Some Aspects of Institutionalized Exchange: A Kanuri Example

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Some Aspects of Institutionalized Exchange:
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The relationship of the economy to other aspects of social relations in differing societies is a fundamental problem in the social sciences. Because of the semi-separate existence of economics and what appears to be its quantitative elegance, attempts to use it both across societies and across disciplines have been suggested in recent years. In applying it to other societies a common technique, and one that will not concern us in this paper, is the straightforward application of economic concepts and theories from the western world to a non-western economy. The level of analysis utilized is that of the national economy as a whole, and local social and cultural differences are not taken into account. Although recognized as potent factors in the creation of national economic indices, they are not vital to the national figures themselves. Whether government revenues, exports, imports, manufacturing outputs, interest rates, bank deposits etc. are in the U.S.A., England, or Nigeria, they are by their very nature measurable quantities whose relations to one another can be compared from one national economy to another. Whatever their faults as indices of societal economic growth, they do give us useful standards by which various countries can be compared. This does not imply, however, that they fully explain the economic growth that they describe. In order to accomplish this (especially in non-western areas) we must relate the local economic picture of production and consumption with all its attendant social and cultural features to that of the national level—

* A previous draft of this paper was read by George Dalton and Elizabeth Colson. Their comments and criticisms have been exceedingly helpful to me in my attempts to clarify some of the theoretical issues discussed here. This does not mean that they are necessarily in agreement with any particular theoretical position in this essay which remains the sole responsibility of the author. Fieldwork among the Kanuri (1955-1957) was financed by the Ford Foundation Area Training Program.
and for many areas of the world this is a task that still remains in the future (cf. Keyfitz 1959).

A second position is rooted in economics, but very much tempered by the data and theory of anthropology. This approach distinguishes between differing economic systems by classifying them in terms of the different kinds of social systems in which they are found. The focus is still the economy, but it is assumed that societies will vary in important ways and that there will be, concomitantly, important variations in the economic sector. The major variable in this approach is an economic one, that of market integration which varies from practically nil, in a society where all exchange is accomplished through reciprocal and/or redistributive exchanges, to almost total integration in which a purchaser can obtain almost everything he needs on the market because it is sold for a price in money terms, and money can serve as a measure of almost all exchange relations required in the society. Essentially such an idea is not a new one in anthropology, but Polanyi (1957) and more recently Bohannan and Dalton (1962), and Dalton (1964a) have systemized it into a theory for the description of differing economies. In the introduction to Markets in Africa Bohannan and Dalton delineate three types of African economies along a continuum of market integration and propose a set of correlates, both social and economic, that accompany each of the three.

The third and fourth approaches are basically sociological in their origins. One attempts to describe social relations as if they were a sort of economic system in which scarce means are allocated for the achievement of alternative ends. Homans (1958) and Goode (1960) represent this approach. Homans sees social behavior “as an exchange of goods, material goods but also non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval and prestige” (1958: 606). He feels that persons give and receive in social interaction in a manner consonant with a balance of exchanges. Finally he suggests that sociologists, as do all other persons, see their social relations as an economy, but they have failed to use this intuitive understanding when developing their theories. Goode (1960) takes this approach much further and describes demands made on a person because of the roles he plays, such that he is forced in the end to make decisions and “economize” among role demands. After admitting that in rigorous terms economic relations cannot be reduced to social relations or vice versa because propositions in one of these theoretical fields cannot be deduced from those in the other, he goes on to discuss “setting the role price in the role bargain,” “limitations on a free role bargain,” “the family as a role budget center,” and other varieties of interactive and inter-role “economizing.” The goal of such an approach seems to be that of
extending economic theory and concepts to include social relationships of all varieties.

Finally Parsons and Smelser (1956) contend several years before Goode (1960) that they have already established what he claims to be as yet impossible, namely the deductive transposability of economic concepts and relationships to those used by these authors in social theory. They claim to have demonstrated that “economic theory is a special case of the general theory of social systems” (1956: 306), and that economic processes in their details are simply specialized cases of more generalized social processes. Unlike Homans and Goode these authors do not use economic concepts to describe social action, instead they reverse the operation using sociological variables as the general categories of analysis. The authors claim that their concept of differentiating collectivities in which economic relations coincide or gradually differ with the other “functional sub-systems” (1956: 79) is a “far more sophisticated classification and dynamic analysis of comparative economic institutions than is possible at present” (1956: 84), and they promise to demonstrate this in their work during the next few years.

