

**'MATRIMONIAL GOODS AMONG THE ATOENDE KUSASI'
CONTINGENT PRESTATIONS: PART II**

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In the first part, Awedoba (1989), the discussion centred on the primary or prime prestations but reference was made also to contingent prestations - particularly to the fact that some contingent prestations such as cattle loans might, unless settled by the wife-taker, become transformed into prime prestations and thus be refundable on divorce not by the wife-giver but by the new wife-taker. Even where divorce has not intervened the wife-taker might recoup by demanding from those who marry his daughter excess bridewealth reflecting the value of the loan. Excess bridewealth usually has ambivalent significance. In this part of the paper the discussion will be about the other prestations which are mostly given to the wife's parents by the husband himself or on his behalf. These include both material goods and services. The discussion will be against the background of the Fortesian definition of Contingent Prestations.

Fortes (1962) maintains that contingent prestations correlate with ancillary value; for example, their transfer secures the right to remove the wife from her natal settlement to that of her husband in some societies. Mendosa (1973) shows that this is precisely what some of the Sisala haalakias prestations do, although in the case of the Sisala some of the contingent prestations are made a year or so after the bride had been removed to the groom's compound. This does not apply in the case of the Atoende Kusasi - except perhaps for those marriages described as infant betrothal marriages.

Contingent prestations according to Fortes may be subject to bargaining and may be reciprocated partially or wholly by the wife-giver. They are not usually refundable when the marriage is dissolved. This last characteristic is applicable to the Atoende Kusasi situations, a fact which is not surprising as most contingent prestations are intangibles such as services, courtesies and goods destined for immediate consumption. In native idiom, contingent prestations come under 'respect'. Sons-in-law are enjoined to show profound respect for the wife's parents but not necessarily to the entire wife-giving lineage since the husband is permitted to joke and take certain liberties with some of its junior members.

On the issue of ancillary value and residual rights to the daughter, I did not get the impression that, as far as the Kusasi (Atoende) case is concerned, contingent prestations made

a decisive impact. A wife-giver, it is agreed, might withdraw a daughter if the son-in-law fails to show 'respect' and Rattray (1932: p. 390) insists that in doing so the wife-giver would return the primary prestation.

Mortuary and Funeral Prestations

Some of the prestations that may be regarded as contingent among the Atoende Kusasi have a situational character. They take place only on certain occasions. Among these are the mortuary and funeral prestations. Both wife-givers and wife-takers are expected to make certain prestations but the burden borne by the wife's parents on these occasions is in no way comparable to that of the son-in-law. We cannot speak of balanced or equivalent exchange.

The son-in-law is expected not only to attend the burials of the parents-in-law and other close kinsmen of the wife's but also to participate actively in some of the activities. The son-in-law is expected to dig the grave of the parent-in-law. The chore is not entrusted to sons-in-law solely but they should lend a helping hand by digging themselves or rewarding those digging with beer and money gifts. Rattray's informants told him that "A son-in-law will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones", Rattray (*op. cit.* p.389). This is a very important service which the son-in-law should render literally or metaphorically. As Rattray also shows, Kusasi *Tendaanas* (Earth-priests) prefer early burials so that the corpse 'will not be rotten and spoil the land', Rattray (*op. cit.* p.391). Sons-in-law should see to it that the grave is dug with despatch. They should dig up any big stones that they encounter rather than allow such obstacles to lead to a relocation of the grave area. Rattray's informants also told him that 'No one who has many brothers and sons can become rotten before burial', Rattray (*loc. cit.*), but it is the sons-in-law who take over as soon as they arrive on the spot. The same is true for Tallensi, [cf. Fortes (1949)] though not for Kasena-Nankana, another Upper Eastern Ghanaian people.

The son-in-law is also expected to provide entertainment for the occasion or to reward with beer and cash those who provide music and drumming. The burial occasion in many parts of the Upper East is a time for mourning and celebration especially when the deceased is an aged person. Among some peoples like the Kasena-Nankana muskets are exploded when the burial rites of an elder are in progress and the celebration redounds to the honour of the deceased.

