



Dimitry F. Chebotarev

-
- 3 Living Arrangements of the Elderly Women of Lesotho**
Chuks J. Mba.
- 21 Myths and Legends as a Source of Psychological Development for the Elderly**
Enrique Reig, Luisa Salgado, Isaac Jauli and Cecilia Cervantes
- 29 Dmitry F. Chebotarev**
- 31 INIA activities 2004**

CONTENTS

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ELDERLY WOMEN OF LESOTHO

CHUKS J. MBA

Abstract:

The study examined the living arrangements of elderly women aged 60 years or over in the ten districts of Lesotho, using the 1996 census micro-data. The study found that about 50 percent of these women were aged 60-69 years, most of them had only primary education, and many of the women were widows. An overwhelming majority of them lived in rural areas and had no formal employment, while they were more likely to live in relatively smaller households. Although the extended family system still held sway, more women were living alone or living with grandchildren. The multivariate findings revealed that women from six districts might stand in need of care and support, while only four districts might have adult kin to provide assistance. As there were no clear signs of the processes characterizing it, the modernization theory could not be validated.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The demographic trends of past decades in Africa and other developing regions are leading to unprecedented increases not only in the absolute numbers of older persons but also in the relative share of the population that belong to the elderly age groups. The increase in the proportion of elderly is no longer limited to the industrialized countries since the population of most of the developing countries is also now aging at unprecedented rates. In Africa, despite the fact that the population of people aged 60 years and older constituted only 5.1 percent of the total population by the year 2000, this percentage translates to a very large number of people. Specifically, the United Nations (1999) medium-variant projection estimates show 38.9 million Africans aged 60 years and over (with females accounting for 21.3 million of the total) by the year 2000. It is expected that by 2025, this figure will rise to 80.3 million (with females outnumbering to the tune of 43.2 million). Recent decline in fertility observed in various developing countries including Africa, coupled with changes in mortality trends following the steady decline of the early twentieth century are accelerating the population aging process (United Nations, 2001c).

In traditional African societies, the aged had special privileges and were provided with care by an extended family network (Kendig *et al.*, 1992; IFE, 1987). Modernization and urbanization have been

consistently eroding that system, however, and it is yet to be replaced with a social welfare system because of the economic and social difficulties currently being encountered by many African countries. In fact, certain social and economic changes are under way that are widely assumed to have profound implications for the future of the elderly (Angel and Angel, 1997; De Vos, 1995; Kendig *et al.*, 1992; Clark, 1989). These changes include reduction in the number of children per couple (Buckley, 1998; Casterline, 1999; Cohen, 1998), increased involvement of women in economic activities outside the home (Clark and Anker, 1990; Durand, 1975), physical separation of parents from adult children associated with urbanization and age-selective rural-to-urban migration for better job prospects (United Nations, 1991, 1994) and the spread of Western-style individualism through public education and mass media (Caldwell, 1982; Martin, 1989; 1990).

The size and composition of households vary over time and among societies, and this variation has implications for the well-being of the elderly persons. A popular view among sociologists interested in family research is that the size and complexity of households converges to the nuclear type as a society modernises (McDonald, 1992; Cowgill, 1986; United Nations, 1973; Goode, 1963). It can therefore be expected that variations in the living arrangements of the aged is the result of differences in levels of development as measured

by indicators such as education, place of residence, and formal employment status. The present study is concerned with the living arrangement dimension of this theoretical perspective in the context of Lesotho.

Very little is known concerning the dynamics of living arrangements of elderly persons in Lesotho, and how the changing social and economic environment is impacting on the propensity to provide for the welfare of the older population by family members. Also, given that there is little evidence concerning the living arrangements of older people in developing countries, and Africa in particular, this paper represents a modest attempt aimed at expanding knowledge about the rapidly emerging phenomenon of population aging in the developing world. Attention is focused on elderly women because by reason of their biological and physical make-up, they are more vulnerable in terms of welfare needs and care (Angel and Angel, 1997; Kendig *et al.*, 1992).

BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

Lesotho, formerly Basutoland, is a small, barren and mountainous country, with a population of 1.9 million in 1996. It attained political independence from Britain in 1966. The country occupies an area of 30,355 square kilometers, of which less than one-fifth is arable (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1966). It is landlocked and wholly enclosed by the Republic of South Africa. About two-thirds of Lesotho consist of rugged mountainous terrain with difficult access (Gill, 1993; Kingdom of Lesotho, 1966). The country is composed of ten administrative districts, with Maseru as the capital, and sixty constituencies. The names of the ten districts are Butha-buthe, Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's hoek, Quthing, Qacha's nek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka.

Although Lesotho is politically free, it is economically dependent on South Africa, perhaps due to historical, geographical, and physical reasons. South Africa determines Lesotho's wages and prices, interest rates and customs receipts, exchange rate

of its monetary unit, and controls all trade and communication links between Lesotho and the rest of the world (Gill, 1993; Johnston, 1996).

Lesotho is divided into four major ecological zones, namely; the Lowlands, the Foothills, the Mountains, and the Senqu (Orange) River Valley. It has also four distinct seasons: the spring planting season occurs between August and October; the summer months of November to January experience the heaviest rainfall; autumn extends from February to April; and the winter months of May to July bring frost and sometimes much snow (Stevens, 1967).

The country is relatively homogenous in terms of linguistic and cultural affiliation. Sesotho is the national language, while the English language is the medium of instruction in tertiary institutions, and also used in government and business transactions. The inhabitants of Lesotho are referred to as Basotho (singular, Mosotho).

Six of the ten administrative districts, namely, Butha-buthe, Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, and Mohale's hoek, have their capitals or headquarters in the small towns connected by the main arterial road running north to south in the western Lowland belt. One district, Quthing, lies in the Orange River Valley in the south. The remaining three districts, Qacha's nek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka, have mountain headquarters. The country's capital, Maseru, was a small and dusty stone-built town of about 9,000 people in the early 1960s (Stevens, 1967; Kingdom of Lesotho, 1966). However, after independence in 1966, it has grown rapidly in size, while the other towns have remained much smaller (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1996). The reason for this is obvious. In most developing countries, social, healthcare, and economic infrastructural facilities are generally concentrated in the national capitals. The disproportionate location of industries, schools, healthcare services, among others, hold a strong attraction for people living in other parts of the country since the promise of a better quality of life and better economic prospects is very high. As a result, also, the impact of the modernization process is particularly felt in national capitals more than any other place in the developing world.

The latest empirical evidence shows that more than 70 percent of Lesotho's population live in the rural areas (United Nations, 2001a). Other evidence indicates that the rural dwellers live in villages whose mean size varies between 94 persons per village in the district of Mohale's hoek and 232 persons in the district of Leribe (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1976). It should be stated that village homesteads are not dispersed across the landscape, rather they are clustered around a central area, which is the chief's place, called moreneng. The relatively concentrated settlement pattern is consistent both with highveld ecology and with the Sotho political tradition (Kuper, 1975a; 1975b; Sansom, 1974). On the other hand, about 70 percent of the population live in the Lowlands and Foothills, whereas the Mountains, the largest of the ecological zones in area, are relatively sparsely populated. In fact, of the country's 30,000 square kilometre of land, less than 10 percent is arable and the country contains as many as 1,000 people per square kilometre of arable land (Epprecht, 2000), although the current overall population density is 67 persons per square kilometre (United Nations, 2001 b).

Because of better economic prospects in South Africa, which completely surrounds it, Lesotho has been consistently suffering from a high level of male labour migration. It is estimated that about 40 percent of the male labour force in the age group 20-39 is away in South Africa at any one time (Holland et al., 1988). These migrants are principally employed in the mines on contracts of between 6-18 months, which may be renewable. Migrant remittances play a very important role in the country's economy. It has been estimated that migrant remittances contributed about 43.7 percent of the Gross National Product in 1990 (UNDP/FAO, 1992). The migration of able-bodied men to South Africa effectively leaves agricultural production in the hands of women, children and the elderly. Indeed, women play a crucial role in Lesotho's agriculture as direct subsistence producers and as farm managers for absent male landholders. Because of the sex-selective migration of labour, there are significantly more women than men in Lesotho's domestic economy. Also, subsistence agriculture is the dominant occupation for the people left behind.

Despite the high risks involved in crop production due largely to erratic rainfall, drought, hail and frost, it remains a central activity in the rural areas. Crop production is seen as essential in meeting the needs of households as a cushion against food insecurity in the event of inadequate or erratic remittances from migrant workers.

World Bank (2000) estimates suggest that life expectancy at birth is 55 years for Lesotho, while infant mortality rate is 93 deaths per 1,000 live births, which is slightly higher than the regional average of 92 deaths per 1,000 live births. About 49 percent of the population live below the national poverty line, while the gross national product per capita is currently US\$560. Only about 17 percent of the population aged 15 years and over are illiterate, as compared with 39 percent for sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2000). It is remarkable that in Lesotho both literacy and educational levels are higher for females than males. This is because more uneducated adult males migrate to South Africa to work as unskilled labourers in the country's diamond mines (Sembajwe and Makatsjane, 1992). Additionally, the predominantly rural cattle-rearers are more male-selective.

There is a growing body of literature to support the fact that the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), is rising at alarming proportions in Lesotho, and other parts of Southern Africa, with disastrous consequences for the elderly (World Health Organization, 2001; United Nations, 2001c; Dorrington et al., 2001; UNAIDS, 2000; Zimbabwe Ministry of Health, 1995). While the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is currently at 23.6 percent of the adult population of Lesotho (UNAIDS/World Health Organization, 2000), the overall HIV/AIDS prevalence rate for the country is 27.1 percent (World Health Organization, 2001). It is common knowledge that infection with the virus leads to the destruction of a person's immune system, making the victim highly susceptible to multiple infections and ultimately results in the inevitable death of the victim since there is no cure for AIDS. All available pieces of empirical evidence reach the common conclusion that increases in young and adult

mortality are essentially a consequence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic (World Health Organization, 2001; United Nations, 2001); UNAIDS,2000). The implication is that if nothing is done to reverse the dismal situation, the elderly persons, especially women, will be the hardest hit since they will have the dual responsibility of taking care of themselves and their grandchildren with the increasing demise of their adult children at a time when they have no meaningful resource base.

