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VI. Equality and Inequality: The Sexual Division of Labor and Gender Stratification

In most societies certain tasks are predominantly assigned to men while others are assigned to women. In European and American cultures it used to be considered "natural" for men to be the family breadwinners; women were expected to take care of the home and raise the children. An underlying assumption of this division of labor was that men were dominant because their contribution to the material well-being of the family was more significant than that of women. Women were dependent on men and therefore automatically subordinate to them.

The "naturalness" of this division of labor has been called into question as women increasingly enter the labor force. However, has this significantly altered the status of women within their families and in the wider society? Or has it simply meant that women are now working a double day, performing domestic tasks that are negatively valued and not considered work once they get home from their "real" day's work? If employment enhances the social position of

women, why is it that women still earn only 65% of what men earn for the same work? Why is there still a high degree of occupational segregation by gender?

What precisely is the relationship between the economic roles of women and gender stratification? Cross-cultural research on the sexual division of labor attempts not only to describe the range of women's productive activities in societies with different modes of subsistence, but also to assess the implications of these activities for the status of women.

In many parts of the world women contribute significantly, if not predominantly, to subsistence. This is perhaps most apparent among hunting and gathering or foraging populations, and for this reason such groups have been labeled the most egalitarian of human societies. Hunters and gatherers used to form the bulk of the human population, but today only a small number remain. They are found in relatively isolated regions; they possess simple technology and therefore make little effort to alter the envi-

ronment in which they live. They tend to be characterized by a division of labor whereby men hunt and women gather. Friedl (1975:18) outlines four reasons for this division: the variability in the supply of game, the different skills required for hunting and gathering, the incompatibility between carrying burdens and hunting, and the small size of seminomadic foraging populations.

Friedl (1975) further argues that in foraging societies in which gathering contributes more to the daily diet than hunting, women and men share equal status (see also Lee 1979; Martin and Voorhies 1975). Conversely, in societies in which hunting and fishing predominate (such as among the Eskimos), the status of women is lower. It seems that female productive activities enhance the social position of women in society, but Sanday (1974) cautions that participation in production is a necessary but not sufficient precondition. Control over the fruits of their labor and a positive valuation of this labor are other factors to consider, as is the extent to which women are involved in at least some political activities. In addition, the absence of a sharp differentiation between public and private domains (Draper 1975) and the fact that there is no economic class structure and no well-defined male-held political offices (Leacock 1975) have been cited as explanations for the relative egalitarianism in foraging societies compared to more complex societies.

Despite the common assumption that men hunt and women gather, in some foraging societies the division of labor is not sharply defined. This often provides the basis for the highest degree of egalitarianism. Among the Tiwi, Australian aborigines who live on Melville Island off the coast of northern Australia, both men and women hunt and gather. Goodale (1971) demonstrates that resources and technology, rather than activities, are divided into male domains and female domains. Although the big game that Tiwi men hunt provides most of the meat to the group and therefore gives them a dominant position in the society, Tiwi women, who hunt and gather, provide more than half of the food consumed; they share in both the comradery and the spoils of their endeavors. As major provisioners, women are economic assets and a

source of wealth and prestige for men in this polygynous society. Despite the fact that their opportunities for self-expression may be more limited than those of men, with age women acquire social status and can be politically influential. In general Goodale suggests that Tiwi culture emphasizes the equality of men and women in society.

Among the Agta women enjoy even greater social equality with their men than among the Tiwi. This is a society in which the division of labor and the battle of the sexes appear to be virtually absent. Agta women hunt game animals and fish just as men do. Not only do they make significant contributions to the daily food supply, but they also control the distribution of the foods they acquire, sharing them with their family and trading them in the broader community. The Griffins (in this book) argue that these roles are clearly the basis for female authority in decision-making within their families and residential groups.

The Agta case challenges the widely held notion that in foraging societies pregnancy and child care are incompatible with hunting (Friedl 1978:72). Agta women have developed methods of contraception and abortion to aid them in childspacing. When they become pregnant they continue hunting until late in their pregnancy and resume hunting for several months after the birth of the child. At any given time there are always some women available to hunt, during which time children may be cared for by older siblings, grandparents, or other relatives. Reproduction is clearly not a constraint on women's economic roles in this society.

In horticultural societies in which cultivation is carried out with simple hand-tool technology and slash and burn methods of farming, women also have important roles in production (Boserup 1970). One theory argues that the economic importance of female production in horticultural society emerged from women's gathering activities in foraging groups. Horticultural societies vary in the degree to which men participate in crop cultivation as well as whether this cultivation is supplemented by hunting, fishing, and raising livestock. In addition, many horticultural societies are matrilineal (reckoning descent through the female line), and in these societies

women tend to have higher status than in those that are patrilineal.

Despite descent systems and economic roles that enhance the status of women among horticulturalists, Friedl (1975) cautions that male control of valued property and male involvement in warfare (an endemic feature in many of these societies) can be mitigating factors that provide the basis for male dominance over women. For example, among horticulturalists in highland New Guinea, women raise staple crops but men raise prestige crops that are the focus of social exchange. This cultural valuation is the foundation for gender stratification.

Murphy and Murphy (in this book) take us through the active day of a woman among the Mundurucú Indians who live in the Amazon region of Brazil. The Mundurucú are a sexually segregated society. Men sleep in a men's house, and women and children share other dwellings. Men hunt, fish, and fell the forest area for gardens. Women plant, harvest, and process manioc. In their daily tasks women form cooperative work groups, have authority, and are the equals of men. To the extent that their work "draws women together and isolates them from the immediate supervision and control of the men, it is also a badge of their independence" (Murphy and Murphy 1985:237).

However, according to a male-dominated ideology, women are subservient to men. Despite the contributions that Mundurucú women make to subsistence, what men do is assigned more value. As Murphy and Murphy state, "Male ascendancy does not wholly derive from masculine activities but is to a considerable degree prior to them" (1985:234). Male domination among the traditional Mundurucú is symbolic. As the Mundurucú become increasingly drawn into a commercial economy based on the rubber trade, men, with their rights to rubber trees and to trading, may gain a more complete upper hand. "The women may well discover that they have traded the symbolic domination of the men, as a group, over the women, as a group, for the very real domination of husbands over wives" (1985:238).

While women's labor is clearly important in horticultural societies, it has been argued that it becomes increasingly insignificant relative to

that of men with the development of intensive agriculture. Intensive agriculture is based on the use of the plow, draft animals, fertilizers, and irrigation systems. In a survey of ninety-three agricultural societies, Martin and Voorhies (1975:283) demonstrate that 81% delegate farming to men who then achieve primacy in productive activities. One explanation for the decline in female participation in agriculture is that the female domestic workload tends to increase when root crops are replaced by cereal crops and when animal labor replaces manual labor (Martin and Voorhies 1975). Cereal crops require more extensive processing, and field animals must be cared for. Both these activities fall to women. In addition, the kin-based units of production and consumption become smaller, and this too adds to the burdens on individual women.

Concomitant with the presumably declining importance of women in agricultural activities is a supposed decline in social status (Boserup 1970). Women's value is defined by their reproductive abilities rather than by their productive activities. It has been suggested that the lesser status of women in some agricultural societies, particularly those of Eurasia, compared to some horticultural societies, as in sub-Saharan Africa, is reflected in the contrast between systems of bridewealth and systems of dowry (Goody 1976). Bridewealth is a compensation to the bride's parents or her kin for the productive and reproductive rights of the bride; dowry, as a form of inheritance, provides a bride with land and other wealth and helps her to attract a husband.

Despite arguments describing a decline in women's status and their relegation to the domestic sphere in association with the emergence of intensive agriculture, cross-cultural data indicate that women in agricultural societies lead much more diverse and complex lives than some theories suggest. In northwestern Portugal women do most of the agricultural activity, inherit property equally, and are often the recipients of a major inheritance that generally includes the parental household (Brettell 1986). This division of labor has emerged because men have been assigned the role of emigrants. Another exception is rural Taiwan, where, despite

the patriarchal and patrilineal character of Chinese society, women construct a familial network that gives them a good deal of power and influence in later life (Wolf 1972).

Japanese women have traditionally played an important role in farming, but today these activities are often combined with wage employment. Haruko, a farm woman who lives just outside the town of Unomachi in Ehime Prefecture in western Japan (Bernstein, this book), is the busiest member of her family. Like many urban western women, she juggles wage-paying work with household chores and community responsibilities. She does not define what she does at home, or the assistance that she gives her husband in the rice fields, as real work. Her real work is her job in construction—"man's work" for which she gets paid. Haruko regrets that all these responsibilities have to be carried out at the expense of her children who, she says, "raised themselves" (Bernstein 1983:47).

Haruko perceives of her work not only as a necessary supplement to the family income, but also as a means to the end of a middle-class lifestyle. In Haruko's eyes the money she earns does not have meaning as a symbol of independence. Her status, she claims, comes from feeling that she is needed. Her desire to become just a housewife with time to spare is one expressed by other women in agricultural societies around the world, especially those who have entered the cash economy on a part-time or temporary basis (Brettell 1982).

A final economic adaptation is that of pastoralism or herding. Some pastoralists are fully nomadic, moving their entire communities in accordance with the demands of the herd. Others are involved in cultivation and are therefore transhumant. They engage in seasonal migration. Among pastoralists the ownership, care, and management of herds are generally in the hands of men. Though there are exceptions, male domination of herding tends to be reflected in other aspects of social organization—the near universality of patrilineal descent and widespread patrilocal residence. Pastoral societies are also generally characterized by patriarchy and a dichotomization of the sexes, both symbolically and socially. Segregation of the sexes and gender stratification, in other words,

are fundamental attributes of many pastoral people.

