution. But these differences of opinion did not

surprise them, aligned as they were with their perceptions of the "West". However, amongst the things that did surprise them[114] was my lack of a wife. I was in their eyes a man who had "capacity" – wealth and influence. Yet I had not realised, nor even held what they had assumed were universal aspirations for men. The men were polite enough not to publicly question my own character, resolved that my unmarried status must surely have been down to a lack of suitable women and that they would "give" me one of their "sisters". I explained that my girlfriend and I had been together for some time and that we were quite happy as things stood. "I think if you look in your heart of hearts you know why you don't marry your girlfriend", advised Abu's friend Shaifu. "Your heart know she have some problem, but your mind is not seeing it. Maybe you know what I am saying is true but you don't want to say". I was somewhat unnerved by Shaifu's remarks and the direction the conversation might be going in. I wore laughter as a cloak for my uneasiness, buying time to forage for a question that might deflect their attentions – something relevant that would keep my discomfort concealed in conversational continuity.

"So which kind of women are good to marry?" I asked. "How do you know if a bride is suitable or not? What should a man look for when he's thinking about who to marry?" The men greeted my question with the deep breaths, tilted heads, and furrowed brows that might be worn by a mallam giving a particularly solemn sermon to a naive congregation. Abu and his friends explained that there were two kinds of bride: '*amarya*' and '*bazawara*', of which the former was most desirable. Abu described the process of finding a bride as akin to purchasing a television[115]. If you are a rich man you can go to Accra Mall or Osu and buy a brand new television. When you buy the television you receive a receipt and proof of import from Japan or America. These kinds of televisions are the most desirable, but because of their cost also the most difficult to acquire. Abu explained that *amarya* brides were like these new televisions in that they were virgins who had not been married before.

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[114] Amongst the other things that surprised Abu and his friends was that I did not own a car or know how to drive, that I did not have a 'house boy', did my own washing and cooking and supported a football team that almost never won.

[115] At the time I assumed that this analogy had been devised especially for my benefit, as a means to translate complex matters into simpler terms, but I later learned that this was not the case.

Though every man hoped to marry an *amarya* bride, not all would have the means to do so. In contrast, *bazawara* brides were akin to the "home-used"[116] – second hand – televisions, which men of lesser means bought from the electronics market at Zongo Junction. Abu explained that the *bazawara* bride differed from the *amarya* bride because "a man has had enjoyment with her before you". Alongside *amarya* and *bazawara*, Abu referred to a third category 'test'[117], which was also used to describe electronic goods like televisions. Items described as test were sold as seen, usually broken and bought for spare parts. The women he described as 'test' were unmarried and highly promiscuous. According to Abu, these women were '*karuwai*'[118], a term he translated as "prostitutes" and "bitches". "You give them something small and they let you fuck them", he said. In exchange for a few Cedis or perhaps a piece of cloth men could "use" these women and then just "forget about them". "Nobody want to marry this kind of woman", asserted Abu.

Not all men in Zongo would speak about women in quite the same terms as Abu, and if they did so it would be out of earshot of senior men or women who might reprimand them for using 'foul language'. Nevertheless, it is true enough to say that most men I spoke to in Zongo agreed that *amarya* brides were more desirable than *bazawara* brides, at least in the case of a man's first marriage[119], and only the foolhardiest man would even begin to entertain the idea of marrying *karuwai*.

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[116]   Though part of popular parlance, most people would consider the term 'home-used' to be foul language when speaking about women. In contrast, *amarya* and *bazawara* are frequently heard and acceptable. It is considered improper to directly address an older woman as *amarya* or *bazawara* as to do so would be to speculate as to her sexual or marital history. The exception being on wedding days and the various ceremonies associated with the marital process where the bride is invariably referred to as *amarya* regardless of her actual marital history.

[117]   Though the term 'home-used' has entered the vernacular as a derogatory term for *bazawara*, this was the only time I heard the term 'test' used in this way.

[118]   Though in Zongo the term *karuwai* is unambiguously associated with prostitution, the meanings and moral implications of the term are subject to historical and geographical variation. For example, in Kano the services provided by *karuwai* are not and never have been exclusively sexual. Nor has the status of being *karuwai* always been considered quite so morally reprehensible as it is in the present day (Gaudio 2009).

[119]   See below for a discussion of how the importance of a bride's status as *amarya* or *bazawara* varies for a man's later marriages.

6.2 The Moral Value of Virginity

Men generally agreed that the ideal bride was an *amarya* bride on account of her virginity[120]. This would seem to be consistent with observations made elsewhere in the Hausa studies literature, where a number of scholars have argued that the value accorded a woman's virginity is reflected in the transfer of marriage goods and in the efforts expended to curtail women's engagement in pre-marital sex (see Callaway 1987, Masquelier 2004, 2005, Yusuf 2004). For example, in Nigerien Hausaland, Masquelier (2005) describes how for many men the bridewealth demanded for virgin brides had become prohibitively high. This meant that marriages were delayed, fostering parental anxieties that the virginity and virtue of as yet married women was at risk of being lost to pre-marital sex. This fear was echoed by religious leaders who advocated a reduction in bridewealth, claiming it would enable earlier marriages and keep women from losing their virginity prior to marriage. The Nigerien state responded by attempting to impose a cap on the bridewealth that could be paid for an *amarya* bride.

The above example speaks to anthropology's long standing concern with the moral discourses that surround sexual conduct, the social relations they imply and the kinds of social evaluations that emerge from them. A number of anthropologists have described how retaining one's virginity is often considered a state of moral virtue or purity such that virgins are particularly valued as brides (see for example Berger and Wenger 1973, Saadawi, 007, Odeh 2010, Mahadeen, 2013). This is echoed by observers of Hausa society and culture who have described how the preservation of

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[120]   One might speculate that this is a reflection of men's sexual preferences – that men value *amarya* brides as objects of sexual desire. This idea is problematic for a number of reasons, not least the fact there is little evidence men in Zongo find virgins any more sexually desirable than non-virgins. Not once during my fieldwork did men express anything that could be construed as a sexual preference for virgins. There are many reasons why men may or may not express particular sexual desires, not least the innumerable taboos and injunctions that surround them. Nevertheless, when men did talk about their sexual preferences, it was sexually experienced, previously married women who were the objects of desire rather than virgins. Indeed, a number of my informants, men and women, claimed that men who had married *amarya* brides were more likely to be adulterous, because their wives lacked the experience or skills necessary to satisfy them. My data is such that I am unable to say an awful lot about what men's actual sexual desires might be. Nevertheless, I think it a reasonable supposition that the perceived value of the *amarya* bride has little to do with men's sexual preferences. There is also a more fundamental problem here, in that reducing men's 'sex talk' to expressions of sexual desire alludes to the kind of suspect and unhelpful essentialisms which have long been contested by gender analysis (See Chapter Three).

an as yet unmarried woman's virginity is seen as imperative if her moral integrity is to be *mai*ntained (Schildkraut 1982, Masquelier 2004, 2005, Yusuf 2005). However, as highlighted by Schildkraut (1982) in her analysis of wife seclusion in Kano, virginity or its absence does not seem to matter in quite the same way for married women. Indeed, most people in Zongo would say that a wife is morally obliged to provide her husband with sexual gratification and bear his children. Failure to fulfil either is considered legitimate grounds for a husband to divorce his wife[121]. Furthermore, children are considered to be God's reward for moral virtue, such that in the case of married women, it was those who had not as yet given birth who were subject to moral speculation. For example, a number of my informants claimed that it was adulterous women or those who meddled in occult practices antithetical to proper Islamic conduct, such as sorcery or witchcraft, who were most likely to be afflicted with infertility or 'dormant pregnancy'.

As is evident from the above, a concern with pre-marital virginity must be situated within wider anxieties about female sexuality and the perceived social and moral consequences of failing to regulate it. In Zongo, it is women's extra-marital sexual relations which seem to attract the greatest moral ire. Alongside the immoral propensities of young men, young women's sexual conduct was often cited as an example of Zongo's moral degeneracy. Many of my informants lamented a perceived increase in the number of never-married women with children as being indicative of a general moral decline. One of Abu's friends claimed that under the influence of telenovelas such as Maid in Manhattan, women in Zongo had become increasingly materialistic. This desire had become so powerful that many women had been seduced into a life of prostitution as a means to acquire wealth.

As seen in Abu's account above, *karuwai* were highly undesirable as brides. Many men claimed that the *karuwai*'s appetites for sex and money were such that they were inherently adulterous and would almost certainly be carrying sexually transmitted diseases. Other informants asserted that *karuwai* performed "*sikaduro*", "*magani da*

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[121]   When asked about marital violence, most men would say that it was only 'weak' men who beat their wives, and that it was legitimate for a wife to divorce a husband who beat her 'excessively'. However, the obligation of wives to fulfil their husbands' sexual wants meant that the notion of marital rape was in the view of many men a contradiction in terms. It is hard to know the extent of marital violence in Zongo.

laya" [122] and other occult practices, which gave them magical powers, such as the ability to shapeshift, or use magic words to 'capture the minds' and money of men. The victims of such practices are possessed by a spirit under the control of another person. The perpetrator makes a kind of Faustian pact with 'jinn', spirits which expect sacrifices in return for their help. The rituals alleged to be involved in *sikaduro* are particularly grotesque, often involving human sacrifice, bathing in blood and sleeping with the dead. Such behaviour was generally accepted as being prohibited in Islam.

6.3 Marital Histories and the Evaluation of Brides

I began this chapter by asking Abu which kind of women were good to marry. Abu emphasised the *amarya* brides' virginity when explaining what made them more desirable than the *bazawara* brides. The *bazawara* bride differed from the *amarya* bride because "a man has had enjoyment with her before you". Even less desirable were the women that Abu described as "test", highly promiscuous women who provided men with sexual services in return for money or "gifts". Abu's account was framed by sex and sexuality and so I began to excavate this frame through the significance of women's sexual conduct.

As we have seen, perceptions of a woman's sexual conduct invoke judgements about her moral character. An *amarya* is by definition a virgin, and a virgin's sexual conduct is by definition virtuous. However, virginity and virtue are not mutually exclusive. This is apparent in the fact that though marriage implies the absence of virginity, such absence does not necessarily equate to sexual deviance. Indeed, when men spoke about *bazawara* brides, the emphasis on sex and sexuality was variable. Thus the idea that the relative value of *bazawara* and *amarya* brides is foregrounded in norms of sexual conduct is problematic in that it offers little explanation as to why the *bazawara* bride ought to be any less desirable than her *amarya* counterpart. However, though sexual conduct was less consistently mentioned as being amongst the qualities

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[122] 'Magani da *laya*' refers to the practice of charming. Magani is the Hausa word for medicine or magic; *laya* are written charms or spells, usually verses from the Quran. '*Sikaduro*' is a Twi term which literally translates as 'money medicine'. '*Sakawa*' – the use of charms to make money from foreigners by 'capturing their minds' via chat rooms, dating sites, skype and other forms of social media – has become particularly notorious in Ghana and Nigeria alike. (See also Wendl 2007, Armstrong 2011).

that made *bazawara* brides less desirable, men were consistent in framing their evaluations of both *amarya* and *bazawara* brides in moral terms.

Kabiru gave an account of a man he knew, who had married a *bazawara* bride. Kabiru told of how the man had fallen in love with a *bazawara* woman and wanted to marry her. The man's friends advised against the marriage, warning him that they knew her character and she was not a good woman. His parents, disapproving of their son's choice, tried to find him an alternative bride, but the man defied his parents' guidance and re*mai*ned insistent that he would only marry the bride of his choosing.

As time passed, his father became worried his son was getting too old and so eventually agreed to let him "choose his choice" and marry the *bazawara* bride. At first everything seemed normal and the man was content. However, with the passage of time the marriage began to sour. His wife became aggressive and greedy. He had to work very hard to satisfy her demands for money, clothes and gifts. According to Kabiru, the man became very sick. "*He look like he was sleeping, but his mind have left his body*". The man's parents sought advice from a Mallam, who said "his wife have done something spiritual to him, like charm him". The Mallam wrote some verses from the Quran onto a wooden tablet. He then washed the tablet clean and used the ink stained water to bathe the afflicted man[123] whilst reciting the Quran. The man suddenly woke up. He realised that his wife had been using "rituals to control his mind" and divorced her immediately.

Though Kabiru's story would be regarded by most men as an extreme case, it is nevertheless consistent with many accounts in the sense that the undesirability of the *bazawara* bride is framed in terms of a proclivity for occult practices antithetical to Islam. It is not that all *bazawara* women are inherently immoral or dangerous; but the fact that they have by definition been divorced was seen to raise concerns as to how a particular woman had conducted herself in her previous marriage and the extent of her culpability in bringing the divorce about.

The men at Oakville Town Hall claimed that when considering a *bazawara* marriage, one has to take a similar approach to buying a home-used television. You can see

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[123]   This practice is referred to as 'rubutu', literally 'writing', and is a common form of medicine in Zongo and elsewhere in Hausaland (See Stock 1987, Tocco 2010, James 2014).

home-used televisions that appear to be in very good condition when in the shop. The picture and sound might appear to be as good as a new television, but when you get it home you might discover that it has many flaws or it might break after a short period of time. Consequently, one has to temper one's expectations: to know and understand that one is taking a risk, and to be prepared to suffer the consequences.

Just like buying the home-used television, marrying a *bazawara* bride was in the eyes of Abu and his friends a risk: she could be infertile, sexually promiscuous, carry sexually transmitted diseases, practice blood rituals or have a "bad attitude". Consequently, a man needed to know a lot about a *bazawara* bride's background before deciding to marry. One of the things that struck me about Zongo, is that people seem to be acutely suspicious of one another, even those who appear to be good friends or family. Many of my informants insisted it was impossible to know a person's 'true character', that the general character of most people in Zongo was bad, and that people often presented themselves well whilst harbouring malign intentions[124]. This anxiety is especially acute in attitudes towards *bazawara* brides. Again, this idea is expressed neatly in Abu's television analogy.

According to Abu, home-used televisions can look so good when on display it is hard to tell them from new. As a result, an unscrupulous salesman can "use his words to catch your mind"; deceive you into believing that a faulty television is in fact in perfect working order. Blinded by optimism and the salesman's words, an old television that nobody would ordinarily buy appears irresistible. In the same vein, a *bazawara* can be very beautiful, speak in such a way as to make you feel good about them, and after not very long come to love them. However, there are no guarantees that the perception you have of them is not a deception to try and "*catch*" a husband. Sometimes even using witchcraft or charms to "*catch your heart*", to "*want them too much*". But when you finally marry them, they change. You discover that they have a "bad character". The woman might be mad – "have bad connection" and receive "only one channel". She might not listen and may be argumentative. She might not do her work or she may shame you in front of your friends. Consequently, those who wanted to marry a *bazawara* bride had to resist their impulses, exercise patience and caution. They

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[124]   This idea is captured in a popular adage '*farin hakora amma bakin ciki*', which literally translates as 'white teeth but black inside'. White being associated with moral propriety.

would need to do a lot of research. Take time to observe her behaviour for clues as to the "*true attitude*" she might try to keep concealed.

I asked the Abu and his friends whether *amarya* might not be subject to the same flaws. How could you know that an *amarya* was any less prone to such problems? Abu's response was that in contrast to *bazawara*, the *amarya* bride had not known "life". She had not had the chance to be corrupted by life, by hardship, by a previous husband. All women had the potential to be immoral, but divorce makes it more likely that this potential has been realised. Maybe if her husband had mistreated her, beaten her unnecessarily or failed to support her, she would have pursued immoral paths such as prostitution or witchcraft as a means to try and survive. The *amarya* is a tabula rasa upon which immorality would be inscribed by life beyond the paternal home unless tempered by a good and proper husband. A man marrying a *bazawara* would have to work hard to re-educate through appropriate discipline and teaching in the ways of Islam as a means to correctly orientate her moral compass. *Amarya* and new televisions share the quality of newness; they have no background, and thus are known to be unsullied.

Whilst these views are clearly indicative of the normative judgements men make of women in Sabon Zongo, they can also be read as expressions of anxiety by men as to their own capacity as husbands. There were men who claimed that *bazawara* brides, having already been married, would have different expectations to *amarya* brides. A *bazawara* bride was more likely to complain at her husband's failings than an *amarya* bride, who knowing no different would put up with her lot.

As argued in Chapter Two, moral orders imply social orders. Social hierarchies are articulated and legitimated through moral commentaries concerning which kinds of people, practices and things are and are not morally acceptable (Douglas 2010). This idea speaks to the moral discourses surrounding women's sexual conduct[125]. An important observation to be drawn out from the examples above is the linking of sexual and moral deviance to the occult and transgressive forms of consumption and

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[125]   Indeed, Gaudio (2009) describes how in Kano, the sustained persecution and eventual criminalisation of *karuwai* in 2001, has been justified by the idea that transgression of sexual norms poses a threat to social and moral stability.

exchange[126]. The argument that exchange is embedded in and reflects wider moralities is well-established in social anthropology (see Bloch and Parry 1996, Geschiere 1997, Comaroff & Comaroff 1999, 2001, Masquelier 2009a).

In Zongo, the idea of consumption and exchange as moral domain is evident in the notion of 'bakin Kuɗi' – literally black money. Bakin Kuɗi refers to the money obtained via immoral means, such as sikaduro, sakawa as well as prostitution. This resonates with the larger concern of this thesis; namely the ways in which notions of masculinity are situated in relations of production, consumption and exchange. In Chapters Four and Five I described how notions of accepted and valued masculinity emphasise a productive and responsible manhood. Categories of the person do not exist in isolation, but require constituent referents in order for them to be meaningful. This is to say that the notion of productive and responsible manhood necessarily implies that there are other kinds of people who are not productive or responsible men. I argued that the notion of youth as immoral, irresponsible and unproductive was significant in this respect. In the same vein, the legitimacy of men's authority over women is derived from the notion of men as providers, and so necessarily requires a notion of women as dependants. This idea is given expression in the moral speculation that surrounds women whose dependency on men is uncertain; as we see, for example, in the idea that women who live independently of men, or whose means are judged to exceed those of the husbands and fathers normatively expected to provide for them, must by virtue of their productive inadequacies be engaged in prostitution or occult practices.

The very possibility of independent women is troublesome for the notion of female dependency upon which masculine status and authority rely. From this point of view, the moral speculation that is attached to female sexuality might be seen as a manifestation of the prevailing social order and wider anxieties about the legitimacy of masculine authority, but also as a mechanism of social control. This idea is well illustrated in the case of Ladi.

I had been introduced to Ladi's father by one of my research assistants when I first arrived in Zongo. My research assistant felt that as one of Zongo's mai gida he was

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[126]   Again this resonates with the wider Hausa studies literature where the convergence of sexual and spiritual deviance is perhaps most keenly represented in the association of 'bori' – spirit possession and 'karuwai'; both of which have come to be regarded as antithetical to Islam and so morally reprehensible (Gaudio 2009).

an important man for me to know. Though my conversations with his daughter Ladi were generally fleeting, I did learn that she had been divorced a few months prior to my arrival in Zongo and so had returned to her parental compound. Every time I went to visit Ladi's father, she seemed to be perpetually sweeping and scrubbing the area around the entrance of her father's compound. At the time I thought the sweeping to be of limited significance, other than Ladi perhaps being a little neurotic. Indeed, I made a joke that if she swept the floor any more she would wear it away. To this she responded that it was important for the house to be clean as a means to preserve '*girma*' – respect or honour.