In the context of these developments concerning the profile of Lesotho, carrying out a districts-based study of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the country's elderly women will undoubtedly provide some insights and throw some light on their welfare and living arrangements.

It should be stated from the outset that theories about the living arrangements of elderly women of Africa, let alone Lesotho, are scanty, fragmented and rudimentary. African traditional societies have long been characterized by extended family living arrangements that sometimes span three to four generations. Thus, it is common to find a man living with his wife and children, as well as parents and grandchildren, cousins, in-laws and other relatives. This situation may provide a conducive environment for the care and support of the elderly persons. Traore (1985) argues that family support for the older population is strong in Mali since there are no official public sector structures to support them, stressing that in the rare case of the family defaulting, the rural community provides the necessary support. In their study, Chobokoane and Zuberi (2001) provide a description of living arrangements among the Sotho in different parts of Southern Africa. They found that while males continue to play a major role as household heads, female headed households are now a dominant feature of household structure among the Sotho. Similarly, in a pioneering research work in three districts of Kenya, Khasiani (1987) gathered descriptive information on the household size, levels of income and educational attainment in understanding the role and effectiveness of the family in meeting the basic needs of the elderly persons. He found that the economic well-being of the elderly had deteriorated resulting from the probable disintegration of the extended family

system, and that a significant proportion of them, especially, the oldest old who incidentally were most needful of physical, financial and emotional care, lived alone. It should be noted that living alone in most developed countries is associated with good health and economic autonomy (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 1999). This is essentially because of the universality of formal education that enables an individual to be gainfully employed, and the existence of universal social security benefits. In contrast, for a developing country like Lesotho, which has no such universal social security system, living alone may be disadvantageous especially to the elderly in terms of their welfare. However, this fact should not be accepted outright. This is because older people living alone could in fact be living close to relatives as they do in the United States and Europe and so continue to give and receive considerable levels of support from family members. Besides, the census data of Lesotho do not provide any information on proximity or wider kin network (Kingdom of Lesotho,1996; 1976; 1966).

In his monumental study of elderly persons' patterns of kin availability and access, Wolf (1994) contends that kin availability is critical to the welfare of the older population. This is because members of the kin group constitute a vital resource pool that provides shared residential space, time and money to which the elderly persons in need of care and assistance can make recourse. Although he concedes that microdata containing information on kin availability are not widely available, he observes that among the married elderly, the spouse is possibly the most important member of the kin group, and concludes that having more children makes coresidence with children more likely.

Susan De Vos (1995; 1990) investigated the household arrangements of the elderly persons in six Latin American countries in the mid-1970s. She found that a rather high proportion (about 58 percent) of the older population in these countries lived in extended family households, while a fairly low proportion lived alone or only with a spouse, and the results were most apparent among the married persons. Her findings present a vivid portrayal of what obtains in much of the developing, contrary to

what we find in the developed countries of North America and Europe.

Because only those in selected employment receive any, even limited, social security benefits, the welfare of the elderly in most parts of Africa is considered to be primarily a family responsibility (Dixon, 1987). However, modernisation, which is believed to be due to changes in economic, social, and political structures, as well as in human personality observed through time (Easterline, 1983), is impacting adversely on this traditional African system. Most theories related to the living arrangements of the older population in some parts of the developing world emphasize the effects of modernization and cultural norms. The proponents of the modernisation theory of aging and elderly living arrangements focus on the effects of technological advancement, industrialisation, and the spread of modern education (Berquo and Xenos, 1992; Treas and Logue, 1986; Cowgill, 1986; Goode, 1963). This is because the development of health technology raises longevity, which in turn results in prolonged retirement of the older population that is often accompanied by a noticeable loss of income and social prestige. Also, industrialisation requires a separation of work from home and a highly mobile work force, which weakens familial ties to a particular geographical location. Similarly, modern education leads to changes in values and intellectual development across generations as younger people place greater emphasis on self-fulfillment as individuals rather than on their responsibilities toward their relatives. Thus, modernisation renders living in extended family households less essential and economically less viable and therefore facilitates the transition to conjugal or nuclear family living arrangements. The preservation and continuity of the support and respect accorded the elderly in traditional societies should be of paramount importance as Treas and Logue (1986) have warned that the older population may be viewed as victims of modernisation efforts if their status declines with development.

Given the foregoing theoretical argument, it can then be expected that variations in the living arrangements of the aged are the result of differences in levels of development. Thus, in Lesotho's specific context, it

is hypothesized that those districts of Lesotho with a higher percentage of educational attainment are expected to exhibit weaker extended kinship ties in their living arrangements and to be characterised by smaller household sizes and a higher percentage of older people living alone.

DATA AND METHODS

The present study will use the most current census micro-data from Lesotho, that is, the 1996 Population Census of Lesotho. This data set is part of the collection of census micro-data presently archived by the African Census Analysis Project of the Population Studies Center of the University of Pennsylvania, which are used for demographic research and training (Zuberi, 2001).

In this study, the elderly is defined as the population aged 60 years and over, and the unit of analysis is the elderly woman aged 60 years and over. The scope of the study are the ten administrative districts of Lesotho, which have been named previously. It is important to examine the living arrangements of the elderly women in these districts to find out whether there are major differences in their coresidential patterns as a result of factors such as the influence of the modernisation process, migration, HIV/AIDS-related mortality, and their ecological location, for possible policy interventions.

The problems associated with the collection of reliable information in Africa and other developing regions have been documented in the literature (Cleland, 1996; Arriaga, 1994; Ewbank, 1981; Shryock and Siegel, 1976). Two dimensions of census data quality are critical: completeness of the count, and accurate reporting of age. Available evidence indicates that the coverage of the 1996 census data of Lesotho was universal (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1996), while an evaluation of the age-sex data suggested that the data are of good quality (Mba, 2002).

Although the data from the 1996 Census of Lesotho provide a unique opportunity to establish important benchmarks for a wide range of demographic, social and economic variables, the enumeration did not cover a wide range of topics that would permit a

detailed and exhaustive treatment of the subject matter. For example, there was no information on income. However, the census included questions on certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics pertinent to the study of ageing populations, which are therefore selected for the study of the elderly women of Lesotho. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics considered include women's age, level of educational attainment, geographic district of residence, place of residence (urban versus rural), marital status, employment status, household size, and surviving children. Also, various indicators of living arrangements, such as living alone, living with spouse only, living with children only, living with spouse and grandchildren, among others, are examined.

Broadly, two levels of analysis, namely, bivariate and multivariate, are employed in this study. In the bivariate analysis, simple cross-tabulations will be used to identify patterns among the study variables, as well as to establish a basis for the subsequent multivariate analysis.

Because Lesotho, just like many African countries, is a country without any comprehensive universal social security and welfare scheme, coupled with the threatening inroads of modernisation, it can plausibly be assumed that elderly women who live alone and those of them who live with only their grandchildren may be in most need of assistance and care*. On the other hand, those older women who coreside with their adult children and adult relatives (including husbands, children, sons/daughters-in-law, and others) may be those most likely to receive support. Thus, these four indicators of living arrangements (living alone, living with grandchild, living with adult child, and living with adult relative) are used for multivariate analysis with a view to predicting their likelihood in the Lesotho context. It should be noted that in this study, adult children and

adult relatives are defined as those aged 20 years or over.

The second-level analysis uses multivariate logistic regression technique to predict the likelihood of the elderly women to live alone, live with grandchild, live with adult child, and live with adult relative. The logistic regression model is used because the dependable variables can be dichotomized and hence, logistic regression is generally the appropriate functional form for the analysis of dichotomous variables (Aldrich and Nelson, 1984, SPSS Inc., 1999)*. For example, living alone is treated as a dichotomous variable that is assigned the value 1 if the elderly woman lives alone, and 0 if she does not live alone. Similar considerations underlie the use of the remaining three indicators of living arrangements.

The ten administrative districts of Lesotho constitute the independent variables. Because the majority of the Basotho occupy the Lowlands, which contain most of the arable land, the present study employs one of the districts in this ecological zone - Buthabuthe - as a reference category in the multivariate analysis. This district is also located in the northernmost part of the country. Furthermore, the selected background (demographic and socio-economic) characteristics are used as control variables for the study on the basis of their theoretical importance and data availability.

In the multiple logistic regression analysis, results are shown as regression coefficients and odd ratios or in this context, odds of the living arrangement indicator (and 95 percent confidence interval), associated with each variable. It should be noted that Wald tests of significance are utilized for individual coefficients and for variable groups (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989). Two multivariate models are estimated for each of the four indicators of living arrangements. The first model uses only variables

* It is conceded that these are rather rough approximations as there is no way to empirically show that these women do not receive financial aid from relatives simply because they are living alone or with grandchildren only since the census did not provide any information on income and remittances.

* Multinomial logistic regression could have been used since an elderly woman could live alone, live with adult child, or in other types of household but it is "conceptually clearer to think in terms of yes/no (dichotomy) rather than trying to compare only two of three possibilities" (De Vos, 1995:200).

from the ten districts, while the second model utilizes the variables in the first model plus the predictor variables. However, results are shown only for the second of the two models in each case.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 shows that the elderly women are generally located in the younger ages of 60-69 years across the districts of Lesotho. This is an expected pattern since mortality inevitably results with advancing age

in all human populations. However, that the two age groups (60-64 and 65-69) together account for more than 50 percent of the elderly women in Lesotho is indicative of the fact that the elderly population is a “youthful” one, unlike what obtains in most of the developed countries of Europe and North America (United Nations, 2001b). The table further reveals that Thaba-tseka district contains the highest proportion (17 percent) of oldest elderly women (those aged 80 years or over), while the least proportion of oldest elderly women is in the Mokhotlong district (10 percent).