The symbolic opposition between men and women is apparent among the Sarakatsani, a group of transhumant shepherds who live in the mountainous regions of the province of Epirus in Greece. According to Campbell (1964) the life of the pastoral Sarakatsani revolves around three things: sheep, children (particularly sons), and honor. "The sheep support the life and prestige of the family, the sons serve the flocks and protect the honour of their parents and sisters, and the notion of honour presupposes physical and moral capacities that fit the shepherds for the hard and sometimes dangerous work of following and protecting their animals" (1964:18). Gender ideology is embedded in these three valued items, especially in the parallel oppositions between sheep and goats on the one hand and men and women on the other. The practical division of labor parallels this symbolic opposition. Women give assistance in the care of animals and make major contributions to their families. The economic roles of husband and wife are complementary. Nevertheless, Sarakatsani husbands have ultimate authority over their wives; obedience to a husband is a moral imperative for a wife. As among the Mundurucú, ideology assigns women to a lesser status, in spite of their economic complementarity.

Men and women are also symbolically and economically complementary among the seminomadic and polygynous WoDaaBe Bororo (Fulani) of Niger, West Africa, described by Dupire (in this book). The WoDaaBe Bororo are characterized by a dramatic spatial and conceptual segregation of the sexes. Each camp is divided into an eastern women's domain and a western men's domain. Herding activities provide about 85% of the Bororo subsistence and are dominated by men. Women, however, are involved in the care and milking of cattle, as well as the care of other animals such as sheep and goats. These economic responsibilities, certain rights of ownership, and the fact that they head matricentric units when their husbands are absent give Bororo women a good deal of autonomy.

Generalizations are often made about the status of women according to different modes of

adaptation. However, these readings demonstrate that there is a great deal of diversity within each subsistence strategy. For example, in foraging societies women may hunt as well as gather; in intensive agricultural societies not all women are powerless, dependent, and relegated to the domestic sphere.

While women's contributions to subsistence are important to gender stratification, a number of other factors need to be considered. These include leadership roles in family and kinship units and in the wider community; inheritance of property, control of the distribution and exchange of valued goods, authority in childrearing, and participation in ritual activities. In addition, the ideological definitions of women's roles and valuations of their economic activities are often powerful determinants of status.

To fully understand gender stratification both ideology and participation in production must be taken into account. As Atkinson (1982:248) states, "It is too facile to deny the significance of sexual stereotypes or to presume that women's influence in one context cancels out their degradation in another. Just as we know that women's status is not a unitary phenomenon across cultures, we need to be reminded that the intracultural picture is equally complex."

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Woman the Hunter: The Agta

Agnes Estioko-Griffin and P. Bion Griffin

Among Agta Negritos of northeastern Luzon, the Philippines, women are of special interest to anthropology because of their position in the organization of subsistence. They are substantial contributors to the daily subsistence of their families and have considerable authority in decision making in the family and in residential groups. In addition, and in contradiction to one of the sacred canons of anthropology, women in one area frequently hunt game animals. They also fish in the rivers with men and barter with lowland Filipinos for goods and services.¹

In this chapter, we describe women's roles in Agta subsistence economy and discuss the relationship of subsistence activities, authority allocation, and egalitarianism. With this may come an indication of the importance of the Agta research to the anthropology of women and of hunter-gatherers in general. . . .

Women, especially women in hunting-gathering societies, have been a neglected domain of anthropological research. The recent volume edited by Richard Lee and Irvén DeVore (1976) and the *!Kung of Nyae Nyae* (Marshall 1976) begin to remedy the lack but focus solely on the !Kung San of southern Africa. Other works are either general or synthetic (Friedl 1975; Martin and Voorhies 1975), or report narrowly bounded topics (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974). Sally Slocum, writing in *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (Reiter 1975), has provided impetus for the Agta study. Slocum points out a male bias in studying hunter-gatherers, showing how approaching subsistence from a female view

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gives a new picture. From the insights of Slocum we have sought to focus on Agta women, to compare the several dialect groups, and to begin investigating the nature and implications of women as not "merely" gatherers but also hunters.

THE AGTA

The Agta are Negrito peoples found throughout eastern Luzon, generally along the Pacific coast and up rivers into the Sierra Madre interior. . . . Although perhaps fewer in numbers, they are also located on the western side of the mountains, especially on the tributary rivers feeding the Cagayan. In general terms, the Agta of Isabela and Cagayan provinces are not dissimilar to other present and past Philippine Negritos. (See Vanoverbergh 1925, 1929-30, 1937-38; Fox 1952; Garvan 1964; and Maceda 1964 for information on Negritos outside the present study area.) In the more remote locales, hunting forest game, especially wild pig, deer, and monkey, is still important. Everywhere, collection of forest plant foods has been eclipsed by exchange of meat for corn, rice, and cultivated root crops. Fishing is usually important throughout the dry season, while collection of the starch of the caryota palm (*Caryota cumingii*) is common in the rainy season. An earlier paper (Estioko and Griffin 1975) gives some detail concerning the less settled Agta; both Bennagen (1976) and Peterson (1974, 1978a,b, n.d.) closely examine aspects of subsistence among Agta in the municipality of Palanan.

A brief review of Agta economic organization will be sufficient for later discussion of women's activities. Centuries ago all Agta may

have been strictly hunter-gatherers. Since at least A.D. 1900 the groups near the towns of Casiguran (Headland and Headland 1974) and Palanan have been sporadic, part-time horticulturalists, supplementing wild plant foods with sweet potatoes, corn, cassava, and rice. The more remote, interior Agta, sometimes referred to as *ebuked* (Estioko and Griffin 1975), plant small plots of roots, a few square meters of corn, and a banana stalk or two. They usually plant only in the wet season, harvesting an almost immature crop when staples are difficult to obtain by trade. *Ebuked* neglect crop production, preferring to trade meat for grains and roots.

Lee and DeVore (1968:7) argue that women produce much of the typical hunter-gatherers' diet and that in the tropics vegetable foods far outweigh meat in reliability and frequency of consumption. The Dipagsanghang and Dianggu-Malibu Agta strikingly contradict this idea. They are superb hunters, eat animal protein almost daily, and, as noted above, may have both men and women hunting. (The Tasaday, to the south in Mindanao, may represent an extreme nonhunting adaptation, one in which plant food collection is very dominant [Yen 1976].) Hunting varies seasonally and by techniques used among various groups, but is basically a bow and arrow technology for killing wild pig and deer, the only large game in the Luzon dipterocarp forests. Monkey, although not large, is a reliable rainy season prey. Among Agta close to Palanan and Casiguran, hunting is a male domain. Many hunters pride themselves on skill with bow and arrow; less able hunters may use traps. Dogs to drive game are very desirable in the dry season when the forest is too noisy for daylight stalking of animals.

The collecting of wild plant food is not a daily task. Most Agta prefer to eat corn, cassava, and sweet potatoes, and neglect the several varieties of roots, palm hearts, and greens procurable in the forest. . . . Forest foods are difficult to collect, necessitate residence moves over long distances, and do not taste as good as cultivated foods. Emphasis of trade networks with lowland farmers favors

deemphasis of forest exploitation of plants. Only in the rainy season do Agta actively process a traditional resource, the sago-like caryota palm. Fruits are often picked on the spur of the moment; seldom do parties leave camp solely for their collection.

Trade with farmers is practiced by all Agta known to us. Rumors of Agta "farther into the mountains" who never trade (or cultivate) seem to be without substance. In the report of the Philippine Commission (1908:334), evidence of lowland-Agta trade around 1900 indicates the *ibay* trade partner relationship to have some antiquity. As the lowlander population has increased since World War II, trade has also increased. Agta are more and more dependent on goods and foodstuffs gained from farmers; adjustments of Agta economic behavior continue to be made, with labor on farms being one aspect of change. Agta formerly simply traded meat for carbohydrates. Around Palanan they may now work for cash or kind when residing close to farmers' settlements. Hunting decreases as the demands of cultivation are met. A cycle is created, and further withdrawal from forest subsistence occurs. Farmers live in areas once solely owned by Agta. Debts to farmers increase with economic dependence; freedom of mobility and choice of activity decrease; and Agta in farming areas become landless laborers.

At the same time, Agta seek to get out of the cycle by emulating the farmers. Many Agta within ten kilometers of Palanan Centro are attempting to become farmers themselves. While the success rate is slow, the attempt is real. Again, when questioned by an early American anthropologist, Agta close to Palanan Centro claimed to be planting small rainy season plots with corn, roots, and upland rice (Worcester 1912:841). Living informants confirm the long practice of cultivation, but suggest a recent expansion of Agta fields and commitment to abandoning forest nomadism (especially over the last fifteen years). Around the areas of Disuked-Dilaknadinum and Kahanayan-Diabut in Palanan, Agta are well known for their interest in swidden cultivation. Even the most unsettled Agta farther upriver claim small fields and

sporadically plant along the rivers well upstream of lowland farmsteads.

The horticultural efforts of the Agta appear less than is the case, since the social organization and settlement patterns are very different from those of the farmers. Agta throughout Isabela and Cagayan are loosely organized into extended family residential groups. A group, called a *pisan*, is seldom less than two nuclear families and very rarely more than five (in the dry season—perhaps slightly higher average during the wet season). The nuclear family is the basic unit of Agta society, being potentially self-sufficient under usual circumstances. The residential group is organized as a cluster of nuclear families united either through a common parent or by sibling ties. Non-kin friends may be visitors for several weeks, and any nuclear family is able to leave and join another group of relatives at will.

As is typical of hunting-gathering societies, no formal, institutionalized authority base exists. The nuclear family is the decision maker concerning residence, work, and relations with other people. Older, respected individuals, often parents and grandparents of group members, may be consulted, but their opinions are not binding. Often group consensus is desired; people who disagree are free to grumble or to leave.

The settlement pattern is determined, in part, by the seasonal cycle of rains and sunny weather, and by these influences on the flora and fauna exploited for food. Rainy season flooding restricts forest travel, brings hardships in exchange, but is compensated by good condition of the game animals. The dry season permits travel over greater distances and into the remote mountains. Predictable fish resources enhance the advantages of human dispersal; only the need to carry trade meats to farmers inhibits distant residence placement.

WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES

Women participate in all the subsistence activities that men do. Women trade with farmers, fish in the rivers, collect forest plant

foods, and may even hunt game animals. Tasks are not identical, however; a modest sexual division of labor does exist. Furthermore, considerable variation is found among the groups of Agta of Isabela and Cagayan provinces. These differences may possibly be ascribed to degree of adjustment of Agta to lowland Filipino culture. Some differences may be due to unique culture histories and to little contact.

Although in Isabela most Agta women do not hunt with bow and arrows, with machetes, or by use of traps, most are willing to assist men in the hunt. Not uncommonly, women help carry game out of the forest. Since mature pig and deer are heavy and the terrain is difficult, this is no small accomplishment. Even in areas around Palanan and Casiguran, women are known to accompany men and dogs into the forest and to guide the dogs in the game drive. Some women are famous for their abilities to handle dogs; one informant, a girl about fifteen years of age, was especially skilled. In Palanan and Casiguran, women and men laugh at the idea of women hunting. Such a practice would be a custom of wild, uncivilized Agta (*ebuked*) far in the mountains, they say. Many of the attributes of *ebuked* seem to be old-fashioned customs still practiced by interior groups.

Two groups studied as part of the present research do have women who hunt. Among the Dipagsanghang Agta, several mature women claim to have hunting skills; they learned these in their unmarried teen years. They only hunt under extreme circumstances, such as low food supplies or great distances from farmers and a supply of corn. All these Agta are found in southern Isabela between Dipagsanghang and Dinapigui.

In the northernmost section of Isabela and well into Cagayan province, women are active and proficient hunters. While we have termed the Agta here as the Dianggu-Malibu group, we are actually referring to speakers of the southeast Cagayan dialect who live on the river drainage areas of the Dianggu and Malibu rivers.² Both the dialect and women who hunt are found over a considerably greater territory, according to informants, reaching

north to Baggao, Cagayan, and at least to the Taboan River.

Among the Dianggu-Malibu women some variation, perhaps localized, perhaps personal, is found. On the Dianggu, some of the women questioned, and observed hunting, carried machetes and were accompanied by dogs. They claim to prefer the machete to the bow and arrow, allowing dogs to corner and hold pigs for sticking with the knife. Our sample of actual observations is too small to argue that only immature pigs are killed, but we do know that in the dry season adult male pigs are dangerous in the extreme. Dogs may be killed during hunts. Since Agta dogs are seldom strong animals, we wonder if mature pigs are acquired only occasionally. On the other hand, so many dogs are owned by these Agta that sheer numbers may favor large kills. We have observed two Agta women with as many as fifteen dogs. Other Dianggu women prefer the bow.

On the Malibu River, Agta women are expert bow and arrow hunters. On both of our brief visits to this group, women were observed hunting. They claim to use bows always, and they seek the full range of prey animals. Wild pig is most desired, while deer are often killed. Future work must quantify the hunting details, but women seem to vary slightly from men in their hunting strategies. Informants say they hunt only with dogs. On closer questioning they admit to knowing techniques that do not involve dogs—for example, they may climb trees and lie in wait for an animal to approach to feed on fallen fruit. Among all Agta, hunting practices vary considerably between the rainy and dry seasons. Our fieldwork in Malibu has been confined to the dry season, when dogs are important. In the rainy season solitary stalking is practiced. Field observations should eventually provide quantitative data on women hunting in this season; we must stress that our data are primarily from interview and brief observation. We have not resided among Cagayan Agta long enough to advance quantitatively based generalizations.

Women not only hunt but appear to hunt frequently. Like men, some enjoy hunting

more than others. The more remotely located Agta seem most to favor hunting. Even among Agta certain males and females are considered lacking in initiative, a fault that may not be confined to hunting.

Informant data indicate that while women may make their own arrows, the actual blacksmithing of the metal projectile points is a male activity. More field research is necessary to confirm the universality of this detail. Other items of interest pertain to the composition of hunting parties. Most people in any one residence group are consanguineally or affinely related. We have observed several combinations of hunting parties. Men and women hunt together or among themselves. Often sisters, or mother and daughter, or aunt and niece hunt together. At Malibu, two sisters, co-wives of one male, hunt together, and either or both sisters join the husband to hunt. When young children exist, one of the two wives may stay at the residence while the husband and the other wife hunt and fish. Also, sisters and brothers cooperate on the hunt. A woman would not hunt with, for example, a cousin's husband unless the cousin were along.

The only real argument, in our opinion, that has been advanced to support the contention that women must gather and men hunt relates to childbearing and nurture. Among the Agta, during late pregnancy and for the first few months of nursing, a woman will not hunt. In spite of the small size of each residential group, however, some females seem always to be around to hunt, although one or more may be temporarily withdrawn from the activity. Women with young children hunt less than teenagers and older women. On the occasion of brief hunts—part of one day—children are cared for by older siblings, by grandparents, and by other relatives. Occasionally a father will tend a child. Only infants are closely tied to mothers.

Girls start hunting shortly after puberty. Before then they are gaining forest knowledge but are not strong. Boys are no different. We have no menopause data, but at least one woman known to us as a hunter must have passed childbearing age. She is consid-

ered an older woman, but since she is strong, she hunts. The pattern is typical of men also. As long as strength to travel and to carry game is retained, people hunt. Our best informant, a young grandmother, hunts several times a week.

Both Agta men and women fish. In fact, from early childhood until the infirmity of old age all Agta fish. If most adults are gone on a hunting trip for several days, the remaining adults and children must obtain animal protein by themselves. Only women in late pregnancy, with young infants, or into old age, withdraw from fishing, which makes considerable demands of endurance as well as skill. Some men excel at working in rough, deep, and cold waters. The everyday techniques for fishing are limited to underwater spear fishing. Glass-lensed wooden goggles, a heavy wire spear or rod varying according to size of fish sought, and an inner-tube rubber band complete the equipment. To fish, people simply swim underwater, seeking fish in the various aquatic environments known for each species. Girls in their teens are very capable at fishing. When fishing individually, women may be major contributors to the daily catch.

When group fishing is undertaken, a drive is conducted. In this operation, a long vine is prepared by attaching stones and banners of wild banana stalks. Two people drag the vine, one on each end and on opposite sides of the river, while the people in the water spear fish startled by the stones and stalks. Women join men in the drives, with older men and women dragging the vine while all able-bodied youths and adults work in the water.

Difficulty of fishing may be characterized as a gradient upon which men and women become less and less able as age and debilities increase. The elderly, when mobile, may still be productive, but instead of true fishing, their activities may be termed collecting. Both the coastal reef areas and freshwater rivers and streams have abundant shellfish, shrimp, and amphibians that may be caught by hand. Elderly women and grandchildren are especially eager to harvest these resources. Older men are not ashamed to follow suit, although the enthusiasm of others for the task seldom

gives old men incentive. Men are much less eager to give up riverine fishing after middle age than are women. Clearly some emphasis on males securing protein is found among Agta. Women, however, seem to have traditionally been active in fishing. Interestingly, as a few Agta adopt lowland fishing technology, especially nets, women seldom participate. Like their female counterparts in lowland society, women are deemed not appropriate in net fishing.

One might expect that, on the basis of worldwide comparison, tropic hunters would really be gatherers, and that women would be the steady and substantial providers. Agta do not fit the generalizations now accepted. Few Agta women regularly dig roots, gather palm hearts, seek fruit, or pick greens. Most Agta daily consume domesticated staples grown by the farmers. Women are, however, very knowledgeable concerning flora and its use, and among the less settled Agta, young girls are still taught all traditional forest lore. Brides-to-be among these Agta are partially evaluated on the basis of their knowledge, skill, and endurance in collecting jungle plant foods.

Roots are collected by women whenever more desirable food is unobtainable, when several wild pigs have been killed and the men want to eat "forest food" with pig fat, or when a visit to relatives or friends calls for a special treat. The interior groups may actually combine meat and wild roots for weeks when camped so far from farmers that exchange for corn is impossible. Downriver Agta consider such a practice a real hardship, not to be willingly endured. Men are known to dig roots, even though they say it is women's work. On long-distance hunts men do not as a rule carry food, and they may occasionally dig roots to alleviate the all meat-fish diet.

As hunting is thought of as a "sort of" male activity among many Agta (in Isabela), processing the starch of the caryota palm is a female activity. Women cruise the forest searching for trees containing masses of the starch; they also chop down the trees, split the trunks, adze out the pith, and extract the

flour. Often parties of women and girls work together, speeding up the laborious task. On occasion, men will assist. Extracting the flour starch is moderately heavy work, and tiring. Husbands may help when wives have a pressing need to complete a task quickly. Since much of the final product is given in gift form, the need for haste occurs frequently. Perhaps most important to note is the male participation. Sexual division of labor is tenuously bounded among all Agta. Emphases may exist, but a man can even build a house (i.e., tie the fronds to the frame—a female task).

As noted at the beginning, trade, exchange, and horticulture are not new to Agta. Informants, early photographs, and writings indicate that all but the most remote Agta were not "pure" hunter-gatherers after about A.D. 1900. Since the mountains have been a final retreat—from the earliest Spanish attempts to conquer the Cagayan Valley until the present—Agta must have been in contact with former farmers/revolutionaries in hiding. Keesing (1962), summarizing the peoples of northern Luzon, documents several societies of pagan swiddeners adjacent to or in Negrito territory. The Palanan River drainage area was inhabited by farmers before Spanish contact in the sixteenth century. Doubtless, Agta have participated in economic exchange and social intercourse for centuries. Agta now have institutionalized trade partnerships, at least in Palanan and Casiguran municipalities. Trade partners are called *ibay* (Peterson [1978a,b] discussed the *ibay* relationship in detail), and partnerships may last between two families over two or more generations. *Ibay* exchange meat for grains and roots, or meat for cloth, metal, tobacco, beads, and other goods. Services may be exchanged, especially in downriver areas. Fields may be worked by Agta, who then borrow a carabao, receive corn or rice, and satisfy any of a number of needs. What is important in relation to this chapter is that Agta women may engage in *ibay* partnerships. Among the lowland farmers almost all *ibay* are males. An Agta woman may be an *ibay* with a lowland man. According to our data, an Agta husband often is not also *ibay* with his wife's *ibay*, but he

must treat the farmer as he would his own *ibay*. Of course Agta men and women trade with any farmer they choose, but such exchange is without the consideration given to an *ibay*. (Considerations include credit, acts of friendship, and first choice/best deal on goods.) Not only do women have *ibay*, but they very frequently are the most active agents of exchange. In areas where the trade rests mostly on meat and where men do most of the hunting, women are likely to carry out the dried meat and bring back the staple. They therefore gain experience in dealing with the farmers. We should note that many farmers attempt to cheat the Agta by short-changing them on counts or weights, but they do so on the basis of gullibility or naiveté of the Agta, not on the basis of sex. Agta women are actually more aggressive traders than are men, who do not like confrontation.