It is compulsory for the son-in-law to attend in person the mortuary rites of the wife's parent, unless circumstances prevent his participation; even then, a close kinsman should attend the

rites on his behalf and provide the services that the son-in-law himself would have provided. The contribution of the son-in-law draws attention to the 'filial' character of his relationship with the wife's parent: he is a proxy son. Like the agnatic son he is duty bound to bury the parent-in-law, but unlike the agnatic son he is in some ways a stranger who does not participate in the death of his wife's parent. While the lineage is distraught literally or metaphorically by the death of its member, the son-in-law as a member of another lineage retains his sanity. He is therefore best placed to bear the responsibility of making the grave and burying the dead. One is reminded in this respect of the Kasena-Nankana and Sisala practice of leaving the mortuary rites to that segment of the maximal lineage that renders reciprocal funeral services to the deceased's segment.¹ The son-in-law's position among bereaved Kusasi is indeed similar in some ways to the Sisala *nyinniaa* and the Kasena-Nankana *Kwo bia* in being an outsider to the bereaved lineage and yet connected with it sufficiently to be entrusted with such an important task as burial.

Though the son-in-law's attendance at the burial of the wife's parent is compulsory burial rites are not held up if he is absent.² The daughter will not normally be withdrawn from her husband when he fails to be present but it is conceivable that the bereaved would take offence if the daughter's husband does not have a plausible explanation for his absence. Failure to demonstrate concern and sympathy in this context would constitute gross disrespect on the part of the son-in-law and would be perceived as a dereliction of filial duty.

Affinal Prestations at Funeral Celebrations

After the burial, the final funeral obsequies are observed for the deceased within the year in most cases. This is an occasion for elaborate prestations involving agnates, affines and other kin in many parts of the Upper East, the Kusasi included. The affines - particularly the son-in-law are called upon to make a number of prestations beginning on the first or second day of the funeral when rites are held just outside the gate of the compound at which poultry and livestock are offered to the deceased by hitting the victims on the ground to kill them. These rites are called *pugub* in Kusaal. The son-in-law may offer small livestock - sheep, goat or pig as well as fowls for the *pugub*. In the view of one informant these gifts are announced publicly and praised. The children of the deceased's daughters may also feature at these rites acknowledging their ties with the deceased by offering gifts of poultry. If they are young children, the son-in-law provides them with the *pugub* victims.

In the course of the funeral celebrations the son-in-law will be required to provide a large basketful of thick stiff porridge accompanied by relish and a second basketful of guinea fowl

meat. A basketful of malt is also provided for making the funeral beer. Some of the accounts elicited from informants indicate that in addition to the animal or two provided at the pugub rites another is provided later on on the wife's behalf in addition to several live fowls. There was also mention of what is termed 'waist money' which the son-in-law should give to his mother-in-law in the course of the funeral rites. The gift is symbolic of her pain at giving birth to the wife and is probably meant to help supplement her funeral expenses.

These presents are customary and more or less compulsory. Non-payment may not however lead to automatic withdrawal of spouse, but unless the defaulting son-in-law can demonstrate that he is really prevented by poverty from meeting these obligations it could lead to his wife being recalled. An entry in the Civil Record Book for Bawku District dated 12th April 1958 indicates that a father had withdrawn his daughter from her husband because he had failed to assist in the performance of the wife's mother's funeral. The husband was a member of the Assembly of God Mission then residing in Tamale, more than 150 miles away. He had already transferred to his parent-in-law a primary prestation comprising 3 cows, 1 donkey and 3 sheep for a girl he had married after a seven year betrothal. The court ruled that the son-in-law should pacify his wife's parent by offering him a sheep and a goat.³

Though the son-in-law's prestations are customary they retain an indeterminate character, which allows the groom to give as much as he can afford. There are no standardised measures or quantities that are applicable. The custom lays down that the malt, stiff porridge, and guinea fowl should be brought over in a big basket; however baskets come in various sizes so that a medium-size basket might pass for a large one and vice versa. It is also up to the individual son-in-law to decide to what level the basket should be filled. The same also applies to the 'waist' money and the animals that are presented. No value is set for the 'waist' money just as a son-in-law may provide big healthy animals or small emaciated ones. The recipients cannot refuse whatever presents are given on the funeral occasion. In the case of the primary prestation the wife-giver has this right.