Such an attitude chimes with the notion of 'dirt' as matter out of place presented by Douglas (2010). Seen in this light, cleanliness can be taken as an expression of order. The cleanliness of the compound was important as a reflection of '*lafiya*' – the social and moral integrity of the household from which *girma* is derived. I am reticent to suggest that Ladi's sweeping was solely motivated by a concern with the moral integrity of the household. Nevertheless, one can see how Ladi's status as an unmarried non-virgin could be considered a potentially polluting force that threatens to destabilize the household's *lafiya*, and the sweeping a possible means to *mai*ntain it. The sweeping has symbolic power as a public performance of her morally appropriate gender identity. In sweeping she performed a domestic role and an associated dependent identity within a household provided for and under the authority of men. This 'presentation of self' served to counter possible speculation as to her social and moral integrity. Being a dependent of men she would have no need or inclination to support herself through immoral means such as prostitution.

6.4 How Brides Make Men

Marrying *amarya* is most desirable, but also most difficult. One needs to be a 'big man' and to have money. In contrast, marrying a *bazawara* is considered a last resort; something that only poor men or those that "have no option" would pursue. The relative desirability and difficulty in marrying an *amarya* versus a *bazawara* woman means that the category to which one's prospective bride belongs influences a man's social status. Whereas marrying *amarya* is considered ideal, even normal, marrying *bazawara* as a

first bride is suggestive of a man's limited social and material means and thus an inferior status.

While there tends to be a consensus that marrying an *amarya* as a first bride implies higher status, *bazawara* women are not altogether rejected. Indeed, many elder or previously married men actively pursue *bazawara* wives. Although he currently has only one wife, Gariba told me that he had been married three times. The first wife, he said, had been *amarya*, chosen by his parents. He didn't really love her but he needed to marry and it was his duty to follow his father's choice. After a year she had borne him a child, but he felt like he needed someone that he truly loved. He chose the most beautiful woman he could. She was also *amarya*. She bore him two sons, but was very demanding, always wanting expensive cloth. She also argued with his first wife and refused to work. He decided to divorce her. Seeing as he already had children, he decided that a cooperative wife, who could support herself and do her work would take a priority over fertility. He decided to marry an older woman who had already been married. This woman was the one that he had come to love and with which he said he had the most "understanding". He liked that she had experience of life and her own income; he was able to talk with her and even ask for financial help from her when he needed it. His first wife became very jealous because he was so close with his third wife. He felt that he could not support both his wives equally and so divorced his first wife.

Similar sentiments were echoed in interviews with young men who stated that though the first wife should be *amarya*, it was less important in the case that one took a second or third wife. They did however all agree that one's first wife ought to be *amarya*. Marrying *amarya* was most desirable, but also most difficult. One needed to be a 'big man' and to have money. In contrast, marrying a *bazawara* was considered a last resort; something that only poor men or those that "have no option" would pursue. The relative desirability and difficulty in marrying an *amarya* versus a *bazawara* woman meant that the category to which one's prospective bride belonged would influence a man's social status.

The key point here is that *amarya* women are perceived as having greater social value than *bazawara*. Whereas marrying *amarya* was considered ideal, even normal, marrying *bazawara* as a first bride was suggestive of a man's limited social and

material means and thus an inferior status. The important point here is that marrying an *amarya* bride shows capacity. It expresses a man's productive capacities and responsible manhood. Though it was better to marry a *bazawara* bride than to never marry at all, they were described by men as less desirable. They were not merely morally perilous, but had the potential to undermine a man's efforts to present himself as responsible provider.

What men describe as the ideal bride is articulated through a normative ideology of household relations. In Chapter Five I elaborated the conventions that frame the normative position and conduct of women within the domestic economy. Women are the notional dependants and subordinates of the married men within their household, including both their husbands and fathers. Women are expected to dutifully perform their domestic roles and tasks, such as preparing food, cleaning and caring for children, and to express deference towards men. When a woman's conduct deviates from these norms, it is seen to reflect badly upon the men to whom she is subordinate; she is seen as a reflection of a failure to exert social control over their dependents and *mai*ntain a household in *lafiya*. This can be seen to inform notions of the ideal bride in Zongo. The ideal bride is one that is seen as being most likely to conform to the normative role that is designated to women within the household.

This is reflected in the notions of *amarya* and *bazawara*. The term *amarya* is used to denote a woman who has never previously been married. In contrast the term *bazawara* is used to describe women who have previously been married and are now divorced. While these two categories might be defined in terms of marital status, it's not as such whether a woman has been married or not that determines her suitability as a bride, but rather the kinds of judgements that are made about her character and conduct on the basis of her marital history. In the case of a *bazawara* bride it is not being divorced that is problematic as such, but the speculation that surrounds her role in bringing it about. Divorce is a manifestation of an absence of *lafiya* in a household and thus casts doubt over the conduct of its constituents, in particular women. In many cases divorce was seen to result from a wife's failure to conform to her normative role within the household, or to adopt an appropriately deferential disposition towards her male superiors.

However, marital histories are inevitably particular, and the actual circumstances of a divorce difficult to ascertain. Individual men and women often produce conflicting and competing accounts in efforts to absolve themselves of blame and represent their own character and conduct favourably. However, men do sometimes acknowledge that a *bazawara* might not be entirely culpable for the breakdown of her previous marriage. Indeed, in the event of divorce, speculation can and does arise as to a husband's conduct and capability in performing his conjugal obligations. Nevertheless, uncertainty often re*mai*ns, such that the character of a *bazawara* women and their suitability as brides are subject to considerable doubt. Furthermore, marriage is regarded as the socially and morally proper condition of a woman and so it follows that the *bazawara* is associated with social and moral deviance. This is often articulated through discourses of consumption, production and dependency. In Chapter Five, I elucidated how notions of gender difference in Zongo are situated in relations of production and consumption. When divorce takes place, a woman's dependent status becomes unclear. Regardless of women's actual productive activities, the idea that women can support themselves independently of men is seen as counter to the proper social and moral order. When a *bazawara* fails to convincingly assert her dependency upon a socially and morally appropriate provider, such as her father or other senior male kin, speculation arises as to the morality of the means through which she meets her consumption needs; for example, she might be subject to accusations of witchcraft or prostitution. This comes to shape the evaluations that are made as to the suitability and desirability of a *bazawara* bride. By virtue of having been divorced, the moral propriety of the *bazawara* bride is often seen as uncertain. Thus the notion of *bazawara* describes not only the marital status of the divorcee, but also alludes to a potential for social and moral deviance.

Though clearly all *bazawara* have at some point been *amarya*, men see the moral status of the *amarya* bride as less ambiguous. The *amarya* has re*mai*ned under the watchful supervision of her kin and her dependent status is more easily affirmed. Unlike the *bazawara*, she has not been compelled to provide for herself. She re*mai*ns uncorrupted by the immoral means of subsistence that the absence of a socially appropriate provider necessitates.

The social and moral uncertainties that surround *bazawara* women mean that marrying a *bazawara* bride is regarded as an inherently foolish or risky endeavour,

best avoided by the man as yet experienced in conjugal affairs. Consequently, opting for a *bazawara* bride for one's first marriage is often seen as an act of last resort when a man lacks the resources or wherewithal to acquire an *amarya* bride and thus calls into question the viability of his manhood.

6.5 Who do Men Actually Marry?

Thus far we have seen how it is not only getting married that matters to men, but also to whom. I elaborated the notion of the ideal bride as described by men in Zongo. I showed how an important feature of the ideal bride was her marital history. This discourse categorised prospective brides as either *amarya* – as yet unmarried women, presumed to be virgins – or *bazawara* – those women who had already been married and their status as virgins uncertain. Those women accorded the status *amarya* were described by men as possessing inherent qualities that meant they were regarded as superior, higher status brides and eventual wives relative to those described as *bazawara*. The differential statuses of these categories were in turn invoked in the status of men themselves. A man who marries an *amarya* could be regarded as of higher status than a man who married a *bazawara*. In turn this was said to influence men's marital pathways. Young men would pursue *amarya* rather than *bazawara* brides as it is from marriage to the former from which the greatest prestige and status relative to other men can be derived. Given the ubiquity of this discourse, we might expect it to be reflected in actual marital practices. However, as has been persistently argued throughout this thesis, discourses cannot be reduced to descriptive content, but need to be examined in terms of their wider social effects. In seeking to examine the implications of the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse, I will now turn my attention to who men actually marry. Do men manage to fulfil their expressed desire for an *amarya* bride? To what extent is the dominant narrative that expresses preference for *amarya* brides reflected in actual bride selection?

Consistent with the proposition of this thesis, marriage is important to men in Zongo. It is a standard feature of greetings between people who know each other well, as well as with strangers. It is a common topic of casual conversation and gossip; and as described previously, it is a central preoccupation for young men who have yet to achieve it. This makes it relatively straightforward to enquire as to a man's marital

status, both in informal interactions or within the formal structure of an interview. It didn't take long to know the marital status of many of those men who I came to know or greet outside of an interview. Questions concerning marriage were staple in all my interviews. None of these interactions was specifically intended as a means to extract numerical data; however, it was nonetheless possible to quantify some of the information produced in these encounters. Understanding men's marital practices perhaps logically begins with an examination of who men actually marry. From the data extracted we might gain insights into marital practices and how the *amarya/bazawara* discourse is invoked in them[127]. Let us begin by setting the scene with some basic information concerning the people from which the data subject to analysis is gathered.
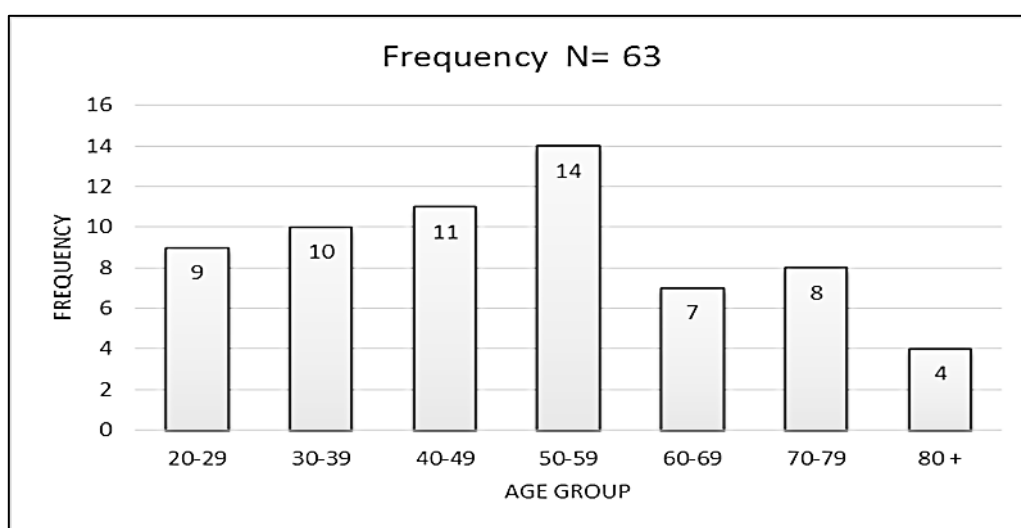
Figure. 5. Frequency of Married Respondents by Age-Group. N= 63.

Figure 5illustrates the composition of the sample by age group. Though fieldwork was undertaken with both married and unmarried men, my focus here is on those men that are or have been married and the categories of bride that they have married, hence never-married men are not included in this sample. The total sample consists of 63 married men across seven age groups[128]. Men under 20 are not included as no

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[127]   Whilst I present the following data quantitatively, the methods employed in producing it are firmly grounded in qualitative data collection methods.

[128]   Though I have grouped men decennially this is simply as a means of organising the data for convenience and presentation purposes rather than corresponding to any particular age grading system in Zongo. I do not believe that this particular scheme interferes with the integrity of the data nor the results that are derived from it. The conclusions that I draw from my data are not contingent upon the particular age grouping applied in its presentation.

married men under the age of 20 were identified during fieldwork. I have also grouped 4 men together in a category of 80+, even though these men were aged 82, 83, 88 and 90. Creating a separate category on the basis of a single case seemed unnecessary, and in any case this omission does nothing to detract from the analysis.

Table 3. Reported Status of First Wife by Age Group.

Age Group	Number of men who reported first wife as *bazawara*.	Number of men who reported first wife as *amarya*.
20-29	4	5
30-39	1	9
40-49	0	11
50-59	0	14
60-69	0	7
70-79	0	8
80 +	0	4

Table 3 illustrates the number of *bazawara* and *amarya* wives at a man's first marriage by age group. The first thing to note is that 55 out of 63 married men said that their first wife had been *amarya* with only five saying that they had married *bazawara*. What is immediately striking in the table is that of the five men who disclosed that they had married *bazawara* as a first wife, four of them were under 30 and the remaining one was 32 years old; placing them at the lower end of the samples age range. Age would also seem to broadly correlate with the number of marriages as demonstrated in table 3 above.

Table 4. Reported Number of Marriages by Age Group.

Age Group	Frequency	Total Number of marriages.	Mean (Marriages per Person)
20-29	9	9	1
30-39	10	14	1.4
40-49	11	15	1.5
50-59	14	34	2.4
60-69	7	15	2.1
70-79	8	26	3.25
80 +	4	13	3.25

In Table 4 above, we can see that the more marriages a man has the older he is likely to be and vice versa. Although in one case one man had married four times and divorced once by the time he had reached 34[129], and another had married twice and divorced once by age 39, the next youngest man to have more than one wife at the time of fieldwork was 43 years old[130].

Table 5. Reported Status of Wives by Marital Order.

	1st Wives	2nd Wives	3rd Wives	4th Wives	5th Wives	Total
Amarya	58	27	14	3	1	103
Bazawara	5	7	5	5	1	23
Unknown/did not say	0	0	1	1	0	2
Total	63	34	20	9	2	128

Table 5. illustrates the number of *bazawara* and *amarya* wives across all marriages. What immediately emerges as interesting is that although in the case of first marriages few men stated that their first wife had been *bazawara*, the situation dramatically changes when additional wives and marriages are accounted for. Of the total 128 marriages of the 63 men in the sample, 23 were to *bazawara*. Placed in this context, the five men who disclosed a *bazawara* as a first wife account for a relatively small proportion relative to the total.

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[129]   It is not entirely unusual for men in Zongo to maintain household's elsewhere, such as in Nima or Madina. However, in some ways this man represents an anomaly in the sample as his presence in Zongo was relatively infrequent. Although he had a wife in Zongo, he spent most of his time in Nima, where two of his wives lived. Ordinarily his wife would travel to Nima to spend two nights with him, but occasionally he would come to Zongo, where he had some business interests and stay in his wife's room.

[130]   At this point it is important to note the first of the methodological issues alluded to above. The extent to which my sample can be taken as representative of Zongo as a whole is questionable. The absence of formal survey data concerning the demographic make-up of Zongo as a whole means that it is impossible to know the extent to which my sample corresponds with the population. Nevertheless, my concern is with process and possibility rather than . I am not so much interested in describing the totality of ways that all men in Zongo navigate marital pathways, but rather gaining insights into the possible mechanisms at play as demonstrable by specific young men's navigation of them. Even if my sample were representative, in isolation such statistics would at best provide a snapshot of the status of men's brides, not the processes through which such a status is established, nor how men relate to it.

6.6 Looking at the Numbers

As we saw in the previous chapter, marriage to a *bazawara* is described as being of inferior prestige to that of *amarya*. As a result, one might expect that men might favour *amarya* over *bazawara* marriage and thus *amarya* marriages would be more prevalent in the data. This would appear to be the case. As shown in figure 3, 103 of 128 marriages were reported as being to *amarya*, and 23 to *bazawara*, with the re*mai*ning unknown or undisclosed.

However, two observations are of interest here. First of all, the majority of marriages reported as being *bazawara* were second or subsequent marriages. Secondly the five men who reported a *bazawara* first wife were all towards the lower end of the age spectrum. This presents two questions. Why do the men who disclosed a first marriage as *bazawara* marriage fall towards the lower end of the sample range? Why are there no elder men who report marrying a *bazawara* first wife, whilst more than a third (23 of 65) of the same men took *bazawara* wives in subsequent marriages?

Several possibilities need to be explored here. First of all, we have already discerned a prevalent discourse that describes marriage to an *amarya* bride as according greater prestige and status to men than that of marriage to a *bazawara* bride. Given its prevalence we ought to expect men's responses, and the statistics that are derived from them, to be framed by this discourse. To put this in concrete terms, we might expect men to be reticent about disclosing a *bazawara* marriage, even if one had taken place. This presents a methodological issue in the possibility that neither group of men is likely to report a first marriage as *bazawara* under 'normal conditions'. However, that *bazawara* marriages were disclosed in a large number of cases amongst elder men and in the case of five younger men would seem to preclude this notion.

This suggests a second possibility: that the data presented above does not as such accurately represent men's actual marital practices, but rather the circumstances of its production. Perhaps there was something about the specific circumstances in which the data was gathered from the five young men, who were exceptional in marrying *bazawara* in their first marriages, which produced these specific accounts. I argue that my positionality as a researcher and relationships with particular informants are salient here in producing specific responses.

First of all, we ought not to assume that an informant is without investments in cultivating a particular presentation of self to a researcher. Indeed, as described in Chapter Two, interactions between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are framed by the cultural legacy of Zongo as a community of 'aliens', in which relationships with strangers are seen as socially, politically and economically important. The interactions with informants from which my data is derived are framed by my social identity as a particular sort of *baturi* in Zongo, and thus people's judgements as to the kinds of social costs and benefits that can be derived from particular self-presentations. This is to say that there is no necessary reason why the encounter between researcher and researched should be any more conducive to ostensibly factual or honest representations than any other kind of interaction. People may adapt or realign their self-presentations to different ideals, norms or scripts, but they do not discard the need or desire to be favourably evaluated simply by virtue of interacting with an outsider.

Furthermore, as with any social encounter, people will always be wary of leakage – that information exchanged in even the most private or secretive of contexts may find its way into the public do*main*. In concrete terms, my fieldwork was primarily amongst young men. I was explicit about this interest, and my associations with such young men were clearly visible. Knowing who I spent my time with, and how, may have influenced the things that people decided to say or do in my presence. For example, a young man formally interviewed would know that I would later be spending time with his peers, and so might be concerned that his account be shared with them. Regardless of my best efforts to assert and *mai*ntain confidentially, trust between researcher and informant is something that takes time to establish and its achievement is never guaranteed. Nevertheless, that it was younger men that disclosed the *bazawara* status of their first marriage suggests that these particular men perhaps did not perceive a risk of disclosure or other negative consequences should such disclosure occur, despite falling into the category of men that would perhaps have most reason to do so.

An understanding might be derived from my relationship with the specific young men in question. Though many men were cautious in the extent of their disclosures, those that did report a *bazawara* marriage were amongst those that I knew best. They would have been more familiar with my research and its objectives and perhaps trusted me more than others. Additionally, the relatively familiar relationships that I had with these

men might have meant that they perceived it as more difficult to conceal their wives' statuses, or perhaps secondary to the potential benefits that might be derived from a franker and more open relationship. For example, several young men assisted me as research assistants. Two of these were amongst those who reported a *bazawara* first marriage. Other men with whom I had a relatively close relationship may have perceived opportunities of employment, or the potential to derive status or resources from a relationship with me and this may have influenced the kind of information that they were prepared to disclose.