With such a variety of approaches available, it seems like a useful exercise to attempt a test of the utility of each. In order to accomplish this I have brought together data on traditional Kanuri exchange. The exchange of goods and services among the Kanuri operates through a variety of institutions, only one of which is the market place. It therefore becomes necessary to relate the semi-separate economic organization to that of other social relations used for a variety of purposes both economic and otherwise. In a highly differentiated society, the economy can easily be seen as a separate system and thus relations between economy and society are complex. In a highly undifferentiated society, such as that of a hunting and gathering band, all of the economic relations are embedded into the simple and highly diffuse role structure of the society. However, somewhere in between these two extremes, economy and society are overlapping so that they merge and separate from one another in an easily observable fashion. Some economic activities take place within truly differentiated commercial transactions, while others are embedded in household, political and religious organizations.

In what follows I have attempted to summarize what we know about Kanuri money in the 19th century, since it symbolizes the commercially differentiated exchange system. Then exchanges carried on outside the market place are described, and an assessment made of their importance in the society as a whole. After this presentation of the material, I will discuss the theoretical significance of the data in light of the various approaches available in this field.
CONTEXT: THE KANURI OF BORNU

The Kanuri of Bornu Province in northeastern Nigeria have been organized as a Muslim emirate in the Chad basin for many centuries. Their language classification by Greenberg (1954), early Arabic scholars, and their own chronicles (Cohen 1964a), supports the notion of their continuity in the region, with possible origins somewhere to the northeast of their present habitat. The pre-colonial emirate maintained continual contact with the Maghreb during its long history as an organized state.

In the 19th century, as indeed in the 20th, the society was supported by a peasant economy with semi-specialized craft production and a well developed system of internal and external trade. The peasant economy can be divided into three analytically distinct activities: (1) subsistence farming, primarily millet and guinea corn, supplemented by maize, beans, squashes, cucumbers, groundnuts, and onions, (2) production of any of the latter items for the market (replaced today by an emphasis on groundnuts as a cash crop), and (3) a dry season non-farming activity connected with the market. Market activities are in turn divided into craft work, sales of agricultural surpluses, and a complex middleman trade between markets. There is today, a large variation in dependence upon producing for the market as against subsistence agriculture for obtaining total income, and this seems to have been the case in the last century as well. Market places were spread across the entire state and indeed across the whole of the west and central Sudan into the Sahara. Usually there were weekly markets held in interlocking cycles so that in any one sub-region a trader could attend markets in nearby towns on successive days of the week. In larger towns, especially Kukawa the capital of Bornu, a smaller market was held every day where quantities of goods were smaller and prices a little higher than in the weekly ones. In the larger towns too, there were strangers' quarters for traders from other parts of the Sudan and the Maghreb, and although as Boahen (1962) has shown, the trans-Saharan trade diminished throughout the century, it continued to operate up to the first few years of the British occupation of Northern Nigeria, when Lugard and his colonial administration faced Nigerian trade southward away from the desert.