Table 1 – Percentage Distribution of the Elderly Women of Lesotho by Characteristics and Districts, 1996

Characteristics	Buthabuthe	Leribe	Berea	Maseru	Mafeteng	Mohale's hoek	Quthing	Qacha's nek	Mokhotlong	Thtse
Age										
60-64	34.2	33.7	32.8	33.4	31.6	34.3	36.4	3.8	37.0	36
65-69	20.1	21.2	19.7	20.0	19.7	19.1	19.2	20.1	17.7	17
70-74	15.0	15.6	16.5	17.5	17.8	16.2	15.9	16.1	15.7	15
75-79	14.5	14.2	14.9	14.0	15.8	16.6	15.3	15.5	14.0	14
80+	16.2	15.3	16.1	15.1	15.1	9.8	1.2	14.5	15.6	16
Marital status										
Never married	1.2	2.2	2.1	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.3	2.5	1.8	2.0
Married	42.5	41.9	37.2	35.3	35.6	37.6	31.7	49.0	51.2	59
Separated	1.3	1.7	2.2	1.8	2.5	1.6	1.4	2.3	1.5	1.4
Divorced	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.3	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.4
Widowed	54.3	53.3	57.7	59.1	58.5	57.3	62.6	45.8	44.9	36
Residence										
Urban	9.4	13.0	12.6	22.9	6.1	6.1	4.9	5.2	2.9	4.0
Rural	90.6	87.0	87.4	77.1	93.9	93.9	95.1	94.8	97.1	96
Education										
No Education	27.7	22.0	19.8	18.4	18.5	31.5	40.7	36.2	41.7	46
Primary	68.3	72.0	74.2	73.8	75.4	63.9	55.4	58.9	54.0	51
Secondary	2.0	2.7	2.3	3.8	2.4	1.6	1.9	2.3	1.9	0.9
Higher	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.9
Employment Status										
Not working	89.8	90.8	91.1	87.6	89.6	93.6	89.0	89.5	89.3	90
Working	10.2	9.2	8.9	12.4	10.4	6.4	11.0	10.5	10.7	9.5
Household size										
< 6	58.0	58.7	61.7	56.8	57.3	57.9	49.0	47.4	60.5	60
6 +	42.0	41.3	38.3	43.2	42.7	42.1	51.0	52.6	39.5	39
Surviving children										
0 - 19	66.9	66.2	66.4	65.3	65.7	66.6	66.8	68.7	67.3	66
20.39	33.1	33.8	33.6	34.7	34.3	33.4	33.2	31.3	32.7	33
Total	6.0	15.5	13.3	19.2	12.2	11.0	6.8	4.3	4.3	7.4
No. of cases	4527	11813	10093	14631	9275	8362	5148	3256	3302	57

Source: 1996 Population Census of Lesotho Data Set

Note: The total for *Education* may not add up to 100 because of *not stated* category.

When the districts are examined according to marital status, interesting findings emerge. Table I indicates that a substantial majority of the women have lost their husbands. The percentage widowed ranges from 37 percent in Thaba-tseka district through 59 percent in Mafeteng district to as high as 63 percent in Quthing district. A possible explanation for the high proportion of widowhood is that women in all societies generally outlive men, and particularly in Africa, they marry men much older than themselves. The table shows that most women in Lesotho are either married or widowed since both categories account for about 95 percent of the marital status in the districts of the nation.

An overwhelming majority of the elderly women of Lesotho reside in the rural areas. According to Table 1, with the exception of the Maseru district (which is the capital of the country) where 23 percent of them live in urban areas, between 87 percent and 97 percent of the women in the remaining nine districts are rural dwellers.

Unarguably, formal education offers the hope of a better economic future. Thus the attainment of economic well-being is contingent on the acquisition of relevant skills that will aid in engaging in income-generating activities. Table I shows that a substantial number of the Lesotho elderly women had no formal education. Those of them that lacked formal education ranged from about 20 percent in Leribe, Berea, Maseru, and Mafeteng districts to over 40 percent in Quthing, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka districts. While majority of them had only primary education, the skills they acquired at that level severely limits them to engage in any meaningful income-generating activities. As a result, very few of them can be found in white-collar jobs. Table 1 partly confirms this point since over 85 percent of the women in all the ten districts are not in formal employment, although by age 60, a woman must have attained retirement age, which therefore may warrant her leaving public sector work.

It is striking that apart from those of them in Quthing and Qacha's nek districts, the elderly women in Lesotho tend to co-reside in smaller household sizes as evidenced from Table 1. This state of affairs may not be a rational choice of the women since a large

number of them are widows and some of their older children have migrated out in search of better employment opportunities (Sembajwe and Makatsjane, 1992). This is partly explained by the fact that three out of every five elderly women in the ten districts of Lesotho are staying with young children (aged 0-19 years). A similar finding has been reported by Khasiani (1987) who found that there is an inverse relationship between the age of the elderly persons and household size in Kenya. It should be noted that in the traditional African society procreation assures economic security especially in old age (Caldwell, 1977). However, the findings here seem to suggest that as women grow older in Lesotho, their household size diminishes.

Overall, there are more elderly women in the national capital, Maseru, than any other district of Lesotho. In fact, the elderly women in Maseru district are about four times higher than their counterparts in Qacha's nek and Mokhotlong districts, and about three times higher than those women in Butha-buthe, Quthing, and Thaba-tseka. Qacha's nek and Mokhotlong districts are sparsely populated since they are mountainous districts, while Maseru, as the national capital, contains the greatest number of inhabitants.

Table 2 presents the distribution of living arrangements of the elderly women by district in Lesotho. It is remarkable to observe that a good number of these women are living alone. The proportion ranges from 8 percent in Quthing to 10 percent in Buthabuthe, Leribe, and Maseru, and then to as high as 14 percent in Mokhotlong. Mokhotlong district has the largest proportion of the elderly women living alone probably because it is located in the barren mountains with very little prospects of arable land. This proportion is lower than what is found in Finland (37 percent) and other advanced economies (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 1999). Nevertheless, because there are no public welfare structures to cater for the needs of these Lesotho women, the findings are a cause for concern.

That very few of these elderly women are co-residing with their spouses harks back to the results of Table 1 where a good number of them are widows. The

Table 2 – Percentage Distribution of the Living Arrangements of the Elderly Women of Lesotho Districts, 1996

Living Arrangements	Buthabuthe	Leribe	Berea	Maseru	Mafeteng	Mohale's hoek	Quthing	Qacha's nek	Mokhotlong	Thtse
Living alone	10.4	10.4	12.5	10.2	10.6	11.3	7.9	8.7	13.5	12
Living with spouse only	3.2	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.2	2.3	2.8	4.2	4.2
Living with children only	10.3	12.1	9.6	10.8	9.6	12.2	12.1	10.2	9.9	8.2
Living with grand-children only	13.2	10.8	11.8	8.4	17.9	8.2	7.3	6.5	7.6	9.
Living with others only	5.4	5.9	6.5	13.5	6.7	7.1	6.8	7.3	8.0	7.
Living with spouse and children only	6.7	8.0	5.3	6.4	6.2	7.0	5.7	5.9	8.2	7.
Living with children and others only	9.2	9.7	9.7	11.1	9.9	11.3	13.9	14.2	9.9	8.
Living with spouse and others only	2.6	2.8	2.6	3.4	2.7	3.0	2.4	3.3	4.3	4.
Living with spouse and children	3.8	3.7	3.3	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.8	2.1	2.8	3.8
Living with spouse, children and others	13.6	13.9	13.2	17.1	13.9	14.9	18.6	20.7	17.1	15
Living with spouse, children, grandchildren, others	21.6	18.9	21.9	13.2	16.6	19.6	21.2	18.3	14.5	19
Number of cases	7757	20280	16956	24822	15708	13682	8287	5221	5724	98

Source: 1996 Population Census of Lesotho Data Set

elderly women of Leribe, Mohale's hoek, and Quthing districts are more likely to co-reside with their children only than their counterparts in the other districts. It is worthy of note that a significant proportion of the women are living with their grandchildren only. In fact, Table 2 indicates that 18 percent of the elderly women from Mafeteng district are living with their grandchildren alone. This is followed by Butha-buthe (13 percent), and Berea (12 percent). A probable reason may be a more pronounced emigration of their adult children, or death of their adult children due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Because most of these grandchildren are young and at school, they constitute an economic

burden to their grandmothers who have the responsibility of at least partly caring for them (assuming that migrant surviving children send remittances).

In general, the findings presented in Table 2 reinforce the preponderance of kin co-residence in Lesotho, as is the case in many parts of the African region. This is because the greatest number of the elderly women across the districts live with their spouses, children, grandchildren, and others. It is, however, important to note that this kin co-residence is least in the nation's capital, Maseru. This may be partly because of accommodation problems inherent in

major urban areas, and partly because of the influence of modernization which promotes individualism and personal freedom.

From the foregoing, four indicators of living arrangements can readily be seen as suggestive of lack of financial care and availability of such care in Lesotho's specific context and perhaps that of Africa. These are *Living alone and living with grandchildren alone* as a proxy for lacking aid, and *living with adult children and living with adult relatives* as a proxy for aid availability. Prompted then by the need to predict the likelihood of aid availability and its lack for possible policy interventions in Lesotho, the next section deals with the multivariate results using these four indicators. The multivariate analysis is important either to confirm the foregoing descriptive analysis or to reveal the impact of confounding factors in the event of dissimilar results at the level of the former which are not captured by the latter.

Multivariate Analysis

The logistic regression coefficients and odds ratios predicting the likelihood of an elderly woman to live alone and with a grandchild are presented in Table 3 for the districts of Lesotho. The table shows that five districts impact significantly on the propensity to live alone in the country (Model 1). While there is a positive correlation with the likelihood to live alone for the elderly women who live in Berea, Mohale's hoek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka districts, there is a negative association with the propensity to live alone in Quthing district. The findings show that the elderly women of Mokhotlong district might stand the greatest risk of living alone, followed by their counterparts from Thaba-tseka district. Specifically, the elderly women of Mokhotlong district are about five times (odds ratio, 5.0) as likely as their counterparts from Buthabuthe district, the reference category, to live alone. On the other hand, the probability to live alone is about 50 percent significantly higher in Butha-buthe district than the Quthing district (odds ratio, 0.4). The findings seem to suggest that women in the Mokhotlong district are more likely than their counterparts in the other nine districts to live alone.