This issue of the extent to which men's reports of their first wives' status corresponds to their actual status is compounded by the fact that it is sometimes difficult to verify the status of a bride[131]. At times representations of a bride are inconsistent. Some men appear uncertain as to the status of their brides or *mai*ntain the status of their brides as ambiguous, through 'misrepresentation' or evasion. For example, when I formally interviewed Nasir prior to his marriage, I asked him whether Fiddausi, his prospective bride, was *bazawara* or *amarya*. I was initially frustrated that he would not answer the question directly; especially as I had already met Fiddausi and her children from a previous marriage. Nasir evaded the terms *amarya* and *bazawara*, but described Fiddausi in terms consistent with that of *amarya* – a woman without experience of men or marriage. He explained how marriage would mean that she would need to learn lots of new things – the needs and wants of a man and how to care for him and their marital home. He explained that this was understandable as she wouldn't know much about being a wife. He would have to be patient with her and help her understand what was required of a wife. What is important here is that Nasir doesn't dispute his wife's status as *bazawara*, but that the narrative he provides is consistent with the notion of *amarya* rather than *bazawara*. As I got to know Nasir he seemed to become less reticent in discussions concerning the status of his bride. He often shared with me his concern that his elder brother might find out that his bride was *bazawara* and how other men might view him if they knew the 'true' status of his bride.

That Nasir seemed to divulge this information might be attributable to greater trust within our relationship. Under certain circumstances researcher and researched can

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[131]   As we shall see later, the ambiguity that is derived from the difficulty of verification is a central point of analysis.

build a trusting relationship in time. The longer I spent in Zongo, the more socially precarious information was revealed to me by informants who seemed to lower their guards, thus yielding more accurate data concerning the status of men's wives. This would seem to be the case for the five young men who disclosed *bazawara* first marriages. However, there were many elder men with whom I felt I had equally frank and open relationships[132] and yet none reported a *bazawara* first marriage. Hence, whilst trust might be necessary in enabling such disclosures I am not convinced that it is sufficient as an explanation for their distribution. This does not mean that *bazawara* first marriages are more common than reported in the data, but it does mean that we cannot be certain of their actual prevalence amongst men, be they young or old. Bearing in mind the methodological difficulty of empirically demonstrating how trust, or the absence of it, might shape the data produced, I am reluctant to claim that the numerical data presented above accurately represents the status of men's brides. Furthermore, the question re*main*s as to why men who have married more than once report the *bazawara* status of second or subsequent wives, but still not that of a first wife?

As shown in table 3, more young men reported *bazawara* first marriages than elder men. This may or may not be explained by my specific relationship with the men in question. However elder men do report *bazawara* marriages, but only in the case of marriages subsequent to their first. This would present the question: Why is the *amarya*/*bazawara* status of one's bride most significant in the case of first marriages?

Three possibilities emerge: First of all, that the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse is exclusive to first wives and does not apply to second or subsequent wives. Second, that although applicable to second wives, its importance is diminished relative to other factors which mediate male social status. Third, that it is less a case of disclosure and more about men's ability to frame marital pathways in specific ways.

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[132]   I resist complacency in this regard. I believe that 'gut feeling' is often a good guide to evaluating the extent of trust in any relationship, but I cannot and should not rely upon the reader's gut feeling to take my word for it. Moreover, it is inherently complex to demonstrate empirically. Whilst this is more of a problem than a solution, it does provoke areas of further examination that might be useful in the analysis.

It is relatively straightforward to discount the first of these possibilities with a degree of certainty. At no point during fieldwork did an informant explicitly or implicitly allude to age or number of marriages as exempting a wife from *amarya*/*bazawara* categorisation and the associated ranking and status implications. Of course, one must re*mai*n open to the possibility that this is attributable to a gap in the data. However, the persistence of the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse in men's narratives and yet complete absence of any sort of age or marital order qualification would seem to make this unlikely.

While at the level of discourse the constitution of the categories of *amarya* and *bazawara* and their broad implications for a man's status re*mai*n unchanged, the effects of this discourse appear less significant for men who have had multiple marriages. If the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse effected subsequent marriages in the same way as the first, then we might expect fewer men who have married more than once to report *bazawara* marriages. The intersection of the *amarya*/*bazawara* status of one's wife with other forms of social differentiation is significant here in mediating the effect of a wife's status on a man's social status. Marriage represents the rite of passage through which the transition from youth to manhood is achieved. All things being equal, a man married to a *bazawara* might well enjoy lower social status relative to that of a man married to an *amarya*, but as has been shown in Chapters Four and Five, he will nonetheless be of higher status than the as yet unmarried man.

As we saw in the example of Mallam Malolo discussed in Chapter Four, tremendous emphasis is placed on a first marriage as demarcating youth from manhood irrespective of other forms of social differentiation such as age or lineage. This emphasis is not present in subsequent marriages as manhood has been achieved upon one's first marriage. Marriage plays out as a binary opposition between youth and manhood. For older, already married men, their manhood is not at stake in their marital pathways in the same way as it is for men marrying their first wives because they are ranked relative to other married men rather than the category of youth, a status which upon marriage to a first wife men have left behind.

Whilst clearly status varies between married men, the distinction between unmarried youth and married man is exceptionally powerful. This is not to say that the *amarya*/*bazawara* status of marriages subsequent to a first marriage is without the

potential to impact upon a man's status. However, entry into manhood, via marriage, opens up a series of intersecting, status-conferring relations and qualities not available to unmarried men – such as title, wealth and legitimate paternity – that take precedence over, or at the very least diminish the significance of, whether one's additional wives are *bazawara* or *amarya*. This is especially the case for men in polygamous marriages. As described in Chapter Five, polygamy is seen as an indicator of powerful manhood. The polygamously married man is the *Mai Gida par excellence*; the epitome of man as provider, as ordained and revered in Islam. He is the embodiment of *mutumin kirkii* and thus of respect and prestige. That a polygamously married man's wives might be *bazawara* is by and large socially irrelevant relative to the superordinate achievement of obtaining and providing for multiple wives. Despite this reverence for polygamy, it is seldom achieved in Zongo. Hence elder polygamously married men are of such a high status that they constitute Zongo's elite and are to some extent immune from the negative effects of the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse[133].

Bearing in mind that my sample as presented is limited in the variables it takes into account, one of course has to be cautious in interpreting this data. It might be that the elder men sampled happened to be inordinately wealthy, for example. It is certainly the case that all of the men with three or more wives at the time of fieldwork could be described as belonging to Zongo's elite – belonging to prestigious lineages and occupying formal and informal positions of power. Nonetheless, it is a fairly safe assumption that multiple marriages, be they polygamous or successive, tend to be more prevalent amongst elder men who are likely to have greater resources, in terms of time and wealth, with which to acquire wives than younger men. However, the reasons that one man might have more wives than another is not the issue at stake in this chapter, but rather how these marital pathways might be framed relative to the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse.

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[133]   Multiple divorces and marriages are perhaps not as frequent as in Hausaland proper, but they are nonetheless not nearly as rare as polygamous marriages in Zongo.

6.7 When the Numbers Don't Add Up

As we have seen a key problem in evaluating men's actual marital practices is the extent to which a bride's reported status corresponds with actual status. While the building of trust over time has been raised as a possible factor in influencing disclosure, this ought not to be overstated relative to the pressure time exerts on efforts to sustain particular self-presentations and performances, particularly when they might be at odds with 'realities'. I believe that as Nasir and I spent more time together we developed a friendship and came to trust one another. However, the amount of time that we spent together meant that it also became increasingly difficult for Nasir to conceal the status of his bride, and the costs of misrepresentation might for Nasir have felt outweighed by the benefits of sustaining openness in our relationship.

The absence of elder men's reports of *bazawara* first marriages might be similarly shaped. One might argue that elder men also attempt to redefine the status of their brides. Indeed, the 'rewriting' of one's marital history to conform to a high status marital pathway ought to become easier as time passes and memories fade. Equally, for younger men who have married more recently, such rewriting might become more difficult, subject as it is to public memory. Therefore, a key variable influencing reports of a bride's status is perhaps not so much number of wives or age, but how recently the marriage has taken place.
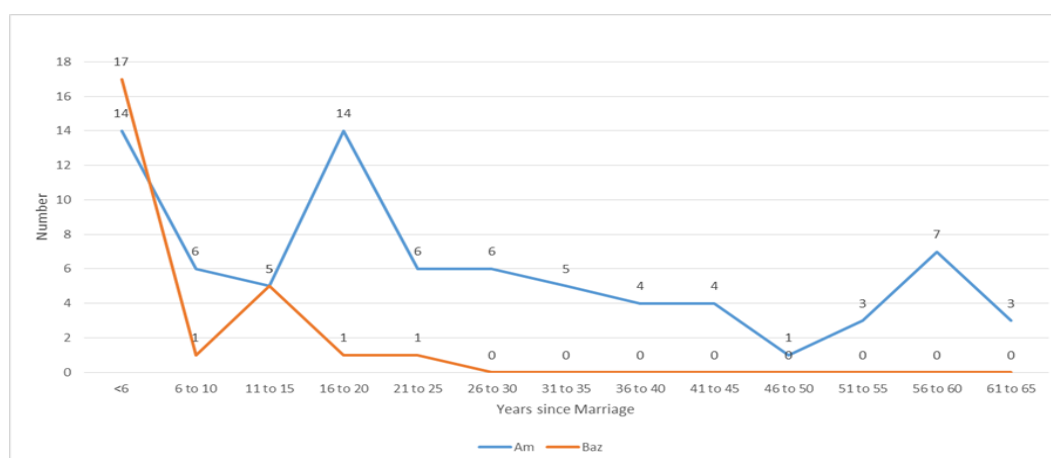

Figure 6. Marriages Reported as Amarya and Bazawara by Years since Marriage. N = 103[134].

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[134]   Where the number of years since a marriage was either not reported or unclear, this data has not been included. Hence of the total 128 marriages reported, in 25 cases there was no data available or given for the time since marriage.

Looking at Figure 6 we can see that, of the 103 marriages in which the time since marriage was stated, the number reported as *bazawara* declines as the number of years since a marriage has taken place increases. Of the 72 marriages that had taken place more than five years ago, just 8 marriages were reported as being *bazawara*; whereas 17 of the 31 marriages to have taken place in the last five years were reported as *bazawara*. Whilst clearly correlation does not equal causality, there does seem to be a relationship between time since marriage, or a time associated variable, and the likelihood of a marriage being reported as *bazawara*. This appears to add weight to the proposition that the 'rewriting' of one's marital history to conform to a high status marital pathway becomes easier over time. This does not altogether preclude the influence of the 'back-grounding effects' of other factors which mediate male social status for elder men, but suggests that representations of marital pathways are subject to a range of factors that influence the social cost of specific representations. For example, reporting a *bazawara* marriage might have less effect on the status of an elder, polygamously married man of title than on a younger recently married man, but it might also be easier for an elder man to sustain favourable representations of a first marriage that is more distant in public memory than that of a younger man.

The problem here is that it is not possible to verify this proposition from the quantitative data set out above in isolation. First of all, one needs to be cautious of making claims about specific correlations, let alone causality, on the basis of a relatively small sample size. Second, and perhaps most significantly, the data gathered is subject to the contingencies that shape the production of specific accounts as set out above. This points towards the need for deeper qualitative analysis of specific cases.

6.8 Conclusions: (Un)Revealing Answers to Unsatisfactory Questions

"Zuma da zaki da harbi - The bee has both sweetness and a sting" (Hausa Proverb)[135].

Clearly, a man cannot get married without a wife; but as we saw in the first part of this chapter, it is not simply the case that any bride will do. Men broadly categorise and evaluate brides in moral terms. Men say they want virtuous brides and that it is the

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[135] Meaning there are two sides to every story (Merrick 1905. P.63).

'*amarya*', never-married virgin bride, that most keenly embodies such virtue. '*Bazawara*' brides, women who have already been married and divorced, are somewhat less desirable. Though not necessarily without virtue, a *bazawara* bride is a more uncertain prospect. The fact that a *bazawara* bride has been divorced raises questions about her character and conduct, which men say are difficult, if not impossible to answer. In Zongo, the belief is that only God can know a person's 'true character', such that malign intentions may often be concealed behind a veil of propriety.

Men claim that the value of bridewealth paid to an *amarya* bride's father is a reflection of the fact that virtuous brides are in high demand and hard to come by. A man who marries an *amarya* bride is generally considered a man of capacity, but men of lesser means must necessarily settle for *bazawara* brides. Thus who a man marries matters because it is indicative of his ability to produce and provide which, as described in Chapters Four and Five, are the bedrock of masculine prestige and status.

However, the moral discourses through which notions of the ideal bride are articulated reflect more fundamental anxieties about masculine self-image and personal significance. Much like we've seen in the case of junior and senior men, having authority over women is central to the idea of responsible manhood. Men's authority over women is considered legitimate by virtue of women's notional dependency on men. The flipside of this notion is that the realisation of accepted and valued manhoods relies upon the dependency of women.

What we see within the moral discourse of the ideal bride is a commentary on the ways in which the idea of independent women is troubling for individual men and masculinity at large. When men make judgements as to which kind of women are or are not morally virtuous, they are marking out which kind of women are and are not going to fall into line. This is important for individual men, who require appropriately behaved brides if they are to successfully establish and sustain their manhoods. Where a virtuous bride is a symbol of competent and responsible manhood, a wanton and wily wife signifies a husband's lack of control. The women men describe as virtuous brides are those they perceive as being most amenable to – or perhaps more precisely, the least likely to undermine –, the kinds of self-images they would like to cultivate. Though independent women present a problem for individual men's efforts

to establish their manhoods, there is a much larger issue at stake. The very possibility of independent women calls into question not only the legitimacy of male social control, but the very terms that make the category 'man' socially meaningful. Thus, who men marry matters not only as a marker of individual status, but for the significance of and value of manhood as a whole.

I was interested in the extent to which this discourse could be seen to inform men's actual marital practices. Through the use of quantitative data extracted from field notes and interviews, I attempted to draw a clearer picture of who men actually married. However, in the analysis of this data several methodological issues arose that made the answer to this question difficult to ascertain. I argued that the extent to which men's accounts can be seen accurately represent their actual marital practices is uncertain. Within the context of a discourse that accords greater prestige and status to men who marry *amarya* than *bazawara* brides, there is an incentive for men to claim their brides are *amarya*, such that it is difficult to reliably ascertain who men actually marry solely on the basis of their own reports. Thus one might argue that the data presented above tells us little about men's actual marital practices. However, I would argue that the ambiguities of men's representations are an interesting social phenomenon in their own right. Although the issue of disclosure re*mai*ns, that men's reports are framed by the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse only reinforces the suggestion that it matters to men. In perhaps more concrete terms, how a bride is perceived by others might well be more important than her actual status.

Furthermore, I argued that representations of brides are subject to a range of influences that affect the social cost of specific representations. For example, reporting a *bazawara* marriage might have less effect on the status of an older, polygamously married man of wealth and title than on a younger recently married man, but it might also be easier for older, less recently married men to sustain favourable representations of a first marriage that is more distant in public memory than that of a younger man.

Drawing on this idea, I posit a change of emphasis in the analysis. Rather than examining marital practices in terms of who men 'actually' marry, the following Chapters examine the marital pathways of specific men to ask how men (re)produce specific representations of their marital pathways. I elaborate the social forces that

come into play in shaping them, including men's ability to curate and choreograph their marital pathways and manage the perceptions of others. This is achieved through an analysis of the marital process as defined in terms of a series of prestationary exchanges that formally demarcate the marital process and the relationships, personhoods and statuses of the individuals who participate in it. I argue that the marital process can be seen as a stage for impression management – performances oriented towards cultivating specific self-presentations in which the *amarya*/*bazawara* discourse is a framing element. Through this exposition of the marital process I demonstrate how perceptions of a bride's status are subject to a man's ability to (re)produce and sustain (mis)representations favourable to his social status.

Chapter Seven: Prestations in Zongo

7.1 Husseini's *Sadaki*

This thesis is concerned with how manhoods are mediated by marriage. In this chapter, we will see how it is the fulfilment of specific prestationary requirements that formally confirms and sanctions the marital status of a man and woman as married, and thus confers the status of manhood.

In the following I examine how the fulfilment of prestationary processes and the achievement of accepted and valued forms of masculine personhood are interwoven. This means unravelling the normative discourses, structures and relationships in which prestations are embedded and given meaning in terms of their social consequences for men.

As described in Chapter Three, a consistent observation in the anthropology of marriage has been how marriage operates to establish, reconfigure and reinforce particular social relationships. In the following section I argue that in Zongo prestationary exchanges play an important mediating role in these processes in three important respects. First of all, prestations can be seen to initiate the processes through which particular social relationships are established. Second, because prestationary exchanges require an audience, they serve to make these relationships and their normative entailments visible to others. Third, this visibility opens up the relationships established in the prestationary process to public scrutiny, which in turn serves as a disciplinary mechanism, encouraging conformity to normative rights, obligations and conduct within them.

In formal discourses of the marital process, it is *sadaki* - bridewealth - that is regarded as most important and thus that which I turn to first in my analysis. Let me begin with an account of a not untypical *sadaki* exchange, before the complex sequence of prestations, and then analysing how they work to make social relations and persons.

It is a Saturday afternoon, a couple of weeks from the anticipated commencement of Ramadan, and high season for weddings[136]. I gather along with perhaps two hundred men at Mallam Bako's mosque, for the formal confirmation of Husseini's wedding. Husseini and his bride are both absent: he is waiting in the marital home, while his future bride is at her father's house ready to be taken to her new husband, via celebrations with her friends and family. At the front of the mosque, Mallam Danjuma sits crossed legged encircled by various elders. On either side are the bride and groom's male kin. Husseini's younger brother circulates, offering Tom Tom cough sweets and kola nuts to the assembled men.

Despite the formality of the occasion, it is far from quiet. The atmosphere is boisterous and jovial. Men chatter amongst themselves, tease and chase one another, and converse loudly on mobile phones. Some get up and down, wander in and out of the mosque, returning with sachets of cold water bought from a stall set up by a shrewd young Ewe woman outside[137]. I am sat with my research assistant Garuba and another young man, who shows me pictures of the woman that he is planning to marry, and asks that I greet her on his phone[138].

Mallam Danjuma begins the ceremony with prayers, followed by the elders of the bride and groom. Husseini's father hands a white envelope of money to Mallam Danjuma which he in turn passes to the bride's uncle. The brother of the bride's father takes the envelope and opens it to reveal the money enclosed. He counts the money out aloud, holding each note up one-by-one for the congregation to see. The money is then placed on another silver tray and a male member of the bride's family circulates with

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[136]   During Ramadan, a fatigue sets in derived from tiredness and hunger meaning men work less and spend more on luxury foods such as dates, fresh fruit and masara. They will be preoccupied with the innumerable *Tafseer* (readings from the Quran) and late nights spent feasting after the breaking of fast at sundown, thus they will have less time and money available for marriages and the accompanying expenses.

[137]   It is considered as essential to prayer that the supplicant is neither hungry nor thirsty; however, to consume any food or drink during a formal Islamic rite is prohibited.

[138]   I was often asked by young men, even those that I didn't know, to speak with a woman that they were courting on the phone. Sometimes I would be asked to accompany them on a visit to the woman in question. On one occasion, when I asked an informant why he wanted me to accompany him to visit his girlfriend, he explained that because I was a '*baturi*' it would give him "power" and so she would see him as a "big man".

the tray for all the men to bear witness it. 200 Cedi's worth of crisp 20 Cedi notes are visible. Some younger men laugh amongst themselves as one of them gestures as if about to steal the money and run away.