MONEY IN 19th CENTURY BORNU

In 19th century Bornu there was a plethora of objects reportedly used as “currency” in commercial transactions. Beads, coral, amber, coarse linen rolls (Denham and Clapperton Vol. 1: 85), boomerang
shaped iron plates, silver dollars (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 17), bullocks (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 36), slaves (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 156), cowries1 (Barth Vol. II: 185), and iron bracelets are all mentioned as having been objects that could be used to obtain a variety of other objects in the market places. There seems to have been exchange rates between at least some of these items such that one could be translated into some of the others. Thus in the 1820’s depending upon the quality of the cloth, four to five rolls of cotton (gabaga) approximately $3' \times 3' \times 36'$ were called a roll or rotalla, a measure that is supposed to refer to a pre-19th century medium of exchange in copper (either chunks or discs, —the stories vary). Ten roll (i.e. forty to fifty gabaga or rolls of cotton) were equal to one silver dollar or gursu (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 156). The latter was either Austrian, Spanish, or Arabic make, but the Austrian was preferred and can still be seen in Bornu today and purchased at about 7/6 per gursu. Three to four dollars were equivalent to one bullock (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 149) and for thirty to forty bullocks one could purchase a slave or for 100-150 a good horse (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 36). Either the price went up or the market was entirely different but thirty years later Barth (Vol. II: 315) notes that a really good horse cost as high as 300 dollars. Other Kanuri referred to an equivalence of one slave for a copper kettle from North Africa (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 156) and three packages of iron plates, ten to twelve plates per package for a dollar (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 311-313). Cowries came to Bornu sometime between 1820 and 1850 and were rated at eight cowries to the cotton roll and thirty-two to the roll. Thus from 1820 to 1850 the standard of four rolls to the roll was maintained. In the same passage Barth describes the cowrie and roll as standard measures as well as the “shirt” or item of men’s clothing. Each variety of men’s clothes from the meanest at six roll to the most expensive at fifty or sixty roll could be used to buy its equivalent amount of other things in the market. He notes, again in the same passage, that the relation of the roll to the dollar (Austrian) fluctuated with the political situation. If a leading political figure such as Haj Bashir, one of the chief advisers to the Shehu (ruler of Bornu), had collected large amounts of cowries as tributes and wanted dollars, he simply dumped his cowries and the increase in supply often sent the price down as low as 45 roll (1,440 cowries), while at other times

1. Clapperton (Denham and Clapperton Vol. II: 220) reported that cowries were not used in Bornu, but in travelling from Bornu to Kano cowries could be used and obtained after leaving Bornu at Katagum. East of Katagum cowries were not accepted in the markets; the traveller was expected for the most part to use cloth rolls and bullocks.
the price of dollars would rise as high as 100 roll (3,200 cowries).

The use of the word "dollars" tends to blur our analysis by giving a superficial impression that Bornu currency was in fact very similar to our own. However, many people in the society did not use these currencies interchangeably. Barth (Vol. II: 312) complains that a small farmer bringing his grain for sale at the market in Kukawa, the capital of 19th century Bornu, would not on any account accept cowries, and only very rarely would he take dollars. If he had only dollars, the purchaser must exchange these for cowries, then exchange cowries for a man's robe and with the robe begin to barter for grain. Since Barth was a high status person who should not go too often to the market, at least for ordinary household purchases, and since he comments further on this point that his servants would often return exhausted not only because of the heat but also because there was "not at present any standard money for buying and selling" (Vol. II: 310), we can assume that this was not simply due to his being a stranger in the city. The fact that the farmer would not accept cowries under any circumstances is an interesting point and leads us not only to an explanation of this event but towards a wider understanding of all Kanuri "money."

Cowries came very late to Bornu and of all the monies mentioned in historical accounts, it is the most bulky and the only item that had no other use other than as a medium of exchange. I suggest that it was these two reasons, especially the latter, that kept this object out of general use in Bornu for so long and which explains the origins of the other media of exchange. In the case of the other items mentioned so far, all had some intrinsic value in use to the owner and their use as money developed as a result of a widely understood and accepted value placed upon their exchangeability, usually earmarked for some special kinds of trade. Beads, coral, bullocks, cloth, robes, especially rolls of cloth and robes were widely accepted as commodities for which there was always some need among the population in or out of the market place. (Fancy or expensive robes might have a limited upper class market, while a very poor quality robe could not be traded beyond the lower classes). However, cloth from which any item of clothing could be made obviously had a more generalized appeal and was indeed used widely across the Sudan. The bulkiness of cowries had the defect of making them easily seen by tax collectors and inconvenient for the travelling merchant.

