Women and Men, Cloth and Colonization : The Transformation of Production-Distribution Relations among the Baule (Ivory Coast).
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Résumé
M. Etienne — Femmes et hommes, pagnes et colonisation : la transformation des relations de production et de distribution chez les Baule de Côte d’Ivoire. La production, chez les Baule, est fondée sur la division sexuelle du travail. L’époux considéré comme ayant l’initiative d’une production, ou comme ayant fourni la matière première, est « propriétaire » du produit et, une fois les besoins familiaux satisfaits, en assure la distribution — quitte, le cas échéant, à y faire participer son conjoint. Les femmes cultivent le coton et le filent et donc, bien que les tisserands soient des hommes, contrôlent la circulation des pagnes. En raison de la valeur de prestige de ces pagnes, qui les soustrait au circuit de l’économie de subsistance, les hommes ont intérêt à acheter du fil hors du groupe de production conjugal ; mais, puisque les producteurs sont des femmes, la relation demeure du même ordre. La colonisation a provoqué la dislocation de ce type de relation, notamment en introduisant la fabrication industrielle des textiles, la culture commerciale du coton et d’autres denrées, ainsi que l’économie de marché. Les pagnes artisanaux restent une marchandise de prestige mais peuvent être désormais fabriqués par les hommes, avec des filés industriels. Le commerce des pagnes industriels est également entre leurs mains puisque, grâce aux cultures commerciales — auxquelles participent les femmes —, ils disposent du capital nécessaire. Les ouvrières des filatures et des tissages contribuent ainsi doublement à leur propre aliénation. Elles sont désormais placées dans une relation de dépendance et non plus d’interdépendance.

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The Baule are a population of about one million occupying some 35,000 square kilometers in the center of the Ivory Coast, beyond the pale of precolonial Islamic penetration from the north, well inland from the coast and marginal to West African kingdoms and major trade routes. We know little about their origin, except that it was very heterogeneous: an autochthonous population that had a well-developed neolithic culture, Senufo and Guro elements, perhaps others, and finally Akan immigrants, the first we know of from Denkyera and then, toward 1730, from Ashanti. The Akan, sometimes by conquest, sometimes peaceably, assimilated—or were assimilated by—the previous occupants. They failed in their attempts to constitute—or reconstitute—a State. Effective centralization of authority was limited in scope and short-lived; political formations were subject to rapid change; stratification was multi-directional and therefore never clearly defined or rigidly established.¹

Because neither the coast nor the hinterland were easily accessible, we have no eyewitness accounts of Baule society before the end of the nineteenth century (Weiskel 1976: 358). After the French officer Marchand conquered Tiassalé, a Baule-controlled trading post on the southern border, and penetrated the hinterland in 1893, colonial conquest...

* Where specific references are not given, the source of my data is personal fieldwork among rural Baule of the Bouaké region (villages of Abouakro, Andobo-Alluibo, Diamelassou and Ngatakro) from September 1962 through December 1963 and among urban Baule of the Abidjan-Port-Bouet neighborhood from December 2, 1974 through April 5, 1975. Urban fieldwork was supported by grant no 3067 from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.

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¹ For basic and detailed data on Baule history and political organization, cf. Ph. & M.-A. de Salverte-Marmier & P. Etienne (1965); Ph. de Salverte-Marmier (1965). For further historical research and/or concerning the problem of stratification, cf. J.-P. Chauveau (1972a, 1972b, 1973); T. C. Weiskel (1976). T. C. Weiskel (ibid.), referring to 'the Baule peoples', particularly questions the criterion of linguistic unity and suggests the Baule do not exist as a precolonial socio-political entity. The question is important, but does not affect my analysis of production relations.
was actively pursued. The last armed resistance was overcome only in 1911. In 1912 the railroad reached Bouaké, in the heart of Baule country, now the second largest town in Ivory Coast.

In spite of their conquests and their resistance to colonization, the Baule do not appear as a people of warriors. Farming was and still is the essential productive activity; hunting, although secondary, was more important in the past. Crafts, now marginal, were essential in pre-colonial times and cotton cloth production was particularly important. Uncultivated vegetable fibers were used for certain purposes (baskets, mats, etc.) and bark cloth was used for bedding. Its continuing ritual importance as a gift from husband to mother-in-law ‘to replace the mat her daughter wet as a baby’ may be a reminder of earlier times, but we find no clear evidence, as we do for other peoples, of a time when the Baule went unclothed or wore only bark cloth or raphia.

Marriage seems always to have been characterized by considerable freedom of choice, even in cases of childhood betrothal; there was no bridewealth, but only brideservice and symbolic gifts, primarily of consumable goods. Descent, in the past as in the present, was cognatic, although inheritance of wealth, including captives, and of positions of authority was generally matrilineal. Because of the cognatic principle, group membership was indeterminate and depended both on the informal power relationship between maternal and paternal kin and on individual choice. It also depended very much on women, who, as mothers, tended

2. According to A. Deluz Godelier (1967: 82), the Baule acknowledge having learned the art of weaving from the Guro. Considering the heterogeneity of Baule origins and the history of both peoples, this observation cannot be taken at its face value and would require information on the origin of informants.

I have no quarrel with R. Boser-Sarivaxévans (1969, 1972a, 1972b) concerning the origins of weaving and dyeing techniques, with her hypothesis (1972a: 209) that seventeenth-century cloth which was traded to the coast was not Baule but came from further north, or with her suggestion (1969: 190; 1972a: 190-191) that cloth worn by the Baule was not necessarily made by them. Her systematic questioning of the identity of specimens that, by her own statement, can be no later than late nineteenth or early twentieth century (1969: 167-170, 189-190; 1972a: 13; 1972b: 53), however, as well as her suggestion that Baule weaving did not exist or was unimportant even in the immediate post-conquest period (1972a: 191) contradict both history and ethnographic observation. Notably, she does not take into account the presence of Mandingo elements in central Ivory Coast and constant movement of individuals and groups. However this may be, it seems likely that, at least in the eighteenth century, both the population present in Baule country and the Akan immigrants knew weaving and indigo dyeing and that these techniques, if not the most refined techniques of tie-dyeing, were the domain of all individuals, not simply practiced by specialists or foreign elements.

3. Young women legitimately could — and did — reject the man they had been betrothed to as a child. An exception to the general rule concerning bridewealth occurred in one type of marriage sometimes practiced by the wealthy and noble (P. & M. Etienne 1971: 172-173) and in marriage with members of neighboring patrilineal societies.

Captives, a term I prefer to ‘slaves’, were numerous and important in Baule society. They were to all appearances assimilated through marriage and were never a separate caste or class, but their status was transmitted matrilineally and, in the matriline, was never lost. It is still visible both in matrimonial strategy and in the transmission of wealth (inheritance).
to determine de facto group membership of children by attaching them to the domestic group with which they themselves elected residence.