Meanwhile, the bride's elders quietly discuss something between themselves. My research assistant Garuba interprets events for me, giving me an overview of the procedure and the conversations taking place as he sees them. Garuba tells me that the bride's elders are discussing the amount of money that has been offered as *sadaki*. The brother of the bride's father turns and speaks to Mallam Danjuma. The bride's father's brother says some prayers and gives thanks for the offering. He states that the bride's father is pleased that the groom's family are seeking marriage to his daughter. However, he continues to state that his brother's daughter has many suitors and that she is bound to make an ideal wife for her groom. On this basis they feel that a more generous sum is needed – an amount more fitting for a bride such as his daughter.

The groom's elders turn to one another and converse in the same hushed tones as the bride's kin before them, eventually turning to Mallam Danjuma and the bride's elders. The groom's uncle states that they are a prestigious family, well thought of in Zongo, and that the daughter will be treated well. He describes a series of feats and favours that the family has performed for the benefit of the bride's family and the depth of the relationship between the two families. He says that already their families were united when his eldest daughter married one of their sons, and that the monies given are merely a token, intended to formalise a marriage that has long been on the table and to reiterate the enduring bonds between the two households.

The bride's uncle turns to Mallam Danjuma. He reiterates the close relationship between the two families and his gratitude for the relationship. However, he says his brothers have gone to considerable expense in raising their daughter and ensuring that her behaviour has been proper. Despite her many suitors she has not considered a man before and has re*mai*ned honourable. They have spent a lot of money, he continues, on the things that they will need in the home to ensure that when she goes to her husband's house she will not need anything to perform her duties as a wife and that this burden will not be assumed by her new kin. He suggests that a larger

contribution would be advisable so that the groom's family can publicly show recognition through a contribution to these expenses.

This statement is clearly anticipated by Husseini's elders. They produce a second envelope with more money enclosed, which is again passed to the bride's kin via Mallam Danjuma. Again the bride's uncle counts the money out aloud and it is circulated amongst the guests. The total *sadaki* has now reached 300 Cedi's, an amount towards the higher end of *sadaki* exchanges in Zongo. Garuba explains to me that this is a marriage between two prestigious families. The *sadaki* is high as a reflection of the pedigree of the two families that are about to marry and the auspiciousness of the occasion. He points out various prominent elders sat on plastic chairs at the southern side of the mosque: The Chief of Zongo Karfe, the Sarkin, Galadima and Madawaki of Zongo, and Mallam Danjuma. He explains that his father is present because it is an important.

The bride's elders converse amongst themselves once more, until after some minutes one of the uncles turns to Mallam Danjuma and informs him that his brother, the bride's father is satisfied – indeed, he has been nodding his head throughout in agreement. Mallam Danjuma invites the bride's father to say some prayers of thanks, who does so; and who is then followed by the father of the groom.

Mallam Danjuma speaks. Quiet descends upon the mosque for the first time[139]; the atmosphere is solemn and attentive. The men present stand in a well-rehearsed unison, as if attached to a single set of puppet strings precisely coordinating their movements. They fold their arms across their chests and in low, soft tones recite Al-Fatiah, the first surah of the Quran. The men kiss their thumbs and then gently place them over their eyes, before bowing their heads and descending to their knees. Once on their knees, the men place their heads, knees and hands to the floor and repeat the '*takbeer*' – '*Allahu akbar*', God is great – three times, raising themselves upright after each recitation.

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[139] Prayer clearly merits much greater attention than the *sadaki* negotiations.

The men eventually sit up, cross legs, and dip their heads to one side[140]. Mallam Danjuma recites '*Kitbah-tun-Nikah*', a prayer traditionally recited at weddings in which God's blessing for the marriage and ongoing guidance for the bride and groom are sought. At this point the marriage between the bride and groom is considered formally sanctioned.

Mallam Danjuma concludes the marriage ceremony with a prayer for the bride and groom, their families and the 'Jumma'a' – the Muslim community. Garuba explains that Danjuma is giving a short lecture for the benefit of the men in attendance. He says that it is through marriage that the Jumma'a grows strong and prospers, and thus should be sought by all men; furthermore, that they should strive to preserve it in all its glory and not degrade it though hasty marriage or immoral practice[141].

The men re*mai*n seated for some minutes, reflecting on the prayers before standing and leaving. The quiet formality of the ceremonial prayers contrasts with the chaotic and noisy departure of the assembled men. Once the ceremony has drawn to an end I feel relief that it has reached a successful outcome. I had not expected the bride's family to bargain over the *sadaki*, despite Husseini himself fearing the possibility.

I knew Husseini reasonably well and he had shared some of his pre-wedding nerves with me as the day approached. He was concerned that the bride's father might create difficulty when the *sadaki* was presented, or that he might even reject it altogether. I had numerous times visited the father of the bride with Husseini or his elders, including for the *gaysua,* when a groom's senior male kin give a gift to those of the bride to formally initiate the marital process[142], and things had run smoothly. The bride's father had appeared enthusiastic for the marriage and relations amiable between the elders from both the bride's and groom's sides. I naively offered Husseini my reassurance, reasoning that the bride's father had appeared nothing but positive throughout his courtship and wedding preparations. Her kin had enthusiastically accepted the *gaysua* and made generous contributions towards the wedding expenses and preparation of

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[140]   It is said that an angel sits on either shoulder; one making note of their prayers and adding it to the record of their good deeds, the other their bad deeds.

[141]   Afterwards, Garuba says that Mallam Danjuma means fornicating outside of wedlock, but it is not correct to mention such things in the mosque.

[142] See page

the marital home. Surely having invested so much of his own time and resources into this wedding, the bride's father would not sabotage it now?

Despite the vast amounts of time, effort and money Husseini and his kin had poured into the day, he *mai*ntained a degree of uncertainty as to whether the marriage would be formally confirmed. As time passed and I came to observe other men prepare for their marriages, I learnt that, no matter how remote the possibility that a marriage fails to be confirmed, the uncertainty and angst that centred on *sadaki* were not entirely unjustified. Next I shall describe the elements of marriage prestations, to situate *sadaki* within the wider process of marriage exchanges.

7.2 Dominant Accounts of Marriage Prestations

A number of formal prestations take place throughout the marital process in Zongo. They are structured into stages and categories, defined by the items that constitute them, the moment in which they are exchanged, those who participate in them, and the direction in which goods flow. The most important formal prestations include *sadaki*, *lefe*, *gaysua/goro* and *kayan daki*. Such prestations are a necessary constituent of the marital process in Zongo, such that without them a marriage cannot be said to have taken place. Below I summarise the dominant accounts of each category of marriage prestation, before proceeding to discuss their meanings in greater detail.

Sadaki

Throughout much of Hausaland, *sadaki* is a normative payment made by a groom's father and elder male kin to the father of the bride. The *sadaki* money is the formal responsibility of the groom's father; he can expect contributions from male kin and those with which he has economic, political and social ties, such as friends, business associates and men with title. Though it is often the case that neither the bride nor groom will be present at the point of exchange, the receipt of *sadaki* by the bride's family at the mosque formally confirms the bride and groom as husband and wife (Hill 1972, Cooper 1997, Masquelier 2005). This is consistent with narratives identified during my fieldwork in Zongo. The *sadaki* is not usually agreed in advance and even when it is there is often disagreement over the amount of *sadaki* to be paid at the

wedding ceremony itself, such as is described in the example of Husseini's wedding above. In Zongo, *sadaki* is often described as being a form of compensation for the bride's father who has raised her. Ibrahim describes this process as akin to raising a cow.

"Somebody can take a small cow and feed it and look after it. It is the same like the bride's family who spend money raising her and it is the husband who is going to get all the benefit".

The price of the cow reflects the investment of time, effort and resources of the person who is selling it. Similarly, the *sadaki* is said to be a form of compensation for the resources that have been invested in a bride's upbringing by her kin. This transfer from groom's to bride's kin conforms to what has been defined in the literature as bridewealth (Goody and Tambiah 1973): the groom's kin making a payment to those of the bride as compensation for the investment that they have made in raising her and from which the groom and his kin benefit.

Gaysua/Goro

If *sadaki* confirms a marriage it is *gaysua* or *goro* that formally initiates it. *Gaysua* is the first 'formal' prestation of the marital process. It is sometimes referred to as 'knocking money' or *goro* – meaning kola nut – which was traditionally the currency of the *gaysua* (Hill 1972, Schildkraut 1982). It usually consists of kola nuts, sweets and a few Ghana Cedis, usually between five and 20, but sometimes as much as 50. The *gaysua* is given to a prospective bride's father by that of the groom when he visits him to formally ask that their son and daughter marry. Acceptance of the *gaysua* by the bride's father indicates that he commits his daughter to the marriage solicited and any approach from other men will be rejected. The groom is not present for the *gaysua*. The money is normally handed over in an envelope. The father of the bride will ask one of his junior brothers to open it, and the amount is counted aloud so as to be witnessed. Sometimes the *gaysua* may take place several times, the second *gaysua* being the time at which a formal date is set for the marriage. Though men explained that there were no guarantees that the bride's father would accept the *goro*, it is seldom refused when the marriage is between two people from Zongo when the odds are that most people know that the marriage is on the cards and people have already evaluated the likelihood of the *gaysua* being successful beforehand. The likelihood of *gaysua*

being unsuccessful increases when there is an absence of common social network between the bride and groom's kin.

Kayan Daki

As has been observed elsewhere in Hausaland (Cooper 1995, 1997, Masquelier 2004, Manvell 2005), the *kayan daki*, or 'things for the room', is described as a wedding gift from a mother to her daughter that includes the items needed to prepare the marital home and perform her marital duties.

In Zongo, the *kayan daki* is constituted of two components: *kayan aiki* ('work things'), and *kayan gara* ('foodstuffs'). The *kayan aiki* usually includes cooking and cleaning products and utensils such as brushes, bowls, cooking pots, food bowls, washing buckets, a pestle and mortar for pounding grains, wash cloths and soap.

The *kayan gara* consists of food items, mostly those which are described as *abin marmari* – treats or luxuries – for the bride's personal consumption, such as soft drinks, biscuits, milo, and chocolate. Sometimes items considered staples such as rice, milk and tinned or packaged foods are included. The husband also provides a *kayan gara* consisting of foodstuffs, but his is differentiated from that of the bride's mother as staples for household rather than personal consumption.

The *kayan daki* also includes some simple clothes usually made from inexpensive 'work cloth' as opposed to the *kayan ado* – 'best clothes' – which are bought by the husband as part of the *lefe* (see below). The *kayan daki* frequently includes a cabinet for the bride to store her belongings in, and a bed. Though the bride's mother may purchase many of the items herself, many of them are sourced via her social networks derived from kin, friends and those women with which she participates in important social events or *biki* (see below). These contributions may take the form of cash to buy them or the items themselves.

The *kayan daki* is taken to the bride's home between four days and two weeks after the wedding ceremony. Though four days is the ideal, there is often a delay while the *kayan daki* is prepared. Several days after the wedding ceremony, these items are presented at the *budan kay* – literally 'opening of the head' – in which friends, family and well-wishers are invited to visit and inspect the *kayan daki* at the marital home.

Elsewhere in Hausaland, the *budan kay* is the culmination of a lively and noisy procession, known as the *kan kaya* – the carrying of the load – in which the mother and kin of the bride as well as female friends deliver the *kayan daki* ready for the *budan kay* (Cooper 1995, Masquelier 2004, Manvell 2005). However, in Zongo, the *kan kaya* is a much more understated affair: the *kayan daki* arrives in dribs and drabs prior to the *budan kay*. On the day of a *budan kay,* the mother and close female kin usually arrive by taxi[143] to the marital home, dressed in their finest clothes carrying a small, perhaps symbolic portion, of the *kayan daki*, usually in decorative plastic bags. Visitors arrive sporadically throughout the afternoon and evening to inspect the bride's new home and the items of the *kayan daki*.

The items of the *kayan daki* are displayed either inside the marital home or outside on a plastic table. Key soap is organised into neat pyramids, bags of washing powder in rows and soft drinks arranged in triangles separated by brand. Cooking utensils such as pots and pans (*kwano*), electric food processors and rice cookers (often more than one), are displayed in a glass-fronted cabinet. In the bedroom a bed might be piled high with several mattresses and further items displayed on top. The *kayan daki* is not the only gift displayed at the *budan kay*. The *lefe* or gift from the groom will also be presented.

Lefe

Elsewhere in Hausaland, the *lefe* is ordinarily given to a bride by her groom several days before their wedding and is comprised of the fine clothes, jewellery and cosmetics that she will dress herself in for the occasion (Hill 1972, Wall 1988, Clough 2009). Although this is also the case in Zongo, a groom generally gives an additional gift of similar items to his bride upon her arrival in the marital home, which is also

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[143]   Only the closest kin travelled in taxis and often small children had to be dragged kicking and screaming from them so as to make room for more senior friends and kin. Men and women travelled in separate taxis. Sometimes the taxi journey involved a long drive simply because the quickest routes through Zongo on foot are impenetrable in a vehicle. Finding the taxi, waiting for the people and loading the taxi could take more than an hour and yet the journey itself could be little more than two minutes. This also meant that those who were travelling on foot would arrive at the marital home before the bride's mother and be able to witness the arrival of the mother's party. At one *budan kay* for a woman marrying a man in Nima (another Zongo, perhaps 20 minutes away by car), the mother and her companions took the *tro-tro* to Nima and then changed into a taxi for the last stretch. A taxi to Nima would be expensive relative to the *tro-tro*, but arriving in a car would seem near enough a necessity.

described as *lefe*. Based on the variable responses of informants I re*mai*n uncertain whether *lefe* can be thought of as one gift given in two parts or two separate gifts altogether. However, what is consistent in the definitions provided by people in Zongo is that the items are principally intended for the bride's personal consumption. The *lefe* is described as consisting of non-essential items that indicate that a husband is willing and able to provide for his bride. It is also regarded as a demonstration of a groom's love. The *lefe* is presented to the bride in a suitcase and later displayed at the *budan kay*. Husseini's *lefe* can be considered typical. I met Husseini in a house that he was preparing for his marriage. He brought a large red suitcase into the hall, opened the lock with a small key and flipped the lid open to reveal the contents. The contents of the case included a Quran, prayer mat (*sadada*), beads (*nastazbi*), scarf (*mufti/mayafi*), shampoo, perfume, jewellery, underwear, makeup, cloth (around 12 pieces), sandals, three handbags, shampoo, perfume, jewellery, underwear, makeup and nine rolls of cloth. Husseini explained that these items were the '*lefe*' that he would give to his bride, Fatima, on the day of his wedding. He explained that this was the costliest and most important gift that the bride would receive as it demonstrates that he is both committed to and capable of providing for his wife, as well as being a sign of his love.

Though the *lefe* is notionally intended for the bride's consumption, men also assert that it is necessary if he is to find his wife desirable. Men describe these items as the things a bride needs so as to appear beautiful to her husband. Ibrahim explains how if a bride is left to buy her own cloth and jewellery she will just wear rags as she has no money to buy nice clothes herself. It was important for his bride to have a variety of cloth, cosmetics, perfume and jewellery such that she would be able to re*mai*n attractive to him.

We can thus see that in dominant discourses each set of prestations are defined in discrete terms based upon the items that constitute them, the moment in which they are exchanged, those who participate in them and the direction in which goods flow as summarized in the table below.

Table 6. Dominant Discourses of Prestation Form and Function in Zongo

Prestation Name	Giver	Recipient	Items involved	Reported function
Sadaki	Groom's senior male kin	Bride's father	Money.	Compensates bride's kin for investment made in raising her.
Gaysua/goro	Groom's father	Bride's father	Money, kola, sweets.	Establishes acceptance of and commitment to marriage.
Kayan daki	Bride's mother	Bride	Foodstuffs, furniture, basic clothing, cooking and cleaning products and utensils. Some 'luxury' items for the bride's personal consumption.	Ensures bride has all that is needed for her to carry out her domestic responsibilities.
Lefe	Groom	Bride	Quran, prayer mat and beads, clothing, toiletries, cosmetics, accessories.	Demonstrates groom's commitment and ability to provide for his wife; demonstrates groom's love.

7.3 Unpacking Dominant Narratives: What's the Point of Prestation?

By definition, marriage prestations involve the transfer of goods and services from one party to another. It is thus not surprising that analyses have sometimes drawn upon economic theory, in particular concepts of the market. In their crudest form these approaches have reduced prestations to a variation on the functioning of market forces and, as such, a demonstration of supply and demand, with the relative scarcity of brides and grooms informing prestationary form and value (see Becker 1974, Bell and Song 1994).

A related and somewhat overlapping approach has argued for prestations as reflecting the value of women's labour[144], the argument being that in dowry societies women are considered an economic liability. A payment is made to the groom or his kin for accepting the burden of a dependent bride. In contrast, where women are considered a productive asset, as making a positive contribution to her husband's household, it is the bride's kin who are compensated for the loss of her labour (Caldwell et al 1983).

This idea would seem to resonate with prevailing accounts in Zongo, where people say the principle objective of prestationary transfers is the acquisition of goods and services themselves. From this point of view, *sadaki* could be considered a 'rational' economic exchange, in which acquisition of the goods and services themselves is the primary function of the interaction in which they are transferred: the groom's kin seek to procure a bride and her labour, whilst the bride's kin seek monetary recompense. This is evident in accounts such as Ibrahim's that describe *sadaki* as a payment intended to compensate the bride's kin for the investment made in her upbringing as well as the account of Husseini's wedding above, where the same rationale was deployed by the bride's kin as justification for demanding a larger *sadaki*.

However, puzzled by the prevalence of bargaining on wedding days and the apparent discomfort it caused young grooms such as Husseini, I asked several young men why the *sadaki* was not agreed in advance. They typically responded by claiming that the *sadaki* was agreed prior to the exchange itself, but that the bride's kin would often roll back on the agreement and try to take advantage of the relatively public context of the

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[144]   Opinions differ regarding the extent to which notions of value are culturally or materially defined as informed by the particular epistemological orientation underpinning the analysis.

wedding ceremony to make a profit. Bargaining, they claimed was a result of the bride's kin seeking to maximise the material benefit to be derived from the *sadaki* exchange, whilst the groom's kin sought to minimise their expenditure.

This would seem to be consistent with the description of Husseini's wedding provided above, where thinly veiled accusations of greed are leveraged in attempts to shame either side of the bargain into submitting to their demands. In Chapters Four and Five we observed how generosity, charity and providing for others are so highly regarded as masculine traits that the accumulation of material wealth is not infrequently regarded with a degree of suspicion. This notion is invoked by the bride's uncle when he alludes to a lack of generosity on the part of the groom's kin. He asserts that the sum that they have offered does not adequately reflect the investment made by her kin in raising the bride. Hence the material demands made by the bride's kin are articulated in such a manner as to invoke the notion of generosity and a potential loss of face should they fail to meet their demands.

However, in making this demand for a greater *sadaki*, the bride's kin themselves risk appearing greedy or mean. In order to deflect such accusations, they draw attention to the contributions that they have made towards the expense of establishing a marital home so as to lessen this burden for her new kin. The groom's kin seek to mitigate the effects of this strategy in several ways. First of all, the groom's uncle provides a veiled warning to those of the groom. He asserts the prestige of his own household in Zongo, implying that its status is widely accepted, and so not easily diminished by the efforts of the bride's kin. He follows up by describing the prior 'feats and favours' performed by the groom and his kin for the benefit of the bride's household and playing down the significance of the monetary value of the *sadaki* by referring to it as a mere 'token', thus suggesting that the extent of their generosity cannot be evaluated on the basis of the *sadaki* alone.