The use of any of the several monies was limited by the specialized needs of some of the trading relations in Bornu. The best examples of this point are from the trade from Mandara to Bornu, and the slave trade across the desert. It was no use offering a North African trader rolls of cotton for his armor, silks, perfumes, horses, clothing
or swords. He had come for slaves. Thus the accepted form of payment to the trans-Saharan trader was in slaves. If this was impossible, there were a few other items, small quantities of which they would accept such as Bornu-written Korans, leather goods, ostrich feathers and so on. If none of these items were acceptable, then silver dollars that were used on the Barbary coast were resorted to. Kanuri traders going southeast to Mandara, went especially to obtain iron goods. To be paid in anything else defeated the purpose of the trade. Hoes, axes, spearheads, bracelets, and armlets were sometimes accepted, but the raw material itself was of more general value, since Bornu blacksmiths could turn it into whatever was required by local demand. Thus for this trade the packages of ten to twelve boomerang shaped iron plates became the main item of payment by Mandara peoples for Bornu goods or goods that had been imported to Bornu from other parts of Africa. Wherever there was specialized trading, the development of a general currency seems to have been restricted. Thus the same sort of thing took place between traders and producers of specific crops. The traders would offer a variety of goods, but accept only the specialty, and in this area of the kingdom the specialized product tended to become a general medium of exchange. More examples could be given, but enough has been said to make the point that money-stuff in Bornu was not all-purpose money. It was used in commercial transactions, but was limited by the nature of the trade itself.

Reciprocity and Redistribution

The other reason why money use was restricted was the large amount of economic activity that remained outside of the marketplace, embedded instead in the socio-political structure of the society. Some of this activity was reciprocal, that is to say the transactions involved obligations of gift-giving and counter gift-giving. Most of the economic activity within the social and political organization was of the redistributive variety. In this activity higher status persons distribute goods and services after having received gifts, services and tributes delivered to them by political subordinates. In Bornu, reciprocal and distributive payments can easily overlap within the same event, but can always be distinguished by the status differences, real, imagined, or hoped for, between givers and receivers.

A good example of this overlap occurs at the nzia, a ceremony associated with all rites de passage with the exception of funerals. A number of informants asserted that nzia ceremonies could even be held if an individual, like the anthropologist, attended many ceremonies but held none of his own to which people could come and
Ronald Cohen

discharge the obligations incurred by his previous attendance at their nzia ceremonies. During this traditional event, drummers beat out rhythms and the person for whom the nzia is held sits in stony silence while a caller shrieks out the exact amount of each gift. Often a person will come forward to deliver his own gift, and then deliver one from a friend or neighbor who could not attend. People of the same social rank remember what they themselves gave to neighbors, relatives and friends, and expect an approximately equivalent amount in return. Since material objects can be purchased in the market (and/or bartered for traditionally), standard equivalences are widely known for any local area. For example, A might have come three months ago to B’s nzia and given a chicken, later B attends A’s ceremony and gives between one and two shillings, or between one and two shillings’ worth of millet, or groundnuts, or sugar, or several small items that add up to that same amount. People of lower status give less and expect less in their turn, unless they have a superior-subordinate client relationship with the person giving the nzia. However, all persons of superior status to the nzia giver should give more than they receive. This is especially true of political leaders who must give because of their status and not necessarily because they have received gifts for similar reasons in the past. This redistributive quality becomes obvious in the case of persons hoping to be known as upwardly mobile. They try to give more than they receive, including in their generosity persons from whom they have never received anything in the past. In this way they try to equate themselves with the socially prominent. If they have the capital to do this, it is considered a good thing. If they do not, and give more than they receive and to more people, they are dubbed wujirma or “spendthrift”, which is a derogatory term for a Johnny-come-lately hoping for upward mobility. Although wujirma translates as spendthrift, it means literally “a man who goes to many ceremonies”—more in fact than he is required to through his normal social relational network. This brief description indicates that in the nzia, unequal giving is part of the redistributive system, whilst equal or approximately equal returns involve giving and counter-giving between persons in reciprocal exchanges in a social relational network.