Among the Dipagsanghang Agta, women seldom hunt today, and infrequently dig roots. They do carry out meat to trade. They seem to have an easier life, with emphasis on corn, rice, and roots instead of gathering wild foods. However, downriver, close to farmers, Agta women have reversed this trend, and are working harder and longer hours.³ Intensification of the *ibay* relationship and need to own and cultivate land has forced women to become horticulturalists and wage laborers for farmers. On their own family plots (family-owned, not male- or female-owned) they, together with adult males and youths, clear land, break soil, plant, weed, and harvest. When clearing virgin forest of large trees, women do not participate. They do clear secondary growth in fallowed fields.

In the families that reside close to Palanan . . . men and women work almost daily in the fields of farmers. Women go to the forest to collect the lighter raw materials for house construction, mats, betel chews, medicines, and so on. Men follow a similar pattern, giving up hunting for field labor and a corn and sweet potato diet supplemented by small fish. Again we see a remarkable parallel in the activities of males and females.

Looking more closely at specialized women's activities, one may suggest increas-

ing importance in downriver areas. Women have several domains that they use to gain cash or kind income. As just stated, income from labor in fields adds to the economic power of women. A small-scale traditional pursuit, shared by men and women, is the gathering of copal, a tree resin common to trees (*Agathis philippinensis*) found scattered in the Sierra Madre. Women often collect and carry the resin out to lowland "middlemen," who sell it to the depot in town. While corn and cash may be sought in exchange, cloth is desired in order to make skirts. Medicine and medical treatments for ailing children may be paid for by copal collection. Another example of entrepreneurship by females is a small-scale mobile variety store effort. After working in fields for cash and building a surplus, families may cross the Sierra Madre to the towns of San Mariano, Cauayan, and Ilagan. There Agta, often women, purchase in markets and stores goods for use and resale in Palanan. Palanan Centro itself has no real market, only several small general stores selling goods at highly marked up prices. Since no road reaches Palanan, all manufactured supplies must enter town by airplane from Cauayan or boat from Baler. Freight costs are high. Some Agta women are very eager to hike outside to get tobacco, which always commands a high price and a ready market.

DISCUSSION

The role of women in Agta economic activities has been reviewed. Assessment of an hypothesized egalitarian position of women may be more difficult, and rests on assertions and interpretations drawn from the economic roles. First, drawing in part from Friedl (1975), an argument can be made that women in Agta society have equality with men because they have similar authority in decision making. The authority could be based on the equal contribution to the subsistence resources. Working back, we see that among many Agta, women do contribute heavily to the daily food supply, do perform maintenance tasks with men, and may initiate food

acquisition efforts through their own skills. They do control the distribution of their acquired food, sharing first with their own nuclear family and extended family, then trading as they see fit. They may procure nonfood goods as they desire. Men may do the same; generally spouses discuss what work to do, what needs should be satisfied, and who will do what. Whole residential groups frequently together decide courses of action. Women are as vocal and as critical in reaching decisions as are men. Further examples could strongly validate the hypothesis that women do supply a substantial portion of foods, and the assertion that women have authority in major decision making. Two questions arise. May we accept a causal relationship between percentage of food production and equality? Certainly there are cases to the contrary. According to Richard A. Gould (personal communication), Australian Aboriginal women in various areas collected the bulk of the food, yet remained less than equal (as we will define equality). Second, we may ask if Agta males and females are actually "equal."

Two avenues may suffice in answering this question. First, one might explore a definition of equality, surely a culturally loaded concept. Since Agta women have authority or control of the economic gain of their own labor, they may be equal in this critical domain. Equality must surely be equated with decision-making power and control of one's own production. The second avenue of equality validation by the scientist may be to examine the female's control over herself in non-economic matters. These could include selection of marriage partner, lack of premarital sexual intercourse proscription, spacing of children, ease of divorce, and polygyny rules.

In marriage, two forms are typical of Agta. One, the less common, is elopement by young lovers. While such marriages admittedly are fragile, elopement is not uncommon. In this case both partners must be willing. Rape and abduction are rare. Rape by Agta men is not known to the authors. Abduction must involve a slightly willing female, and is not done by young people. A mature man might ab-

duct a married woman, crossing the mountains to a safe locale. To abduct a young girl would be difficult. Parents of eloping couples may be enraged, but usually reconcile themselves to the marriage. If the newlyweds stay together, no more is made of it.

The proper form of marriage is one arranged by customary meetings and discussions, as well as exchange of goods between two families. Often neither the bride nor the groom has had much say in the matter, although serious dislike by either would probably kill the negotiations before the marriage. Mothers are the most important in choosing who will marry whom. Even when their children are young, they are looking about for good partners. Word filters around when a young girl is marriageable, and efforts are made to get the appropriate young man and his family into negotiations before an undesirable family appears. Once any family with a prospective groom formally asks, a rejection is given only for strong and good reasons, since the denied family loses considerable face and may be angry enough to seek revenge.¹

Criteria for choice of a marriage partner are varied. Often a young man in his early twenties marries a girl about fifteen. Girls entering marriage before puberty are not uncommon. In such cases the husband may help raise the girl until the time the marriage is consummated and full wifehood is recognized. Other combinations are seen. One much discussed case was the marriage of a woman in her forties to a man in his mid-twenties. The couple seemed very happy, with the wife paying rather special attention to her husband. The man's mother, a friend of the wife's, decided that the marriage was peculiar but acceptable.

Premarital female chastity is not an idea of much currency. Agta close to farmers will pay lip service to the idea, but should a girl become pregnant she will take a husband. There are no illegitimate Agta children, although an occasional rape of an Agta by a lowland male may produce a child. Since by the time a girl is fertile she likely will be married, illegitimacy is not the issue. Although

some data are difficult to collect concerning sex, almost certainly girls are able to engage in sexual activity with relative ease; promiscuity is not favored in any circumstance. Males may have as little or great difficulty in engaging in sex as females. The Agta are widely dispersed in extended family groups; hence appropriate sexual partners are seldom seen. No homosexuality is known to exist.

Agta gossip suggests that many Agta, male and female, married and unmarried, constantly carry on extramarital sexual relations. This may be a function of gossip, and a gross exaggeration. Whatever reality, neither males nor females seem to be especially singled out for criticism.

Women say they space their children. The practice certainly varies hugely from person to person, as does fecundity and luck in keeping children alive. The Agta use various herbal concoctions that supposedly prevent conception, cause abortions shortly after conception, and have several functions related to menstruation. These medicines are known to all Agta and are frequently used. Our census data indicate that some women seem to be successful in spacing births. Other cases note high infant mortality yet no infanticide, female or male. All Agta abhor the idea.

Divorce is infrequent among Agta, with elopement being more prone to failure than are arranged marriages. Divorce does happen often enough, however, for us to look at the causes and relate them to an inquiry into female equality. First, either sex may divorce the other with equal ease. Agta have no possessions. Some gift giving between the two families establishes the marriage, but most of the gifts are food. Cloth, kettles, and minor items make up the rest. Return of marriage gifts is unlikely. Spouses simply take their personal possessions and return to the residential group of close relatives.

Causes for divorce are mainly laziness or improvidence, excessive adultery, or personality clashes and incompatibility, usually caused by a combination of the first two conditions. Skill and success in subsistence activities is of primary importance to marriage. While some Agta are less industrious and less

skilled than others, all Agta expect a mate to work hard at all appropriate tasks. Should a male fail, divorce is likely. Occasionally, very young couples experience extra difficulties. These may be accentuated by displeased parents of either party.

Polygamy is not found in most of Isabela. Census data collected to date reveal only monogamy or serial monogamy. That is, spouses may be divorced or widow(er)ed several times in a lifetime. In Cagayan the data are incomplete but startling. Probably some of the strongest support for the equality of women as hunters, comes from a study of Agta polygamy. We noted earlier that two co-wives, sisters, hunted together in Malibu. South of Malibu at Blos, another husband and two sisters/co-wives arrangement was found. In the same residential unit we recorded a woman residing with her two co-husbands. They were not brothers; one was older than the wife, one younger. The other women considered this arrangement as humorous, but acceptable. An insight into the male sexual jealousy found in many societies worldwide is the comment of a Palanan Agta man. This old man, when told of the polyandrous marriage to the north, thought for a moment and commented, "Well, perhaps one man with two wives is OK, but a woman with two husbands? I find that totally bad." The women laughed at him.

NOTES

1. Although the authors have worked among the Agta about fourteen months, visits to the northerly group in the Dianggu-Malibu area have been brief. The practice of women hunting was first observed during a survey trip in 1972. We again visited the Dianggu group in 1975. In August 1978 we returned for one week to Dianggu and Malibu, where we verified in greater detail the subsistence activities of women. Data were collected using the Palanan Agta dialect and Ilokano.
2. Dianggu and Malibu are river names used by Agta and nearby Malay Filipinos. On the

Board of Technical Surveys and Maps (Lobod Point, Philippines), the Dianggu is named the Lobod and the Malibu is named the Ilang.

3. Peterson (n.d.) argues that "downriver" Agta women are highly variable in their devotion to labor, older women being hardworking and young mothers not at all industrious.
4. Thomas Headland tells us that rejection of a prospective spouse may be a less serious matter among Casiguran Agta than among those we know.