Though it is seldom the case that the bride and groom's kin fail to agree upon the *sadaki*, the bargaining process is nevertheless a source of anxiety for men as they navigate the marital process. In many conversations with young men, they expressed considerable resentment for the elder men responsible for *sadaki,* claiming that senior men's efforts at profiteering put their marital ambitions at risk.

However, the extent to which the pursuit of material gain can be accorded primacy in shaping the *sadaki* exchange is questionable when situated within the frame of masculine personhoods and statuses as have been elaborated in the preceding chapters of this thesis and the ways in which they are articulated through normative discourses of material wealth. In Chapter Five, I described how the notion of wealth in people is fundamental to masculine prestige and status to the extent that men often forego material wealth in pursuit of wealth in people. This idea points to a need to reconsider the *sadaki* bargain, and indeed any other prestation in terms of the relationships that are at stake in them.

7.4 Making Relationships

As described in Chapter Three, a consistent observation in the anthropology of marriage has been how marriage operates to establish, reconfigure and reinforce particular social relationships. In the following section I argue that in Zongo prestationary exchanges play an important mediating role in these processes in three important respects. First of all, prestations can be seen to initiate the processes through which particular social relationships are established. Secondly, because prestationary exchanges require an audience, they serve to make these relationships and their normative entailments visible to others. Finally, this visibility opens up the relationships established in the prestationary process to public scrutiny, which in turn serves as a disciplinary mechanism, encouraging conformity to normative rights, obligations and conduct within them.

Throughout this thesis I have shown how marriage reconfigures men's relationships with others. This is perhaps most apparent with respect to the relations of kinship and affinity that mediate men's statuses. In Chapter Five, I described how marriage, as an articulation of kinship, often forms the basis of economic and political entitlements, such as access to accommodation and political support. I demonstrated how marriage involves a reorganisation of relations of production and consumption relative to the *iyali* and *gida* and the positions of individual men within them.

For example, as can be seen in the account of Husseini's wedding above, where the relationships between the bride and groom's kin are a recurrent theme in the negotiations. The groom's uncle asserts the depth of the relationship between the two households by making reference to a previous marriage between them and the various

things that his household has done on the other's behalf. Given that narratives of relatedness are a pervasive feature of the social interactions in which prestations are transferred, it is hard to dispute that inter-household relationships are at stake in the prestationary process. However, the question that I want to address here is: What other relationships might be at stake in the prestationary process, and how and why do prestations come to be a site in which these relations are articulated?

Within social anthropology, scholars have sought to understand how prestations reflect the relationships realized through marriage. Structuralist accounts have examined how exchanges of women between men could be seen to structure relations between social groups (see for example Levi-Strauss 1969, Leach 1970, Needham 1971, Goody and Tambiah 1973). To take just one of these examples, Goody and Tambiah (ibid) argue that prestationary processes tell us a lot about the kinds of social relationships that are given emphasis in a society. They argue that variations in prestationary structure and form, as either bridewealth or dowry, correspond to whether it is the relation of alliance or descent that is accorded social primacy.

One critique levied at these analyses is that they tended to emphasise relations between groups of men, precluding an account of the full range of relationships that might be at stake in prestationary processes (Collier and Yanagisako 1987). This critique can be illustrated through Masquelier's (2004) elaboration of the *kayan daki* in Nigerien Hausaland. Masquelier describes how the bride's mother provides a bed for her daughter upon marriage. The resources to buy such a bed are derived from her participation in *biki* – a socio-economic network grounded in reciprocal gifting of goods and labour[145]. Whilst these are important means through which ceremonial expenses

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[145]   *Biki* has often been observed as an important social and economic resource for Hausa women (Smith 1957, Cohen 1969, Hill 1972, Jackson 1978, Cooper 1997, Gaudio 2011). Analyses of the circulation of enamel pots, or *kwano*, in *biki* have served as particularly interesting illustrations of this point (see Cohen 1969, Douglas 1979 (2002). However, *Kwano* is a less prominent feature of *biki* in Zongo; certainly one is less likely to find the great stacks of carefully arranged pots that can be seen in a Nigerian Hausa household. It would seem that small electrical appliances such as blenders, food processors, rice cookers and sometimes even larger white goods such as refrigerators and gas stoves have come to serve a not dissimilar function. Indeed, my neighbour devoted considerable time to cleaning an upright gas stove that was not connected to a fuel supply. As would be consistent with *kwano*, I never once saw the stove being used for food preparation. Nevertheless, the point remains that women can be seen to invest heavily in a range of *biki* goods and the networks and public ceremonies through which they are realised as both livelihood strategies as well as assertions of status.

– such as those incurred at naming days, funerals and weddings – can be met, they also form the basis of relationships between women, which may or may not be defined in terms of kinship.

As described above, the *kayan daki* is a much less conspicuous affair in Zongo than it might be elsewhere in Hausaland. Nevertheless, one only has to take a weekend walk through Zongo to observe the crowds of women assembled at the innumerable *budan kay* to realise that the *kayan daki* is an important focus for women's *biki* activities and the relationships that are mediated by them.

The key point here is that prestationary processes ought not to be reduced to the acquisition of goods and services, but must be examined in terms of their broader social entanglements – in particular, the ways in which they can be seen to mediate specific sets of social relationships not limited to those of kinship. Indeed, a number of anthropologists have argued that prestationary processes are not only informed by, but necessary to, a variety of social relationships (Comaroff 1980).

One line of argument is that prestations play an important role in initiating a marriage and the relationships that emerge from it. Through his comparative analysis of prestations, Van Baal (1975) makes the case for marriage as part of a cycle of reciprocal exchanges that establishes political ties between households. He argues that the 'gifting' of prestations initiates these exchanges. Much like in Malinowski's (1963) analysis of the Kula trade, this gifting puts the receiver in the giver's debt and thus obliges him to reciprocate in the form of a bride at a later date.

This idea can be brought to an interpretation of *gaysua*, in which the groom's senior kin give a 'gift' to the bride's father. As the first formal prestation in the marital process, *gaysua* can be seen as the moment in which a hitherto tentative courtship becomes formal marital process. Acceptance of the gift by the bride's father obliges him to commit his daughter to the marriage. As is akin to Van Baal's (1975) analysis, *gaysua* is invested with normative obligations which bring into being a series of reciprocal exchanges and transfers, ultimately resulting in marriage. Thus it can be argued that the significance of the *gaysua* is in initiating a relationship between the bride and groom's kin.

Prestations do not only initiate relationships, but also make them visible to others. In Zongo, goods may be exchanged at various points leading up to a marriage which

may or may not be subject to public knowledge; for example, in the case of gifts exchanged during courtship. However, unlike the exchanges that take place in courtship, *gaysua*, *lefe*, *sadaki* and *kayan daki* involve at least some degree of public ritual. In this sense they can be seen as means of expressing these relationships to others.

In the context of the *sadaki*, that it is the groom's father that performs the ceremonial exchange of *sadaki* serves as an expression of his position as *mai gida* within his own household. A son's position as his dependant and subordinate is made evident in the fact that a groom is seldom present at his own *sadaki*. An interesting variation on this dynamic can be found in the not unusual incidence of landlords assuming responsibility for their tenants' *sadaki*. When a tenant's own senior male kin are deceased or otherwise absent, his landlord may make a substantial contribution to the *sadaki* and perform the ceremonial exchange. In this event, *sadaki* operates to extend the landlord's position as his tenant's *mai gida* to encompass a form of fictive kinship in which the landlord becomes his tenant's adoptive father. This is reflected in the nomenclature *ubankinta*[146], a term literally translated as 'stepfather', but used to imply an adoptive father[147].

However, this relationship is not merely nominal, but involves a strengthening of rights and obligations such as those of political and economic loyalty and protection that are more stable and enduring than those between landlord and tenant alone[148]. A key

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[146]   *Ubankinta* is not generally used to describe a man who adopts a child, but is reserved for the senior male in fictive kinship between adult males, or a man's relationship to his wife's children from a previous marriage.

[147]   Typically, this dynamic is realised between political elites in Zongo and younger Hausa men, who have recently migrated to Zongo from Niger or Nigeria and whose senior kin are geographically distant.

[148]   Though this practice is perhaps less common today, there is evidence to suggest that these ties endure over time and may be inherited by subsequent generations. Take for example the case of Alhaji Danzaki the barber surgeon. His father, Mallam Zaki had been invited to Zongo from Nigeria by Ibrahim *Mai* Giwa, the head of an important Zongo lineage. Mallam Zaki was provided with a plot of land on which to build a shop to practice in and in return circumcised all the Giwa lineage boys without charge. Mallam Zaki's father remained living in Nigeria and was unable to travel to Zongo and so his marriage was arranged by Ibrahim *Mai* Giwa, including the payment of *sadaki* and the provision of a marital home. Alhaji Danzaki inherited his father's profession, but also many elements of the relationship between his father and the Giwa household. Though both Ibrahim *Mai* Giwa and Mallam Zaki are both deceased, the continuation of this tie can be seen in Alhaji Danzaki's relationship with Mamadou Giwa, the eldest son of Ibrahim, to whom he expresses notable deference and

point that emerges here is that prestationary processes do not only express relationships, but expose them to the disciplinary effects of the public gaze.

Take for example the *gaysua*, in which the groom's senior kin give a 'gift' to the bride's father. As the first formal prestation in the marital process *gaysua* can be seen as the moment in which a hitherto tentative courtship becomes formal marital process, bringing about a shift in normative rights and obligations. Acceptance of the gift by the bride's father obliges him to commit his daughter to the marriage. Once a *gaysua* has been transacted it is ill-thought of for a groom to court other women until he has married. On the bride's part, she ought not to receive gifts from other suitors and is expected to avoid social situations in which she might encounter men who are not her immediate kin. It is not insignificant that the items that constitute the *gaysua* include large quantities of smaller items such as sweets and kola, subsequently gifted to friends and visitors. By distributing these gifts others become aware of the forthcoming marriage and evaluate the behaviours of participants in light of the normative obligations entailed in the *gaysua*.

In the event that a bride's father fails to fulfil his obligations by later rejecting a marriage or marrying his daughter to an alternative suitor, his moral character may be called into question by accusations of cheating or lying in pursuit of profit. If a groom is seen courting other women he may be accused of being a "*womaniser*", of lacking respect for or trust in his bride's kin, or being too immature or ill-prepared to fully commit to his marriage. A bride seen to be, or even suspected of, receiving gifts or spending too much time in the company of other men is subject to speculation that she is weak-willed, dishonest and immoral. She may be labelled as sexually promiscuous or accused of being a prostitute. It is not uncommon for *gaysua* to be paid and yet the marriage never to be realised. There are often competing accounts of how and why it never came about, reflecting the loyalties of the person providing them. On one occasion when a *gaysua* had been accepted and yet the bride married another man, I asked one of my informants what had happened. He explained that the bride was "*sex mad*" and that her father was too weak to control her. He had accepted the *gaysua* hoping to marry her off quickly before the first groom's father found out that she was

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describes as being not only his "*landlord*" and "*mai gida*", but also as his "*abbani*" – his father's elder brother. Indeed, Alhaji Danzaki goes so far as to claim that he himself is a Giwa, despite an absence of consanguinal ties.

having sex with lots of men. However, another man had come along who had said that he would marry her immediately and so rather than be patient and wait for a good marriage he accepted the marriage to the other man. What this example demonstrates is that the prestationary process operates as a means of harnessing public scrutiny as a disciplinary mechanism[149].

Fathers generally prefer that their sons marry a bride from a household that is known to them. Her kin's trustworthiness is more easily established, normative rights and obligations are more easily enforced, and the social, political and economic benefits more certain than they would be when the bride's kin are unknown to them. *Gaysua* is often made several times over as a means to reaffirm the agreement into which the bride's father has entered. This is particularly the case when several months or more have elapsed since the initial *gaysua*, the bride and groom's kin have little or no relationship beyond the marital process itself, and the mechanisms for enforcing the agreement in the form of pressure from others more limited. Making repeated gifts of *gaysua* reiterates the recipient's obligation to reciprocate, enhances public awareness, increases the associated social costs should the bride's father fail to live up to his side of the agreement. Thus the *gaysua* can be seen as a means through which a relationship between a bride and groom's kin and the normative rights and obligations that frame it are established or reinforced. The point here is that prestationary processes bring changes in social relationships into public view. The potential costs of transgression are no longer limited to the opprobrium or disapproval of a single individual or household, but are extended to the wider social sphere.

7.5 Making Personhoods

As was argued in Chapter Three the kind of personhood accorded to an individual is a function of their relations with others. In standing to represent these relationships, prestationary objects can be seen as inherently interwoven with the processes through which particular personhoods are constituted. Take for example the case of how Bilal's bride is accorded a particular personhood as a 'big' woman on the basis of the goods presented at her *budan kay*.

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[149] This chimes with Foucault's (1977) notion of the 'gaze'; a pervasive system of surveillance that produces disciplinary effects. Individuals regulate their behaviour in the belief that they are being observed by an Other.

Early in the morning I had been sat on a bench next to the open door of Bilal's house waiting for him to return with soft drinks for the impending visitors. A passer-by, seeing a canopy assembled outside the house and curious as to what was going on, asked as to the nature of the occasion. I told him that my friend Bilal had married and today was the *budan kay*. The man peered inside the open door. When he withdrew his head he turned to me and said: "*Your friend, the ango* – bridegroom -, *has done well. Look at all the gifts. He has married a 'big' woman*". I assume from the man's necessity to ask that he knew neither Bilal nor his wife personally. Yet, that she could be described as 'big' on the basis of the items displayed inside illustrates how prestations may often come to symbolically represent the qualities and characteristics of specific individuals.

The important observation to be drawn out from this example – as well as from the above accounts of *sadaki* and *gaysua* – is that prestations not only establish and represent relationships between groups and individuals, but inform how their personhoods are defined, understood and hierarchically ordered. This interpretation is informed by several key approaches already encountered in this thesis. First of all, throughout this thesis I have argued that marriage is central to notions of accepted and valued forms of masculinity in Zongo. Whether a man is married, who to, and how he goes about achieving it, informs how he is socially evaluated by others.

Second, objects derive their meanings from social relationships (Appa*durai* 1988, Strathern 1988). As objects circulate through prestationary processes, they operate to establish, reinforce and represent social relationships.

As discussed in Chapters One and Three, relationships and the norms and values that pertain to them are not arbitrary, but located in broader cosmologies: beliefs about the nature of reality, how it is organised, and what its inhabitants should be or do (Ortner 1972). In Chapter Three I discussed how a number of scholars have argued that marriage is part of the ideological apparatus that not only makes ideas of gender sameness and difference meaningful, but operates to naturalise relations of subordination and domination (MacCormack 1980, Ortner and Whitehead 1981). From this point of view, personhoods become symbolic categories, themselves constituted in social relations.

When these three positions are brought together the question emerges as to how the prestationary process might operate as a site in which the social order is symbolically

reproduced. A useful jumping off point in addressing this question is the work of Douglas and Isherwood (2002), who make the case for consumption as a site of cultural (re)production. The essence of their argument is that goods are not only made meaningful by social relationships, but that consumption makes possible the very cultural categories from which meaning is derived.

"…goods are most definitely not mere messages; they constitute the very system itself. Take them out of human intercourse and you have dismantled the whole thing. In being offered, accepted, or refused, they either reinforce or undermine existing boundaries. The goods are both the hardware and the software, so to speak, of an information system whose principal concern is to monitor its own performance" (Douglas and Isherwood 2002. p.49).

This approach has implications for my own analysis of how prestationary processes mediate personhoods in that prestations and the processes through which they are consumed can be argued for as mechanisms through which categories of the person are constituted and made visible. However, Bourdieu (1984) argues that goods and the cultural categories that they imply have regulatory and disciplinary effects. They assert boundaries, not only of what can be articulated, but also what can be thought. Thus it is not just individuals that are disciplined, but the very premises through which reality is apprehended.

As was argued in Chapters Four and Five, *lafiya* can be seen as an articulation of a gendered and gerontocratic social order. This hierarchical ordering is naturalised and legitimated by the moral connotations of dependency articulated through a discourse of Islam. The various prestations that comprise the marital process can be seen to mark out and make concrete these ideas. For example, as described in Chapter Six, there is a prevailing narrative that if left to her own devices a wife would be unable to meet her own subsistence needs – materially, in terms of food, clothes and shelter; but also spiritually, in the form of Islamic knowledge and guidance. Thus the Quran, prayer mat and prayer beads, gifted as part of the *lefe*, are an expression of a husband's responsibility for the moral conduct of his wife. However, moral orders operate metonymically as social orders (Douglas 1995, 2010, 2013, Bourdieu 1984, Rawls 2010) such that the idea of men's inherent moral authority can be seen as both producing and being produced by a social order in which notions of masculine status

and authority rely upon the deference and subordination of women. This brings us back to the prestationary process as a site of social evaluation. Prestations give expression to social orders, constituting and organising personhoods within them. They therefore serve as an ideological frame against which the things that individual men say and do can be interpreted, defined, evaluated and regulated. Hence, if an abundant *lefe* represents responsible manhood, then an inadequate *lefe* can be seen to undermine it. This can be seen in the following extract from a conversation with Abdullah:

"He [the groom] *know that the women like gossips. The women will show the items to her friends. Her friends will tell their husbands and even start complaining. Did you see her cloth? Did you see the necklace? Why don't you buy me this thing? His friends will hear about the items and think, Oh he is a big man".*

As we can see above, the prestationary process is a means to register interest or demonstrate affection, but also becomes a model or indicator of the kinds of exchanges that are likely to take place within a marriage, which in turn may come to signify the success of a marriage.

7.6 Conclusions

This thesis has been concerned with how marriage mediates manhoods. In this chapter I described how in Zongo the marital process is formally defined by a series of prestations. It is through the realisation of these prestations that a man becomes married and attains the status of manhood. I elaborated how the significances of prestations are embedded in normative discourses, structures and relationships, such that the fulfilment of prestationary processes and the achievement of accepted and valued forms of masculine personhood are interwoven.

I began the analyses by examining accepted accounts of the prestationary process as foregrounded in the acquisition of goods and services. I described how, despite its prevalence in popular narrative, this explanation was unsatisfactory for making sense of prestationary processes, given the ways in which the accumulation of personal material wealth informs masculine status.

Drawing on the wider anthropological literature, I began a reconsideration of prestationary processes in terms of their broader social entanglements. I described

how prestations in Zongo operate to establish, reconfigure and reinforce particular social relationships. I argued that the public nature of prestationary exchanges makes these relationships and their normative entailments visible to others, exposing them to the disciplinary effects of public scrutiny and encouraging conformity to normative rights, obligations and conduct. However, through the lens of anthropological analyses of consumption, prestations can be seen to not only organise and regulate relationships, but inform how individual personhoods are defined, understood and hierarchically ordered. Prestationary processes and the goods which circulate through them inform how the personhoods and statuses of individuals are defined and evaluated by others. The key point here is that marriage is not merely a rite of passage transforming youth into men; nor is it solely a mechanism through which the notion of manhood is made meaningful. It is, by way of the prestationary process, a system through which men are evaluated, differentiated and ranked. It is thus not surprising that the marital process is a source of such tremendous anxiety for young men like Abu and others. It is after all their very personhoods which are at stake in it.