These structural factors seem to have played a decisive role in determining the autonomy and mobility that are still characteristic of Baule people in general and Baule women in particular. Correlative with this autonomy and mobility we find, between women and men, juniors and elders, no indication of clearly established relationships of subordination-domination and no mechanisms whereby husbands or elders could systematically appropriate the surplus production of wives or juniors, although in practice they might sometimes profit by it. (Even captives—at least the captive-born as opposed to those newly acquired—could control property during their lifetime.) The obligation to increase the sacred treasure of the kin group could perhaps have served such a purpose; it seems however to have weighed most heavily on the kin-group head and those who hoped to succeed to this position.

Land, the source of all subsistence, was available to all and all were subsistence producers, but durable wealth, especially in the form of gold and cloth, was important. Moreover, not only was there local barter of subsistence products and ritual exchange of prestige goods, both among the Baule and with neighboring societies, but there were forms of trade that can be defined as commodity exchange in the context of a non-capitalist society. To control distribution of a product therefore could have real economic implications in this commodity sector, not merely prestige value, as would theoretically be the case if production were only for subsistence use and ritual exchange.

This, very schematically, is the context of an analysis that will attempt to describe one limited instance of the impact of colonization on the relations between women and men.

I.—The Preconquest Period

All productive activity in Baule society was based on the sexual division of labor or what we can call the ‘bifurcate mode of production’.  

5. Although there were no towns and no local or regional market places, only borderland markets or trading ports (Chauveau 1972b: 7, 22).

6. The importance of gold—and a system of gold-weights—indicates that it served as currency. A detailed discussion of what is or is not commodity exchange in a non-capitalist society is not possible here. Cf. J.-P. Chauveau (1972b) concerning the Baule, C. Meillassouxs (1974: 263-275, 286) concerning Baule-Guro trade and its relationship to coastal trade. F. Pouillon (1976) gives a synthesis of theoretical approaches in economic anthropology related to African data and R. Meunier (1976) deals with the question of forms of exchange and currency. My data give the basis of my choice of terminology. I do not always find it possible—or necessary—to distinguish between ‘commodity’ and ‘currency’.

7. Cf. J. Siskind (1977: 7) who, in a theoretical effort to found kinship and marriage on relations of production, borrows this term from the classification of kinship terminologies.
In the case of some essential subsistence products, production was entirely the responsibility of one or the other sex and the producer was the ‘owner’ of the product or controlled its distribution. In the case of other products, both sexes contributed to production, each being in charge of specific tasks or phases of the production process; the sex that was considered to have initiated the process and taken responsibility for it ‘owned’ the product or controlled its distribution. In both cases, the wife or husband who controlled an essential product had to provide for subsistence needs of the other spouse and their children. When one sex controlled the product but the other had shared in its production, this latter could also receive a share of any surplus in exchange for his/her labor.

Thus, Baule marriage appears very much as an association between a woman and a man, not only for purposes of reproduction and child-rearing, but also for purposes of production—the two being, of course, closely related. Although no social or supernatural sanctions rigidly enforced the division of labor and a woman or man could, if necessary and possible, occasionally do the work of the other sex, this division of labor was clearly defined, maintained and perpetuated by the socialization process. Possible deviation was further restricted by sex-specialized competence in tasks that required complex skills. Marriage therefore gave each person a necessary partner of the other sex. At the same time, the partnership in production constituted the material basis of the conjugal relationship, and also of the relationship between kin groups of the spouses.

Two products were both labor-demanding and vital to subsistence in Baule society: yams and cloth. Yams were the basic crop and, though survival was objectively conceivable without them, it would have been considered a miserable existence. To eat only cassava was ‘famine’.

Cloth too was essential to everyday life. Although children were clothed only to protect them from chilly weather and men might wear only their breech-cloth maintained by a waist band for farming work, the cotton loincloth covering the breech-cloth and falling below the knees was a minimum that clearly marked the transition from puberty to womanhood. Later, additional pagnes—one for carrying the baby—were the mark of the married woman. The draped pagne was worn during leisure hours and in public places by all adults. (To go naked or with only a breech-cloth in public places is one symptom of madness among the Baule and even casual observers note the extreme modesty of men as well as women.)

Both yams and cloth required the labor of both sexes in the different phases of production. In the case of yams, it was the man who initiated production and took responsibility for it; he also controlled distribution.

8. Or, to borrow Siskind’s formulation (1977: 10), marriage served to ‘define rights to the appropriation of objects of production for one’s self and to the appropriation of the product of the opposite sex’.
In the case of cloth, it was the woman who initiated production, took responsibility for it and controlled distribution.

As suggested above, although cloth is not nourishment, if we define needs by a people's own values—and so we must—it was fully as essential as yams in the context of subsistence. Beyond subsistence, both products played an important role in precolonial Baule society in that they were exchanged on various occasions and thus marked the establishment and perpetuation of social relationships between individuals and groups. Gifts of yams by the man marked the phases of what was a very gradual marriage process. Helping to nourish a young wife-to-be, especially during pregnancy, was an obligation in establishing rights—as a husband, as a father—as was contributing labor to the production of in-laws' yams. Cloth was equally indispensable in establishing the conjugal partnership. In defining marriage, older women rarely fail to describe the production and distribution process, specifying the mutual obligations of wife and husband. Here too, affines are involved: pagnes are exchanged reciprocally between parents of the wife and husband.9

i. The Importance of Cloth

Interestingly, while the yam—a perishable foodstuff—remained primarily confined to the subsistence sector,10 the woman-controlled product cloth—no doubt because of its durability—circulated more widely and played a greater variety of roles.11 Once the production process terminated, surplus production, what was not needed for everyday family use, became, with gold and gold ornaments, the most valuable type of property produced by the Baule themselves. It was given at funerals, sometimes buried with the deceased, displayed on special occasions, conserved in the sacred treasure that was guarded by each kin-group head. Thus, within Baule society, besides its subsistence function, cloth had an essential function in what can be considered the ritual and prestige sector.

Even more important, cloth, unlike yams, was not confined to intrasociety relations, but was very important in relations with people of neighboring societies. For example, it was traded directly with the

9. C. Meillassoux (1974: 195, 216) stresses the importance of cloth (pagnes) as bridewealth among the Guro. It is interesting that this valuable durable product, in Baule marriage, is precisely exchanged reciprocally. Also according to Meillassoux (ibid.: 194), the Guro woman gives up her skeins of thread—to her husband or to others—and the half finished product 'circule sous forme de don'. If this is exact, it would mean she does not control the product, as does the Baule woman.
10. At trading and gold-prospecting centers and in the late precolonial period, when war ravaged the north and captives could be bought with cassava, foodstuffs did function as commodities, but these were exceptional circumstances.
11. E. Leacock (1975: 613-614), in suggesting the importance of the study of cloth and the physical and functional characteristics that make it a potential commodity par excellence, partly inspired this analysis.
Guro for iron and cattle, with other groups for captives. Whether or not this direct trade with neighbors can necessarily be characterized as commodity exchange is not always clear.\textsuperscript{12} To the south, however, and especially at Tiassalé, cloth served to acquire salt, guns and gunpowder from coastal peoples who traded directly with the Europeans. These commodities, although prized by the Baule themselves for their use-value, were also traded, again with the Guro and other peoples, for iron, captives and other goods. To the north, Islamic conquerors furnished captives in great numbers in exchange both for gold and for guns and gunpowder acquired with gold and cloth.\textsuperscript{13} Cloth, therefore, besides its subsistence, ritual and prestige functions, was important in long-distance trade and seems clearly to have served as a form of currency and/or as a commodity.