The most important form of redistribution in 19th century Bornu was based upon goods and services given to superiors in the political and social system. The state was organized into a large number of fragmented fiefs of varying sizes under a fief-holder who lived in the capital. Once a year, through an elaborate hierarchy of subordin-

1. A fief is here defined as a political unit within a state, over which a superior has rights of tribute collection and political leadership (not necessarily exclusive rights) given to him by his, or his ancestors’, relationship to a monarch.
iates, he collected revenues in kind or in some locally accepted item of exchange from his holdings and in this way supported his large households in the capital and sent gifts to the monarch (Shehu). The Emir or Shehu, as nominal owner of the land, also collected a tithe on all crops throughout the kingdom. These revenues were distributed by the nobles and the monarch to their own followers. Informants reported as many as 1,000 robes being given by the king to various members of the court on ceremonial occasions, and this same observation was made by Denham in the 1820's (Denham and Clapperton Vol. I: 261):

"The twelfth day of the new moon, which was the 17th of the month was a day of general feasting and rejoicing. Garments, according to the estimation in which the giver holds the receiver, are distributed by all great people to their followers: the sheikh (Shehu) gave away upwards of a thousand robes (robes), and as many bullocks and sheep."

Another form of redistribution resulted from warfare. After a victorious battle in which the men of the opposing side either fled or were killed, their wives, children and any valuable property they had were all taken. Cattle, women and children were brought to the leader of the campaign who kept a large portion of the booty for himself, and then distributed the rest to his leading followers, who in their turn kept some, and distributed portions to their own followers. Slaves taken on such expeditions were among the chief assets used by political leaders in obtaining import goods from the trans-Saharan trade.

It is in interpersonal relations, however, that the most illuminating and theoretically significant features of Bornu socio-economic life come to light. The basic unit of Kanuri social organization is the compound. It is a domestic unit that may go through a series of phases in cycle, an economic unit, and a political one as well. Starting with a couple who ideally live near the compound of the husband's father, father's brother(s), or male sibling(s) of the husband, the household can develop through the addition of wives, children, clients, son's wives and children, adopted children, returned divorced women and/or their children, and an aging mother of the compound head. This organization can easily grow into a series of closely linked neighboring households that have split off from the original, and if successful they can come to resemble a ward of the town with the senior male as the ward head. The household is and was traditionally the basic political unit, whether or not the cycle completes itself (so that from one original couple an expanding ward is created). Compound heads are the authoritative leaders of the compound, and each relates the individuals in the residence to higher echelons in the political hierarchy.
Indeed, the entire political system in its basic outlines was (and still is to a large extent) a series of links between household heads, from the monarch right down to the lowliest peasant. To obtain a powerful position in the 19th century political organization of Bornu, a person had to be attached to one of the important households of the titled nobles. Even today this is still considered an advisable route for recruitment into the political hierarchy.

In the economy, each household had usufruct rights to some of the land around the village granted by hereditary claims or by the village head. A person who cleared new land paid a fee to the village head, who shared it with the local representative of the fief-holder. Each household had at least one non-agricultural economic activity either in craft-work or in trade. Membership in these occupations and the acquisition of technical training necessary for their practice was obtainable only through households. Thus a man who wished to become a trader but had none in his own family sought out—or often his father or older brother sought out—someone who was in this occupation. The recruit was then placed in the new compound, learned the new skill and made the social contacts necessary for him to enter the occupation.

Most Kanuri would probably have maintained this system through time by use of the principles of descent as a recruitment device, and thus Ego would have obtained his potential position and his economic roles in the society as these were ascribed to him at birth. In other words, the occupation would have followed descent lines. Indeed, this is true today for many Kanuri. However, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Cohen: 1964b), all of Kanuri history has been punctuated by episodes of uncertainty, famine, wars, military services to the state, and by an awareness of the possibilities of social mobility which have always been present in the society. People have always been forced to acknowledge that social relationships, even those of kinship, may not be permanent and, more importantly, not the most necessary for personal security and advancement. Divorce always has been a frequent occurrence in Bornu (Cohen: 1961) so that nuclear family cohesion and persistence is not highly predictable, and although compound life is comparatively more secure, it has always been possible to change compounds. Even if this involves changing a membership in a viriloclal residence association to one in which Ego is a client-subordinate, the advantages may be very great for the individual doing the moving. The clientship may mean that the new compound head is a powerful political or economic leader of the state, thus furthering Ego's chances for advancement. Parents often foster such moves by naming a child after a "great" man so that the child may possibly become a protégé of this person later in life and be taken into his compound.
For these reasons, Kanuri compounds have always involved non-kin members who are subordinates of the compound head; if they are of non-slave backgrounds, they are called tada njima, "sons of the house," and they refer to the compound head as their aba njima, "father of the house." The mode of interaction is that taught to a child as the proper relationship between a father and his son. Later this bərzum relationship is shown to the young child, but most especially to boys, to be the thing that must be used between himself and all superiors. He is told that his koranic teacher surpasses his father in "fatherliness," as does his chief, and the Emir surpasses all. To all of these supervisors he must use some aspects of bərzum or discipline-respect.