However, whilst prestations might formally confirm a marriage, situate individuals and groups in genealogical structures and establish rights and obligations, they cannot be seen as fixed, transcendent, self-contained systems, in some way alienable from the interpretations and interests of individuals inhabiting the specific contexts in which they take place. In Chapter Two I touched upon the enduring debate in anthropology concerning the inter-play of structure and agency in social practice. I drew upon De Certeau (1984) to argue against the idea that social practice can be reduced to normative discourses derived from totalising structures and questioned the extent to which the wants and needs of individual actors correspond to them. The implication here is that the meanings of prestationary goods and the personhoods that they come to represent must be situated in the practices of social agents, including the ways in which collective public evaluations of male status are secured, which I explore in the following chapter.

Chapter Eight: Curating a Wedding

"Lafiya ya fi gara – Peaceful living is worth more than wedding comodities" (Hausa Proverb)[150]*.*

8.1 Bilal buys a Blender

Bilal and I went to Zongo Junction together. He wanted to buy a food processor for Bintu, who he is planning to marry. Bintu is the daughter of a relatively poor Dagomba migrant from Northern Ghana, with no land or property of his own and of no formal political or religious title. Her mother sells charcoal outside the doorway of the small two-bedroom residence that they rent in Nima. Bintu has previously been married and divorced and has children from her former husband. She is in many ways far from the high status *amarya* bride most young men claim to desire.

Bilal and I arrive at one of the shops at Zongo junction where various household electricals are lined up neatly in rows in front of the open store front. As we survey the items on sale, Bilal explains that he wants to buy a blender for Bintu to help her with her work when they are married. It is important to buy such things for one's wife, he explains, to show her your love. I probe him as to what Bintu will do with the food processor. He says that she will use it to prepare food. The man at the store is a Kotokoli from Togo, but converses with Bilal in Hausa. After a period of negotiation Bilal settles upon a 'Tefal' branded food processor costing 12 Cedis. He pulls five Cedis from his pocket and looks over to me. Though re*mai*ning unsaid, I know that he expects me to make a contribution. Indeed, it is partly by virtue of this expectation that he has invited me to accompany him. I give him the seven Cedis that make up the difference. He thanks me and tells me that Bintu will be happy.

I ask him why he chose that particular blender when there were others that looked almost the same for a lower price. He explains that he wanted to buy the "*correct one*", one from America. The other food processors were "*China ones*" and not good quality. He explains that if you buy a China one it would likely break, but the American ones

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[150] From Aminu (2003 p.17).

are better quality. He says that when his wife sees it she will be happy and she will know that even though he doesn't have money he has tried his best for her.

Several months after our shopping trip, about two weeks after Bilal had married Bintu, I attended his *budan kay*. A white plastic table has been set up in the compound with the various items that constitute the *kayan daki* on display. There are stacks of Sunlight laundry soap, packets of biscuits, and neat rows of soft drinks, labels facing forward and separated by brand. Inside the house the curtain that normally separates the sleeping quarters from the living room has been drawn to one side. A glass-fronted cabinet full of cloth, pillows, cooking pots and utensils rests against one wall. A wooden bed fills the centre of the room. Arranged on the bed are more pillows and fresh bed linen, still wrapped in plastic, like new. A brown sofa, also covered in clear plastic, dominates the chamber. To one side of the sofa is a small refrigerator, on top of which is a rice cooker, kettle, and three electric blenders, including the Tefal-branded blender we had bought at Zongo Junction.

8.2 Framing Bilal's Blenders and the *Budan Kay*

In and of itself the presence of the blenders at the budan kay may not seem remarkable; but it is rather irregular, and raises questions around why Bilal placed it there, and how the blender at the *budan kay* is framed. With Goffman (1973, 1974) in mind, I begin this chapter by analysing what is going on at the *budan kay*, and how Bilal seeks to manage the performance and reception of the *budan kay,* particularly in the enlistment of others in the co-production of a positive social evaluation. I then turn back to *sadaki*, to analyse how in making a marriage the groom has to juggle social relations with male kin within his lineage. I also address the burden of personal provision of *sadaki*, and the public perception of Bilal's status and worth.

As has been argued throughout this thesis, social interactions are framed by official scripts which assert a set of norms and rules through which people understand what is going on and how they ought to conduct themselves (Goffman 1974, 1980). People know that they are attending a *sadaki,* a *budan kay* or any other ceremonial occasion by virtue of the fact that the structure of the interaction is ritualised. Indeed, many aspects of the social interactions that take place in the marital process are formally defined and explicitly stated in terms of being proper Islamic practice. As at Husseini's

sadaki, people know when to stand and sit, when and what to eat and drink in the mosque, when their attention ought to be directed to Mallam Danjuma, and when talk among themselves is acceptable. As described above, dominant accounts of the *budan kay* define it as a ritual event in which well-wishers are invited to the newly established marital home to inspect the *kayan daki* and *lefe*.

The meanings of marriage goods are similarly framed. In the preceding chapter we have seen how marriage goods articulate social relationships, personhoods and their hierarchical ordering. The meanings of marriage goods are not transcendent or immutable, but socially derived and thus may have multiple meanings. Yet some meanings come to be more widely accepted than others. They achieve a status of a dominance – of being the significance that is assumed in the absence of a credible alternative.

The key point here is that when an object is introduced into a social situation people make use of dominant narratives to interpret their meanings. Unless presented with information suggesting otherwise, they will assume that the meaning of the prestation and its social connotations are consistent with those of accepted accounts. In the case of *sadaki,* the money exchanged between a bride and groom's kin is defined as *sadaki* by virtue of the specific context in which the transaction takes place. However, once so defined the *sadaki* also implies a set of relationships and transactional histories through which the *sadaki* has been realised. For example, it is assumed that a groom's senior kin have provided the money for the *sadaki* unless they are provided with information to the contrary.

8.3 What Reputations are at Stake in the *Budan Kay*?

People in Zongo are explicit in describing the *budan kay* as a context of social evaluation. Indeed, the very meaning of *budan kay* as 'open head' is a not so subtle allusion to this idea. In the words of one informant, the *budan* was an opportunity to "*look inside their head and know their character*"; to examine and evaluate what is ordinarily concealed. Furthermore, the conjugal living space is generally off limits to most casual observers. The *budan kay* provides a rare glimpse into the domestic arrangements that occur within the household. Thus, as will be demonstrated below, the *budan kay* is generally accepted as a moment of social evaluation.

Observers of the *budan kay* are provided with an opportunity to inspect the *kayan daki* – the gifts given to a bride by her mother and sourced through her *biki* networks. An abundant *kayan daki* and elaborate *budan kay* implies that a bride and her mother have well-resourced and extensive social networks. Thus the *budan kay* can be seen as a reflection of both the bride and her mother's social value as described in Chapter Seven.

This is not without consequence for men. In Chapter Six, I described how the social value of a groom's bride informs the judgements made by others concerning his own social status. A well-connected woman with an extensive and well-resourced *biki* network is generally assumed to be related to well-connected men. Thus the *kayan daki* operates as a reflection of a bride's social standing, but also implies that of a groom.

However, as was shown in Masquelier's (2004) example of the bed, when it comes to representations of status, not all goods have the same effect. Different goods inform social evaluations in different ways. While there is considerable variation in the specific items that are exchanged in each set of prestations, a prestationary repertoire is far from arbitrary. The norms and definitions as to what makes an appropriate prestation are culturally defined; for example, where the gifting of a cow is an appropriate and rational form of prestation amongst Kgalagari (Kuper 1970), and indeed amongst some rural Hausa in Niger (Cooper 1995), the same gift would be regarded with bafflement in an urban Zongo. These differences are not limited to cross-cultural comparison, but may also occur within a given cultural group's prestationary inventory, contingent upon the specific category of prestation being made and the social objective it has as its end. Crucially, as we shall see below, a blender gifted by a mother as part of the *kayan daki* is likely well-received as a symbol of status and prestige. However, when gifted by a groom as part of a *lefe*, its status effects are more uncertain.

8.4 Spinning the Blender: How is the Blender Read?

A blender is not an uncommon feature of *kayan daki*, but is less frequently gifted than relatively inexpensive and easily obtained items such as soap, soft drinks or biscuits. Though the *lefe* may be displayed at the *budan kay,* and whilst it is within the bounds

of reason that a husband might buy his wife a blender, for a blender to be gifted as *lefe* would be regarded inappropriate, given that the *lefe* normatively consists of items intended for the bride's personal consumption rather than the fulfilment of her domestic duties within the household[151].

However, a blender is regarded as a prestige good, requiring generous contributions from wealthy or numerous benefactors who hold the bride and her mother in high regard. That Bilal presents three blenders can be seen as a display of profusion beyond the usual. It thus follows that the presence of a blender at the *budan kay* serves to assert that both the bride and her groom are of relatively high social standing.

Bilal's blenders constitute a departure from conventional accounts of how and why a blender ends up on display at a *budan kay,* perhaps most obviously in that it is Bilal who has bought and gifted the blenders and inserted them into the *budan kay* rather than Bintu's mother. Whilst it might not be unthinkable for a groom to buy his bride a blender, there is much about the specific context and circumstances of Bilal's gifting that makes it unusual, such that it could not be considered a default course of action or normative imposition. His deviance suggests intention. The question then is: What does Bilal hope might be achieved by presenting the blenders at the *budan kay*?

As has been described above, the *budan kay*, like any social situation, is a context of social evaluation in which participants would hope to create a favourable impression of themselves. Bilal's insertion of the blenders into the *budan kay* can be seen as an impression management strategy (Goffman 1973), an effort to present himself favourably to others.

The *kayan daki* reflects a bride's status, and by proxy that of her groom. As part of the *kayan daki,* a blender implies that the bride is of considerable social and moral standing. It thus follows that if Bilal's blenders are construed as being part of the *kayan daki* then he stands to be positively evaluated by others. Indeed, as we saw above, the abundance of Bintu's *kayan daki* led one stranger to conclude that she must be a 'big' woman. The blenders function as a smokescreen, obscuring characteristics of his

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[151]   This is not to say that a blender can necessarily be defined in terms of function. Take for example the example of enamel cooking pots – *kwano* - a feature of the *kayan daki* across Hausaland, which serve a variety of social functions quite apart from cooking (Tipilida et al 2008).

bride that might lead others to think less of him; for example, Bintu's unremarkable ancestry, material poverty and less than respectable marital history. Of course it takes more than a blender to definitively establish a bride's social value. Nobody in Zongo would suggest that Bilal's blenders provide incontrovertible evidence of his bride's social and moral standing. However, the presence of the blenders does imply certain assumptions about the route taken by a blender before it arrives at a *budan kay*, which might be drawn upon by observers in socially evaluating the bride and her groom. These assumptions are what Bilal seeks to engage.

As is the case in many cultures, lying is ill-thought of in Zongo, such that if Bilal were to make explicit claims about his wife that were found to be false, his status would no doubt suffer. However, Bilal does not explicitly lie, but instead alludes to a set of expectations and allows observers to draw their own conclusions.

The idea that in seeking to be positively evaluated by others, men cultivate presentations of self that may be at odds with their social realities is not in and of itself all that remarkable. However, if an audience is to be convinced by a performance, then they must re*main* unaware of potentially discrediting information (Goffman 1974). For Bilal to derive status from the display of the blenders his audience must be unaware of Bintu's less respectable background. If others have knowledge to the contrary, then Bilal's placement of the blenders at a *budan kay* is unlikely to have a status-augmenting effect. The fact re*main*s that marriage marks Bilal's transition into manhood, and so an improvement on his former status as youth. Nevertheless, he stands to enjoy greater prestige if others are convinced by his curation of the budan kay and regard his bride more favourably. Thus the success of a particular representation relies upon a groom's ability to manage information about both his bride and the transactional histories of prestations available to others. Perhaps the most important part of a convincing performance is that the audience do not realise it is a performance at all.

8.5 Representing a Marriage: A Social Endeavour

In the following section I take a step back from the performance to examine the processes involved in bringing it into being. I observe that creating a favourable impression of oneself and making it stick may not be quite as straightforward as buying

a blender and introducing it into the *budan kay*. Marriage is never a solo endeavour, organised and funded by the groom in isolation, but involves negotiating relations with others that may or may not be conducive to a groom's efforts to create a positive impression of himself. For a performance to be successful a groom requires the cooperation and collusion of others, particularly those who may be in possession of discrediting information. In the case of Bilal's blenders, Bintu and her mother likely know that it is Bilal who has procured the blenders, or at the very least that they are not part of the *kayan daki*. However, there is a clear incentive for Bintu and her mother to cooperate in his performance, as they also stand to gain from the status-augmenting effects of the blender. However, securing such cooperation may not always be straightforward.

As was alluded to in the examples from Kirk-Greene (1974), Barkow (1974) and Salamone (1976) in the opening passage of this thesis, it is often notional dependants and subordinates who possess discrediting information with the potential to unsettle fragile representations. Securing others' cooperation, even of one's social inferiors, is seldom a question of outright domination, but requires negotiation and compromise. First I will discuss how public knowledge is managed, and then the social collusion demanded to make a representation stick.

8.6 Information Control for Impression Management

Managing the information that others have of a groom and his bride is no simple matter. As described in Chapters Four and Five people in Zongo care deeply about the rights, obligations and entitlements that are articulated through relatedness. Moreover, in Zongo secrets seldom re*mai*n secrets for long, but spread like wildfire through the frail partitions of ostensibly private dwellings[152].

The data presented in Chapter Six are as I have argued questionable in terms of the extent to which it provides a valid account of marital practices over time. Nevertheless, that there seems to be a shift towards extra-local marriages might feasibly be

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[152]   Indeed, within only a few days of my being in Zongo I discovered that one of my neighbours had discretely placed a mobile phone atop the wall that divided our chambers so as to record my conversations.

explained by the relative ease with which information regarding a bride's background can be concealed. As we saw in the case of the *gaysua*, people can and do *mai*ntain relationships that extend beyond Zongo, but information concerning these relationships is often less complete and behaviours less easily monitored. This is evident in the case of several women in Zongo, who visit children from previous marriages in other neighbourhoods. In most cases their current husbands were unaware or at the very least pretended to be unaware that such children existed. Few men would openly acknowledge to others that their wife had children by another man; fewer still would permit these children to reside in Zongo where it would be nigh on impossible to conceal their existence and avoid the diminished status that arises from marrying a *bazawara* bride.

Returning to Bilal and his blenders, it is easy to see how his curation of the *budan kay* serves an effective strategy for impression management. That Bintu's premarital residence was in Nima and her ancestry is in Northern Ghana makes it less likely that others will be in possession of information that discredits his efforts at cultivating a particular representation. Nevertheless, it requires something of a leap of faith to assume that Bilal's control over this information is absolute; not least because marriage is never a solo endeavour, organised and funded by the groom in isolation, but necessarily involves relations with others through which discrediting information might leak.

8.7 Social Collusion for Impression Management

As discussed in Chapter Six, there are a number of possible reasons why young men seemed willing to share potentially compromising information with me. Perhaps there was something about my identity as an outsider that meant people believed I was less likely to share it with others. Maybe people thought that if I were to disclose anything, it would not be received as credible or its effects might be less damaging. However, I suspect that Bilal's willingness to allow me to bear witness to his buying of the blender was likely underpinned by the hope that I would contribute to its purchase. The key point here is that getting married necessarily involves the support of others. Gaining such support often requires sharing potentially compromising information. To share information with others is to surrender a degree of control over it. Thus deciding to

share information represents a risk. This section is concerned with how young men can be seen to make efforts to minimise disclosure risks, principally by managing incentives that foster collusion.

Putting Bilal and his blenders to one side for a moment, this idea is well illustrated by the case of Ibrahim and the processes through which he raises his *sadaki* and secures his elder brother's support for his marriage.

Men's social status is implicated by the social value of their brides. In the previous chapter I described the social value of a bride (in the eyes of men) as being a function of her status as either *amarya* or *bazawara*. Men reported that the *sadaki* amount is subject to the status of the bride as *amarya* or *bazarawa*; but as identified above, it is often difficult to verify the status of a bride. A key factor in this is that there is an incentive to (re)produce a certain representation of one's bride. Hence men actively seek to represent their wives in ways that conform to the notion of a high status bride. In the event that a man is to marry a *bazawara* bride, he may seek to misrepresent or evade such status definition altogether so as provide a representation more favourable to his own pursuit of status. I argue that *sadaki* and the *sadaki* bargain is one of several methods through which such representations can be achieved. However, the groom faces a number of trade-offs in the pursuit of public status, as he confronts questions of the degree of material assistance provided by male kin in acquiring *sadaki*. Relations with lineage men are also part of the dilemma of *sadaki*, and I turn to this next.

8.8 Obtaining *Sadaki*: The Representational Consequences of Lineage Support Versus Personal Provision

In the accounts provided by men in Zongo, *sadaki* was described as being given by the elder males who form the groom's family to the father of the bride at the mosque. This would appear to be the case at Husseini's wedding, or at the very least the performance of the *sadaki* bargain seemed to allude to it. However, in practice this money may not be directly contributed by the groom's male elders. It may be raised by the groom independently of his male elders or kin, through work or borrowing. He may put small amounts of money that he receives from kin for other purposes aside (in the manner of 'keeping the change' from other transactions). Many young men such

as Ibrahim place a lot of emphasis on getting the *sadaki* money together themselves in response to a perceived need to prove their ability to generate income and provide independently of their fathers. Some young men may even have *sadaki* money put to one side before having settled on a bride. This was usually something done secretly. One young man showed me a small stack of notes approaching 50 Cedis in small denominations that he kept hidden in a shoe. He said that the money was for his wedding. If he met a suitable bride, he explained, he wouldn't have to wait to for his father to get the money, nor worry that a rival would beat him to securing her hand in marriage. He could just "*move*".

That men attempt to find the money for their own *sadaki* is not insignificant. First of all, it is a means to assert their independence. To demonstrate a productive responsible manhood to the senior male kin who will judge their readiness to marry. Some young men reported that even if your senior kin were to contribute to the *sadaki*, you risked being perceived by them as re*mai*ning dependent. These points are well illustrated by Ibrahim's case. When Ibrahim was struggling to raise money for the *sadaki* I suggested he ask his elder brothers and uncles for help. Ibrahim rejected this idea outright, arguing that his kin would surely use his request as a means to assert their authority over him. He claimed that if there were ever a disagreement or if they wanted to shame him they would say "*You couldn't even marry your own wife*", thus undermining the productive ability that defines his masculine status. Thus raising their own *sadaki* is one strategy by which a man is able to assert his status. By proving their ability to independently generate income they demonstrate their capacity as providers, asserting a productive and responsible masculinity associated with manhood that creates distance between themselves and that of the youth as dependant and consumer.

Secondly, providing one's own *sadaki* is a means to influence how a bride is to be evaluated. As described in Chapter Six, the social value of one's wife informs a groom's status. Hence it is logical for men to try and manage representations of their brides. By providing his own *sadaki,* a man exerts greater influence on the representation of his bride's social value than if the *sadaki* is left to others. In providing the *sadaki* himself, he expresses the social value of the bride to his senior kin; whereas if left to senior kin, it is they who decide upon the *sadaki* and thus determine the social value of the bride. In deciding upon the *sadaki,* the senior kin will investigate the bride

and her kin, their ancestry, wealth, social and moral standing, decide whether a bride is suitable, and determine the level of *sadaki* that is appropriate. This presents the possibility that a bride is evaluated less favourably than might be hoped for by the groom. This may result in a lower *sadaki* and so diminish the status that a groom derives from its public exchange.