In making these presents, unlike the primary prestation of matrimonial goods, the groom can apply his discretion and initiative but how he uses the allowance might redound to his prestige or shame. As I have indicated for the pugub rites above stock is generally taken of who gives what and in what quantity or of what quality. The actors are keenly aware that they are being measured against each other and also against other examples set in the neighbourhood. Sons-in-law are particularly conscious of this, a fact which appears to influence their

behaviour. One of our informants, a settlement chief, deplored the absurd extent to which this sort of rivalry among sons-in-law is sometimes carried. To understand this behaviour among sons-in-law it needs to be borne in mind that display of generosity enhances not only their public image but also earns a credit incremental.⁴ Those who score well may expect that the female agnates of their wives would be offered to them or to their kin in marriage. Women are of course generally perceived as a 'limited good', to borrow Foster's (1965) phrase in many polygynous societies, Kusasi included.

It is important to stress that these prestations do not restore any rights in ~~uxorem~~ or ~~genetricem~~ since these are only implied in the acceptance of the primary prestation of cattle and other livestock. The receipt of contingent prestations does not require the wife-giver to cede his parental rights in the bride, for no amount of matrimonial transfers, prime or contingent, can remove the bride's interest and attachment to her natal lineage or induce the wife-giving lineage to relinquish its residual rights to her as a daughter of the clan. This applies not only to Atoende Kusasi but to all other Upper Eastern societies where the matrimonial transfers are substantial. Marriage would indeed fall under purchase if it were possible to alienate the daughter from her natal lineage through such transfers.

The prestation of an additional bride to the generous groom or his kin may be perceived in terms of reciprocities. It should again be pointed out that the girl who has been betrothed as a consequence of affinal generousities will be the focus of a new and independent marriage settlement. She does not come at a discount and a new set of matrimonial prestations must be transferred sooner or later. Informants said that sororal polygyny contrary to expectation does not enable a man to achieve economies as far as primary and non-primary prestations are concerned. The point was stressed that if a man is married to two sisters and it becomes necessary to make funeral prestations to his affines he should transfer two portions of prestations on behalf of each of the sisters. For this reason some informants did not see sororal polygyny in entirely positive terms. Marriage of two sisters to one husband is fairly common but perhaps only the very wealthy would contemplate marriage to more than two sisters. Where a third sister has been offered, she would almost certainly be passed on to a kinsman.

Contingent Prestations and Bargaining

As far as these funeral and mortuary prestations are concerned bargaining is out of the question since what is presented cannot be rejected on the grounds that it is unsatisfactory. It could however be argued that the latitude given to sons-in-law is

purposive and aimed at taking advantage of the quandary in which the groom is placed. This could be an etic view point, one unlikely to be admitted in the emic representation; nevertheless as a strategy, it might compare with similar ones often adopted in the market place when kinsmen or acquaintances meet as buyers and sellers. I refer specifically to contexts in which services are provided or subsistence goods marketed. An artisan dealing with a kinsman has three options: to treat the kinsman as he would treat any customer, to make a gift of the goods to the kinsman, or to ask the kinsmen to pay his or her own price. The particular strategy adopted might reflect kinship distance and the quality and quantity of previous reciprocities. The third option eschews haggling but, more importantly, the seller avoids giving the impression that he or she is a willing exploiter of a kinsman. The participants to this type of transaction, by their department, seek to convert what should be 'balanced reciprocity' into 'generalized reciprocity', to use Sahlins' terminology. Placed in this kind of quandary the buyer might well end up paying more for the goods in order not to appear ungenerous. The son-in-law's quandary is even more obvious since his prestations are publicized and will inevitably be measured against similar prestations provided by other sons-in-law who are competitors for the favours of their wives' lineage. The pressure on the son-in-law to acquit himself creditably is not only external but also internal in these competitive situations. Among the Kasena-Nankana, I have heard villagers and clansmen complain that their kinsman had not upheld the prestige of the village. The wife herself is the husband's severest critic for her honour is upheld or lost by the behaviour of the husband on these occasions. Thus it is that a wife is sometimes lost not because her parents have withdrawn her but because she could not endure the disgrace brought on her by her husband's lack of generosity or by his indigence.

