

Fifteen

Let me illustrate what I mean by a simple example, again based on material from the Fur.' Fur household organization is one where each adult individual is an economic unit for himself: each man or woman produces essentially what he or she needs **for** food and cash, and has a separate purse. Husband and wife have certain customary obligations toward each other: among other services, a wife must cook and brew for her husband, and he must provide her with clothes for herself and their children. But each of the two cultivates separate fields and keeps provisions in separate grain stores.

This arrangement can be depicted as a system of allocations (Figure 1). **A** woman must allocate a considerable amount of her time, varying with the season, to agricultural production. By virtue of the marriage contract, she is also constrained to allocate time to cooking and to brewing beer for her husband.

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The husband, on his side, owes it to his wife to allocate some **of** his cash to consumption goods for her. Such patterns of allocation are thus one way of describing the structure of Fur family and household.

Some of these Fur couples change their mode of life and become nomadic pastoralists like the surrounding Baggara Arabs (cf. Haand 1967). Together with this change in subsistence patterns one finds **a** change in family and household form, in that such couples establish a

joint household. Their allocations change, as compared to those of normal Fur villagers (Figure 2). The husband specializes in the activities that have to do with herding and husbandry, while the woman cultivates some millet, churns butter and markets it, and cooks food. They have a joint grain store and a joint purse and make up a unit for consumption.

In the anthropological tradition, one might reasonably formulate the hypothesis that what we observe here is a case of acculturation: as part **of** the change to a Baggara Arab way of life they also adopt the Arab household form. **This** manner of describing the course of change implies a very concrete view **of** household organization as one of the *parts* of Arab culture, a set of customs that people can take over.

Fortunately, the ethnographic material provides us with a test case for the acculturation hypothesis: some Fur cultivators, in villages where they have no contact with Arab horticultural populations, have recently taken up fruit-growing in irrigated orchards as *a* specialized form of cash-crop production.