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Woman's Day Among the Mundurucú

Robert Murphy and Yolanda Murphy

Dawn came first as a shift of light and shadow in the eastern sky, etching out of the blackness of the night the outline of the hills on the watershed of the rivers. With it, the forest fell silent, the raucous noises of the night creatures faded, and the great quietude separating the life of the night from that of the day reached its brief ascendancy. As the eastern sky turned a dark, then a lighter, gray, the houses of the Mundurucú village of Cabruá began to emerge from shadows into pale images, and the first stirring of the people was heard.

Borai tossed in her hammock, wrapped it tightly around and snuggled her baby closely against the chill dawn. The child began to whimper, and she took a breast from under her worn dress and placed it by his mouth. While he suckled, Borai lay half-asleep, gazing out through the space between the walls and roof of the house, watching the light strengthen in the east. The eight-month-old baby finished feeding, fell back to sleep, and Borai gently disengaged herself from it and eased out of her warm cocoon into the cold of the wakening house. She yawned and stretched, scratched herself luxuriantly, and then kicked at the dogs nestled around the smoldering household fire.

The earth around the hearth was still warm, and she stood close to it, warming the bottoms of her feet. Borai then took some kindling and placing it next to the fire, took a still glowing end of a piece of wood from last night's fire and blew it into flame. She placed the kindling carefully around the small flame, like spokes about a hub, and when the fire

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crackled into life, brought over larger pieces of firewood to prepare for the day's cooking. She swung rather halfheartedly with a piece of firewood at the lingering dogs, chasing them out of the house, and then went to stand at the back door, pensively watching the breaking day.

The sky in the east had by then turned to delicate and striated bands of mauve and pink, and the land in the valley below was beginning to appear from the gloom. The hills beyond the headwaters of the river could now be seen in sharp relief, and the islands of forest in the rolling savannah appeared as dark blotches, their trees gaining distinction as the light grew stronger. The valleys were still covered with the mist of the dawn, and small pockets of fog moved slowly across the faces of the hills. It was a calm and serene period, and the other women of the house only spoke to each other in whispers, lest the stillness of the natural world be torn by human beings.

The life of the village gained momentum as the natural order of the day asserted itself. Before the sun had edged over the horizon, a rooster crowed from somewhere in the underbrush bordering the village, another in the brush near the *farinha*-making shed answered, and the morning litany of cock-crowling was joined by the first snarling fight of dogs competing for a shred of tapir intestine outside the village. In the men's house many of the men were stirring, though a few were still lying in their hammocks, their feet dangling over the small fires they had built beneath. Most of them planned to hunt that day, and they were already testing bow strings and sighting down arrow shafts for straightness. Others squatted by a fire to discuss where to hunt, passing from one to another the single cigarette one of them had rolled.

Borai's husband, Kaba, broke away from the group of men and came to the house. He sat on a log that served as a seat, and Borai brought him a half gourd of *farinha*, flour made from bitter manioc, mixed with water. He tilted the container back, pushing the *farinha* toward his mouth with a hunting knife, and passed it back to her when he had finished. Borai had warmed up, over the fire, two monkey legs left from the previous night's dinner, and she passed one of the legs over to him with a small gourd of salt. He dipped the scrawny and heat-shriveled meat in the salt between each bite, washed it down with water, and went back to join the gathering hunting party. Few words had been exchanged. The baby had a slight cold; Kaba asked how he had spent the night, and he played with the child for a short time before leaving.

Borai's older son by a previous marriage, a boy of twelve, arrived from the men's house for food and water, but left quickly to join the other boys, who were planning a day of stalking fish with bow and arrow in a nearby stream. The boys would roast the small fish near the stream and eat palm fruits, so she did not expect to see him again until the men began to return from the hunt, bringing the boys out of the forest to examine the day's kill. The baby having begun to cry, she picked him out of the hammock and gave him the breast again, then passed the child to her sister's ten-year-old daughter, who put the now squalling baby in a carrying sling passed around her shoulder, forming a seat for the baby on her narrow hip. Freed of her burden, Borai gnawed on monkey bones, took some *farinha* and water, and then went off some 200 feet from the village to relieve herself. Three thin and mangy dogs, not suited for hunting and thus reduced to scavenging garbage and human waste, followed her, sat patiently on their haunches, and waited.

The sun had cleared the hills and the house was in full motion when Borai returned. Children were laughing, crying, and shouting, emerging from their houses to wander through the village and explore the other four dwellings. Wherever the little ones went,

they were offered a bit of food and fondled, for in this village of ninety people, every child was well known to each adult, and most of them were related in ways that people could not quite specify, however much they categorized their kinship ties. The men by this time had left the village, winding single file down the path that led from the grass-covered hill into the still mist-shrouded forests bordering the stream below. The column of hunters passed out of sight, but the women and children could still hear the barks of the hunting dogs and the deep sounds of the horns of the hunters signaling to each other, ever more faintly until only the low murmur of village life broke the calm that had settled on the community.

As the sun rose, it evaporated the mists, driving away the cool of the dawn and touching the village with a promise of the oppressive heat of midday. It was May, and though the worst of the rains had passed from the up-lifted drainage south of the Amazon River, the air remained humid, and afternoon thunderstorms were still frequent. But the streams had receded to the confines of their banks, their waters had cleared, and the small rivulets of the high savannahs flowed cool through the tunnels of forest they watered. The women of Borai's house—her mother, two sisters, the wife of one of her brothers, and a maternal cousin of her mother—gathered up their gourd water containers and, bidding the children to follow, went down to the stream below. As the procession wound through the village and past the back doors of other houses, more women joined them, calling out to each other, while the little children ran down the grassy hill, playing as they went; the boys were empty-handed, but their small sisters carried their own little gourds. As they neared the stream, the older boys finished their morning swim and began to work their way downstream to one of the better fishing holes.

The smallest children, who were naked, ran into the water with shrieks of glee, while their older sisters shucked off their thin dresses and followed them. The older women eased into the stream, taking off their clothes

as the water rose higher on their bodies. The water was stinging cold at first, but they soon became accustomed to it, ducking under the surface and splashing each other happily. The women rubbed their bodies with the water and scrubbed the backsides of the smallest children to clean them. They splashed about for another half hour and then slipped on their cotton Mother Hubbard dresses and sat in the sun to warm and dry.

Their ablutions done, the women filled the water gourds, and most started back up the hill to the village. A few stayed behind to wash clothes, dipping them in the water, rubbing their folds against each other, and smacking the wet clothing against flat rocks. Last week, the village had run out of the soap they had gotten from the trader, but most of the dirt was washed out without it. Borai had only two dresses, the one she was wearing and the one being washed; Kaba had promised her another after he had sold some rubber to the trader during the coming months of the dry season.

The washing done, the remainder of the women returned to the village together. Both propriety and fear of lone and wandering males kept any from remaining behind, forcing them to stay in small groups on almost any venture beyond the immediate vicinity of the village. Back at the house, Borai hung her tattered wash on a small cotton bush near the back door and began to clean up garbage, which she simply threw in the underbrush, from the cleared area around the house. She started to sweep out the house with a broom improvised from a few branches, but the baby began to cry in earnest, and she took him from her niece. This time, however, instead of offering the breast to the child, she mashed up a piece of banana with a chunk of boiled sweet manioc and spooned it into his mouth. She then put the baby in its carrying sling and swept the floor in a rather desultory way with one hand, while stroking the baby with the other. One of her sisters joined in the house-cleaning, and they swept the remains out the door, where a tame parrot and two hens immediately began to pick through the trash for pieces of grain and fruit. The women watched

in amusement as the hens tried unsuccessfully to drive off the parrot, who reared back in outrage and squawked at the menacing fowl. The sisters then sat in their hammocks and talked to their mother about the day's work ahead; housekeeping in the large, un-compartmented, and dirt-floored dwellings was the least of their chores.

The sun had risen full into the morning sky, but the peak of the day's heat was still four hours away, making most of the women anxious to get their garden work done. The supply of manioc flour in the house had already been eaten, and for the last two days the women of Borai's house had been drawing on the larders of their neighbors. Borai's mother went to the open-walled shed in the middle of the village where manioc flour was made, and began to build a fire in the large earth-walled oven on which the farinha was toasted. She directed her three daughters to fetch tubers from the stream, where they had been soaking in water for the past three days, and sent her daughter-in-law for more firewood. The daughter-in-law put an axe in her carrying basket, which she carried on her back with a bark-cloth tump-line hung across her forehead, and went through the village to ask her cousin to come help her. Borai and her sister stopped at another house to tell the women where they were going and enlisted the support of two of the occupants. The four then set out for the stream on a path which took them well below the area where they bathed and drew water, and they began to load their baskets with the softened, almost crumbling, manioc tubers. The children had been left with their grandmother, allowing the women to take another, more leisurely, bath and to discuss some of the shortcomings of their sister-in-law.

The carrying baskets were heavy with the water-laden manioc, and they squatted in a genuflecting position with their backs to the baskets, passed the tumplines across their foreheads, and slowly stood up, using the full strength of their torsos and necks to lift the burdens. The sun was beating down on the path as they made their way laboriously back up the hill to the village, walking in silence to

conserve their strength. Arriving at the farinha shed, they gratefully dropped their loads into a long hollowed-out log used as a tub and sat down in the shade to rest. Borai's baby began crying as soon as he saw her, quickly escaping from his older cousin to crawl through the dirt to his mother. She nursed him, more for comfort than food, and then let him crawl back and forth across her lap. The sister-in-law and her helper returned from the garden, where they had gathered felled, but unburned, wood and chopped it into stove lengths, and dumped the contents of their baskets next to the farinha oven. They too sat in the shade against one of the shed uprights and joined the conversation. Three other women drifted across the weed-choked village plaza to help, and to tell of their own plans to make farinha in two days' time.

The work party having increased to eight, the women decided that the dull and laborious chore could be put off no longer. Borai and her mother stepped into the trough filled with soft manioc and began to walk back and forth, working their feet up and down, to break up the tubers and separate the pulp from the skins. As they worked, the water oozed out of the broken tubers, mixed with the pulp into a thick mass, and squished rather pleasurably between their toes. Another woman began picking out the skins and throwing them to one side. The sister-in-law and her cousin went off to the old garden for more firewood, and three of the other women went down to the stream to get more manioc. One woman remained seated in the shade, helping Borai's niece in keeping the children from underfoot.