Counter Prestations

The parents-in-law are never called upon to contribute on the scale expected of a son-in-law on funeral occasions. In terms of material prestations against counter prestation of similar character, there is no equivalence. The Kubet prestation may be mentioned as an example here. Literally this means 'funeral trap'. It comprises a guinea fowl present sent to the wife's mother to inform her of an impending funeral obsequies that the wife-taker is about to execute. Receipt of the Kubet compels morally the mother-in-law's attendance at the funeral rites and a cash donation. The present that the mother-in-law makes is not however induced overtly nor is its value predetermined. This means she will contribute whatever amount she deems appropriate and within her means. She is certainly not under any pressure to

contribute handsomely. Other Upper-Eastern examples may serve as illustration: among the Kasena-Nankana where the mother-in-law prepares her own food and beer for distribution at the funeral place she is recompensed by a 'levy' on the households constituting the bereaved lineage; it is possible that the Atoende Kusasi mother-in-law is handsomely recompensed for the gift she makes. I was however unable to verify this on the field.

Where the son-in-law's funeral obsequies are at issue the wife-giver makes a contribution of guinea fowl meat, grain and soup ingredients. These items are given to the widow as she returns to the wife-taker after a period of temporary withdrawal and stay at her natal lineage lasting several days. The provisions that she brings back can only be seen as indirect prestations to the wife-giver, for they are destined to be cooked and served to those of the widow's kin who had come over to sleep in her rooms and to be of general assistance to her. Against this contribution is the prestation of a dog and one or several fowls to the widow's agnates who had accompanied her back to her husband's home. These prestations are interesting; for the first time in the funeral context, we see haggling reminiscent of the Frafra *besengo* described by Rattray (1932 Vol.1: 151) or of the Kasena-Nankana *gongna* and *kayidiri*, all of which involve a prestation of a dog and fowls. In the Frafra and Kasena-Nankana cases these prestations are pre-mortem mostly while the Kusasi equivalent is post-mortem. With the former peoples these gifts are part of the prime prestations of marriage, and this is probably what they are even in the Kusasi case - a symbolic renewal of marriage after the demise of the husband. In making this claim one must bear in mind also that it is the agnates of the senior widow who receive the dog, those of junior widows receive only fowls.

Other Non-Primary Prestations

The son-in-law is expected to provide occasional gifts of foodstuff to the wife's parents as well as guinea fowl meat. There is also farm labour. The mother-in-law's groundnuts farm was often mentioned as well as the roofing of her rooms. The son-in-law should also help the father-in-law occasionally to cultivate his farms. Whenever he provides labour the parents-in-law should reciprocate by preparing a generous meal for him. It is therefore possible to talk of prestations and counter-prestations here. My own impression of the Kasena-Nankana practice which is similar is that the refreshment provided to the work party of the son-in-law coupled with other gifts more than counters the value of the labour that is provided.

Rattray (1932: 389) was informed that a man is required to provide farm labour until his wife has had a child of their own after which he is released from the obligation to work for the

parent-in-law, curiously "because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws". The son-in-law should also give the parents-in-law beer and guinea fowl at the harvest season and five baskets of grain yearly until the birth of their first child. The rationale is "... for after that they will at once demand payment of the sul (bride price)", Rattray (ibid.). Atoende informants did not corroborate these remarks. The general view was that the son-in-law was not obliged to contribute labour to the wife-giver, since he had to produce the food that would feed his own family. The wife's parents could request the son-in-law's assistance on their farms and it is possible that generous sons-in-law would volunteer their assistance - particularly if the wife's parents were too old to work or did not have sons who would take over the farming chores. One informant said that in exceptional cases where the wife's parents felt that they could not fend for themselves they might marry their daughter to a 'poor' man who would then be prepared to live in with his wife's parents and assume the farming chores of the father-in-law. In that case the son-in-law would be released for the time being from the obligation to provide primary bridewealth goods.⁵

The son-in-law could also assist the wife's parents with loans, as I have indicated above. Some of these loans would in fact be regarded as gifts for which the wife's parents need not make a refund but others involving cattle loans would be accounted as part of the primary prestation of matrimonial goods.