Cloth was, of course, also art in that esthetic appreciation was decisive in determining the value of Baule cloth. But, as has been frequently noted for non-Western societies, no object was ‘art for art’s sake’ independently of its utilitarian or ritual function.

That the original distribution of such a valuable and polyvalent product was the woman’s domain inevitably gave her power and autonomy both in the conjugal relationship and in Baule society in general. Further, since women could participate even in long-distance trade, either directly or by delegation,\textsuperscript{14} there is no reason to believe that the emergence of a precolonial form of commodity exchange would necessarily have resulted in their losing control of cloth when it entered that sector.

There were, however, in the production process itself, possibilities for the man to minimize the woman’s control of the product. As we shall see, they opened a breach in the subsistence model that will later become a radical breakdown.

\textsuperscript{12} According to C. Meillassoux (1974: 267), \textit{pagnes} were not traded directly for captives between Baule and Guro. Further (\textit{ibid.:} 266-267), in some instances at least, Baule-Guro trade cannot be defined as commodity exchange, but rather had socio-political functions. Craft production in the two societies was similar and cloth, in particular, was traded in both directions.

\textsuperscript{13} The Baule had gold mines and also used gold to acquire captives from the north. Whether they used cloth is not clear. They received cloth from northern Mande, but one does not preclude the other. On both gold and the complexity and historical changes in precolonial Baule trade, cf. J.-P. Chauveau (1972a, 1972b).

\textsuperscript{14} Baule trade was of the ‘expedition’ type, as defined by C. Meillassoux (Chauveau 1972b: 6). Both women and men could mandate another individual, generally a dependent—son, daughter, other kinsperson, even a trusted captive—to carry out this unspecialized and often dangerous activity for them. The same was true of gold-prospecting, a related activity. The grandmother of one of my women informants had been sent south by her mother to trade cloth. She returned with both gold and captives.
The Production and Distribution Process

In order to understand the transformations introduced by colonial conquest and penetration—as opposed to contact—it is necessary first to examine the production process and the way in which it established the woman's rights over the product, as well as the mode of distribution on the domestic level, that is on the level of the family unit, which is also the production unit.

The Baule practiced shifting agriculture (also called hoe culture, slash and burn, or swiddening), in which land is cultivated for one to three years and then left fallow to restore fertility. A plot would originally be prepared for yams. The initial and heaviest work of clearing it, breaking ground and preparing mounds for planting, as well as staking of the young plants, was the man's job. Although he received assistance from the woman in burning and clearing away the brush and in planting, this initial phase of labor was his responsibility and this is the reason given for his 'ownership' of the yam crop.

However, a man always prepared a plot for a given woman, generally his wife, though sometimes his sister, mother or other kinswoman. The Baule were polygamous, but, when a man had more than one wife, each co-wife would have her separate plot. That a plot was 'for' a woman meant: (1) that the yam crop was to feed her and her children, as well as the man, for whom she cooked; (2) that she would do female tasks, such as weeding and helping to plant and harvest yams on this plot; (3) that the plot was hers to exploit by intercropping between the yam mounds and also after the yams were harvested. She used this last right to grow intercrops and second-year crops such as hot pepper, various other condiments, corn and cassava as well as cotton, an intercrop.

Because she had this use-right over the yam plot, because she initiated, tended and took responsibility for these crops, the woman had ownership of the end-product and could dispose of it unreservedly, once family subsistence needs were taken care of. All these raw products, with the exception of cotton, were also transformed by the woman herself—in cooking. In the case of cotton, the first phase of transformation was the woman's responsibility. She cleaned the cotton, carded it and spun it into thread. Thus, she owned this thread. She also made vegetable dye (indigo) to color it. But only men did weaving and sewing. She therefore turned the skeins of cotton over to her husband, who wove them into bands and sewed the bands together to make pagnes. The man wove according to the woman's instructions relative to her estimation of the

15. Another perhaps more objective, but not contradictory, formulation is given as an example by J. Siskind (1977: 8): 'in [.] some forms of slash-and-burn agriculture [.] men's object of production may be the uncleared forest, while women's object may be the cleared and burned-off field, or the planted field from which she harvests to produce the final product.'
necessary repartition between immediate family needs and other uses, although they discussed this together. Because he was simply accomplishing one phase of the labor process for her and even though he well knew which cloth was for himself, he would turn over to his wife all the final product and only then receive from her his lot. This then was the model for domestic or home production of cloth. It also exemplifies the model of reciprocity and interdependency in the marriage relationship, a combining of individual rights, cooperative labor and responsibility for the other's needs.

The question we must ask at this point, before examining post-conquest changes, is whether the model was always the reality. Did it always happen that way or were there other possibilities? Clearly there could be no guarantee that a woman would produce and spin exactly the amount of cotton that her husband could or would weave. A woman who produced large quantities of cotton thread could be married to a man who was a mediocre or unenthusiastic weaver; a man who was an expert and dedicated weaver could be married to a woman whose production of thread was insufficient to satisfy his productive capacity. This imbalance could open a breach in the model of wife-husband production and eventually create opportunities for men to control the product of their weaving, even if they did not control the raw material. They could form partnerships with other women, even strangers, or obtain thread from these women in other ways. In the case of a partnership, it is likely that a man who was an expert weaver and who approached a woman who had a large surplus of thread would sometimes be able to bargain with her to his advantage. An old widow who spent much time spinning and had no man to weave for her would be glad to get cloth for her needs in this way and the man would be able to appropriate more of the surplus production, as he no doubt would if he used the thread of some dependent woman, such as his own captive. If he could purchase thread—or even cotton— outright, he could control the product completely, but there is no indication that this practice, if it existed, was widespread.

16. P. Etienne (1968: 796; 1971: 241) gives a description of the Baule production process similar to mine and a concordant observation concerning 'ownership' of yams and cloth. However, he explains things differently. The man controls yams because he does most of the work or the heaviest work ('le plus gros des travaux', 'les façons culturales les plus pénibles'). The woman controls cloth because the cotton thread is her product and her relationship to the husband-weaver is comparable to the relationship client-craftsperson. The comparison is interesting, but it seems likely, if not certain, that the wife-husband model is prior to the client-craftsperson model. Concerning agricultural products, my data clearly indicate that it is initiating production and taking responsibility for it, not the quantity, intensity or duration of labor that are decisive. Here, as in cloth production, work done by the other spouse, no matter how important, is considered as a service rendered.