Despite the tedium of the work, the conversation in the farinha shed never slowed. Borai's mother brought up the possibility that the trader might pay a visit to the village in the near future, a story she had heard from the wife of a young man who had been visiting on the Tapajós River. One woman added that it seemed to make little difference whether he arrived or not, as he rarely brought very much desirable merchandise. Another commented that on his last visit the trader had brought nothing but *cachaça*, the regional cane rum,

and that the men had exhausted all their credit in becoming thoroughly drunk. Borai's mother reminded the critic that she, too, had drunk her fair share of the trader's rum on that occasion, and the onlookers dissolved in laughter. Given the fact that many of the women had drunk as much as the men would let them have, the subject was quickly turned to the men. One of the chief topics of conversation at the time was the visit in the village of a young man, who was in a late stage of courtship of one of the village's girls. The progress of the romance was carefully examined by the group in the farinha shed, and the young man's merits mercilessly evaluated. One of the women noted that the suitor had a small penis, bringing forth the sour remark that he was not much different from the other men. At least, said another, his penis showed more life than those of most of the other men. The women laughed and all looked over with amusement toward the men's house, where two or three occupants still lingered. The men, aware of the derision, became furiously intent on whatever they were doing, their eyes turned carefully away from the farinha shed.

In the meantime, the work was progressing at a slow and steady pace. Large wads of wet pulp were taken from the trough and placed in the open end of a *tipiti*. The *tipiti* was a long tube made of loosely woven palm leaves, with an open mouth at the top and closed at the bottom. The top end was suspended from a rafter, and a long pole was placed through a loop at the bottom. Two of the women sat on the end of the pole, the other end of which was secured near the ground, and the resultant lever pulled powerfully downward on the *tipiti*. This caused it to elongate and constrict, squeezing out the water from the pulp and leaving the contents still moist, ready to be sieved. When only a dribble of water came from the *tipiti*, the women emptied the pulp into a large sieve placed over a shallow basin and gently worked it through the mesh with their fingers. It dropped into the receptacle as a coarse, damp cereal, and the pieces that did not go through were taken by another of the women and pounded with a wooden mortar and pestle.

The day's production of farinha would not last the household much more than a week, and the women agreed that they should put more tubers in the water to soak. Borai and three of the other women took their carrying baskets and machetes and headed out of the village to the gardens. They followed a path from the village plaza that passed in back of one of the houses. The path narrowed through the dense underbrush surrounding the village and emerged suddenly into the open savannah. The land ahead rolled gently. The sandy soil was covered with clumps of short grass and small flowering shrubs, and here and there were small islands of trees, some of which marked the sites of old and abandoned villages. These were easily identified by the scattered fruit palms in their midsts, the end products of palm pits thrown away decades ago. As the women walked single file along the narrow path worn through the grasses, they commented on almost everything they saw—a pair of doves cooing in a distant grove, a parrot flying from one tree clump to another, the activity around a termite hill, a curious cloud formation.

The trail entered suddenly into the forest and dropped to a small stream that bubbled among rocks. A log served as a bridge across the water, but the women stopped to bathe before going on to the garden. The path wound for a while among very tall trees, whose leafy branches almost 100 feet above kept out the sunlight and left the forest floor clear of underbrush. As the trail rose, it became lighter and the underbrush became thicker, for they were entering a tract that had been farmed many years ago and was still under the cover of lower, secondary forest. Shadow gave way to brightness, dark greens to light hues, and coolness to heat as the women broke out of the forest and into the garden.

The garden was no more than two acres in extent, and along with two other producing gardens provided the main source of vegetable food for the household. This garden had been cleared two years earlier and was yielding only manioc on its second planting. One of the women, however, spotted a pineapple

growing among the weeds and picked it for her children to eat. The garden was rank with weeds and, since no further planting would be done in it, nobody bothered any longer to keep it cleared. To the women, it looked like any other garden, though an outsider would see nothing more than stumps, felled and charred tree trunks lying at various angles, and a clutter of undergrowth. Most of the higher vegetation, however, was bitter manioc, the tall stalks of which had grown to six feet and over.

The women set to their harvest work, taking the machetes from their baskets and cutting the manioc stalks near their bases. They put the stalks aside, and then proceeded to dig out the tubers clustered at the base of each stalk, like fingers from a hand, with the machetes. Each plant yielded two to five tubers, ranging in size from six inches to over a foot in length; if the manioc had been left in the ground to grow for a few months longer, some would reach a length of two feet or so. After knocking the dirt from the manioc, the tubers were put in the baskets. Before going back, the women made a brief reconnoiter of the garden in search of more pineapples or an unharvested squash. Unsuccessful, they took up their burdens and, with another stop-over for a drink of water, went directly to the stream near the village where they put the manioc in a quiet pool to soak.

By the time this chore was done, the sun was almost directly overhead, and the morning breezes had died completely. The village lay beaten down by the sun, quiet and somnolent under the noonday heat. The roosters and chickens were not to be seen, and the few dogs remaining in the village were lying in the shade. One of the men in the men's house was still working on a basket, but the other two had retired to their hammocks in its shady recesses. Borai and her companions went to the farinha shed, where she found her baby crying lustily from hunger. She sat in the shade to nurse him, while watching her mother and another woman slowly turning and stirring the manioc flour, which was being toasted on a copper griddle above the furnace. The women each had a canoe paddle

which they used as a spatula to prevent the manioc from burning on the pan and to turn under the flour on top to expose it again to the heat. It would take well over an hour for each panful to become dry and toasted brown, and other women took up the task at intervals of about fifteen minutes to relieve the heat-parched workers.

As the work dragged on, most of its preliminary phases, such as bringing in the manioc, mashing it, running the pulp through the tipiti, and sieving the resulting mash, were already largely completed, and many of the helpers from the other houses had drifted away to escape the heat of the oven. Borai was hungry after her morning's work and she went to the dwelling, where she put the baby in her hammock. One of her sisters had cooked some plantains in the coals of the fire and offered her some, and Borai rounded out the meal with manioc mixed with a drink made of palm fruit. She then lay down in the hammock to rest with her child and almost immediately fell into a light sleep.

Borai drowsed in the heavy heat of the afternoon and finally awakened after the baby's fitfulness had turned into crying. She fed him and then went out to the farinha shed, where she gave the baby to one of the young girls and took a turn at toasting the manioc flour. The rest of the farinha-making process was now completed, but two five-gallon cans filled with damp sieved pulp remained to be put on the griddle, and it would be almost dark before they were finally done. Though only one or two women at a time were required for the work, others drifted out from the houses to join in the conversation. The sun was already halfway between its zenith and the horizon, and dark cumulus clouds were beginning to build up in the west. The breezes freshened as the storm approached, dispelling the heat and lifting everybody from their afternoon torpor. One of the women suggested that it was time to get water for the evening meal, and the group scattered to their houses to gather up gourds and children. Some twenty of them trooped down to the stream to bathe off the day's sweat and to immerse themselves in the cold stream, lolling in it until their

teeth chattered and they had to seek the warmth of a sun-bathed rock.

From the distance, still deep back in the forest, the faint sound of a horn was heard, followed a short time later by another, somewhat closer. The women quickly filled the water containers and shooed the children ahead of them as they hurried to get back to the village before the hunting party. The storm, too, was approaching, and the silence of the forest and savannahs was broken by still remote rumbles of thunder. Borai went to her house and placed more wood on the fire, put the baby in the hammock, and waited for the return of her husband.

The hunters split up just outside the village and took the separate paths that led to the back entrances of their houses. Borai was waiting there when Kaba walked through the door carrying a wild pig, weighing about 100 pounds, across his shoulders. He dropped the pig to the floor, put his bow and arrow on a platform under the rafters, and sat to wait for Borai to bring him a half gourd of water and manioc. She commented on the fatness of the wild pig, asking her husband where he had taken it. "We cornered the herd at a crossing of the River of the Wild Turkey, not far from the Cabruá River and at a place where there are still ripe *burití* palm fruit," he replied. "The arrow of my brother Warú hit this one in the flank, and I brought him down with another over the heart." He went on to tell Borai that four pigs had been killed before the herd broke and ran, and individual hunters had also taken two monkeys, an agouti, and a paca. One of the dogs had been gashed by a boar, but the wound would probably heal. It had been a good hunt.

Kaba saw two men leave the men's house for the stream and hurried after them to take a bath before the storm hit. The other women of Borai's house joined with her in butchering the wild pig. They took long knives, finely honed on smooth rocks, and drew incisions down the stomach and along the legs. Two of them then carefully pulled back the hide, cutting the gristle at points where it stuck the flesh. The skin was stretched out with sticks and hung up outside to dry and cure for later

sale to the trader. The pig was then sliced through the ventral section to the viscera, the intestines removed and thrown outside to the ravenously hungry dogs. They fell on it ferociously, snarling and fighting while they gulped down whole chunks of the offal. The rest of the pig was quartered, the head and neck put aside as a fifth portion. Pieces of meat were then taken by the women to all the houses in the village, and by the time the usual reciprocity had been observed, almost a whole wild pig was ready for cooking in each dwelling.

The fire was now burning strongly, and Borai half filled a bell-bottomed ceramic pot with water and placed it in the center of the hearth, the flames licking up its sides. As the water heated, she cut a hind quarter of pig into chunks, which she placed in the pot for the evening meal. When the water came toward a boil, she threw in several pinches of salt. Her mother and one of the young girls, in the meanwhile, were cracking Brazil nuts and grating their meats, throwing the fragrant and milky pulp into the pot. The women then sat by the fire, stirring the pot, savoring the smells, and talking happily about the excellence of the meat. The men had by this time returned from their baths and were resting in their hammocks in the men's house, recalling events in the day's hunt, and laughing at some of their misadventures.