There are numerous occasions for affines to acknowledge their relationship by exchange of small gifts, be it cooked food, millet beer as when a person meets his wife's kinsman in the market place, tobacco or kolanut. The son-in-law should visit his wife's parent to 'greet' them or enquire after their health. Though the wife's parents would visit their daughter and son-in-law less frequently they should do so when any of them is unwell. The host should provide the guest with a meal. I was informed that on no account should a son-in-law refuse any meal set before him nor should he fail to eat as much of the meal as is reasonably possible.⁶

Wherever son-in-law meets parent-in-law the former should show profound respect for the latter by adopting gestures that symbolise self abasement. A son is always expected to defer to the parent but the son-in-law should show even more reverence to the parent-in-law. A person who fails consistently to abase himself before the wife-giver would be regarded as disrespectful and might not gain the favour and sympathy of the wife-giver. It is of course important to have the wife-giver on the groom's side for when friction develops in the conjugal relationship his role is crucial in bringing about a resolution. Only an unwise man would exchange harsh words with his parent-in-law. In this

respect one of the extreme examples of negative reciprocity is to attempt to marry a woman who has once been wife to any member of the wife-giver lineage. This would constitute gross 'disrespect' of the wife-giver and would lead to a withdrawal of their daughter.

The Non-Collective Character of Contingent Prestations

A comparison of primary and non-primary marriage prestations shows that while in theory there is the possibility of refund on primary prestations when divorce occurs non-primary prestations of the type being discussed here are never refunded. This is partly because the non-primary prestations are intangibles - services, demonstration of courtesy and consumables destined for immediate use. These prestations are also numerous as well as more varied in nature making it impossible to keep account of them. The most bulky of them are the funeral prestation of livestock, food and grain but even these are not refunded when the marriage is dissolved.⁷ The difficulty of accounting for such prestations in a non-literate society is demonstrated in T.M. Aluko's *One Man One Wife*. In this novel (based on a Nigerian society) when matrimonial cases went before the Oba's court for adjudication it was the practice for the husband to over-value his numerous prestations and the wife and her kin to undervalue his gifts. The court in its wisdom struck a mean. But an important factor which should not be ignored is the fact that these prestations have a non-collective character. They are made by the son-in-law or on his behalf to the parent-in-law or anybody occupying the *locum parentis*. Most of them are often not witnessed. Primary prestations by contrast, are fewer in number, though each unit is of a higher value, and they are collective in character and therefore collectively witnessed. As I pointed out in Part I, the transactors of primary prestations are groups rather than individuals. The animals that change hands are group or quasi-collective goods. The wife-giver likewise is a lineage and what they receive become in some respects lineage property. Even the dead must be invoked by sacrificing some of the livestock received to them. Because the group emerges as wife-taker it retains some residual rights in *genetricum* and *uzorem* to the wives of agnates. Though the individual groom exercises these rights the collective right is exercised when the lineage reallocates sexual and other rights over widows.

In the case of the contingent prestations, such as provision of labour, these fall to the individual son-in-law and when requests are made they are passed directly to him without any need to use the offices of the marriage mediator. Likewise, when funeral information has to be conveyed it is sent directly to any responsible member of the son-in-law's family. Though the

son-in-law might obtain the livestock necessary for the funeral prestation from his own father the prestation is made by him and in his name or that of his wife. We should note however in this regard that just as private resources might be redesignated as group goods for the purpose of primary prestations so also is it possible for group resources to be designated as private for contingent prestations. Information provided by Rattray (quoted above) to the effect that the son-in-law could stop sending the annual prestation of grain to the mother-in-law as soon as children begin to be born, in my view, appears to portray the personal nature of contingent prestations. As an individual prestator the growth of his ego-centred domestic unit and its attendant responsibilities earns for the son-in-law the sympathy of the wife's parent and an unwillingness to bother him unduly.