17. It seems likely that, besides homespun thread, raw cotton, like other agricultural products, could be acquired in local barter. There is, however, no indication that either product was involved in local or long-distance commodity exchange. (Cf. also note 20, suggesting that even specialized craftsmen did not control their raw materials.)
Women too could profit by the imbalance in wife-husband productivity and the breach in the subsistence model, depending on the availability of cotton thread and the extrafamilial demands of weavers. Further, according to the same principle that governed other areas of production, the daughter, younger sister or other dependent kinswoman of an adult woman assisted the latter, contributing her production to that of her elder. The junior partner would receive either part of what she had produced (cotton or thread) or part of the final product (cloth) for her personal use. There was in this relationship the opportunity to take advantage of the younger woman’s surplus production. Finally, an adult woman—married or unmarried—could have a yam plot prepared ‘for her’ by a kinsman or by her male captive and, like the wife who worked her husband’s plot, use it to grow cotton that she would spin into thread and have woven for her. Informants emphasize the spinning-weaving relationship as a marital obligation and it is not clear, outside the marital relationship, to what extent a woman was obliged to give her thread to spin to the man whose yam plot she grew cotton on. If there was such an obligation, it would have been especially strong when the man was unmarried or, relatively to his productive capacity, insufficiently supplied by his wife or wives. When he was the woman’s dependent, particularly her own captive, she could certainly gain an advantage, whether by disposing freely of her thread or by appropriating more than the usual share of the finished product, the general rule being that the mistress—or master—controlled the surplus production of a captive.

Opportunities for women or men to appropriate each other’s surplus production therefore depended very much on particular circumstances and precise relationships. It was, however, the finished product that circulated outside the domestic sphere and it was the man who finished the product. This suggests that any opportunity to break away from the wife-husband partnership could tip the balance in his favor and that any systematic deviation from the domestic production model in general could favor men’s control of cloth. Such a deviation seems to have existed.

One can say that there was no specialization in Baule society in the sense that all craftspeople were also their own subsistence producers, relying on others, kin as well as captives, to tend their crops only partially or occasionally when they were not available. There was, however, semi-specialization in the sense that certain crafts, for instance goldsmithing, were not known by all.18 This was not the case for weaving, a craft of all adult men, but, besides the general variability in expertise, certain

18. These craft specialties could be learned from a stranger but were frequently transmitted by the parent of the same sex. According to T. C. Weiskel (1976: 372) they were transmitted patrilineally (‘en ligne patrilineaire ’). Given the sexual division of labor, this seems unlikely. Has Weiskel forgotten there are crafts women too? Among possible specialties, he mentions precisely pottery—a woman’s craft. Further, even if there were only male craft specialties, transmission would not be patrilineal, since there are daughters too!
types of cloth among the most sought after were specialities both regional and individual. Itinerant weavers, especially during the dry season, when agricultural work was light, would go from village to village, weaving to order, as would dyeing specialists.19

Although the client-craftsperson and the wife-husband relationship in this case seem to have referred to the same model, the craftsperson receiving as remuneration for services rendered a share of the product,20 this semi-specialization and the importance of cloth in the prestige sector certainly could facilitate and encourage any tendency on the part of the weaver to gain control of the product, eventually by gaining control of the raw material. Further, although the prestige function of cloth and this kind of specialization do not in themselves imply commodity exchange,21 commodity exchange, as I have shown, clearly existed, with cloth an important item, and certainly served as a motivation to control it.

These factors—the durable value of cloth in the prestige sector, its function in commodity exchange, female-male production relations that were not strictly confined to the wife-husband relationship—created a breach in the subsistence model. This breach could not, however, in and of itself, lead to a total breakdown of existing production-distribution relations, removing the control of cloth from women.

What about the fact that weaving differs from spinning in offering a wider range of expertise and variability, an infinity of esthetic possi-

19. Cf. R. Boser-Sarivaxévans (1969: 194-195) for the remarkable complexity of tie-dyeing techniques, whether of cloth or of thread, and the unusual variability throughout West Africa, sometimes within the same cultural group of the sexual assignment of this craft. According to T. C. Weiskel (1976: 372) it is one of the Baule crafts we know little about. Ph. de Salverte-Marmier (M. & P. Étienne et al. 1965a: 160), who particularly studied crafts, says only that women did dyeing but that men did dyeing by the techniques imported by people from the north (‘le procédé importé par les gens du nord’). Does this mean tie-dyeing or only certain techniques of tie-dyeing? C. Meillassoux (1974: 194) says Guro dyeing is done by specialists, who can be men or women, but is no more specific. I myself did not focus on crafts—and regret it.

20. Cf. P. Etienne (1968: 796-797; 1971: 241). I do not know if this was always the case even in specialized craft production. The point is important. It would mean that the craftsperson neither controls the raw material nor really produces an exchange value, but rather produces a use-value, for client and self, that only later, indirectly so to speak, with marketing of surplus production, becomes a commodity. The principle is the same whether the craftsperson is remunerated with a share of the product or a share of the raw material.

I believe the sculptor specified to his client the wood needed and had the client provide it. If he could himself provide the raw material, the implications are limited, since sculpture had magico-medical-ritual functions and was of no use to another than the client who ordered a work. The case of goldsmithing would be more significant.

21. It is important not to confuse ‘prestige sector’ and commodity exchange—and also not to assume that it was necessarily the most valued cloth that circulated as a commodity. Questioning an informant about trade with Tiassale, I was surprised to be shown a very old piece of ordinary undyed cloth, with the remark: ‘This is the kind of cloth we used to get salt and guns at Tiassale.’ Cloth could perhaps circulate in this form and later be dyed by specialists. That ordinary undyed cloth, which women most clearly controlled, could circulate as currency or as a commodity is significant and can be related to their involvement in long-distance trade.
bilities? (Basic designs were traditional, but there were inevitably innovations.) In a word, as perceived by a Westerner, weaving is an art whereas spinning is a simple technique, monotonous, repetitious, etc. Should not the fact that he was the 'artist' have favored control of cloth by the man? This however was not the Baule perception, in spite of their capacity for esthetic discrimination and its confirmation by the value attributed to Baule cloth throughout the region. What was perceived by them was that without the original cotton, without the spun thread, no weaving, no woven cloth, splendid or ordinary, was possible. That is why the woman, who grew the cotton and spun the thread, controlled the product.