The result is consistent with the descriptive finding and points to the ecological disadvantage of that mountainous part of the country.

When coresidence with grandchildren is considered (Model 2), Table 3 indicates that seven districts have significant correlation with the likelihood to live with grandchildren. The elderly women of Mafeteng district are about five times (odds ratio, 5.1) as likely as their counterparts from Butha-buthe district to live with grandchildren.

However, six districts, namely, Maseru, Mohale's hoek, Quthing, Qacha's nek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka, have negative association with respect to the probability of co-residence with grandchildren. The findings show that the propensity to live with a grandchild is about 60 percent higher in Butha-buthe than in the Mokhotlong, and Thabatseka districts. The strongest negative significant correlation with respect to the probability of co-residence with a grandchild is found in the Mohale's hoek, Quthing, and Qacha's nek districts - the women are about 80 percent more likely to live with their grandchildren in Butha-buthe district than in any of these. The results from the preceding models seem to indicate that the elderly women from Butha-buthe, Berea, Mafeteng, Mohale's hoek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka districts (that is, six out of ten districts) might be in need of care and support more than the remaining districts. Although in the logistic regression analysis women resident in certain districts demonstrated higher probabilities of living alone, strictly speaking, it does not necessarily follow that older women in these districts are in a greater need of care and support. This is because the census data provide very little information about the wider kin network, for example, we do not know whether their adult children live close by; neither do we know whether the elderly women receive remittances from their adult children working elsewhere. It is noteworthy that this list includes two of the three mountainous districts of Lesotho, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka districts, which have very limited arable land.

The likelihood of the elderly women's co-residence with adult children and adult relatives is displayed

Table 3 – Logistic Regression Coefficients and Odds Ratios Predicting the Likelihood of an Elderly Woman living alone and with a grandchild by District, Lesotho, 1996

Districts/ Variables	Living Alone Model 1		Living with Grandchild Model 2	
	Coefficient	Odds Ratio	Coefficient	Odds Ratio
<i>District</i>				
Butha-buthe(Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Leribe	0.411	1.508	-0.111	0.895
Berea	0.722**	2.059	-0.222	0.801
Maseru	-0.087	0.917	-0.915**	0.401
Mafeteng	0.211	1.235	1.622*	5.063
Mohale's hoek	1.453*	4.276	-1.555*	0.211
Quthing	-0.844*	0.430	-1.344**	0.261
Qacha's nek	-0.333	0.717	-1.606	0.201
Mokhotlong	1.600**	4.953	-0.924	0.397
Thaba-tseka	1.444*	4.238	-0.996*	0.369
<i>Age</i>				
60-69 (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
70-79	0.235	1.265	0.339*	1.404
80+	-1.444**	0.236	-1.662**	0.190
<i>Marital Status</i>				
Never married	0.843*	2.323	na	na
Married (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Separated	0.085	1.089	0.200	1.221
Divorced	0.068	1.070	1.011	2.748
Widowed	1.665**	5.286	1.844*	6.322
<i>Education</i>				
No Education (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Primary	0.232	1.261	0.314*	1.369
Secondary	0.844*	2.326	-0.644**	0.525
Higher	1.977**	7.221	-0.909*	0.403
<i>Residence</i>				
Urban (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Rural	1.611**	5.008	1.202*	3.327
<i>Employment status</i>				
Not working (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Working	1.423*	4.150	1.50**	4.482
<i>Household size</i>				
< 6 (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
6+	na	na	1.627*	5.089
-2 log likelihood	477.7		888.5	
Model X ² (p-value)	208.1 (0.00)		177.2 (0.00)	

*p<.05, **p<.01

Note: P-values are based on Wald statistic; na = not applicable.

in Table 4. Model 3 reveals that while there is a significant positive association with respect to the probability of living with adult children in Leribe, and Mohale's hoek, there is a significant negative correlation in connection with the prevalence of co-residence with adult children in Qacha's nek, Mokhotlong, and Thabatseka. The findings show that the elderly women who reside in Mohale's hoek district have a better chance to live with their adult children than their counterparts from Leribe district (odds ratio 4.2 versus 3.1). However, the likelihood of living with an adult child is about 60 percent higher in Butha-buthe district than in Thaba-tseka district, and about 70 percent higher in Butha-buthe than in Qacha's nek. The greatest negative association is found in the Mokhotlong district (odds ratio, 0.2).

Model 4 indicates that the elderly women of Leribe, Mohale's hoek and Quthing districts are significantly more likely to live with their adult relatives than those from Butha-buthe district (odds ratios, 3.3, 5.0, and 3.4 respectively). In contrast, the probability to co-reside with adult relatives is about 30 percent lower in Qacha's nek district, 20 percent lower in Mokhotlong district, and 50 percent lower in Thaba-tseka district, than in Butha-buthe district.

Overall, Table 4 tends to suggest that the elderly women of Butha-buthe, Leribe, Mohale's hoek, and Quthing districts (that is, four out of ten districts) might stand to benefit from the support of their adult kin than the rest of the women in the remaining districts. All of the four districts are located in the densely populated Lowlands and Foothills. In fact, with the exception of Quthing district that lies in the Orange River valley in the south, the remaining three districts are located in an area running north to south in the western Lowlands belt. All the four districts lie within the small available area of arable land. Therefore, it can be argued that a vital reason why the elderly women co-reside with their adult kin in this area of Lesotho is to benefit from the erratic subsistence farming.

The results of the analysis seem to suggest, on the basis of three indicators of socio-economic development (education, place of residence, and

formal employment) that Lesotho is more or less homogeneous. Contrary to expectation, Maseru district, the capital of the country, did not show any noticeable differences with respect to the three basic indicators. Similarly, Berea district, which benefits from the spill-over effects of the urbanisation process due to its proximity to the capital did not show any remarkable differences. As a result, no clear pattern emerged to validate the modernisation hypothesis. Generally, however, the multivariate findings are consistent with the bivariate results (Table 2). The findings underscore the importance of district of residence in the analysis of the living arrangements of the elderly women of Lesotho.

DISCUSSION AND POLICY ISSUES

The present study sought to characterize the living arrangements of the elderly women of Lesotho, and the likelihood or otherwise of their receiving assistance from their kin. The study found that about 50 percent of these women were aged 60-69 years, and most of them had only primary education. Also, the majority of the women had lost their husbands, with women from Quthing being the greatest hit (63 percent) and those of them from Thaba-tseka the least hit (37 percent). An overwhelming majority of them (about 90 percent) lived in rural areas and had no formal employment. The results showed that the elderly women were more likely to live in households whose size was less than 6, and which had a significant proportion of children. The study further found that although the extended family system still held sway in Lesotho, more women were living alone or living with grandchildren. About 14 percent of the elderly women from Mokhotlong district were living alone, while about 18 percent of those from Mafeteng district lived with their grandchildren alone. A multivariate analysis, designed to authenticate the descriptive findings, as well as measure the probability of living alone and with grandchildren on one hand (both of which served as a crude proxy to predict the likelihood of lack of support), and that of living with adult children and adult relatives on the other hand (both of which served as a proxy to predict the likelihood of support availability), was conducted. The findings showed that six out of the ten districts (Buthabuthe, Berea,

Table 4 – Logistic Regression Coefficients and Odds Ratios Predicting the Likelihood of an Elderly Woman living with an Adult Child and Adult Relative by District, Lesotho, 1996

Districts/ Variables	Living with Adult Child Model 3		Living with Adult Relative Model 4	
	Coefficient	Odds Ratio	Coefficient	Odds Ratio
<i>District</i>				
Butha-buthe(Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Leribe	1.122*	3.071	1.208**	3.347
Berea	-0.304	0.738	-0.199	0.820
Maseru	1.200	3.320	1.078	2.939
Mafeteng	-1.344	0.261	-1.211	0.298
Mohale's hoek	1.431**	4.1.83	1.603**	4.968
Quthing	0.873	2.394	1.212*	3.360
Qacha's nek	-1.199**	0.301	-1.333*	0.264
Mokhotlong	1.622*	0.198	-1.883**	0.152
Thaba-tseka	-0.876	0.416	-0.722**	0.486
<i>Age</i>				
60-69 (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
70-79	0.642*	1.900	0.527*	1.694
80+	1.344**	3.834	1.498**	4.473
<i>Marital Status</i>				
Never married	na	na	na	na
Married (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Separated	0.655*	1.925	0.811**	2.250
Divorced	1.024	2.784	1.271	3.564
Widowed	1.552**	4.581	1.775*	5.900
<i>Education</i>				
No Education (Ref)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Primary	1.344**	3.834	1.845*	6.328
Secondary	-0.722*	0.486	-0.665**	0.514
Higher	-0.844**	0.430	-0.927*	0.396
<i>Residence</i>				
Urban (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Rural	0.997*	2.710	0.606**	1.833
<i>Employment status</i>				
Not working (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
Working	-0.592**	0.553	-.0707*	0.493
<i>Household size</i>				
< 6 (Ref.)	na	1.000	na	1.000
6+	1.444*	4.238	1.822**	6.184
-2 log likelihood	629.7		898.3	
Model X ² (p-value)	155.6 (0.00)		172.5 (0.00)	

*p<.05, **p<.01

Note: P-values are based on Wald statistic; na = not applicable.

Mafeteng, Mohale's hoek, Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka) might stand in need of care and support. The number included two of the three districts located in the Mountains ecological non-arable zone of the country (Mokhotlong, and Thaba-tseka districts), and four of the six districts that lay in the arable Lowland belt (Butha-buthe, Berea, Mafeteng, and Mohale's hoek). However, only four districts (Butha-buthe, Leribe, Mohale's hoek, and Quthing districts) might have adult kin to provide largely subsistence farming assistance, since they lay in the limited available arable land area. Put in another way, the results indicated that the majority of the elderly women of Lesotho might be in need of support and care.