The Meaning of Daughter's Husband

The personal character of contingent prestations needs to be remarked particularly in relation to the notion of generalised reciprocity. Marriage establishes personal as well as affinal ties between individuals. It could be argued that far from inducing the wife-giver to transfer residual rights, the Atoende Kusasi material suggests that contingent prestations should be seen from the perspective of the duties expected of a 'son'. This term is an 'odd job' word which designates several categories of relationship including biological kin, spouse and other sociological kin of the male filial generation. It is generally extended to others by sympathetic address or reference.

The parent-child relationship in the context of Upper Eastern societies implies reciprocities of the delayed kind. A parent is expected to make sacrifices which may affect his own immediate needs and creature comforts in order that the child might be assured of the material and non-material necessities for growth and development to mature adulthood. Parents are seen as having invested in their children, even if all that this involves is the initiation of the act of procreation by sexual intercourse.⁸ That investment would yield dividend when a person approaches old age, and though a person never retires completely unless incapacitated by illness, the availability of children and dependents, it is expected, should permit the aged to enjoy some leisure. Own children, those of immediate kin and the spouses of the offspring all have a contribution to make during the life-time of the parent. After death these categories of dependents contribute variously to the establishment of an ancestral cult. Thus the investment in children does not attract only material rewards. Children and dependents are the measure of ultimate success and even of personhood. The curtailment of funeral rites for those without offspring indicates conclusively

the social and religious significance of children. Failure to beget children eventually relegates the deceased to the status of a marginal person who should not be accorded full funeral rites and honours because society should be exorcised of his influence.

Between parent and child there is direct exchange which is not immediate but of the kind usually delayed over a generation. The reciprocity involved is not a balanced one and no strict reckoning is applied. The obligations involved are moral rather than contractual. Thus it is that parent and child have the opportunity to be 'good' or 'bad' parent and child respectively. For example, if the offspring fail to maintain the parent for whatever reason they might incur the censure of society; conversely, if they suffer hardships on behalf of the parent they get the acclaim of society. Either way their filial status does not usually suffer. Even the father's curse does not expunge the filial status although it may bring mystical retribution on the offspring. I reiterate the nature of the parent-child reciprocities to draw attention to their similarity to contingent prestations.

Contingent prestations furnish the son-in-law with the means for demonstrating his filial ties with the wife's parents. The transfer of the prime prestation cannot do this satisfactorily since it involves groups and not individuals and its transfer is the occasion for the symbolisation of group exclusiveness and the opposition of wife-giver to wife-taker groups. Contingent prestations emphasize solidarity, particularly between daughter's husband who by association with her becomes her male equivalent i.e. a 'son' to the wife's parent.

Men As Property

Contingent prestations can be said to point to the enrichment of family life which marriage based on exogamy brings about. Because virilocality is the rule of residence, after adolescence daughters change place of residence and their domestic services are lost to their own natal domestic groups. This is however compensated for by the importation of a daughter-in-law, as articulated in Levi-Strauss (1949/1969) where groups exchange women, the ultimate value. The notion of family life enrichment being introduced here points out that the exchange goes beyond women and includes men, and the contingent prestations provided by the son-in-law demonstrate this fact.

The notion of exogamous marriage practice implies that the groups exchange women but it may be asked, what benefits do the component cells that constitute these groups derive from exogamy? There can only be meaningful exchange where a wife is imported as a daughter is exported, and yet this is what does not often happen. The prime prestation is not usually regarded as equivalent to a woman in value, and the possession of the

requisite matrimonial goods does not imply that a woman can be imported immediately. The benefit of exogamy to the domestic group lies in the fact that they are able to obtain the matrimonial goods necessary for bringing in a woman to replace the daughter and that the daughter's husband is beholden onto the group. Thus a domestic group which is endowed with daughters but deficient in sons achieves a sexual balance when its girls are married out. Given that indigenous Upper Eastern societies were characterised by a division of labour according to sex, marriage could be said to restore a balance. The daughter-in-law provides feminine services and the son-in-law's contingent prestations are linked to his sex. There is therefore a sense in which marriage could be said to result in the sharing of the spouses between the two natal domestic groups of the couple.