II.—THE POST-CONQUEST PERIOD

The preconquest contact period certainly accentuated the importance of Baule cloth both in the prestige sector of the economy, since there were greater opportunities to accumulate wealth, and as a commodity in long-distance trade. Although neither the Baule nor their cloth were directly involved in coastal trade with Europeans, they did, as indicated above, take part in this trade indirectly but very actively, furnishing cloth to coastal peoples who were in direct contact, using it as currency to obtain European commodities both for their own use and for trade with other groups. For cloth production at least, this involvement apparently resulted in changes that were for the most part quantitative. One of the factors that were to determine radical qualitative change, the introduction of imported cloth, was present during that period but was not widespread and, in itself, could have only a limited impact on Baule production relations.

What will ultimately be decisive is colonial conquest and penetration. Several very precise changes introduced in the different economic sectors will all converge and complement each other in breaking down the precolonial production-distribution relationship, divesting women of their control over an essential and valuable product. One must see these changes as interrelated, intermeshing, mutually reinforcing each other. They will therefore be examined in what seems to be the logical order of their importance rather than in the strict chronological order of their occurrence.

1. Colonial Penetration and the Breakdown of the Precolonial Production-Distribution Relationship

Although European cloth and perhaps thread—other than what may have been obtained by unravelling cloth—were introduced by preconquest trade (Boser-Sarivaxévanis 1969, 1972a), imported thread
seems to have been used occasionally and very partially in the oldest existing specimens of Baule cloth—dating back no further than the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Boser-Sarivaxévanis 1972a: 13; 1972b: 53). Museum specimens collected in 1910 and examined by R. Boser-Sarivaxévanis (1972a: 179-180) are all made with native thread, except for some decorative use of factory-made thread. Later specimens, however, are all composed mainly of factory-made thread (*ibid.*: 179 sq.).

Very rapidly colonization was to provide new opportunities to acquire factory-made thread. Whether or not the imported product already tended to be widely used before that date is not clear, but in 1923 a textile factory was established by R. Gonfreville just outside of Bouaké (M.-A. de Salverte-Marmier 1965: 6). Producing both cloth and thread for the local market, 'Gonfreville', as it came to be called, grew into what is practically a ‘company town’ and in 1973 was still the largest textile factory in Ivory Coast.

Weavers could purchase Gonfreville thread with cash, thus freeing themselves from dependence on their wives' home production or on the production of other Baule women, making the woman’s role in cloth production appear inessential and her control of the product unjustified. The availability of Gonfreville thread, decisive in destroying precolonial production relations, also contributed to what was to become a flagrant disproportion between women's spinning and men's weaving, a disproportion confirmed by recent sales figures of the textile industry.22

Although factory-made thread favors the weaver's control of his product, its growing use has not been simply a question of availability and of choice on his part. There is a real scarcity of homespun thread, determined by other causes than lack of demand. If we examine the agricultural sector, the reasons for this scarcity become clear. It is not that the Baule no longer produce cotton or that Baule women no longer contribute to its production. On the contrary, as we shall see, the Baule produce more cotton than ever and the role of Baule women in the production of both cotton and thread is still essential, but mediated by cash and the capitalist commodity economy, it has become invisible.

Shortly after conquest and before the establishment of Gonfreville, as early as 1913 (Pezet 1965: 4), the colonial administration wanted cotton for export purposes. Women's surplus production from intercropping could not satisfy this demand (Benetière & Pezet 1965: 12). New varieties were introduced—at one point Gonfreville provided the seed (*ibid.*: 24)—and new agricultural techniques aimed at improving production both qualitatively and quantitatively were imposed (Pezet 1965; Benetière & Pezet 1965: 12; Ripailles 1965: 63).

22. Already in 1945, of 162 tons of thread produced by Gonfreville, 77 tons were sold to Baule weavers (Benetière & Pezet 1965: 24). More recently, according to B. Frdke (1965: 204), ‘... les tisserands achètent pour 72 millions de filés au secteur moderne, le coton local filé par les femmes ne représentant plus que 8 millions de francs.’
Attempts to force the Baule to grow cotton as a pure (main) crop proved that they were more knowledgeable than the colonizer; crowded cotton is destroyed by parasites. In spite of the ‘war effort’ (World War II), post-war production figures made it clear that the choice was between intercropping, with its limited yield, and insecticide treatments permitting the development of cotton as a high-yield main crop. Further (especially since the corvée had recently been abolished), higher yields were necessary to bring the higher revenues relatively to input that would encourage farmers to grow cotton as a cash-crop (Côte d’Ivoire [1955]: 9-10). As a result, a heavy technical assistance apparatus was instituted for research, for intervention during the different phases of production and even for marketing (Pezet 1965; Benetière & Pezet 1965; Ripailles 1965). From sowing to selling, cotton became the focus of agricultural development experts, the principal buyer being Gonfreville (Pezet 1965: 24).

There were also attempts to make cotton a first-year crop. They tended to be unsuccessful both for technical reasons and because the Baule preferred to save the best soil for yams (Pezet 1965: 9-10; Benetière & Pezet 1965: 25). Cotton was therefore developed as a second-year main crop on previously exploited yam plots. As we have seen, second-year use of the yam plot, like intercropping, was traditionally the woman’s right. Cash-crop cotton, however, because it involved considerable preparatory work, could be considered a new beginning. Further, this preparatory work, like the following phases of labor, was directed by agricultural experts and their extension agents. Just as the colonial administration, when it demanded that more cotton be produced, had addressed its demands to men, early and later agricultural experts and their male extension agents, when they introduced new techniques, addressed their teaching to men. It is therefore not surprising that cash-crop cotton, like other cash-crops, became the man’s domain. At the same time, especially in the more densely populated areas, the takeover of second-year exploitation of the yam plot for cash-cropping, by intruding on their use-rights, could divest women of their means of production or, more precisely, of their object of production.

History confirms that it was not simply on their own initiative that Baule men came to control cash, cotton and cloth. What has finally worked to their advantage began as a serious disadvantage. Until 1946, when the corvée was abolished, cotton production was one of the main

23. E. Boserup (1970: 53-57) notes the generality of this phenomenon—control of cash-crops by men—in developing countries and relates it to the intervention of experts and extension agents. Both the literature and my personal experience confirm that, although certainly not unaware of them, development experts show no concern whatsoever for women’s rights in agriculture. They are concerned with women’s cooperation, but see them only as helpmates of men, ignoring the occasional protests of local women employed as extension agents, as they do the somewhat ambiguous warnings of their sociologist colleagues (M. & P. Etienne et al. 1965b: 107; Frédé et al. 1965: 153) who note the low revenues of women as a source of conflict between the sexes.
goals of forced labor. Quotas were established and physical violence was used to oblige villagers to cultivate ‘collective fields’ of cotton (called by them les champs du commandant ‘the Commander’s cottonfields’). Besides force, taxation, the first act of the colonizer following conquest, served as a serious incentive. Cotton, like other products, could serve either as payment in kind or as a means of acquiring the necessary cash, since it was paid for, though badly.