It is obvious that the family alone cannot furnish this vital assistance by the limited subsistence farming. In the first instance, declining fertility of women coupled with increased survival of parents, has multiplied the burdens on family members who are caring for the elderly persons (United Nations, 2001b). Secondly, Lesotho is one of the least developed countries in the world (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2001). Thus, due to pervasive poverty, it can be argued that there is an inverse relationship between modernisation and family support for the elderly, resulting in a growing incidence of low levels of well-being among the elderly persons. This perhaps is contributing also to the weakening of family organizations and kinship networks.

The results of the analysis have shown that there are many more elderly women in rural than urban areas in both absolute and proportionate terms. This might be because of rural-urban migration of the younger population in search of better opportunities of livelihood. Such aging of the rural population has implications for agricultural productivity, maintenance of rural services and the provision of care for the older rural dwellers. Migration of the elderly persons' children to the cities could have a dramatic effect on the well-being of the rural elderly by reducing intergenerational wealth flows to the elderly and causing neglect of the elderly parents left behind. Worse still, not only are the rural elderly persons left with less family support, they are also

left with little or no health services since medical facilities are generally concentrated in urban areas. Khasiani (1987) has warned that "the extended family within which the economic needs of the elderly were traditionally met is no longer fulfilling this function". There is no empirical evidence to substantiate the fact that there is regular and uninterrupted flow of remittances from the elderly women's adult kin working in South Africa, and perhaps elsewhere, to them.

Because an overwhelming majority of these elderly women reside in the rural areas, it is obvious that their primary means of subsistence are agricultural activities, which by definition require much physical strength. With advancing age and concomitant frailty, these activities are likely to be deleterious to the health of the women. It is thus suggested that the government should institute alternative, less tedious and viable income-generating programmes such as handicraft and other physically less demanding activities, that will provide means of livelihood for these women, many of whom are widows and live alone in the rural areas.

Formal education is critical to the attainment of economic security in old age as societies respond to the modernisation process. Since an overwhelming majority of the women did not go beyond primary education, the government should encourage girls to pursue higher education for their own good and that of the society.

It should be stated that in Lesotho in particular, and Africa in general, the traditional ethics surrounding filial piety give legitimacy to filial care. Reciprocity norms sustained within these traditional mores, which foster the informal social security system within the family, on the one hand provide the elderly population with a sense of entitlement to care and support, and on the other hand leave the children with a sense of obligation for care and support. However, traditional support systems are changing in character due to development and modernisation, and the family's direct role in the support and care of the elderly will likely be eroded. Although there are presently no empirical data to substantiate this argument, it is common knowledge that the resources

accumulated by the very few aged people during their entire working career in formal employment are not sufficient to compensate for the dwindling traditional support and care for the older population.

Since the primary means of transmission of HIV is through heterosexual intercourse (World Health Organization, 1996; 1995), it is imperative to address the unbridled and promiscuous sexual lifestyles of both the teenagers and adults (Mbamaonyekwu, 2001 a; 2000). Therefore, there is the urgent need for the development of more relevant information, education and communication (IEC) programmes to build knowledge, motivation and skills among all segments of the Lesotho society with regard to the adverse consequences of HIV/AIDS. The EC programmes need to be developed, based on a full understanding of the individual and the broader socio-economic factors that influence individual, institutional and group behaviour. They should focus on fostering health and responsible behaviour among the young and old alike. Since men and women in the prime of life are the worst hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic (World Health Organization, 2001; UNAIDS, 2000), they should be targetted for special interventions. This is because women, especially in the Lesotho context, are caregivers to both the elderly and children when their husbands are away as migrant workers in South Africa. There are various factors which make the women susceptible to HIV/AIDS. Paramount among them is their assuming a subservient role to that of men. A married woman cannot refuse her husband's sexual advances even if she knows that he has extra-marital affairs that have the potential of exposing him to the risk of HIV and thus endanger her own life and health by having unprotected sex. Generally, men have more sexual partners than women, and men away from their wives as migrant workers are undoubtedly a serious problem as they often bring home the virus. Another important risk factor is the economic power

than men have over women. The older and more economically powerful men often entice the poorer and younger women. With promises of economic benefits, young women often engage in unsafe sexual behaviour with these older men, thereby running the risk of becoming infected with, or spreading, HIV/AIDS. Consequently, confidence-building among women is imperative so that from a young age women should be socialised to be able to say no to undesirable and unsafe sexual advances. The empowerment of women socially, economically, legally, and culturally would greatly enhance their self-worth, and ultimately ensure that women are not exposed to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections because of their inferior status.

Finally, it should be noted that census-based analyses, per se do not furnish much depth of understanding of social changes in the status and condition of the elderly persons. The need for ongoing research that is conducted at a number of places in time to build up longitudinal data cannot be overemphasized.

Research on population aging, of any significant scale in Africa, is a recent phenomenon, largely due to the fact that the region has been characterized as youthful populations with minimal number and proportion of elderly persons. The current emerging efforts on the subject are a reflection of the recognition of population aging as of considerable public and private importance. There is presently growing awareness of the implications of population aging for social and economic development, in addition to the increasing understanding of the associated impact of population aging for both individuals and communities in the areas of health, lifestyle, and well being (Mba, 2001; Mbamaonyekwu, 2001b; Kinsella, 1988; Warnes, 1986). These emerging efforts should be sustained.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was undertaken while Chuks J. Mba (Mbamaonyekwu, C.J.), Ph.D was a postdoctoral fellow with the African Census Analysis Project (ACAP) at the Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. Support for this research was provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant to ACAP. The author is solely responsible for the views expressed in the paper.

REFERENCES

- Aldrich, J. and F. Nelson. 1984. *Linear Probability, Logit and Probit Models*. Beverly Hills, USA: Sage Publications.
- Angel, R.J. and J.L. Angel. 1997. *Who Will Care for Us? Aging and Long-Term Care in Multicultural America*. New York: New York University Press.
- Arriaga, E.E., (with associates Johnson, P.D. and Jamison, E.). 1994. *Population Analysis with Microcomputers: Presentation of Techniques*. Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: U.S.
- Bureau of the Census.
- Berquo, E. and P. XENOS. (eds.). 1992. *Family Systems and Cultural Change*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Buckley, S. 1998. "Birthrates Declining in Much of Africa: Economic Pressures, Better Education, Changing Attitudes help Explain Trend", in *Washington Post*, April 27, A1 1.
- Caldwell, J.C. 1982. *The Theory of Fertility Decline*. New York: Academic Press.
- Caldwell, J.C. 1977. "The Economic Rationality of High Fertility: An Investigation Illustrated with Nigeria Survey data." *Population Studies* 31: 5-27.
- Casterline, J.B. 1999. *The Onset and Pace of Fertility Transition: National Patterns in the second half of the Twentieth Century Population Council Working Papers No. 128*. New York.
- Clark, R.L. 1989. "Economic Well-being of the Elderly: Theory and Measurement." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* 4: 19-34.
- Clark, R. and R. Anker. 1990. "Labor Force Participation Rates of Older Persons: An International Comparison." *International Labor Review* 129: 255-271.
- Cleland, J. 1996. "Demographic Data Collection in Less Developed Countries 1946-1996." *Population Studies* 50: 433-450.
- Chobokoane, N. and T. Zuberi. 2001. "Living Arrangements among the Sotho: A Description." *Fourth African Census Analysis Project Workshop*. Social Change and the Demography of Africa: Evidence from the Analysis of Census Data. Dakar, Senegal, January 15-17.
- Cohen B. 1998. "The Emerging Fertility Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa" *World Development* 26: 143-161.
- Cowgill, D. O. 1986. *Aging Around the World*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishers.
- De Vos, S. M. 1995. *Household Composition in Latin America* The Plenum Series on Demographic Methods and Population Analysis. New York: Plenum Press.
- De Vos, S. M. 1990. "Extended Family Living Among Older People in Six Latin American Countries." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 45: S87-94.
- Dixon, J. (ed.), 1987. *Social Welfare in Africa*. London: Croom Helm Publishers.
- Dorrington, R., D. Bourne, D. Bradshaw, R. Laubscher, and I. Timaeus. 2001. *The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Adult Mortality in South Africa Technical Report*, Burden of Disease Research Unit. South Africa: Medical Research Council.
- Durand, J.D. 1975. *The Labor Force in Economic Development*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Easterline, R.A. 1983. "Modernization and Fertility: A Critical Essay." Pp. 562-586 in *Determinants of Fertility in Developing Countries*. Vol. 2, edited by Bulatao, R.A. and Lee, R.D. New York: Academic Press.
- Ewbank, D.C. 1981. *Age Misreporting and Age-Selective Under-enumeration: Sources, Patterns and Consequences for Demographic Analysis*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- IFE Conference, 1987. *The Cultural Roots of Africa's Fertility Regimes*. Proceedings of the IFE Conference, February 25 - March 1, 1987. Department of Demography and Social Statistics, Obafemi Awolowo University/Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania.
- Gill, S.J. 1993. *A Short History of Lesotho: From the Late Stone Age until the 1993 Elections*. Morija Museum and Archives. Lesotho: Morija.
- Goode, W. J. 1963. *World Revolution and Family Patterns*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Hosmer, D. W. and S. Lemeshow. 1989. *Applied Logistic Regression*. New York: John Wiley Publishers.
- Holland, D.W., J.C. Plath, and J.W. Carvallo. 1988. *Labour Migration and Agricultural Development in Lesotho*. Ministry of Agriculture. Lesotho: Maseru.
- Johnston, D. 1996. *Lesotho*. World Bibliographic Series vol.3, Revised Edition. Oxford: Clio Press.
- Kendig, H.L., A. HASHIMOTO, and L.C. COPPARD (eds.), 1992. *Family Support for the Elderly*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Khasiani, S.A. 1987. "The Role of the Family in Meeting the Social and Economic Needs of the Aging Population in Kenya." *GENUS* 43: 103- 120.