The relationship has three chief components, each of which adds to the depth of the interaction. First there are simply superficial outward signs of respect shown by all socially inferior persons to higher status persons. In speaking Kanuri, the socially inferior must greet the superior "upward," while the superior returns the greeting "downward." Secondly there is the act of visiting a superior at his compound, or paying one's respects. Here the inferior goes to the house of the superior and gives him nona or respectful visiting. This may be purely formal or it may be the beginning of a deeper interaction desired by one or both of the parties which is the third component. This last quality is called aman, "trust." Even when ascribed by birth into a kinship unit, aman must be continually validated through reciprocal services provided by each of the parties to the relationship, even when these involve a real father and son. The superior, whether a real father or not, must provide a position in the community for the subordinate, which he does by associating the subordinate to his compound. He represents the subordinate to the political hierarchy, accompanies him to adjudication procedures, helps him to get a wife, land, a non-agricultural economic pursuit, and gives him food, clothing and shelter. In return the subordinate must give the compound head loyalty and obedience, run messages for him, cut grass for his horse (if there is one), tend his sheep, work on his fields, fix his fences around the compound, and never discuss the secrets of the compound with anyone outside the organization of the compound. Again, these are the ideal ingredients of the father-son relationship. However, these features actually operate better, i.e. more ideally, in the client

1. In a 1957 sample of seventy-five rural peasant households taken from three towns of Magumeri District, there were twenty-seven households (36%) that included one or two adult males over fifteen years of age with the status of tada njima. The average household size was 3.9 persons. Upper class households, not included in this sample, are much larger and often include many more tada njima.
relationship because the only thing holding the superior and subordinate together is *aman*. In other words, only the satisfactory nature of the goods and services exchanged or the promise of such satisfaction can maintain a non-kin relationship. A son can take much more from his father and vice versa than either would take from a stranger. Even so, sons do leave their fathers in Bornu, and always have, to seek new "fathers" because they feel their own parent was not giving them enough for their services. Indeed, ambitious parents sometimes initiate this movement. The biological link is never forgotten, but its social and cultural components are utilized for more general purposes.

Judging by what informants have said in Bornu, and by evidence of the mobility resulting from warfare, slave-raiding, famines, etc., as well as by evidence of the heights to which non-kin clients could rise (even if they were slaves), this custom seems to be an ancient and important one in Bornu society. Naturally, if the client is, or was, an extremely able one and moves into a long term relationship of trust, he may even marry one of his superior's daughters, thus creating a kinship link where none had existed. Again, if the relationship is successful, there is a tendency for it to become hereditary, so that members of one descent group become more permanently associated as subordinate or potential subordinates from among whom the most worthy are chosen for closer association.

To a Kanuri living in Bornu the most valuable "asset" economically, politically, and socially, is not dollars, or bullocks, or money-stuff of any kind. Rather it is valuable and profitable social relations, and this means primarily, *börzum* relations. Social status is judged on a number of counts (Cohen: 1959; Rosman: 1959), but perhaps the most important one is the number of people who are dependent upon you and subordinate to you. A European trader once asked me what would happen if he skipped middlemen and went into the rural areas to give credit to small local traders. I asked Kanuri friends about it, to corroborate my own views. They all said that the local traders would spend little of the extra money or income on capital investments and expanded economic activities. Most of the money would be used to strengthen and enlarge compound membership and therefore power by gaining extra wives, supporting kinsmen and clients. These would in turn increase the political, economic and social status of the person providing the financial support. As the head of a well-to-do compound in Bornu, men would often come to me and call me father, then ask to join my compound; or they would ask for an initial gift, usually clothing, in order to begin thinking of themselves as potential clients who could now begin giving me *börzum*.