The contributions of sons and sons-in-laws at mortuary and funeral occasions illustrate that both share in a filial relationship to the deceased. The duty of burial falls to the son and the son-in-law shares in it - even appropriates the arduous physical chores on his wife's behalf. When the final funeral rites are being performed the son is expected to demonstrate his filial piety by actions which verge on self destruction. He is expected especially to destroy his self-acquired wealth in honour of the deceased parent. The son-in-law is expected to match or exceed the son in this demonstration. If the burden of performing these services and material prestations falls heavily on the son-in-law it is because his contacts with the wife's parents are sporadic and episodic whereas those of the son are continuous.

Daughters as women are not expected to perform the services or contribute the material goods that count towards the contingent prestations. Preparation of the farm through weeding and hoeing are men's chores and this applies to animal husbandry and poultry keeping. The beginnings of private wealth stem from these activities. While the daughter is not expected to dig the grave because that is a male chore or provide livestock and money the son-in-law is not exempted because he has the means to meet these prestations. In similar circumstances daughters and daughters-in-law provide what may be regarded as complementary services. It falls to women to sit over the corpse between the moment of death and the time of burial. At the final funeral obsequies women as wives and daughters (*pogyablis*) provide culinary services. Women and men as daughters and sons and as daughters-in-law and sons-in-law make a very important contribution to a successful funeral. After all, the context of the funeral lays emphasis on the prestation of experience as a totality. The music, the dance, the rites, the various foods that are prepared and shared out, the jamporee of the last night of the period etc. all have a purpose and are an attempt to

enact the experience of the people as a final dramatic performance in the this-is-your-life vein. For the son-in-law the funeral provides an opportunity to 'fuss' over the deceased. In the context of the prestation of experience to the deceased, male and female involvement completes the sexual dyad without which we could not talk of a totality.

This is not to imply that the son-in-law spends his wealth in symbolic and pragmatic prestations for the deceased parent-in-law without misgivings. Informants have lamented the burden borne by the son-in-law in the form of the contingent prestations, especially as a man may often have to borrow from kin to be able to meet fully the funeral prestations. However, attention has been drawn to the fact that sons-in-law sometimes exceed the customary minimum. No less a person than the chief of Binaba himself, one of the most important chiefs in the area, had deplored the practice of carrying to the parent-in-law's funeral drums of local gin (Akpeteshie). Informants have also indicated that a son-in-law who genuinely lacks the necessary resources to make the sumptuous funeral prestation may be excused. Fortes (1949: 121) has shown that among the Tallensi the principal contribution made on the Kogbedaar day which is similar to some of the funeral prestations expected from sons-in-law in Atoende becomes a debt which could be discharged by the daughter's children if their father was unable to do so before his death. Even in this Tallensi case indebtedness provides for various ways of obtaining reprieve. The Kasena-Nankana however take a position that is similar to that of the Atoende Kusasi: the indigent son-in-law, I was told, may present a hoe and some tobacco, which is a token, as parent-in-law's funeral prestation instead of the customary sheep.

One distinction between 'son' and son-in-law both of whom are called upon to make prestations on the occasion of the parent's death and the performance of the final funeral obsequies lies in the fact that after the parent's death the son achieves social, jural and economic emancipation whereas the son-in-law's position might worsen as the check which the wife's father once exercised on the wife-giving group, because of his affection for his daughter and her children, is removed. A son-in-law may well find that after the death of the father-in-law the wife-giving group has become impatient and more intolerant of delays in the transference of the outstanding primary matrimonial goods. Correspondingly, the contingent prestations decline in quantity after the death of the wife's parents.

It could be concluded from what has been said here that the contingent prestations due to the parents-in-law stem largely from the position of the daughter's husband as a proxy son. This

notion may be represented as follows, using a scheme drawn from transformational linguistics.⁹

[-male]	[+male]		[-male]	[+male]	
[+lineal]	[-lineal]	/marriage ---	⇒	[+lineal]	[-lineal]
[+filial]	[-filial]		WP	[+filial]	[+filial]