The sky had now turned completely dark, though there was still an hour and a half before the sun would set, and a cool breeze blew in advance of the storm. Suddenly the storm struck, with brilliant flashes of lightning and sharp claps of thunder which reverberated off the hills across the valley. The rain fell in sheets, the wind driving it into the open sides of the men's house, forcing some of the occupants to move further into the back and others to run for the walled dwelling houses. The roofs all leaked in places, but the residents had already arranged their hammocks and belongings in dry locations, and nobody paid much attention to the puddles forming on the floor. Borai's mother, nonetheless, took the occasion to ask her sons-in-law when they

were going to build a new village. "The roofs are old and leak, the house poles creak in the wind, and one of the children was almost bitten by a scorpion in the underbrush," she said. "Do we have to wait until our gardens are a half-day's walk away before you men decide to move?" Kaba stared intently at his toes and muttered that they were talking about building another village during the next rainy season. There was no time now, for soon after the next full moon most of the people would be leaving to collect rubber on the larger rivers. Enjoying his discomfort, the old woman reminded him that this is what the men had said last year and then went back to stirring the pot.

The front of the storm had passed, the wind died down, and the rain became lighter. Several of the men wandered back from the dwellings of the women to the men's house and climbed into their hammocks under the shelter of the overhanging roof. Many of the little boys trailed after them to play among the hammocks, and one three-year-old girl toddled along, too; her father took her into his hammock and played with her while talking to the other men. Everybody was in good spirits. There was enough food in the village for at least two days, the rain had made the day's end cool, and the smells of cooking wild pig occasionally wafted over from the houses. The men chatted with each other from their hammocks, and, in one, three teenage boys were rolling about in obvious sex play, unnoted by the adults.

In the houses, the boiled meat was now cooked, and Borai took a large gourd, filled it with meat and broth, while one of her sisters filled another with freshly made farinha. They brought them across the plaza to the cleared area in front of the men's house, where Kaba took them and called to the other men. Other women were bringing food to their husbands, too, and the men, with most of the boys squatting around them, sat on their haunches in a ring about the bowls. The men took spoons and scooped up meat and broth from the common bowls, occasionally dipping their hands into the farinha bowls and throwing the

manioc flour into their mouths with quick tosses. The hunters were hungry after a long day with little more than farinha and water and ate steadily, but quietly and soberly; boisterous and noisy behavior while eating would offend the spirit protectors of the game animals. Other spirits had to be appeased, too, and one of the men took a gourd of meat into the closed chamber adjoining the men's house, where he offered the meat to the ancestral spirits, saying, "Eat grandfathers, and make me lucky in the hunt." The offering made, he brought the bowl of meat back out and placed it with the others.

After the meal had been cooked, the women of Borai's house placed a babricot over the fire. This consisted of a tripod with a horizontal rack of green wood strips running across it a foot from the base. The remaining meat was placed on the babricot, where it would slowly roast and smoke until bedtime. The meat would then be removed, but it would be placed over a low fire again in the morning to complete the cooking process and prevent rotting. One of the women stayed by the fire to turn the meat occasionally and to hit any dogs that approached it. The other women, and the girls and little boys, sat around the pot of boiled meat, filling little half gourds with the stew and eating. The meat was tender, and the sauce of broth and Brazil nut milk delicious. There had been little meat in the village for the past few days, and they all gorged themselves. They also knew that by the third day, the remaining meat would be tough and barely chewable.

Dusk is very brief in the tropics, and the sunset glowed brilliantly against the broken clouds in the clearing western sky. The colors shifted, modulated, changed, and were suddenly gone. Night rapidly enfolded the village, and the people who were watching the setting sun remained a moment in silence and reentered their dwellings. In each house, the women lit small kerosene lamps which cast a flickering glow over the interiors, supplementing the flames of the fires. Borai sat in her hammock, talking with her mother about plans for the next day's work, while her

baby sat in the sling on her hip and nursed, more for solace than for food. A few of the children of the house were playing with a puppy, pulling its tail, twisting its legs, and preventing it from running away from them.

Borai and her mother went back to the farinha shed in the middle of the village to finish toasting the manioc flour. They stoked the fire back to life and after letting the oven warm up, poured in the remaining pulp. The glow from the open front of the oven cast a dim and flickering light over their work as they slowly turned and stirred the flour. Other women wandered from their houses to join the group, though the women of the chief's house, who were miffed because they felt they were being gossiped against, stayed home. Finally, unable to bear the thought that the farinha-shed group really was talking about them, two of the chief's daughters joined them. Everybody took a turn at stirring the farinha, but interest centered on a plan to gather *assai* palm fruits the next morning at a grove a few miles away. The fruit drink, and the abundance of roast meat, would make the day a festive one, and they would hold a dance in the evening.

Across the village plaza, a small fire was burning in front of the men's house. A poorly played guitar was trying to pick out the strain of a Brazilian song heard at a trader's post, and another man was softly playing one of their own songs on a traditional flute. The conversation of the men drifted across as a low murmur, broken occasionally by a raucous cry from one of the boys. After a while, the music stopped, but the silence was soon broken by a deep vibrant note from one of the *karökö*, the long tubular musical instruments which contained the ancestral spirits and which the women were forbidden even to see. The first notes were joined by the second and then the third *karökö*, playing in counterpoint to each other, slowly, repetitively, and in measured cadence. The men fell silent for a moment, then the conversation picked up again, the guitarist tried futilely to catch the elusive melody, and one of the boys dumped another from his hammock. But the mourn-

ful notes of the karökö dominated the village, shut out the night noises, accentuated the calm.

"There they go again," said Borai, as the first sounds of the karökö reached the farinha shed. The women listened for a moment, trying to identify the players by style and skill, laughing at an off-note played by one of the younger men. They then turned back to their conversation and the work of farinha toasting. Many of the little ones were becoming cranky from tiredness, and their mothers caressed them, or nursed the infants. One five-year-old climbed onto his mother's lap to nurse, but giggles from the older girls made him give up after a few minutes. The farinha was finally finished, scooped out of the pan with the paddles into loosely woven baskets lined with palm leaves, and placed on a storage rack in the house. A large bowl of the freshly made flour was kept in the shed, and the women occasionally dipped their fingers into it, enjoying the tanginess of the still hot grains. Some of the women brought their children back to their hammocks and remained in the houses; the rest of the group lingered a while and then went home, two by two, leaving the farinha shed to a few dogs huddled near the warmth of the oven.

The men's house had grown quiet as people drifted off to sleep, and finally the last sounds of the karökö faded. The players emerged from the enclosed sacred chamber, climbed into their hammocks, talked a while, and then fell asleep. One of the men drowsily told the boys to be quiet, and they, too, rolled up inside their hammocks, still whispering to

each other. The dying fire cast in flickering outline the arching, open-ended roof of the men's house and the two rows of hammocks.

Borai took the meat off the babricot, placing it in a covered basket, which she put on a storage rack. She threw a bit of dirt on the fire to bank it for the night, removed the babricot, and then slid gently into her hammock so as not to waken the already sleeping baby. Two of the other women went outside to urinate, but they stayed near the house, as the underbrush in the night was a hiding place of the *Yurupari* and other evil spirits. They reentered, blew out the kerosene lamp, and the house fell into silence.

The hills in the east began to emerge from the total blackness as a three-quarter moon rose, bathing the countryside and the village in pale light. The circle of houses around the village plaza could now be clearly seen; yet nothing moved, and the only sounds were an occasional cough or a baby's whimper. Traces of smoke from the smoldering fires were picked up by the moonlight, and the inside of the farinha shed was tinged with orange by the glowing embers of the dying fire. The village was silent, but the forests were not. From far off in the distance, a band of howler monkeys made an ululating uproar, and the noise of tree frogs near the stream was a steady backdrop of tone, broken by the cries of night birds and the chirping of crickets in the brush around the village. Borai listened for a very short while before tiredness overtook her; her last thought before drifting into full sleep was a hope that her husband would not decide to pay a night visit. A woman's day had ended.

Haruko's Work

Gail Lee Bernstein

"I lead a relatively relaxed life," Haruko told me, kneeling on the floor, folding the laundry, a few days after my arrival in Bessho. "I have a circle of four or five close friends who are, like myself, only housewives. Most other women in this area work outside in factories or stores. I prefer not to work, because I don't need the money that much and would rather have free time. Working women are so busy they don't have time to help their husbands." I gradually discovered that in reality she had very little free time; in fact she had stayed home from work only to help me get settled.

During the first weeks of my stay, the pace of Haruko's daily routine quickened noticeably. It soon became evident that she was more than just "a housewife." Although machinery had freed both women and men from most of the arduous work of rice cultivation, many other farming chores remained, and they usually fell to the women. In addition, once the harvest season was over, Haruko, like most other women in Bessho, sought part-time wage-paying work nearby. Watching her daily activities over several months, I concluded that Haruko was the busiest member of her family.

Yet it was not always easy to ascertain exactly what work Haruko and other farm women performed. For one thing, farm women did not consider their round of household chores to be work, and they viewed vegetable farming as merely an extension of their domestic sphere of activity—a part of cooking. Nor did they define rice cultivation as work. Even though they had labored side by

side with men in the paddies, transplanting rice seedlings in late spring or early summer, weeding together with other women during the remainder of the summer, and again working with their menfolk during the harvest in early fall, farm women referred to such labor as "helping my husband." Only wage labor constituted work. Thus to rely on simple questions like, "What work do you do?" was to invite deceptive answers, because even women who farmed almost entirely on their own but were not employed "outside" for pay, might reply, "I do not work; I stay at home."

In addition, women's work included numerous separate, discrete tasks that varied according to the season of the year and the time of day, and that were performed in countless different places inside and outside the house, the shed, and other farm buildings and on various plots of land scattered throughout the hamlet. Every day I had to ask Haruko where she would be working, and even after she told me, "I'll be hoeing in the vegetable field," I often could not find her, because the family farmed several vegetable fields in different places. By the time I did locate her, she might be finished with the hoeing and on to another task, such as separating out the weeds from the edible grasses she had picked the day before.