Again Ibrahim's case is illustrative. Ibrahim worries that should his elder brother Aminu discover his bride is *bazawara* he may not sanction the marriage. His decision to marry Murna, a bride from outside Zongo, presents a clear advantage, if not indeed acting as a central motivation in the first place in that nobody in Zongo seems to know much about her. Murna and her family have no connections to Zongo. They live in another neighbourhood, and her children and former husband live in Madina. This means that the likelihood of anyone in Zongo accidentally coming across Murna's family and children is greatly diminished. Ibrahim and Murna agreed that it would be best for her children to stay with their father and that if Murna were to see her children it was best done at her father's house. They claimed that this was for the benefit of the children as it was good for them to be around their grandmother and that Ibrahim would not be able to support another man's children as well as his own anyway. However, Ibrahim did express a concern with others knowing that she had children when one day he asked that I not mention Murna's children to anyone, especially his elder brother, else they should "*think bad of her*". Whatever the actual motives might be, that his prospective bride is from outside Zongo makes it considerably easier to conceal her previous marriages and children.

It is difficult to gauge the extent to which such efforts at concealment motivate men to find brides outside of Zongo; not least because marriage to a bride from outside Zongo implies spatial, though not necessarily social, exogamy. For instance, one man in Zongo married a bride from Lome, to whom he had been introduced to by an uncle resident in Togo who frequently made trips to Zongo.

Nonetheless, the accounts provided by men in Zongo suggest that spatial exogamy is not infrequent and is at least in some cases underpinned by an effort at concealment, as can be seen in the following extract from a discussion with young men at one of Zongo's 'bases'.

"If they know the bride's story then they can find a way to laugh at you or maybe they will try and destroy the marriage. They can even say that they fuck your wife before you".

When a bride is from Zongo her status as *amarya* or *bazarawa* is contested by her groom's peers. Some men will 'secretly' boast that the bride is not *amarya* as they have already had sexual relations with her. When marriage is within Zongo, to conceal that one's bride is *bazarawa* is more difficult as it is likely the bride and grooms are well known to everybody.

By marrying extra-locally and providing the *sadaki* himself, Ibrahim has greater influence over the amount that will be paid; but he also curtails the need for an investigation of the bride's background if his senior kin are left to decide upon the suitability of the bride and determine the *sadaki* for themselves.

It is perhaps not surprising that young men tend to express a preference for extra-local marriages and paying their own *sadaki*. These tactics serve to control the availability of discrediting information and thus lay the ground for an inflation of the bride's social value and the status a groom stands to gain from it.

This idea is illuminating when reflecting on the bargaining that frequently occurs at *sadaki*. A bride's kin never suggest that a *sadaki* is too high. To do so would not only be irrational from the point of view of diminishing material gain, but would serve to decrease the bride's social value and the status that they derive from it. Similarly, a groom's kin would not want a *sadaki* to be too low as this would be to diminish how the social value of the bride is perceived by the observing audience. Furthermore, a groom's kin stand to gain little from bartering too hard for a lower *sadaki*. They might well reduce their costs, but they also risk appearing miserly, unwilling or unable to fulfil their obligations to the dependent *samari* whose marriage is at stake. In concrete terms, Ibrahim's wife fetches a relatively high *sadaki* even though she has already been married. This is because from her kin's point of view they do not wish to jeopardise the marriage by her *bazawara* status being disclosed and risk the shame of having a *bazawara* daughter re*mai*n in the household. Equally Ibrahim's kin, though unaware of her *bazawara* status, derive status themselves from the high *sadaki* as they appear as men of means to the assembled audience. If the amount of *sadaki* exchanged reflects the social value of the bride, then it can also be argued to reflect

the groom's social status. It thus follows that in terms of men's pursuit of prestige and status there is a powerful incentive for both sides to push for higher rather than lower sums to be transferred in *sadaki*.

However, the amounts exchanged in *sadaki* can hardly be seen as solely subject to the groom's preference for a high *sadaki*. Securing the money for *sadaki* is seldom easy in a context of pervasive underemployment and the diminishing returns of inherited landholdings as they are subdivided into ever smaller shares. Even when the money for *sadaki* has been raised, ensuring a successful *sadaki* exchange relies upon a complex set of negotiations between numerous stakeholders whose interests and investments in a particular marriage may be compatible or competing. This can be seen by the contrasting successes of Aliyu and Salihu as revealed in the following portraits.

8.9 Bargaining with Gerontocracy?

Baki kan yanka wuya – It is the mouth that cuts the neck (Hausa Proverb).

As a means to get to know Accra I had asked a Zongo taxi driver whether I might spend the morning with him as he went about his work. One of his first jobs was to take a Zongo scrap dealer and an old photocopier down to the Lagoon where he hoped to sell it. When we arrived the car was quickly surrounded by bare chested young men. It was a chaotic, brawling environment that heaved with an aggressive physicality. Arms were flexed and voices raised as the men pushed and shoved one another trying to get to the old photocopier strapped into the boot of the car. Their skin burnished with sweat and ash, drawn tightly over muscles toned by hard labour. They wore dark glasses and reversed baseball caps smudged sooty black; their mouths were hidden behind bandanas cut from old t-shirts. The men were far too focused and frenzied to talk, but I was able to catch up with one of the young men, Salihu, later on in Zongo away from the chaos of the lagoon and arrange for him to take me back to the lagoon and show me around.

Salihu is in his late twenties. His face is red and blotchy. Dry cracked skin encircles nostrils that run in perpetuity. Sometimes a rasping cough grinds its way up through his throat and out between lips that are red and sore like his nose. Salihu's condition

is not unusual amongst the men who work in the scrap metal trade down by the lagoon. It is the more profitable yet hazardous end of the business, where old tyres and 'e-waste' are burnt in order to extract their metal components. Salihu advised that I wear sunglasses and cover my mouth and nose so as to enter the clouds of black smoke billowing from burning tyres and domestic appliances within which young men laboured.

At times I was unsettled by the way that Salihu would revel in talk about "*fucking bitches*" and "*motherfuckers*" and his not infrequent threats to beat somebody he felt had wronged him[153]. Nevertheless, I enjoyed my time with Salihu as I felt more able to discuss our different points of view than with many of those who couched similarly misogynistic and violent perspectives within the acceptable discourse of Hausa tradition and Islam. Though I liked Salihu, he was not particularly popular in Zongo. Many people claimed that he had become greedy, impatient and envious – that he had too much 'swagger' under the influence of his somewhat rough and ready co-workers at the lagoon. Some even suggested that he was an area boy and had become involved in 'rituals'. When I asked Salihu why he persisted in such work, he explained that though the work was hard the money was good such that he was able to save money. He hoped to marry soon and was trying to get something together for the *sadaki*.

Despite his unpopularity, many people sympathised with his plight, saying that though it was his work and colleagues that had 'spoiled' him, it was the cruelty and negligence of his father that had made such work necessary. When I went with Salihu to buy medicine from Hajiya Hansatu, she despaired at his father's irresponsibility. How could he allow his own son to endure such suffering for the sake of *sadaki*? she wondered. Others such as the women at 'Coffee Club'[154] gossiped about whether his father might be too poor or too mean to pay the *sadaki* himself.

I had met Salihu's father independently; and though I didn't come to know him as well as Salihu, I knew him well enough to see that he was not a rich man. As with many

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[153]   Almost every ethnic designation is represented amongst Salihu's colleagues such that it was Pidgin English that was the lingua franca down at the lagoon.

[154]   Coffee Club refers to a group of elder women from Zongo who regularly meet in a compound in Kan Tudu. Ironically, they never drink coffee.

people I met in Zongo, he claimed that he was struggling to make ends meet. It is of course hard to evaluate the true extent of his wealth, but his claim seems reasonable given the little work that he had as a tailor, and that he did not own land. His accommodation consisted of a single rented room that had been fastened onto the outside wall of a larger compound. Though somewhat cramped, the room was large enough to be divided in two by a curtain, which concealed the sleeping quarters at the back from the view of visitors. When he had tailoring work to do he set up his sewing machine outside the front door under the shade of a tarpaulin sheet. At the end of each day he moved the machine back into the room which he shared with his wife. Salihu rented a smaller room with two friends, Aliyu and Rabiu.

Aliyu is also in his late twenties, but casts a far less bruised and battered figure than his friend Salihu. He is larger, but lacks the muscular frame. Unlike Salihu, it is his long traditional jalobia that sways as he walks rather than his shoulders. He has the careful and considered demeanour of *mutumin kirkii*. He speaks softly and slowly, his English clearly pronounced and formal. Though like Salihu he sometimes slips into pidgin amongst his friends, it seems out of place, forced even, without the swagger so easily embodied by Salihu. Aliyu also works at the lagoon, but away from the fumes and fires tending to the cows of wealthier men in Zongo; a profession he had entered via his maternal uncle. Though I had met Aliyu's father, I did not know him well. Aliyu told me that his father was from Niger and had met his mother, a Fulani woman, when he had settled in Zongo. His father was older than Salihu's; and, whilst he no longer worked, he appeared to be somewhat better off. In the past he had been a night watchman at a hospital and lived in a relatively comfortable chamber and hall.

Aliyu and Salihu had met at primary school as children. Although neither of them had managed to complete more than a couple of years, they remained friends. Aliyu sometimes complained that Salihu was too loud and bossy, prone to boasting and arrogance. I often observed Salihu make fun of Aliyu and his occupation; for example, saying that he was a "*dan kauye ban azanci*", a villager without sense, "*mumu*" or "*bumbaclot*", meaning fool. Though such chiding often seemed to be light-hearted and was met with laughter, including that of Aliyu, I was never quite sure he was unhurt by it.

After I had been in Zongo for some time, Salihu told me that he had managed to save 500 Cedis. I accompanied Salihu to his father's room[155], where he presented him with 200 Cedis, declared the money was for *sadaki* and asked for his permission to marry; a request that his father refused, asserting as he did so that his son was not ready, and that he needed to find a more suitable bride than the Dagomba girl that he had hoped to marry. He told Salihu that he needed to learn patience, rather than rushing into marriage. After a brief but fiery exchange,[156] Salihu stormed out of the room. It didn't take long for word to get around that Salihu had fallen out with his father, not least because Salihu seemed keen to tell all of his misery and anger at his father's failure to support him.

Aliyu also had marital ambitions. However, unlike Salihu, Aliyu was more guarded about his income and the ends to which he planned to put it. One day when I was sitting with Aliyu and the cows discussing Salihu's plight he revealed that he had managed to make 250 Cedis from selling a cow that he had raised. He explained that he wanted to use the money for marriage and so would give it to his father in the hope that he would use it to pay *sadaki*. Aliyu would not tell me who it was that he was hoping to marry and urged that I not share this information with others, not least Salihu, until more concrete arrangements had been made. As was often expressed by people in Zongo, he feared *'jan ido'*, the evil eye of envy. Should others catch wind of his plans, he asserted, then he risked being sabotaged by envious others. I accompanied Aliyu when he went to present the money to his father and asked his permission to marry. Unlike his friend Salihu, his father accepted the money and assured him that he would make the appropriate preparations. These contrasting portraits open up discussion of what makes for a 'successful' negotiation by a son of a father's contribution to *sadaki*?

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[155] Having a *baturi* friend is a sign of prestige and wealth, so young men often invited me to accompany them when they were hoping to make a good impression. An important part of this is to create the sense of being a *baturi's* equal or superior.

[156] Little of which I could understand; but the ferocity of Salihu's anger was palpable in the tone and volume of his speech.

8.10 What Makes for a 'Successful' Negotiation?

"Da muguwar rawa gara kin tashi - Better sit still than dance a bad dance" (Hausa Proverb[157]).

Normatively speaking the *sadaki* is paid by the groom's father to that of the bride. Though the extent to which fathers contribute to their sons' *sadaki* is variable, without the formal approval and participation of the bride and groom's senior kin, marriage cannot take place. Hence inter-generational relationships are pivotal to the marital process. Tensions may arise between fathers and sons when a father is unable or unwilling to meet marital expenses or sanction a marriage; for example, when a father re*main*s unconvinced his son is ready to marry, disagrees with a son's choice of bride or is simply too poor to meet marital expenses. Young men often provide their own *sadaki* in an effort to gain paternal support for a wedding. This diminishes the resource burden on senior kin and strengthens their bargaining positions when it comes to choice of spouse. Furthermore, as an assertion of independence, of responsible manhood, it is more difficult for a father to dispute his son's readiness to marry.

A groom's senior kin might welcome not having to meet *sadaki* costs from their own incomes. However, if the knowledge that they had not done so were to become public then their own status might be put at risk by speculation that they were either unwilling or unable to fulfil their own responsibilities to their sons. This can be seen in the contrasting successes of Aliyu and Salihu.

Aliyu was much more guarded about his marital ambitions and his attempts to raise money for *sadaki*. Aliyu had at times been explicit that he intended the money for *sadaki*[158], but generally held his cards close to his chest. When he gave the money to his father his language was much more ambiguous than that of Salihu. Rather than state that the money was for the *sadaki* he presented the money as a contribution towards *kayan aure*[159] – general wedding expenses. This subtle modification of language from the specific '*sadaki*' to general '*kayan aure*' shifts the 'frame' (Goffman 1974) within which both the meaning of the money and its transfer from son to father

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[157] From Aminu (2003).

[158]   Including when I had formally interviewed Aliyu in the earlier stages of research.

[159]   Literally 'things for the wedding'.

are constituted. It creates a fuzziness around the source of the money and its purpose, and thereby the social and moral connotations implied by a son providing his own *sadaki* are obscured. Aliyu successfully secures his father's support not only because he provides the *sadaki*, but because he does so in a manner that does not threaten to undermine his father's status.

Of course the comparative wealth of Aliyu's father means that he is better able to fulfil his paternal responsibilities and support his son's marriage, something that Salihu's father is likely less able to do. However, that many young men provide their own *sadaki* and yet secure parental support suggests that who actually provides the *sadaki* may not be the principle determinant of success. From the point of view of Goffman (1956, 1967, 1974, 1980, 2005) we can argue that the manner in which *sadaki* is transferred from son to father and later to the bride's kin is not without significance, principally in terms of how the representation of a specific transaction might be perceived by others and the social evaluations that can be made as a result.

This can be seen in Salihu's efforts to provide his own *sadaki*. The fact that his efforts have become public knowledge plays a significant role in his failure to secure his father's support on the basis that they negatively influence the extent to which his father's responsible manhood is positively evaluated by others. Salihu actively framed his visibly poor health within a narrative of his struggle to raise *sadaki*. Each splutter and cough became a reason for others to speculate as to why his father has not provided the *sadaki*, an embodied allusion to his father's inadequacy. Upon entering the public do*main*, Salihu's ability to influence how his *sadaki* transactions are framed is diminished, subject as it is to the perceptions and accounts of others, over which he exerts little control.

Consequently, when Salihu attempts to give the money to his father, the transfer is already framed by a narrative of parental neglect and irresponsibility that impinges upon how it is received by his father. Salihu's money has become a poisoned chalice for his father. To accept the money is admitting that he is unable to financially support his son's marital ambitions; at the same time, to refuse it has the potential of reinforcing narratives of his parental cruelty and neglect. Whether or not he accepts the money, he confirms the perceptions of others that he is either unwilling or unable to carry out

his paternal obligations. Of course this dilemma could have been avoided had Salihu been less willing to share such matters and the transfer been undertaken discretely.

Clearly there may be many other factors at play in his father's refusal, including his expressed uncertainty of Salihu's readiness to marry. Nevertheless, his refusal can be seen as at least in part a response to the speculation that has come to surround his masculine status as a result of Salihu's perilously public efforts to raise his own *sadaki*. The refusal of Salihu's request on the basis of his lack of readiness to marry is an effort to assert that it is neither lack of money nor willing that prevents him from supporting his son; but it also buys space and time in which to construct an alternative narrative and enable a more discrete transfer of *sadaki* from father to son that does not challenge his masculine status.

What differentiates Aliyu's success from Salihu's failure are the distinct ways in which they frame deviant transactional practices relative to the notions of accepted and valued forms of manhood that are contained within normative discourses of *sadaki*. At this point one might question the extent to which Aliyu's particular framings can be seen as intentional. Indeed, when I asked Aliyu whether his father would use the money for *sadaki*[160], he said that he didn't know and it was up to his father to decide how to use the money, but that he thought it important to make a "*contribution*" as a means to demonstrate to his father that he was capable and responsible enough to marry.

8.11 Conclusions: You Couldn't Even Marry Your wife.

In Chapter Three I set out DeCerteau's (1984) notion of tactics as the subversive practices concealed within dominant discourses. In line with this position it is the evasiveness of Aliyu's response, the very ambiguity he cultivates around the intentions and meanings of the transfer of money, that enables him to conceal the deviant act of providing his own *sadaki*. Salihu and Aliyu's divergent positionings of these transfers in the dominant discourse of *sadaki* inform the outcome of their marital efforts.

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[160]   When I had asked this question I was thinking about trust between fathers and sons. Many young men who claimed that they had given their fathers *sadaki* complained that their fathers had simply taken the money and used it for personal consumption; I wanted to know whether Aliyu felt that he could rely on his father to put the money towards its intended purpose. It is only upon later analysis of the data that the implications for the present argument became clear.

As this example demonstrates, there may be people quite apart from the bride and groom whose reputations are also at stake in the marital process; not least their fathers, whose own responsible personhoods hinge upon their ability and willingness to provide for their sons as notionally dependent subordinates. The manner in which Aliyu and Salihu attempt to pay their own *sadaki* can be seen to present different opportunities for those involved to emerge from the marital process with their reputations enhanced or at the very least unscathed. Because it is assumed that the *sadaki* money is raised via senior male kin, *sadaki* serves as a reflection of the groom and his kin's social relationships in the same way as the *kayan daki* does for the bride. A larger *sadaki* alludes to greater contributions and a wider social network than a lower *sadaki*. Aliyu's father stands to gain status from the higher *sadaki* that serves as a reflection of his wealth, even though he may not have obtained the wealth himself. Conversely, Salihu's father stands to be discredited by the public knowledge that he has not, for whatever reason, fulfilled his obligations to his dependent son. He would gain little from accepting Salihu's contribution to *sadaki*. Indeed, acceptance could come to undermine his own status as *mai gida* which relies upon Salihu giving an appropriate performance of dependency.

At this point it is important to highlight that it is not only the relationship between father and son in which the status effects of relations of dependency are at stake. Let us return to the case of Ibrahim, who like Salihu is also desperate to marry. Unlike Salihu, however, Ibrahim is finding it hard to find the money to meet his wedding expenses. As described above, though it is normatively his elder brother's obligation to provide the bridewealth, Ibrahim wants to provide it himself. Ibrahim suspects that his brother will not sanction his marriage on the basis that he is not sufficiently mature. He wants to provide the *sadaki* as a means to assert his independence. However, Murna, his prospective bride, is frustrated by Ibrahim's lack of progress. Aware of Ibrahim's irregular employment and income, she doubts his ability to raise the necessary funds by himself.