- Kingdom of Lesotho, 1996. Population Census Analytical Report. Volume IIIA: Population Dynamics. Bureau of Statistics, Maseru and United Nations Population Fund.
- Kingdom of Lesotho, 1976. 1976 Population Census Report Vol. II. Lesotho: Bureau of Statistics, Maseru.
- Kingdom of Lesotho, 1966. 1966 Population Census Report Vol. I. Lesotho: The Bureau of Statistics, Maseru.
- Kinsella, K. 1988. Aging in the Third World. International Population Report Series P95, No. 79, Center for International Research. US Bureau of the Census, Washington D.C.
- Kuper, A. 1975a. "The Social Structure of the Sotho-speaking Peoples of Southern Africa." *Africa* 45: 67-81.
- Kuper, A. 1975b. "The Social Structure of the Sotho-speaking Peoples of Southern Africa." *Africa* 45: 139-149.
- Martin, L. 1989. "Living Arrangements of the Elderly in Fiji, Korea, Malaysia, and the Philippines." *Demography* 26: 627-643.
- Martin, L. 1990. "Changing Intergenerational Family Relations in East Asia." *The Annals* 510: 102-114.
- Mba, C.J. 2002. "Assessing the Reliability of the 1986 and 1996 Lesotho Census Data." *Journal of Social Development in Africa*. (in press).
- Mba, C.J. 2001. "Nigeria's Ageing Population: A Call for Attention." *BOLD Quarterly Journal of the International Institute on Ageing* 12: 15-24.
- Mbamaonyekwu, J.C. 2001a. "The Battle Against HIV/AIDS: The Winds are Contrary", *The Spectator*, Saturday, March 24, p.3.
- Mbamaonyekwu, C.J. 2001b. "Africa's Ageing Populations." *BOLD Quarterly Journal of the International Institute on Ageing* 11: 2-7.
- Mbamaonyekwu, J.C., 2000. "AIDS: A Threat to Humanity", *The Spectator*, Saturday, December 2, p.3
- McDonald, P. 1992. "Convergence or Compromise in Historical Family Change?" Pp. 15-30 in *Family Systems and Cultural Change*, edited by Berquo, E. and P. Xenos. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sansom, B. 1974. "Traditional Economic Systems." Pp. 135-176 in *The Bantu-speaking Peoples of Southern Africa* edited by D. Hammond-Tooke. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Sembajwe, I. and T. Makatsjane. 1992. "Migration and Rural Crisis in a Labour Reserve Economy: Lesotho." Pp. 237-276 in *Migration, Development and Urbanization Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa* edited by M. Toure and T. O. Fadayomi. Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.
- Shryock, H. and J. S. SIEGEL. 1976. The Methods and Materials of Demography (Condensed Edition by E. G. Stockwell). New York: Academic Press Inc.
- Stevens, R.J. 1967. Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland: the former High Commission Territories in Southern Africa. London: Pall Mall Press.
- SPSS INC. (1999), SPSS Regression Models 10.0, Chicago, USA.
- Traore, G. 1985. "A Profile of the Elderly in Mali." *African Gerontology* 3: 11-23.
- Treas, J. and B. Logue. 1986. "Economic Development and the Older Population." *Population and Development Review* 12: 645-673.
- UNAIDS, 2000. Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic, June, 2000. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Geneva, Switzerland.
- UNDP/FAO, 1992. Lesotho: Project Findings and Recommendations. Rome: The Food and Agriculture Organization.
- United Nations, 2001 a. World Urbanization Prospects, The 1999 Revision. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, ST/ESA/SER.A/194. New York.
- United Nations, 2001b. World Population Prospects, The 2000 Revision Vol. I: Comprehensive Tables. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, ST/ESA/SER.A/198. New York.
- United Nations, 2001c. World Population Prospects, The 2000 Revision: Highlights. Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ESAIP/WP.165, New York.
- United Nations, 1999. World Population Prospects, The 1998 Revision Vol. I: Comprehensive Tables. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, ST/ESA/SER.A/184. New York.
- United Nations, 1994. Ageing and the Family. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, ST/ESA/SER.R/124. New York.
- United Nations, 1991. Ageing and Urbanization. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, ST/ESA/SER.R/109. New York.
- United Nations, 1973. The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends. New York.
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 1999. Socio-Economic Status and Living Arrangements of Older Persons in Finland. Population Activities Unit. New York and Geneva.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 2001. Statistical Profiles of Least Developed Countries, 2001. UNCTAD/LDC/Misc.72.

Warnes, A.M.1986. "The Elderly in Less Developed Countries." *Ageing and Society* 6: 373-380.

Wolf, D.A. 1994. "The Elderly and Their Kin: Patterns of Availability and Access." Pp. 146-194 in *Demography of Aging* edited by L. G. Martin and S. H. Preston. National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

World Bank, 2000. World Development Indicators Database, July, 2000. The World Bank Group.

World Health Organization (WHO), 2001. 1997-1999 World Health Statistics Annual. <http://www3.who.int/whosis/>. Geneva, Switzerland: The WHO.

World Health Organization (WHO), 1996. Maternal Health and Safe Motherhood Programme: Progress Report, 1993-1995. Geneva: WHO.

World Health Organization, 1995. "The Current Global Situation of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic." *Weekly Epidemiological Record* 70: 7-8.

Zimbabwe Ministry of Health, 1995. "HIV, STD and AIDS Surveillance." *Zimbabwe Quarterly Reports* No.3.

Zuberi, T. 2001. "Introduction." Pp. 1-2 in *Fourth African Census Analysis Project Workshop*. African Censuses in the 21st Century. Social Change and the Demography of Africa: Evidence from the Analysis of Census Data. Dakar, Senegal, January 15- 17.

CHUKS J. MBA Ph.D
Deputy Director
Regional Institute for Population Studies
University of Ghana
LEGON, GHANA

MERCK INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIPS



The International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta has received a grant from the Merck Institute of Ageing and Health, Washington D. C. for the years 2003 and 2004 for Training Programmes, which are held in Malta. These funds support the educational activities of 8 Fellows from developing countries participating in the Short Training Programmes in Social Gerontology, Economic and Financial Aspects of Ageing, Geriatrics and Demographic Aspects of Ageing as well as 2 Diplomates participating in the 9-month Postgraduate Diploma Course in Gerontology and Geriatrics at the European Centre for Gerontology, University of Malta.

Applications for the above Fellowships will be received by Professor Frederick F. Fenech, Director of the International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta, 117, St. Paul Street, Valletta VLT 07, Malta, e-mail ffen@inia.org.mt.

The closing date of applications can be obtained from the Institute's website, www.inia.org.mt.

MYTHS AND LEGENDS AS A SOURCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ELDERLY

ENRIQUE REIG, LUISA SALGADO, ISAAC JAULI
and CECILIA CERVANTES

Abstract

The study, preservation and transmission of ancient myths and legends by elderly persons can be for them a source of psychological development and an aid to memory. Myths reflect the natural flow of the life cycles and provide critical cultural examples for the community. Three classical and universal myths from different cultures are examined and analysed in this context.

Mythology is the science which studies mysteries and fables of ancient civilizations (Yarza, 2000). Popular wisdom and knowledge are expressed in proverbs, legends, fables, tales and myths, all elaborated through centuries of observation and deduction of human behaviour for many generations, so that experience through trial and error supplies the source to learn the most successful ways to survive. Longevity can be seen as analogous to successful surviving, and in turn this survival results from successful integration of knowledge by the community.

These proverbs, legends, fables, tales and myths comprise popular communication systems for cultures worldwide. All these systems transmit cultural messages to the population from which they arose, so that each of them is an irrefutable oral or written instance of cultural and historical worth. Whether oral or written, these systems are of critical value to the culture's preservation, sending messages on moral guidance (virtues and values) to members of the community (the main function of myths is to set forth moral models for most human behaviours, Eliade, M. 1964), and thus supporting the spirit's mission of guiding the individual's materiality. Spiritual life can be understood as the deepest part of self; in Jungian psychology, as behaviour patterns of energy with a biological basis and symbolic universal images (archetypes) (Reig, Jauli 2001). This is why these systems have subsisted for long

periods and their value is incalculable.

These global communication systems, however, also vary among cultures due to different stages of consciousness evolution or psychological development in each culture. This evolution implies a continuing movement from materiality (physical world) to spirituality (search for goodness and truth). In other words, a greater approximation to the individual's spirit and a distancing from the individual's materiality. "To be is life and conscience; not to be is matter and form. So there is here a duality; but the duality does not imply two separate things, isolated and without a link, since there exists a continuous relationship between them, which shows the ever-changing universe." (Besant in Study on Conscience, 1997).

The fable, for example, is a fictional more superficial story (lesser stage of consciousness evolution) that conceals reality and incorporates a moral content, while the tale (slightly more deep) is a narrative that does not specify a plot nor distinguishes between real and fantastic characters. The legend, on the other hand, is a narrative that includes precise locations and determined subjects that carry on behaviours with heroic qualities (and thus achieves a deeper stage of progressive guidance). Finally, myths are a type of legend, but happening in places and times beyond physical reality and by individuals with supernatural qualities (Abellan, 1971; Barthes, 1975;

Claude Levi Strauss, 1966 and Jensen, 1968). Brawls in myth, for instance, typically illustrate the possibility to attain light or darkness, in other words, the eternal fight between good and evil (Diel, 1976).

Legends and myths may exist both in literate cultures and illiterate ones (Paredes, 1975). Jensen (1968) comments that legends include the most important values of a culture, the indications of what is supposed to be done or not, including recommendations on the restraint of human passions and punishments for those who ignore them. Other legends, however, illustrate values without related punishments, degrading the legend's message to a lower evolution level.

Typically, secular knowledge of myths rests within the wise and elderly; so that while the elderly talk, the young man acts, while strength and energy belong to the young people, the elderly possess shrewdness and wisdom.