As in agricultural development and the corvée, the colonizer did not generally intervene directly to collect the head tax, but specified goals to be attained and used native agents and the native hierarchy (manipulated, of course, by the colonial administration) as intermediaries. Whether it was because of the way in which orders were given, because the ‘head of family’ concept was convenient, or for other reasons related to precolonial wife-husband obligations,24 the man became responsible for his wife’s head tax. To be the primary target of taxation made the acquisition of cash a vital need for men rather than for women, tending to justify and reinforce their control of cotton as a cash-crop.25

While the burden of taxation made cash a necessity for men, while cotton grown by them, willingly unwillingly, provided the necessary cash, the expanding commodity economy also made cash useful to purchase the Gonfreville thread that was both: advantageous and indispensable in replacing homespun thread. At the same time, cash-crop cotton made Gonfreville thread more available and contributed to making homespun thread less available. There are, however, in the agricultural sector, still other changes that will reinforce the effects of those described above.

Besides cotton, other cash-crops such as cocoa and coffee, were introduced for export purposes. They too became men’s domain. With the growing need to feed urban populations, the yam itself could become a cash-crop, the entire harvest being sold wholesale, with the exception of piles of yams set aside for subsistence needs and turned over to the adult women of the family. Here again, the right of each woman to ‘her’

24. According to an informant, the husband’s responsibility for his wife’s head tax was based on a precolonial model making him responsible for her expenses (the healer’s services and medicine) in case of illness. I do not, in any case, mean to suggest an explanation by the direct transmission and assimilation of attitudes. However powerful male bias certainly was in orienting the intervention of the colonizer and still is in the case of development experts, it is the nature of this intervention and the mechanisms that determine its precise impact that must be analyzed. One must recognize, however, that colonial domination, like other forms of domination, consciously or unconsciously makes use of the divide and conquer principle, tending to widen gaps and to accentuate any existing imbalances among the colonized, who, in turn, as individuals or as groups, inevitably take advantage of any edge that is given them. Such seems to be the case of men in relation to women under colonization.

25. That taxation in the colonial context was meant to serve more as a means of drawing the colonized into the cash economy than as a source of income is noted by E. Boserup (1970: 19). She sees its relationship to cash-cropping, but not to the takeover of cash-crops by men.
separate yam plot tends to be alienated. Although they have not been the focus of as much technical intervention as cotton, cocoa and coffee (coffee is particularly important as a source of income), because they are perennial, not annual plants, can compound the alienation of women’s use-rights by giving a new meaning to permanent rights over land, whereas in the past only use-rights and rights over crops existed. Eventually, this shift in the meaning of land rights, combined with the use of wage labor, could eliminate women’s use-rights completely.26

Wage labor, however, is still the exception rather than the rule among the Baule. With the development of cash-cropping, women have remained active in agricultural production. Because men’s cash income is now as necessary to them as to their husbands, women continue to fulfill the conjugal obligation to assist a spouse, pursuing such tasks as weeding and harvesting for which they were traditionally responsible. The harvesting and shelling of coffee beans are particularly arduous and time-consuming tasks.27 The principle of retributing a spouse for her or his labor remains operative and women receive some share of the profits. However, because they do not control cash-crops, they are dependent on the men for their reward. Their remuneration tends to be arbitrary and disproportionately low, relatively both to labor input and to the monetary value of the product.

Perhaps more important, the labor time devoted to men’s cash-crops is not available for other activities. Intercropping of cotton and other products on the yam plot continues, as does second-year production of foodstuffs necessary for subsistence. Surplus production of cassava, peanuts and other women’s crops can be retailed or even semi-wholesaled at the local market place, but women often do not have time for their own agricultural production, just as they do not have time for carding and spinning cotton. These productive activities, quantitatively, financially and by their economic function, have become far less important than those controlled by men.

26. E. Boserup (1970: 57-61) discusses the potential effect of cash-crops on land rights and the disadvantage for women. The Baule do not, however, sell their land, although they buy land from other peoples to the south. When land is actually sold, women, provided they have revenues to begin with, can regain an advantage. Some of my urban informants owned coffee plantations outside Baule country.

As for wage-labor, it can sometimes work to the advantage of women. No rigid rule prevents a woman from asking for land and controlling the product if she can find a dependent man to work for her. Wage-laborers, a convenient substitute for captives, can serve this purpose. Further, when men use wage-labor—generally for coffee in wealthier villages—and land is still available, women can devote more time to their own crops and even get husbands to help them in preparing the ground. Thus, at Andobo-Alluiibo, women’s peanuts, a second-year crop, brought them good revenues. These cases, however, are exceptions to the more general rule that cash-cropping tends to alienate women’s rights and that wage-labor is a threat because it makes it possible to devote more land to cash-crops.

27. I have, however, observed men as well as women pounding coffee beans, although pounding of foodstuffs is a woman’s task.
In conclusion, the scarcity of homespun thread and the widespread use of factory-made thread, resulting in women's loss of control over hand-woven cloth, are two related aspects of what has been a fundamental transformation of production relations. The impact of this transformation will be compounded by another intrusion of the expanding commodity economy: the widespread marketing of industrial commodities in general and of factory-made cloth in particular. Like other commodities, factory-made cloth will inevitably be more available to men insofar as men control more cash.

2. Baule Cloth and Factory Cloth

With cash-cropping and/or labor migration, men's time too has become less available for other productive activities and weaving has disappeared as a routine activity of all adult men. It subsists, however, as a leisure activity, especially since it can be pursued during the dry season when there is usually a lull in agricultural labor. Among older people in villages less affected than others by the commodity economy, the spinning-weaving relationship is still considered as a conjugal obligation, although it may be reduced to the strict minimum. On the other hand, for the most expert weavers, hand-woven cloth can be an important source of income.

As imported cloth, Gonfreville cloth and now the cloth of other local textile factories has become widely available, it has tended to replace Baule cloth for everyday use and less important gifts. Gonfreville even makes imitations of hand-made cloth and of hand-woven bands that can be sewn together to make a pagne. This enhances the prestige value of authentic Baule cloth, more appreciated than ever as a symbol of wealth and for ceremonial occasions, both among the Baule and among other Ivory Coast peoples.

Thus, in both the subsistence sector and the prestige sector, cloth now circulates as a commodity. Subsistence need—that is, the everyday necessity to clothe one's body—is satisfied by the factory-made commodity, while hand-made cloth itself has become almost entirely a commodity,

28. Villagers, both women and men, from unforested regions unfavorable for growing coffee, especially if other cash-crops are not highly developed (Michotte 1968), often work seasonally on southern coffee plantations belonging either to members of their family or to local people. The Baule themselves have long colonized the Bete and Anyi, using either traditional land-use agreements or outright purchase to acquire plantations (for details on Baule migration patterns, cf. P. & M. Etienne 1968; Pl. & M.-A. de Salverte-Marmier & P. Etienne 1965: 59-82). They also migrate to the city, but this is a less seasonal phenomenon. Seasonal migration to coffee plantations, most intense during the dry season, particularly affects craft, since this is also the period favorable to craft production.