Murna has her own chop bar near to the bus station which provides a reasonable income, and so as a means to make things move faster has been contributing to the wedding expenses. She has bought rolls of cloth, perfume and underwear for the *lefe,* and given Ibrahim money to prepare a room, and even towards the *sadaki*. Ibrahim was happy to accept contributions to the *lefe*, especially as he explained that it was

difficult to know which items would be to Murna's taste. However, as time passed he became increasingly ambivalent about Murna's contributions. Ibrahim told Murna to stop trying to give him money, to leave him to deal with the *lefe* and the house. Nevertheless, Murna would sneak items into the large suitcase in which the *lefe* goods were contained. This angered Ibrahim greatly. He began to question Murna's suitability as a wife. He was concerned that her disobedience would persist into their marriage and that it was only now that he was starting to see her true 'character'.

Ibrahim's concerns are clearly grounded in the fact that Murna's contributions threatened to undermine his efforts to assert a responsible manhood. They ran counter to the narrative of masculine responsibility and feminine dependency foregrounding male status. Indeed, in conversation with Ibrahim he was explicit about his concern that Murna might make use of the difficulty he had had funding their wedding and the support that she had provided to undermine his status. He worried that in the event of an argument Murna might tell others of her contributions as a means to shame him. Ibrahim anticipated, in what had become a familiar phrase: "*They will say you couldn't even marry your wife*".

Ibrahim's case is not unique. Though often underplayed by men, women in Zongo have access to a range of economic opportunities whilst many young men struggle to find reliable sources of income; often relying on upon others, such as senior kin, to meet their daily needs. Nevertheless, women's normative entitlement to men's wealth seems to endure. Consequently, many young men, in their pursuit of responsible manhood, find themselves facing a trade-off between re*mai*ning unmarried or receiving assistance from others. Often such support is congruous with normative relations of dependency, such as those between fathers and sons. However, in many cases men rely upon women, in particular brides, to bring about the marriages which are pivotal to public assertions of responsible manhood. What we have here is a story about how men's statuses rely upon women's position as dependants and subordinates; and yet the story also reveals the paradox of dependency, in that asserting such a status is dependent upon the cooperation of others. Such cooperation is not only difficult to secure, but may involve compromises that undermine the very notion of responsible manhood.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

'Duniya ba ta auren rago' – The world does not marry the indolent (Hausa proverb).

9.1 The Drama of Everyday Life.

"*Hausa psychology is under no illusion that an outward display of goodness is ever sufficient to cover up an evil disposition: 'if the inner character is sound', a tongue-twisting aphorism assures us, 'the exterior will be pleasing; but if it is not then the pleasing exterior is nothing but a sham*" (Kirk-Greene 1974 p3).

"*In conjugal conflict situations the traditional matter is male/female hostility and each combatant is seeking to prove that his or her behaviour conforms to the norm while the other deviates from it. Neither questions the norm but only attempts to gain the audience's approval. Needless to say, the audience represents society and is the intended recipient of the message*". (Salamone 1976 p.366).

This thesis has been about getting married and the meaning of manhood in Sabon Zongo. I began this thesis with a discussion of two essays: Kirk-Greene's (1974) 'The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa' and Salamone's (1976) 'The Arrow and the Bird: Proverbs in the Solution of Hausa Conjugal-Conflicts'. Kirk-Greene's (1974) essay was concerned with an elaboration of *mutumin kirki* – the terms against which a man is adjudged to be a man of social and moral standing. My analysis chimes with Kirk-Greene's in that I have been similarly interested in describing accepted and valued notions of manhood in Zongo.

In his account of the linguistic elements of conjugal conflicts, Salamone (1976) described how husbands and wives do battle through the medium of proverbs. "Combatants" vie for the support of an audience through wit and repartee, attempting to define the social situation in ways that discredit their opponent's version of events and enhance their own reputations. My analysis has not been so different from Salamone's in the sense that I too have focused on marriage as a territory of representation. However, my analysis differs from Salamone's in emphasising a slightly different cast of characters, whose relations are not always hostile and may collaborate in performances intended to win over an audience. Whilst Salamone tours the battlefields and shows us the weapons of "symbolic warfare" (Salamone 1976

p368), I have examined marital processes as representations, as both battlefield and site of cooperation, in which treaties are negotiated and alliances forged. I have also examined such engagements with a wider repertoire of tools in mind. By drawing on Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980) and DeCerteau (1984), I have sought to interrogate the 'strategies and tactics' of 'impression management' and how the play out in young men's efforts to marry.

The adage quoted from Kirk-Greene (1974) above, conveys the idea that for the Hausa the impressions a person gives of himself might not always be indicative of his 'true' character, but instead a veil behind which something altogether more malign may be concealed. Whilst most people in Zongo would subscribe to a similar idea, this thesis has drawn on Goffman's (1956) 'dramaturgical self' to take a broader view of the "sham" (Kirk-Greene 1974 p.3), not only as socially advantageous, but as a matter of the deepest personal significance.

9.2 Synopsis: Idealised Manhoods in Zongo

I began this thesis with Abu. Abu was eager to marry and yet struggling to secure the support he needed from his father to realise his ambitions. We met some of Abu's friends at Oakville Town Hall. Through the viewing of Maid in Manhattan and the conversations that followed we saw that getting married was a prominent concern for many young men in Zongo, and began to learn something of the challenges they faced in pursuit of this goal. Whilst it became clear that neither Abu's ambitions nor his predicament were unusual, I was intrigued as to why getting married should matter so much in the first place. Following an introduction to Sabon Zongo in Chapter Two, the next four chapters were concerned with unravelling the significance of marriage to manhood.

In the first instance these chapters were concerned with elaborating manhoods as sets of social expectations, providing an account of what people in Zongo think a man ought to be and do. Chapter Three, briefly surveyed the anthropological literature, which has often seen marriage as a rite of passage through which adult manhoods and the status and prestige associated with them are realised. Drawing on this literature and with Kirk-Greene's (1976) *Mutumin Kirkii* in mind, I sought to examine the ways in which marriage might be similarly invoked in notions of manhood in Zongo.

The importance of marriage to manhood was revealed in Chapters Four and Five, where I set out the qualities and characteristics that form the basis of accepted and valued notions of manhood in Zongo.

Chapter Four began with Mallam Hassan's account of Zongo's moral decline. At the vanguard of this worrying trend were young men, whose moral transgressions and anti-social behaviours threatened to destabilise *lafiya*, the social and moral order. According to popular discourse, young men were anything but the embodiment of socially accepted and valued manhood. Nevertheless, I drew upon Douglas (2010) to suggest this discourse of youth as morally threatening was important, operating as a constituent referent against which the man of social and moral standing could be defined. Indeed, this was shown to be the case in the example of Abdulahi, who was keen to assert that as husband and father he could by definition not be considered a youth.

I drew on Goffman (1956), to argue that Abu and his friends viewing of Maid in Manhattan could be seen as a stage for impression management in which the social evaluations made of them by others were at stake. The young men's public discussions about the show and its characters served as a performance, "*incorporating and exemplifying the officially accredited values of society*" (Goffman 1956 p.60), distancing themselves from the category youth and asserting a moral virtue congruent with accepted and valued forms of adult manhood. For example, this could be seen in Abu and his friend's disdain for Victor, one of the central characters in Maid in Manhattan. The young men asserted that Victor was to blame for many of Marisa's troubles. Victor was selfish and irresponsible. He neglected his duties, as husband and parent, in pursuit of his own immoral desires, leaving Marisa alone to carry the burden of providing for their son. For the Men at Town Hall, Victor was the antithesis of the kind of responsible manhood accepted and valued in Zongo.

Abdulahi's narrative not only introduced marriage into the frame distinguishing the men from the youth, but brought into relief the ways in which the differential statuses of married and unmarried men were grounded in distinct sets of rights and responsibilities within the domestic space. In Chapter Five I sought to explore this idea further by examining men's domestic relations and how they were implicated in manhoods.

I began by elaborating the physical structure of the Hausa compound and the domestic relationships which could be seen to pattern its form. I drew out the *gida* and *iyali* as distinct levels of kinship grouping. The different rights, responsibilities and statuses of men within domestic relations of consumption, production and exchange were revealed by plotting the course of kinship and compound morphology. I described how the status and authority enjoyed by married men was derived from their position as normative providers for notional dependants. Irrespective of their actual productive activities, women, children and unmarried 'youth' were said to be profligate consumers, incapable of meeting their own needs, and so dependent on male household heads, who produce and provide on their behalf. According to men in Zongo, it was these dependencies which justified the authority of husbands and fathers over wives, children and unmarried youth. If it weren't for the firm hand and honourable character of responsible men, who put food on the table, then disorder would surely prevail.

This idea of authority as being derived from the dependency of others was embodied in the notion of *arzikin mutane,* or 'wealth in people' – the power, prestige and status which is achieved through the recruitment of and control over dependants and followers (Miers and Kopytoff 1977, Bledsoe 1980, Guyer 1993 and 1995, Jordan Smith 2005). Marriage could be seen as a mechanism through which a man accrues wealth-in-people, by establishing a household unit comprised of notionally dependent women and children over which he exerts control. Thus marriage was central to the attainment of responsible manhoods from which male prestige was derived.

However, marriage is seldom easily realised. Though for the best part defunct in the present day, the practice of *gandu* in Hausaland provided a lens onto the inter-generational relationships through which young men realised their marital ambitions. I described how young men, like Abu and Dauda, often relied heavily upon contributions from senior men to meet their wedding expenses; not least the relatively high cost of providing a room for a bride and the various prestationary payments which formally constitute the marital process. Within the extended kinship unit, the *mai iyali* and *mai gida* enjoy privileged access to resources, and control how they are distributed between the household's various constituents. For unmarried men, accessing such resources meant subordinating themselves to the authority of the senior kinsmen who controlled them.

A similar dynamic could also be seen to play out in relationships between men beyond the extended kinship unit. I revisited Pellow's (2002) account of Sabon Zongo's founding, set out in Chapter Two. I described how in a context in which incomes are low and housing is scarce or difficult to access, control over allocations of housing can be converted into wealth in people. It is for this reason that Zongo's Chieftaincy has historically been dominated by landholders, as it is they who have been most able to recruit followers; the political loyalties of junior men are rewarded with social, economic and political assistance, including access to housing and other resources necessary for marriage.

Thus marriage is important to men in Zongo because it is the means through which the prestige of *arzikin mutane* is realised, and whereby socially valued, productive and responsible manhood is established. Moreover, elite men who enjoy the greatest prestige are those whose networks of dependants reach beyond the conjugal unit, even the extended kinship unit of the *gida*, to the formal political hierarchies of the Chieftaincy. An interesting and important observation here was that it is control over reproduction, rather than production and productive resources, which underpins male authority.

9.3 Ideals and Actualities

The progression from youth, to manhood, to elite seemed to resemble a linear process and so when I first started writing, I thought it made sense to structure the thesis accordingly: describing the various steps taken by men on their pathways through marriage to manhood and wider political influence. However, my efforts were constantly brought into tension with the messiness of social reality. A degree of abstraction is necessary, perhaps even inevitable, when seeking to describe complex social phenomena within the confines of a thesis; but when it came to normative manhoods, actual marital pathways simply did not want to tow the line. Idealised accounts of manhood, and the marital process through which it was achieved, were often contradicted by what actually happened in practice. Thus a parallel, but no less important, thread in my thesis has been the tensions between ideals and actualities, and the efforts men made to reconcile them.

Much like the proverbial duelling of Salamone's (1973) husbands and wives, men in Zongo seemed to be engaged in a perpetual battle to redefine and represent social

situations in terms that were favourable to them. This was apparent from the outset in Chapter One. I drew on Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980) to argue that the viewing of Maid in Manhattan at Oakville Town Hall could be seen as a stage for impression management in which Abu and his friends sought not only to present themselves favourably to others, but cultivate a sense of self-worth. Through the act of viewing and discussing the show, the young men imagined and made a common moral universe, such that their account of the show could be seen as an iteration of their own social and moral realities, the challenges they encountered and how they might be overcome. Given the idea that marriage matters to young men because it brings about an improvement in how they are socially evaluated by others, I argued that Abu and his friends' preoccupation with marriage reflected their anxieties about the difficulties of achieving a sense of personal self-worth and the ways in which remaining unmarried comes to impinge on it.

A similar set of anxieties can be seen to pervade the notion of the ideal bride as set out in Chapter Six. The relative desirability of *amarya* and *bazawara* brides was described as a function of the moral statuses implied by their contrasting marital histories. However, these 'moral' narratives could read as commentaries on female autonomy and the problems it posed for men in a world where masculine prestige and men's sense of self-worth relies on the dependency of others, not least women. It is perhaps not witchcraft or sorcery, infidelity or sexually transmitted diseases that men fear, but that their own inadequacies might be revealed by disgruntled or disobedient wives. If men are to establish and sustain an image of themselves aligned with the normative ideal of productive and responsible manhood, then they need women who do as they're told; or, at the very least, women who give the impression of doing so.

How a bride is perceived by others clearly matters to men. Indeed, this was evident in the difficulties I encountered trying to find out whom men actually married. Just about every man claimed to have married rather well, even when there was evidence to the contrary. This was apparent in the example of Nasir, who seemed to actively foster an evasive ambiguity as to his prospective bride as *bazawara*, despite my having met her children from a previous marriage.

Men's efforts to manage how their brides were perceived by others were clearly visible in the prestationary exchanges that formally demarcate the marital process. In Chapter

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Seven I set out the formal structure and significance of the exchange of marriage goods as described by men, and asked what they might say about accepted and valued notions of manhood. As one might expect, these accounts tended to emphasise normative ideals of gender and intergenerational relations within the household. For example, *sadaki* was described as a compensatory payment made by a groom's senior kinsmen to those of the bride. Compensation was regarded as necessary because the men who had provided for a bride throughout her upbringing were not those who would benefit from her reproductive labour. The value of the *sadaki* was said to reflect the relative value of a bride as derived from her marital history and prestige of her lineage.

In Chapter Eight I elaborated how these prestationary processes played out in practice. Despite often deviating significantly from normative accounts, individuals attempted to represent the prestationary processes in which they themselves had participated in ways that were congruous with official scripts. I argued that this was an effect of the ways in which material costs and reputational consequences were negotiated throughout the marital process.

This could be seen in the contrasting cases of Aliyu and Salihu's efforts to marry. Both men attempted to secure the support of their fathers necessary for marriage by providing their own *sadaki*, but only Aliyua was successful. Aliyu was successful because he made his contribution discretely and framed it in ways that did not undermine the intergenerational dependencies upon which his father's status relied. In contrast, Salihu's contribution was framed in such a way as to imply his father's failure to live up to social expectations. I argued that dominant meanings could be made use of to influence how a social situation is read by an audience. This was well illustrated in the way Bilal made use of a blender as a tool for impression management. A blender when gifted a bride by her mother is considered a prestige good; by inserting a blender in to the *budan kay*, Bilal appeals to the significances that a blender at a *budan kay* is assumed to imply.

9.4 Scratching the Structuralist Itch

As discussed in Chapter Three, within the gender and development literature, there has been a tendency to emphasise the ways in which structural constraints impinge upon the agency of individuals. This perhaps explains why the men and masculinities

literature has tended to focus on the experiences of men unable or unwilling to conform to hegemonic or idealised forms of masculinity and how established gender orders come to work against them. These analyses have been invaluable in bringing men and masculinities to the gender agenda and drawing attention to many of the well-being challenges faced by men. However, it can be argued that the experiences and agency of ostensibly 'non-deviant' men have been left under-examined. For example, as we saw in Chapter Three, a recurrent concern within the masculinities literature has been the idea of a 'crisis of masculinity' – that in contexts where normative masculinities are difficult to achieve, men pursue a sense of self-worth through anti-social behaviours, such as violence, risky sexual practices or substance abuse.

My analysis resonates with this literature, in that young men's concerns about getting married reflect wider anxieties about achieving a socially recognised manhood. However, as is evident in my account, the pursuit of 'alternative' masculinities may not be the only way in which men respond to this difficulty.

A focus on the ways in which established gender orders impinge upon the lives of men has helped alert us to the ways in which power produces inequality and ill-being. This is clearly important. However, there is another side to this coin that merits exploration; how individuals might adapt and make use of these structures as agents.

Without denying the power, injustice and inequality vested in structural arrangements, DeCerteau (1984 p.xiv-xv) urges us to see agents as active "*users*", who "*…make innumerable and infinitesimal transformations of and within the dominant cultural economy in order to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules"*.

In line with DeCerteau, I have attempted to identify the 'deviances' occurring within the normalised and normalising discourses of manhood in Zongo, to demonstrate how agency is expressed not only as overt resistance, but in micro acts of evasion and subversion concealed within and making use of the norm.

One of the puzzles that emerged in this thesis was why young men would continue to reproduce the very ideals that seemed to be working against them. Why did young men continue to reproduce the notion of marriage as central to accepted notions of manhood when it is apparently so difficult to achieve and the source of such tremendous anxiety?

In Chapters Four, Five and Six we saw how men's efforts at impression management tended to be directed towards established social expectations, reinforcing rather than rejecting normative masculinities. This might be read as a triumph of sovereign power: normative discourses propping up the authority of senior men, who derive power from their control over subordinate men's pursuit of personal significance.

My argument was, and to some extent remains, that marriage serves to demarcate socially valued forms of masculinity. However, over the course of Chapter Seven and Eight, I argued that the apparent obstinacy of certain notions of manhood, not only belies the 'tactical manoeuvres' taking place within them, but are indeed necessary conditions for such manoeuvres to take place. In concrete terms I argued that many individual men have an interest in sustaining a particular discourse of how things are and ought to be, even when such ideals are difficult to realise in practice, as they provide a veil of assumptions behind which can be concealed the uncertainties and fragilities of their own status and authority, not least their dependencies on junior men and women.

In Chapter Seven I described how idealised notions of manhood were implicated in accounts of the marital process. Chapter Eight asked how men go about navigating these discourses in practice. Once again I drew upon Goffman (1956, 1974, 1980) to examine the marital process as a stage for impression management. My analysis revealed how individuals manoeuvre within normative discourses as agents, putting them to work to evade and subvert authority: notional dependants hold their social superiors to ransom by threatening to withdraw their cooperation from the performances of dependency upon which male prestige relies.

From this point of view, the moral commentaries which accompany relations of consumption and production – such as Mallam Hassan's, which emphasises the profligacy and indiscipline of young men; and that of Abu and his friends, whose ideal bride is set against a backdrop of the immoral proclivities of women – might be seen not as mechanisms of social control – as a way of legitimating and naturalising the authority of men over women and senior men over their juniors – but as expressions of anxiety about the fragility of this order.

I have shown how in Zongo norms of intergenerational exchange are often transgressed; but I have also shown how considerable effort is made to conceal such

transgressions or frame them in terms aligned with dominant narratives. It is hard to imagine that people in Zongo are entirely unaware of the extent to which these transgressions occur and the efforts that are made to conceal them. In a context in which the reputational costs of confessing one's own failings are high, a depersonalised discourse of young men's production and consumption as inherently immoral, might serve to discourage young men from revealing transgressions which stand to discredit the authority claimed by their seniors. A dividend that young men will also reap when they themselves come to occupy positions of notional authority. It is for this reason that Abu keeps the money he has saved for his wedding hidden beneath his mattress.

9.5 Epilogue: A Whatsapp Chat with Abu.

Abu: Hey man! How r u? You in UK?

Me: Hey Abu! Yeah. I'm in UK. Still studying. How ru?

Abu: I hav news flash from zongo.

Me:?

Abu: Am getting married.

Me: Congratulations! Mungodiya Allah. When is the big day?

Abu: Soon insha Allah.

Whatsapp Chat with Abu. June 2014.

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