Myths have meanings and messages of common sense, understood, in its deepest meaning, as the sense of the continuum, and thus common to the global community at different levels (from literal to symbolic). The classic psychoanalytical approach, for instance, offers a partial and individualistic explanation on the meanings of myths with the goal of providing the individual with greater self-consciousness and wisdom. Conversely, individuals and cultures at a more advanced stage of consciousness evolution utilise their common sense to absorb the wealth of popular wisdom contained in myths, which leads to both individual and communitarian welfare.

Freud, for instance, used Darwin's research to describe the primitive horde as a system of human organization that lived under the mandate of a tyrannical ruler. Arguably, he also used Atkinson's hypothesis on the father's expulsion of the rival sons from the horde to prevent them from dethroning him (Ellenberger, 1976). In this case, the psychoanalytical advice would imply preventing the downfall of the father, so that individual interest prevails over the communitarian sense of harmony. Communitarian welfare, on the other hand, would

seek to promote change and allow for the natural flow of cycles, and thus would imply the necessary demise of the father.

While psychoanalysis promotes the capabilities of the individual rational mind to develop in spite of, or even against, the flow of natural cycles of events, myths warn of the adverse consequences of violating the natural flow of a cycle.

Legends and myths live in the memory of some elders. The onward transmission of the teachings of these elders on the secrets of life most probably results from their sense of duty and devotion to younger generations. For Freud (cited by Freedman and Kaplan, 1982), in established human groups the response of the individuals to the leader's teachings is vital, and derives from a loving kind of relationship, reinforced by the individuals' belief that the leader loves them. In this type of relationship, the ego does not allow for destructive impulses to arise, even if they are always present to a certain degree, so that upon the demise of the group, the repressed aggression is liberated in a form of violence. Ellenberg (1976) thinks that Freud's interpretation could have been influenced by the impact that the demise of the Hapsburgs' leadership caused in Europe in 1918, with its destructive sequel of misery, aggression, panic and anguish.

The main model that the male child has to develop his self, is typically the father, who for some authors like Tarde (cited by Ellenberger, 1976) is the first Master, priest or role model for his son, and whom the son tends to imitate. All leaders have to seek advice from another person at some point in their lives; when their fathers die, they then refer to the wisdom enclosed in the mandates, precepts and attributions of their culture, in sum, to the legends and myths.

The importance of messages contained in myths is that myths flow as natural cycles do, so that myths are true allies of nature. Because of this, intuitive minds that maintain and transmit myths allow for the natural flow of life in their communities. Typically, the most evolved minds in a community, those that respond to the world with intuition, belong

to wise elders. These are the elders that have allowed themselves to flow with life and will undoubtedly know how to flow with death.

Another key advantage of myths in terms of the elderly, rests in maintaining their memory in a healthy state through narration. Elders present more confusion errors than young people when recalling in memory tests. (Cohen, G; Faulkner, D., 1989). Myths may help memory retention because when the psychologists, relatives or social workers discuss myths with elders, their mind is exercised. And when the myth is re-analyzed by elders, they may use mnemonic techniques that refresh their memory. Hill, R. et al (1991) mentioned some memory research and suggest that a story mnemonic can enhance word retention on a free-recall task on older people.

"Mnemonic techniques rely not only on repetition to remember facts, but also on creating associations between easy-to-remember constructs and lists of data. The word "mnemonic" echoes the figure Mnemosyne who personified Memory in Greek mythology." (Wikipedia, 2003)

The purpose of the present article is to examine the content of the messages of some universal myths [described by Karsten (1968), Monast (1972), Osborne (1952) Lara (1973) and Yarza (1998)] to provide rational and concrete minds with the opportunity to access and digest the messages of wisdom in myths so as to adjust better with life and, potentially, to be prepared to accept death when their time comes.

Narration No. 1

One day, Atahualpa found two noble young men fighting to become the next ruler. Atahualpa was in charge of selecting one of them, so he set forth two trials to be completed by each man. The first one required the opponents to explain the powers of the emerald (concrete mind), while the second one required them (intuitive mind) to explain how much they had travelled and how many friends they had.

The first nobleman, the most arrogant one,

mentioned that he had hunted many animals and had many friends. The second one, more cautious and uncomplicated than the first one, stated that he was not a hunter and that most of his friends were elders, since they knew how to provide counselling.

Atahualpa gave the sceptre to the second nobleman for his sincerity and prudence. He then addressed the other aspirant and told him: "and you, continue prancing on hills and hunting pumas".

Analysis:

This South American legend introduces the reader to both the concrete mind (ego-centred on the material world) and the intuitive mind (self oriented to harmonic balance with nature). It also presents the extreme difficulties for these opposite minds to agree on the best succession. The wisdom of Atahualpa allows for a fair evaluation of the situation and for an optimal solution.

The main difference between these two young men is that the first one, with a concrete mind, did not consider needing advice or counselling, while the intuitive one humbly manifested the value of the elders' counselling. In fact, the most developed communities in the world have always sought advice from prominent elders (the pharaoh of Ancient Egypt consulted the empire's architects, the intuitive minds of the epoch; Greek rulers received advice from experienced philosophers; Roman emperors were counselled by the Senate).

Receiving help requires humility. In Arthurian tradition, the noble heart had a distinctive path to follow to become a king. Arthur starts his career being a servant. In fact, the critical step to become a nobleman was to train another man on the path to nobility and to keep his heart pure. The challenge was, then, to develop the intuitive mind of the noble-to-be, just as Atahualpa chose for a ruler the intuitive and humble noble man.

Narration No. 2:

The Herakles Greek myth begins when Zeus seeks a mortal woman, Alcmena, to bear him a child. When

the child is born, his mother, to avoid Hera's (Zeus' wife) revenge, abandons him. The child is rescued by Hermes who, without disclosing the baby's identity, talks Hera into nursing him, thus allowing Herakles to become immortal.

The goddess Hera, upon learning of Hermes' deceit, made Herakles lose his mind. In a confused and angry state, Herakles then killed his own wife and children.

When he came to his senses, Herakles prayed to Apollo for guidance, and the god's oracle told him he would have to serve Eurystheus in order to achieve his purification. The king then sets forth twelve labours to be completed by Herakles.

After a journey full of suffering and sacrifice, Herakles finally attains purification. He is then wounded in battle and his wife, deceived by Nessus, covers him with a blanket soaked in poisonous blood. He dies on Mount Etna and Zeus proclaims him a deity.

The crossing of the threshold by Herakles is a form of selfannihilation. Instead of passing outward, beyond the confines of the visible world, the hero goes inward, to be born again. (Joseph Campbell in *Meeting the Shadow*, edited by Zweig and Abrams, New York: New Consciousness Reader, 1991).

Analysis:

The challenging myth of Herakles illustrates the imperfection of human nature, and men's natural trend to err as a necessary step towards consciousness development. It also shows us, however, that a complementary part of this journey is to redeem our flaws with reparation.

It is interesting to analyse Zeus' desire to transcend through a human child, Alcmena's role as human receptor of Zeus' desire and the product thereby who is Herakles (a human-divine being).

Once Herakles is born, his path, full of opportunities and obstacles, resembles the path of human life. Hermes represents the supporting part of his journey,

while Hera's divine-human reaction of jealousy symbolises an obstacle. In this way the myth illustrates the continuum of good and evil.

Herakles' successful achievement of the twelve labours required him to manage his time and effort wisely, and illustrates the possibility of men to complete their objectives and desires, to repair damage, and to learn throughout the process. For elders, this message signifies that adequate management of time and resources may allow them to deal with outstanding issues appropriately.

Narration No. 3:

This Nordic myth of Fenris tells of a very powerful wolf who was one of the three inhabitants of hell, together with Hel (the goddess of hell) and the serpent Jormoungandour. The wolf's strength increased significantly through time and worried the gods, who had the Alfes create a chain, called Gleipnir, to restrain him. This chain was made of elements such as the patter of a cat's steps, a woman's beard, the nerves of a bear, the breath of a fish, a bird's saliva and so on. To be able to place the chain on Fenris' neck, the gods tried to make him believe it was an ornamental chain. The wolf did not believe this, so Tyr distracted him by placing his arm within Fenris's jaws. The gods then chained him and the wolf, furious at having been deceived, promptly devoured Tyr's arm. Fenris remained, however, chained forever to the centre of the Earth.

Analysis:

The myth shows that evil, personified by Fenris' increasing strength, can grow to the point that it requires great sacrifice to be restrained. In a man's life, his shadow (the dark side of human nature) can grow dangerously and surpass boundaries. Plato's allegory of the winged coach contemplated the existence of two horses (a black one and a white one). The black horse tends downwards, towards the negative side of nature. If this horse is not restrained by the auriga (coachman or soul), this auriga loses control.

Managing one's own dark side may take different

routes: the unaware (lack of consciousness); the aware, (who attempt to achieve integration); and the partially unaware, who attempt perfection through avoidance of flaws.

The unaware elders may reach the end of their lives leaving a lot of damage and pain behind. The aware ones gain full consciousness of their virtues and of their shadow in time and manage it appropriately with their own chains (allowing for integration of the shadow). In this case, the chain implies not restricting the individual's freedom, but being responsible for this freedom. Finally, elders who only gain partial awareness of their being and seek perfection, carry their chain to the grave.

CONCLUSION

The critical function of myths is to reconcile the new born consciousness with the greatest mysteries of this

universe as they are revealed to us. Campbell, (1992).

Working with myths (universal and personal), which implies listening, narration, remembering, repetition, analysing and learning, helps elders in two ways: 1) expanding their consciousness, and 2) preserving their memory. Further research on these benefits is suggested.

We all carry a personal myth within us, which comprises a personal sense of life. Life is, thus, the appropriate opportunity to discover it, even for elders. It is never too late to find one's own personal myth. The personal myth of the elderly person is generally well developed, and can provide a source of inspiration and learning for younger generations.

Meditation in peaceful solitude is the best way to re-evaluate one's life. It is critical for people who assist the elderly (relatives, doctors, nurses, social workers, etc.) to respect and facilitate their sacred moments of solitude and reflection.

REFERENCES

Abellan. (1971). Mito y cultura. Madrid: Editorial Seminario y Ediciones.