The point being made here is that the most widespread "cur-
Many authors have commented on the phenomenon of kanuri exchange with varying degrees of intensity and support. For instance, Denham and Clapperton (Vol. I: 261) remark upon the phenomenon of more gifts being received by some than others, which can be explained by the fact that some persons had given greater man, the working ingredient of borzum, obtained more gifts in return.

**Conclusions**

The conclusions to be drawn from this analysis can now be summarized:

1. Traditionally, Bornu had market-places in which goods were purchased and exchanged. This indicates that Kanuri society exhibited some degree of differentiation and specialized productivity, as well as widespread demand for many goods not produced by each consumer unit.

2. The Kanuri had, traditionally, many forms of money objects but no overall general purpose money. Each money object had definite limitations to its use within the sphere of commercial transactions.

3. It was not a market-integrated society as this term has been defined by Polanyi (1957) and Dalton (1964a). This evaluation results from the fact that a very significant amount of the distribution of goods and services took place outside the market place in (a) reciprocal and (b) redistributive exchanges.

4. These non-market exchanges utilized discipline-respect (borzum) as the basic means by which exchanges could be accomplished in the all-important redistributive sector of the society.

**Discussion.**

Bornu was a peasant society (Dalton 1964b). Trade and the market place were important, and money objects have been described that did not, however, cover all of the important exchanges of goods and services carried out in the society; in other words, money was limited in this applicability. Except for cowries, all other objects were accepted within the area or locality of their use as valuable objects of consistent demand. They had differentiated price ranges, but so do all monies. We in our society do not think of buying a car with dimes and nickels. This simply reflects the complexity of Bornu.

1. George Dalton (personal communication) is dubious about using the word currency in this sense since it has such a traditional and complex place in economic thought. He suggests that I replace it with the phrase "source of a stream of materials and other transfers." See later in this paper for a discussion of this point.
society and the variability of price range to be found in its market places.

In light of the theories alluded to at the beginning of this paper, how can these facts be interpreted, and what light do they shed on the theories? Before venturing into the discussion, it should be noted that the presentation utilizes some of the Polanyi concepts such as reciprocity and redistribution, and in line with the perspectives of that approach, the material has been presented from the point of view of the economy. This is due simply to the fact that these are among the most convenient labels available to the ethnographer in describing such phenomena. Although this may bias our evaluation of the theories, it should be remembered that in a society like that of the Kanuri, the exchange of goods and services is handled both in a commercial market place and in the socio-political structure. Thus terms used to describe either sector may possibly be extended to describe those in the other. This should counteract the bias.

In the sociological position taken by Homans (1958) and Goode (1960) economic terms are used to describe social phenomena. Applying such a perspective to the Kanuri material would justify using the word "currency" to describe discipline-respect (\textit{barzum}). To pave the way for such a conception we have to define currency as any standardized action by an actor that could be utilized to obtain a series of goods and services. Objects used in such responses would tend to be forms of payment which result (a) from a standardized exchange in which only one object (like slaves or iron in Bornu) is considered acceptable, or (b) from the widely known and broadly based demand for such objects (like cloth in Bornu). On the other hand, the social organization may be such that some important exchanges lie outside the range of applicability of the money stuff. In Bornu the \textit{barzum} response is the best example of this type of exchange, although reciprocal exchanges such as those of the \textit{nzia} ceremonies use yet another mode of exchange, that of mutual obligations based on common membership in a relational network. In a modern western civil service known to the writer, payments of money for valued services or goods would be illegal corruption, therefore persons must use their administrative skills and the common value system of the bureaucracy to trade for things they require. In one case two division heads are reported to have traded in office space because this is an item representing success and is in consistent high demand. In other words, new media of exchange are possible even in the complex market-integrated economies with their all-purpose monies.

It can be seen that this sociological position leads to the proposition that there are in society a number of possible currencies. Some of these will be objects or things, others may be role attributes. In
overall theoretical terms this proposition opens up an avenue of flexibility in our view of society, since any phenomena, as long as it is generally valued, can be used to obtain goods and services through negotiated exchanges. This should be true no matter what the level of complexity of the society, and thus can be used to explain such institutionalized (and often non-monetary) exchange as "paying one’s political debts." Using this approach we unify the social and economic, and carrying it forward would mean comparing in detail those societies or institutions that have more or less material as opposed to non-material "currencies."