29. P. Etienne (1968: 813-817) confirms the contemporary prestige and ritual value of Baule cloth and illustrates it by lists of recent funeral gifts.
with its circulation restricted to the ritual and prestige sector,\textsuperscript{30} losing its function as a subsistence product that served a basic need and, at the same time, consolidated the relationship between wife and husband. If pre-colonial commodity exchange of cloth opened a breach in the subsistence model, colonization and capitalist commodity exchange alone could lead to this total breakdown, transforming all cloth into a commodity and divesting Baule cloth of its primary subsistence function.

A corollary of this transformation is that 'art', in the form of weaving, has become dissociated from functional or subsistence production. Baule cloth has long been appreciated for its beauty and variety, but, as long as it was also an everyday necessity, this dissociation could not occur. Because art and life were one and because woman's labor was the indispensable origin of the production process, the considerable skill or 'art' required of the weaver could not radically affect her control of the product. Thus we see that at the same time that art tends to emerge as a separate field—distinct from everyday life, manifesting the generalized subordination of Baule society to the colonizer's commodity economy, it emerges as a male-controlled domain, reflecting the generalized subordination of women to men.

III.—WOMEN AND CLOTH TODAY:
ALIENATION AND THE REVERSAL OF A RELATIONSHIP

A major consequence of the changes analyzed above has been the reversal of the relationship between women and cloth; once an object women controlled because it was their product, cloth has become, in a sense, an object that controls them. Much of what has been described here could have been systematically described in terms of alienation, the concept being applied in its different connotations to the different aspects and phases of the process analyzed.

One instance where the concept of alienation imposes itself so flagrant and obvious, almost ironical, is the changed relationship between producer and product. In 1950 (M.-A. de Salverte-Marmier 1965: 6, 9) the Gonfreville textile factory started employing Baule women and has continued to employ them extensively in several departments as wage laborers (\textit{ibid.}: 6-12). Thus, on the most manifest level, simply as factory workers, they are alienated from their own product in the immediately given context of capitalist production. This alienation, however, is founded on a more complex process of alienation in the historical

\textsuperscript{30} The principal economic activity of one urban woman informant was to buy \textit{pagnes} in rural Baule villages and sell them in town, going from office to office. Her customers were for the most part higher-rank civil servants (Ashanti cloth is also appreciated in town). Baule women also sometimes sell factory cloth at the market place. They by no means, however, have the control over this sector that Ashanti women in Ghana do.
context. The very production process in which Baule women sell their labor to produce thread and cloth has been a key factor in destroying a production process in which they controlled the same products.\(^{31}\)

The alienated labor of Baule women also appears in other phases of the new process, since they contribute to growing cash-crop cotton for Gonfreville cloth and thread; here the productive activity itself is much the same as in the past, but its meaning and function are entirely different. Meanwhile, traditional woman-controlled production of cotton by intercropping and of thread continues but has become practically a remnant of the past, playing no essential role in the economy. Further, what primarily motivates women to sell their labor for wages is the need to acquire the cloth they once produced and, in a sense, to regain control of this product by controlling their own cash.\(^ {32}\) Thus, multiple processes of alienation converge with the Baule women as their focal point or subject.

Alienated production, on one level at least, signifies control of the producer by the product replacing control of the product by the producer. In the case of the Gonfreville factory worker, the relationship between woman and cloth has been visibly reversed in this way. If we move from the sector of production to the sector of consumption—and so we must in a commodity economy that radically dissociates the two—this same reversal of the relationship between woman and cloth manifests itself. Control of the consumer by the product is, of course, a generalized characteristic of the modern capitalist commodity economy. In this case, however, we will see that it is particularly striking—a magnified and oversimplified illustration, almost a caricature, of the more general relationship.

Although hand-made cloth is now confined to the prestige sector, subsistence needs being satisfied by factory-made cloth, this latter also occupies an important position in the prestige sector. All the values and functions previously attributed to the one have been extended to the other. To clothe one’s body is a necessity. To have cloth in quantity and quality beyond the mere necessity of clothing one’s body is a constantly pursued goal. For women in particular, the brightly colored cloth specially designed for the African market and imported from England or Holland—and the less valued local factory cloth—is the most sought after.

\(^{31}\) Ironically, the repartition of men and women in the Gonfreville factory is often in direct opposition to the sexual division of labor in precolonial cloth production, e.g. women work in the weaving and the finishing (‘confection’) departments, not in the spinning departments (M.-A. de Salverte-Marmier 1965: 6), no doubt because they are assigned to non-mechanized tasks (ibid.: 11-12). It is necessary to point out that women are not widely employed as factory hands in Ivory Coast. I have focused on Gonfreville because it is exemplary, not because it is typical. I have no information concerning the employment of women in several other textile factories established since 1958.

\(^{32}\) Women in the sample studied by M. A. de Salverte-Marmier (1965: 9, 10-14) are all of rural origin, almost all live in nearby villages and they are for the most part unmarried. They devote a considerable portion of their salary to the purchase of cloth (ibid.: 15).
commodity. Whenever possible, it is bought in six-yard lengths corresponding to the complet of three pagnes. It is generally worn African style, simply draped unsewn by villagers, machine-stitched and tailored more or less elaborately—usually by male tailors—for townswomen. Except for schoolchildren, very few, even among the educated, wear European style dresses. Women also hoard this factory cloth along with the hand-made cloth and gold objects that have always constituted treasured property. Whether worn and/or hoarded, cloth is coveted and continues to represent wealth and status.

Factory cloth also tends, as did hand-made cloth, to materialize the relationship between woman and man, and especially between wife and husband. But now this materialization of the personal relationship takes another form. Instead of emerging from the cooperative production process with one spouse’s labor being restituted by the other’s gift of the final product, it is mediated by the commodity economy. The principles of wife-husband cooperation in production and of compensating the participating partner for her or his labor remain operative, but the woman is the participating partner for products that bring cash and cash has become indispensable. The equilibrium of an economy where both sexes had control over essential products—and these could be acquired in no other way than through the woman-man production partnership—has disappeared, as have the rules governing distribution in a context where labor produced use-values rather than commodities. At the same time, cash and cloth have become interchangeable, although it is cloth that tends to measure the value of cash, rather than the reverse. (A woman who receives a sum of money will estimate its value by the amount of cloth she can buy more naturally than she will estimate the value of cloth by its purchase price.)

Thus the woman who contributes her labor to her husband’s production of cotton or coffee will receive cash or cloth in amounts which she considers arbitrary and which do in fact very much depend on the man’s ‘generosity’. Abusively low retribution is facilitated by the man’s knowledge that the woman cannot reciprocate, as she could when she too controlled essential products. As a result, the wife-husband production relationship is becoming a constant source of conflict. Because the production relationship has always been the foundation of marriage, because cloth and cash now tend to be the measure of a husband’s affection and respect, the whole personal relationship is also conflict-laden.