Barthes. (1975). Mythologies. Paris: Editions du Senil.

Besant, A. (1997). Estudio sobre la Conciencia. Barcelona: Editorial Humanitas.

Campbell, J. (1991) in Zweig, C., Abrams, J. Meeting the Shadow. New York: New Consciousness Reader.

Campbell, J. (1992) Las mascararas de Dios. Madrid: Alianza editorial.

Chevalier, J. y Gheerbrant T. A. (1988) Diccionario de Simbolos. Barcelona: Editorial Herder.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1966). Mitologicas. Mexico: Editorial Fondo de Cultura Economica.

Cohen, G; Faulkner, D. (1989) Age differences in source forgetting: Effects on reality monitoring and on eyewitness testimony. *Psychology & Aging*. 4(1) 10-17.

Diel, P. (1976) El simbolismo en la mitologia Griega. Barcelona: Editorial Labor.

Eliade, M. (1964) Tratado de la historia de las religiones. Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad.

Ellenberg. (1976). El descubrimiento del inconsciente. Madrid: Editorial Gredos.

Freedman y Kaplan. (1982). Tratado de psiquiatria. Mexico: Editorial Salvat.

Hill, R. D.; Allen, C.; McWhorter, P. (1991) Stories as a mnemonic aid for older learners. *Psychology & Aging*. 6(3) 484-486.

Jensen. (1968). Mito y culto entre los pueblos primitivos Nueva York: Princeton.

Karsten. (1968). The civilization of South American Indians. London: Dawsons.

Lara. (1973). Mitos, leyendas y cuentos de Qucchuas. La Paz: Editorial Amigos.

Monast. (1972). Los indios Aimarares. Buenos Aires: Editorial Carlos Lohle.

Osborne. (1952). Indians of the Andes. London: Broadwat House.

Paredes. (1975). *Leyendas de Bolivia*. La Paz: Editorial Amigos.

Reig, E.; Jauli, I.: (2001). *El Lider Interior*. Mexico: Norma Editores.

Yarza, C. (1998) *Diccionario de mitologia*. Madrid: Edimat libros.

Wikipedia (2003) Mnemonic. <http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mnemonic>.

Authors:

ENRIQUE REIG M.D., Ph.D.
Professor in Psychology
Universidad de las Americas, Puebla Mexico

LUISA SELGADO M.Sc.
Professor in Administration
Universidad de las Americas, Mexico

ISAAC JAULI Ph.D.
Associate investigator
Labour relations school
V. Complutense de Madrid

CECILIA CERVANTES Ph.D.
Consultant and Director
Sherpa Consulting Group
Universidad de las Americas, Mexico

Correspondence to:

Dr Enrique Reig
P O Box 9 UDLA Puebla
72820 Puebla Mexico
ereig@mail.udlap.mx

A Society for All ages



**The 7th International Federation on Ageing (IFA) Global Conference
5-8 September 2004, Singapore**

Hosted by Singapore Action Group of Elders (SAGE)

Conference Theme : “Global Ageing: Sustaining Development”

In April 2002, there was an unprecedented collective effort by UN member countries and NGOs to address ageing issues. The United Nations 2nd World Assembly on Ageing, First World NGO Forum and the Valencia Forum were held in Madrid and Valencia, Spain. Action plans were drawn up for countries to implement. 2 and a half years later, in 2004, the 7th IFA Global Conference in Singapore will be an ideal platform to share your research findings, programmes and services to advance the cause of seniors with an international audience.



INIA'S ACTIVITIES 2004



5th – 14th January	Short Training Programme in Gerontology in collaboration with the Zhejiang Working Committee on Ageing (ZWCA), (MALTA).
19th – 30th January	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology and Geriatrics in collaboration with the Heritage Hospital, Hyderabad (INDIA).
9th – 20th February	International Short Training Programme in Social Gerontology , (MALTA).
1st – 12th March	International Short Training Programme in Economic and Financial Aspects of Ageing , (MALTA).
April	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology and Geriatrics in collaboration with Ain Shams University, (EGYPT).
22nd – 30th April	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology in collaboration with Zhejiang Working Committee on Ageing, Hangzhou, (CHINA).
10th – 21st May	International Short Training Programme in Geriatrics , (MALTA).
19th – 30th July	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology and Geriatrics in collaboration with The St. Petersburg School of Public Health, St. Petersburg (RUSSIA).
6th – 17th September	International Short Training Programme in Demographic Aspects of Population Ageing and its Implications for Socio-Economic, Policies and Plans , (MALTA).
13th – 24th September	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, (BELARUS)
October	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology in collaboration with the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau (BCAB), Beijing, (CHINA)
Oct. 2004 – June 2005	International Post Graduate Diploma in Gerontology and Geriatrics (Dip.Ger) European Centre of Gerontology and Geriatrics, (University of Malta), (MALTA).
13th – 16th October	Conference on “ Medicines Management in Older Persons ” organised by the International Institute on Ageing-United Nations, (Malta), in association with the University of Malta – Department of Pharmacy, Zammit Clapp Hospital for the Aged, Parliamentary Secretariat for the Care of the Elderly – Ministry of Social Policy and the European Society of Clinical Pharmacy, SIG Geriatrics, (MALTA)
28th Nov – 10th Dec	In-Situ Training Programme in Gerontology in collaboration with the Singapore Action Group of Elders (SAGE), (SINGAPORE).



The International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta
announces the conference on

Medicines Management in Older Persons

13 - 16 October 2004 – Malta

Hosted in association with:

The University of Malta, Department of Pharmacy
Zammit Clapp for the Aged
Parliamentary Secretariat for the Care of the Elderly, Ministry of Social Policy
The European Society of Clinical Pharmacy, SIG Geriatrics



University of Malta



Zammit Clapp Hospital



European Society of Clinical Pharmacy



Parliamentary Secretariat for the Elderly

Plenary sessions

- The age factor in the use of medicines
- Management of chronic disorders:
cardiovascular diseases and respiratory diseases
- Improving the quality of life of older persons:
musculoskeletal and neurological problems

Debate

- The WHO Essential Drug List in developing countries is a barrier to good order patient care.

Contributions from Participants

- Participants are invited to submit an abstract for consideration to be presented as a poster during the conference.

Deadline for abstract submission is 30 June 2004

Details On:

The International Institute on Ageing
www.inia.org.mt

The Maltese Islands
www.visitmalta.com

Conference Secretariat:

Lilian M. Azzopardi
Department of Pharmacy
University of Malta
Msida
Malta
t 356 21 344971
f 356 21 324835
e-mail lilmaz@maltanet.net

**BOLD is published by the
International Institute on Ageing,
United Nations ,Malta**

Address: 117, St. Paul Street, Valletta VLT 07, MALTA
Tel: +356-21243044/5/6
Fax: +356-21230248
E-mail: info@inia.org.mt
Home-Page: <http://www.inia.org.mt>

Editor: Prof. Victor G. Griffiths
Design and
Typesetting: Ioana Typesetters
Printer: Veritas Press, Malta
Cover Photo: Dimitry F. Chebotarev

In accordance with the Vienna Plan of Action on Ageing, **INIA** is mandated to provide Multidisciplinary education and training in the following areas: **Social Gerontology, Economics and Financial Aspects of Ageing, Geriatrics, Demographic Aspects of Population Ageing and Its Implications for Socio-Economic, Policies and Plans.** The training programmes are oriented towards persons, particularly from developing countries, who hold positions as policy-makers, planners, programme executives, educators, professions and para-professionals who work, or intend to work, in the field of Ageing, or with the elderly.

The Institute's complementary activities to its training are: research, data collection, information exchange, documentation, publications and technical co-operation.

BOLD is published quarterly by the **International Institute on Ageing, United Nations, Malta.** Views expressed in the journal are the authors own and do not necessarily reflect those held by the Institute.

Articles may be reproduced without prior request, provided that the source is acknowledge and **INIA** supplied with one copy of the reprint.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
US\$ 50 Individual
US\$ 60 Institution

© **International Institute on Ageing,**
United Nations, Malta



EDITORIAL Comment

The comment for this issue of **BOLD** heralds the launching of our fourteenth volume. From time to time, we have been asked how the name **BOLD** originated. As **BOLD** was already two years old when I assumed my duties, I am not too sure that, I have the correct answer in saying that it might stand as an expression of belief in the virtues of “*Being OLD*”, and I couple this with my favourite quotation from Browning: “Grow old along with me: The best is yet to be!” which I put on the back cover of Vol.3 No.1.

This sets off a train of thought about how much the English language, with its etymology, owes to two of its noble roots, the Anglo-Saxon and the Classic, and with the latter we are reminded that the Greeks always “had a word for it” which in large measure they duly passed on to the Romans.

Having recently commented on the Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology of Ageing, we find it now appropriate to consider some of the Terminology, while pausing to muse pleasantly on the fact that in so doing we have used “language” (written rather than with the tongue) to deal with the “love” of knowledge and with the “words” related to groups of human beings.

“Words” are, in fact, our present theme. A Greek root gives us Gerontology and Geriatrics, and with the latter we note that there is a very special field of knowledge and activity that is covered by “doctors” and other workers engaged in caring for the old.

From the Latin name for an old man we derive “senescence”, but here we have to remark that this word has somewhat of a hint of such deterioration of faculties as INIA and other caring institutions are specifically committed to combat. We shall not dwell on the Latin for an old lady, but we note that “annus” stands for “year” and so in multiplication certainly appertains to old people, while “avus” should remind us of ancestors and ancients. In the same way, the old soldier who “never dies” acquires the title of veteran to share with other “antiques”, a term that usually has a connotation of value deriving from old age.

Among those who are concerned with the Old, there persists some uncertainty as to whether we should write AGEING or AGING. We are on sound grounds when we refer to old persons generally as being the elderly rather than as elders, the latter term carrying extra kudos making some as sufficiently experienced and wise to be leaders in their community.

INIA marks its fifteenth year of activity on behalf of the Old by “moving with the times” through its website: www.inia.org.mt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Victor J. Inffick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'V'.