Using the Parsons and Smelser approach, we would describe Kanuri society as one in which the "functional collectivities" had differentiated, but were still overlapping in important respects. Since there is some differentiation expressed in specialized production and also in import commodities, there is a concomitant "need" for a means of transfer which points towards market places and money-stuffs. However, because the society has not fully differentiated its "functional sub-systems" there are important exchanges predictable in the social sphere, in this case (a) reciprocal exchanges within a social relational network, and (b) redistributive exchanges within the socio-political hierarchy. Using such a theory we could also predict that those forces which produce tendencies towards differentiation and specialization will also produce tendencies away from exchanges within social organizations utilized for other purposes, and towards transfers based on money-stuffs. It should be noted that this position does not predict the possibility of non-monetary exchanges developing at more complex levels as does the one above.

The model set up by Bohannan and Dalton (1962: 7-9, 16) produces the most detailed theory. According to this theory the Kanuri should be classified as having a peripheral market economy. Coming under such a classification Kanuri society is hypothesized (by type) to have the following characteristics:

1. Market sales are not the dominant sources of material livelihood. This is correct for the Kanuri.
2. Producers are "target" marketeers—engaging in marketing to achieve specific goals, often sporadically. This does not apply to Kanuri who are regular marketeers.
3. Market places are visited to obtain special (often import) items. This is correct for the Kanuri.
4. Prices are affected by a variety of social factors. This is not true in the market place where supply and demand hold sway, but would be true of other kinds of exchanges.
5. Prices do not affect future production of the things priced. I have no systematic data on this point. I have asked potters and blacksmiths
about it, and they agree that price has very little effect on production. However, cultivators do make decisions about acreage to be devoted to cash crops as opposed to subsistence crops and take price very much into account.

(6) Monies are not all purpose and there are moneyless transactions. This, as we have seen, applies to the Kanuri.

(7) External trade is administered; it also takes the form of gifts, and market places are used for foreign trade. All of these statements apply to the Kanuri as predicted, except for that concerning gifts which although they occurred traditionally do not seem to have been very important to external trade.

Except for a few points, this theory has predicted with far greater depth of detail than any of the others and thus for the present purposes may be said to be the most successful. This is not surprising, when it is realized that the type discussed above came out of an inductive study of a number of African economies, whilst the other theories have not been submitted to this kind of refinement.

The fact that a few of the associated qualities of the type were not applicable is an interesting difficulty, and leads to a few questions. Why are the factors predicted to be present actually there to a marked degree? How can we get from one of the types to another, i.e. how do we get from the marketless economies to peripheral market ones or to market-integrated ones? This question can be stated more dynamically in the terms of Parsons and Smelser viz. how do the collectivities differentiate? Here it should be realized that types can be transposed into dynamic or processual models by simply taking their major characteristic and using it as a dependent variable while looking for a significant set of independent variables. In the present case, the degree of market integration in the society seems like the best place to start. The seven qualities associated with peripheral markets above are not general enough in their applicability to become the major factors in a theory of differentiation. These would much more likely be such old familiar things as the division of labor, the geographical setting, the technology, the degree of centralized government, the numbers and size of a (materially) non-productive group, the extent of external trade, and others of this ilk. The interesting point, not brought out in any of the approaches except that of Homans and Goode should be noted as well, i.e. that the continuum from non-differentiated to differentiated, or from marketless through peripheral markets to market integration, involves a constant tendency along the way for exchange relations to develop outside the commercial sector as that sector is defined by the society itself, no matter what the degree of market integration.

The above evaluation leads to the conclusion that not one but
several sets of ideas available at present will be required in producing a good theory of comparative economics. This present analysis has shown that each approach has something to contribute, even if the Polanyi concepts have proven so far to be the most predictive. However, it is my belief that the other approaches, especially that of Parsons and Smelser indicate that a proper theory of comparative economics will not become available until we have a well-tested and documented body of data and theory on the evolution of human societies and their cultures.

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