Inevitably, many women prefer to remain unmarried and all seek to acquire their own cash, whether at Gonfreville, on southern plantations or in town, through wage labor, petty trade or sometimes prostitution.

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33. Men too attribute great importance to their clothing. In town and often in the villages, European-style clothing is worn for work and on everyday occasions. Brightly colored draped factory cloth or hand-woven pagnes are worn for leisure and special occasions. Incidentally, men are alienated too.

34. Cf. P. & M. ETIENNE (1968) for details on the migration of Baule women and economic activities of migrants. Here and elsewhere in our work, the reader
Whether in prostitution, the preconjugal relationship or marriage itself, they may try to appropriate the man's advantage by constant demands for cloth and cash, but this hardly restitutes their autonomy. To pursue wealth is not entirely new. In the past women also traded and sought to acquire gold and captives, as well as prestige cloth woven by experts. They were not always anxious to marry. What is new is transformation of the woman-man production relationship that replaces interdependency by dependency in the most essential areas of subsistence. Here, as in the Gonfreville factory, the relationship to the object cloth is reversed. Women no longer control cloth but are controlled by it. This formulation is more than an elegant abstraction. When we move from the interindividual relationship and the general production-distribution relationship to women's relationship to the political power structure in contemporary Ivory Coast, the way in which cloth has become, if not the controlling agent itself, at least the means by which control is exercised, is clearly perceptible.

Ivory Coast women—and Baule women in particular—played an important and very active role in the struggle for independence. The national party (Ivory Coast is a one-party State) continues to rely heavily on women's support without always maintaining adequate communication to justify their mobilization on various occasions. When such mobilization is necessary, cloth is distributed. For example, when the party wants to organize a mass demonstration to welcome a visiting head of State, cloth is produced in a local factory especially for the occasion—often with portraits of the Ivory Coast president and the visiting statesman—and pagnes are distributed to the women, especially to those who are known supporters of the party and influential in the community. Here,

will find remarks on colonization as a factor of 'emancipation' for women. Although tempted to claim that the contradiction is only apparent—this is true, in a sense—I prefer to recognize error. It is rooted in our acceptance of the Western male view—an underlying assumption that woman's subordination is somehow natural and general—and in an approach that tends to confuse what is already a result of colonization with the precolonial reality. Attempting now to be more rigorous than in the past, I find that feminism and rigor are indissociable.

35. It is said that agua women—women of noble and wealthy descent—did not marry. This refers, I think, more to a de facto than a de jure situation and is related to the principle of virilocality that is a serious obstacle to women's succession to positions of authority. If wealth made it possible for them not to marry, it is no doubt because captives replaced husbands for men's labor.

36. One of the few mass demonstrations involving violence that preceded independence was a women's march on Grand-Bassam to liberate political prisoners. Led by Baule women, it was met on the bridge to Bassam with fire-hoses; they projected sand as well as water, pumped from the shallow lagoon. Several women were maimed or injured. One of them, almost nine months pregnant, lost her unborn child.

The demonstration used as a model a precolonial women's ritual, adjanu, a form of symbolic war that can be directed against village men as a group or against their enemies. Interestingly, since this is about controlling women with cloth, the power of adjanu is both verbal and visual; it's visual weapon is nudity. But accounts vary on the extent to which nudity was used in the march on Bassam.
besides motivating the women to take part in the demonstration, the *pagnes* serve as a uniform for politico-esthetic purposes. In other circumstances, cloth is distributed as a reward for services rendered or expected. The traditional point of reference for this practice is to be found in the principle of materializing a relationship and rewarding labor. Cloth, because it traditionally served this purpose, because it is highly valued and sought after, is an excellent vehicle, made even more appropriate by its display function. As in other areas the modern power structure uses traditional models and values astutely. What colonization and the capitalist commodity economy have taken from Baule women, the State now returns—in a different form and in different circumstances.

Cloth has become a prime motivation of party support and the focus of attention for the recipients. The women themselves experience this relationship with ambivalence, sometimes appearing entirely absorbed in the pursuit of cloth as a party handout, sometimes expressing with bitterness the feeling of being manipulated by gifts of cloth. They do not explicitly formulate the contrast between present and past as I have done here.

They do, however, perceive it and reflect it in their behavior, often going through the motions of an activity that, once essential, has become anachronistic, while actively engaged in more realistic pursuits. One case illustrates this contradiction: that of a very old woman who, from early colonial times, has adapted to change with intelligent opportunism, becoming the ‘native wife’ of early administrators, serving as an intermediary in their dealings with the population, acquiring wealth and prestige that were maintained in the post-independence period, when she shifted her allegiance to the new government and its party, for whom she continues to play much the same role that she had played for the colonial administration, seeing in fact for her purposes very little difference between the two. Throughout a life that began before colonization, she has maximized every opportunity available to an illiterate woman and avidly collected factory-made cloth. Yet she continues to spin her cotton in her town compound, explaining that young kinswomen in her village grow it and that she returns each year to collect it and to give the thread to kinsmen for weaving—pointing with pride at this activity that in the past defined a woman’s social reality, no doubt getting some profit from it in the present, but pretending to ignore what she obviously knows: that the spinning she carries on almost obsessively has meaning only in reference to a world that is becoming obsolete.
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M. Etienne — Femmes et hommes, pagnes et colonisation : la transformation des relations de production et de distribution chez les Baule de Côte d'Ivoire. La production, chez les Baule, est fondée sur la division sexuelle du travail.
L'époux considéré comme ayant l'initiative d'une production, ou comme ayant fourni la matière première, est « propriétaire » du produit et, une fois les besoins familiaux satisfaits, en assure la distribution — quitte, le cas échéant, à y faire participer son conjoint. Les femmes cultivateur le coton et le filent et donc, bien que les tisserands soient des hommes, contrôlent la circulation des pagnes. En raison de la valeur de prestige de ces pagnes, qui les soustrait au circuit de l'économie de subsistance, les hommes ont intérêt à acheter du fil hors du groupe de production conjugal ; mais, puisque les producteurs sont des femmes, la relation demeure du même ordre. La colonisation a provoqué la dislocation de ce type de relation, notamment en introduisant la fabrication industrielle des textiles, la culture commerciale du coton et d'autres denrées, ainsi que l'économie de marché. Les pagnes artisanaux restent une marchandise de prestige mais peuvent être désormais fabriqués par les hommes, avec des fils industriels. Le commerce des pagnes industriels est également entre leurs mains puisque, grâce aux cultures commerciales — auxquelles participent les femmes —, ils disposent du capital nécessaire. Les ouvrières des filatures et des tissages contribuent ainsi doublement à leur propre aliénation. Elles sont désormais placées dans une relation de dépendance et non plus d'interdépendance.