Conclusions

The use of terms such as 'prime' and 'contingent' prestations is valuable as much as it makes the researcher to examine further the implications of matrimonial prestations. However they are unfortunate in seeming to allocate differential weight and importance and even temporal precedence to the respective prestations. The *haalakiaa* prestation among Sisala, Mendosa (Mendonsa) *op. cit.* shows, is a set of contingent prestations which precede the *hajarikiaa* or prime prestation. The latter is sometimes made post-mortem. Kusasi contingent prestations may precede or follow the primary prestation. In any case they are a life-long prestation but there are occasions when they peak. The Mossi case shows that there is either no 'prime' prestation or if there is any it is of negligible significance whereas contingent prestations are of more importance. Even where both prestations exist stress is sometimes laid on contingent prestations at the expense of prime prestations. This is what the following Kasena-Nankana proverb seems to allude to: 'A poor man marries by means of his feet'. The proverb stresses the value of sociological prestations exemplified by a show of respect and genuine display of helpfulness and constancy on the part of the son-in-law. Strathern (1980) raised a similar objection to Fortes' terminology and using Wiru and Melpa prestations he sought to demonstrate that contingent prestations are of more importance to these people. Though possession of four cattle, three or four sheep or ability to acquire them by independent means may suggest wealth for an individual among Atoende Kusasi, when informants were asked if personal wealth in material goods determined marriage chances seven people out of nineteen informants felt that luck and generosity were even more important. The chemistry of love is at times inexplicable and can only be accounted for by luck. A poor man without the necessary resources or kin willing to lend to him may yet retain his wife provided she loves him and will stick by him. Generosity likewise establishes friendships and quasi-kinship ties and in the final analysis kinship morality has a compelling force over transactors.

Footnotes

1. Among the Sisala the two reciprocal burial groups are the *vaidongo* and *nyinniaa*, Mendosa (1973: 43). Kasena-Nankana call them *Kwo bia*. This internal or intra-clan partnership is distinguished from extra-clan and even extra-ethnic *Kwo bia* partnerships which involve joking relations.
2. Among some Upper Eastern people such as the Kasena-Nankana, a parent's burial could be delayed for a day or two in expectation of the arrival of the eldest son or daughter. Kusasi might similarly postpone the burial ceremony but this requires verification. On the subject of the son-in-law's personal presence, Mr. Nachinaba of the Institute of African Studies (himself a Kusasi though not of the Atoende division) was of the view that sons-in-law arriving after the burial ceremony would be 'fined' and be made to offer presents of millet beer to the bereaved lineage.
3. NAG ADM 57/4/73.
4. I am aware that all this sounds like a description of Malinowski's (1922) Melanesian Kula but this is nevertheless the impression given me by informants including Mr. Nachinaba.
5. It might be argued that what we have here is co-habitation and not marriage. Fortes (1949: 124) discusses the prohibition on a married couple having sexual relations in the father-in-law's house and explains that "If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations". I am not sure where Atoende people stand on this issue but I was told of the prohibition on husband and wife meeting face to face on the path as she returns to the conjugal home. Tallensi have a similar prohibition which Fortes also associates with the prohibition on sexual relations in the father-in-law's house. I would however argue that marriage can exist without the primary prestations having been given, as long as the relationship is sanctioned and the husband has agreed to give the necessary matrimonial goods in future. The informant's reference to the case also supports the view that this is a marriage.
6. Kasena-Nankana attitudes differ somewhat. An affine is expected to leave a fair quantity of the meal uneaten. In expectation of this the affine will be given a very generous serving. In Kusasi the son-in-law offends his parents-in-law when he does not do justice to the meal set before him. The explanation lies perhaps in the feeling that a parent has the duty of 'feeding' the child and the latter the obligation to accept nourishment from the former. Thus failure to

eat a sufficient quantity of the parents-in-law's meal calls into question these alimentary rights and duties. The parents-in-law are perceived to be in loco parentis vis a vis the son-in-law.

7. Some Kasena-Nankana informants said a person was entitled to claim back on divorce any livestock he may have sent to the wife-giver as a mourning present while others indicated that this was not possible.
8. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife is regarded as a duty for both spouses. This is perhaps not surprising in view of the fact that traditionally sexual attraction was not the sole foundation of marriage life.
9. See Buchler and Selby (1968): 166-174) for a Transformational Analysis of Kinship data. In the scheme employed in this article WP means 'wife's parent', '-' means minus value, '+' positive value, = means marriage and /- means context or environment of

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