Equally difficult to study was the diversity of part-time, wage-paying jobs women performed. Their jobs in factories, shops, and offices or as orderlies in hospitals and as day laborers on other farmers' land took them out of the hamlet during the day. To observe such work required trailing after each hamlet woman and gaining entry into half a dozen different work sites. Also, the work was often temporary: small factories hiring only a few women might close down for several months

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during an economic slump, and women working as agricultural hired hands might be laid off after the harvest was over.

By tagging after Haruko for several months, I was eventually able to compile a list—by no means complete—of her work responsibilities. They fell broadly into three categories: homemaking, farming, and wage earning.

As a homemaker, Haruko had more extensive responsibilities than ever before: not only was she in charge of such traditional domestic work as cooking, cleaning, sewing, and participating in communal functions, but in recent years she had assumed the newer tasks of shopping, paying the bills, and guiding her children's education. Except in matters relating to the children, Shō-ichi, like most Japanese men, removed himself altogether from these domestic concerns.

Haruko's daily round of household chores began at six o'clock, when recorded Westminster chimes, broadcast from the loudspeaker installed on the roof of the hamlet social hall, awakened the farmers of Bessho and set her scurrying around the house. Every morning she prepared a breakfast of *misoshiru* (bean-paste soup enriched with white cubes of bean curd, an egg, and a few garden greens), boiled rice, and green tea. The children, who needed to be coaxed awake, ate toasted white bread. Before sitting down to breakfast at seven o'clock, Haruko placed six cups of green tea as offerings on the Buddhist altar in the bedroom. Whenever she made special food, such as rice balls, she also offered some to *hotoke-sama*, the spirits of the ancestors of Shō-ichi's family.

After sending the children off to school at eight o'clock in a flurry of last-minute searches for clothing and books and hastily delivered instructions, Haruko ran a load of wash in the washing machine and hung it out to dry. She also aired the heavy mattresses and quilts to prevent mildew, a perennial problem in Japan's humid climate. These two tasks were part of her morning routine on every clear day, but regardless of the weather, at five o'clock every single evening, just before starting dinner, she filled the deep bath

tub with hot water for the family's bath. Going without the daily bath was unthinkable; and if Haruko was detained, Obāsan or Yōko did this chore in her place. Her routine did not include housecleaning, however. There were neither windows to wash nor furniture to dust, and since shoes were removed at the door, the tatami-covered floor remained clean and required only sweeping. Such cleaning as was necessary was relegated to rainy days, when farmers do not work in the fields.

Lunch was a simply prepared meal of rice, processed or raw fish, and leftovers. For dinner, taken punctually at six o'clock, Haruko again made boiled rice, this time served with numerous side dishes, each on its own little plate, such as raw tuna or mackerel, boiled octopus, sliced vinegared cucumbers, noodles, seaweed, or spinach sprinkled with sesame seeds, and green tea. Thanks to Shō-ichi's pig business the family enjoyed more meat than other farm families, and occasionally they also ate small cubes of fried chicken bought at the Agricultural Cooperative supermarket in Unomachi.

As the woman of the house, Haruko also had several traditional community obligations that were impossible to shirk. Custom demands that all the women in a *kumi* (a grouping of several neighboring households) help prepare food for receptions following the funerals or weddings of member families. Furthermore, each household sends one woman to attend regular meetings of the Women's Guild of the Agricultural Cooperative Association. Haruko and other Bessho farm wives took turns serving in administrative capacities within the guild. They also participated in the cooking classes sponsored by the guild, as well as in meetings of the Parent-Teacher Association.

In addition to being a homemaker, Haruko was the family's chief farm worker. She grew the fruits and vegetables consumed by the household almost entirely on her own: carrots, peppers, Chinese cabbage, spinach, strawberries, broccoli, corn, onions, and a small scallion called *nira*. In the summertime, after the rice crop was planted, she prepared year-long supplies of staple food items such

as pickled vegetables and bean paste for *misoshiru*, and she further supplemented the family diet with wild grasses picked in the hills surrounding the rice plain or along the road. Once, when Haruko was not feeling well, Shō-ichi offered to plant the onions, but she had to tell him what to do.

Since the money for modernizing agriculture had been diverted primarily to the rice paddies, vegetables were still grown in tiny, scattered fields. Haruko's garden was actually four different plots of land: a vegetable patch in front of the house, another one across the road from the house, a cabbage patch down the road toward town, and a potato field about a half mile away in the opposite direction. While the men were learning to use the new rice-transplanting machines and the combines, Haruko worked with an old iron grubbing fork and a scythe. To enrich the soil, she relied on organic materials: chicken manure for fertilizer, and chicken feathers and rice husks for mulch. To irrigate a nearby vegetable field, she drew water from a spigot in front of the goldfish pond and carried it in a watering can.

Haruko did not always farm alone. For one week in autumn, for example, she worked with Obāsan and Shō-ichi harvesting potatoes, which were grown on a quarter-acre plot and fed to the pigs. (Farmers who ate mainly potatoes during the war do not care for them now, though their children have developed a taste for them.) The three worked silently in the fields from ten o'clock in the morning until five at night, stopping only for one hour at noon, when a siren announced the lunch break, and again at three o'clock, when they took a snack of green tea, tangerines, and a sweet cake. The women's work consisted of cutting the potato vines with a scythe, arranging them in piles, and tying them together. Then they put the potatoes in sacks for Shō-ichi to load onto his truck. Shō-ichi also operated a small, motor-driven plow that turned over the soil after the potatoes were harvested. Neighbors carted away the vines and fed them to their cows.

Haruko also worked with her mother-in-

law and husband on a neighborhood team husking rice. The group, which included Obāsan's sister and the sister's husband, son, and daughter-in-law, together with two neighbors, had collectively purchased a wooden husking machine in the early 1960's. It was run by a generator. Before purchasing the husker, they had paid a husking company to do the job for them, and before that, when Obāsan came to Bessho as a bride, a hand-operated device had been used to turn the rice around for hours at a time. The fall of 1974 was the last time the husking group would work together; beginning with the next harvest, all the rice would be husked mechanically in a large machine operated by the Agricultural Cooperative.

Members of the husking group took turns husking rice at each other's houses, and the host family was expected to provide refreshments. On the morning when it was their turn to use the machine, Obāsan and Haruko were up early getting the house in order and preparing the food. While Obāsan raked a gravel area in front of the house, where the gangling wooden contraption would be set up, Haruko turned on the rice steamer, made a swipe at the cobweb strung from the overhead lampshade in the living room to the side wall, climbed the persimmon tree for some fruit, leaped on her scooter for a quick errand to town, and, upon returning, set out the straw baskets used to carry the family's rice kernels from the storage shed to the husker. Shō-ichi telephoned to town for an order of beer.

Once the work team assembled (all but one worker arrived at exactly eight o'clock), the women and the men worked separately on each side of the husker. There was no need to delineate chores or to explain how the work would be done: everyone knew exactly what to do. The women filled the straw baskets with rice, hauled them to the machine, and poured in the rice, while the men weighed the husked rice as it flowed out of the machine, recorded the amount, and sacked and hauled the rice back to the storage shed.

Two hours later, the work was done and a mid-morning feast was served. Mats were spread out between the machine and the side

of the road. The workers gathered in a circle, the women on one side, kneeling, and the men on the other, sitting cross-legged. An abundance of food was pressed on the guests, who ritually refused once or twice before accepting rice cakes, raw fish, assorted vegetables, hardboiled eggs, fruit, tea, beer, and *sake*. Haruko peeled persimmons, cut them into four slices each, and handed them around. Sitting on dust and gravel by the side of the road, after two hours of labor, it was nevertheless possible at that moment to feel like royalty being wined and dined, filling one's belly, laughing and joking, indulged by the host and hostess, whose turn to be served would come the following day, when the wooden husker would be wheeled down the road to work at another house.

One of Haruko's principal farm chores was feeding the pigs, which were housed in a wooden structure several hundred yards behind the house. More than half of the Utsunomiyas' annual income came from the pig business. Twice a day, once in the morning and once at night, the couple fed the ninety pigs and cleaned the pigsty. There were about twelve pens, with seven or eight pigs in each. Haruko poured feed into the trough and mixed water in with it, while her husband cleaned the pens one by one, shoveling out the dung. They worked quickly and in silence. The stench and the flies seemed not to trouble either of them.

"Which of your tasks do you least like?" I asked Haruko one day, emerging from the pigsty to take a deep breath of fresh air. The air inside the sty was suffocating, and the pink, flesh-colored pigs, crowded into their stalls, were loudly squealing for food. Haruko was pouring feed from a tank into a wheelbarrow. Without looking up, she answered, "If you farm, you can't say you hate any work."

Shō-ichi operated a larger pig business in the mountains about twenty minutes' drive from the house. He and five other men raised one thousand pigs and took turns staying overnight to feed the animals, clean the pens, and tend to any emergencies.

Occasionally Haruko went along to help Shō-ichi and the other men at the pig farm.

Neither she nor her husband showed any sentimentality toward the animals. A mother pig, too exhausted after giving birth to move into the warmer quarters prepared for her and her piglets, and uncomfortable with a stillborn infant inside her, was first punched and then prodded with a hog catcher that was attached to her snout. Dead piglets from other litters lay in the aisle between the pens. Frightened pigs being weighed for market were kicked in the face, pulled by the ears or tails, or punched on their backs to make them heed. Haruko seemed unperturbed by the din of grunts and squeals, and while some of the men loaded pigs in a basket onto a truck, she calmly swept one of the sties. When the truck drove off, she put down her broom and stood on the pig scale to weigh herself.

An important part of pig farming was mating the pigs. As soon as the male was led into the female's pen, he became aroused, but he could not perform without assistance. Shō-ichi helped guide the penis, and if the pig failed to penetrate, he punched him as a reminder to try again. It took about ten to fifteen minutes to align a pair; copulation itself took only a few seconds. Meanwhile, Haruko stood ready to help, opening the gates to the pen or simply standing on the sidelines cheering and offering advice, like a third-base coach at the world series. "A little higher," she would yell, or "Oh, oh, too bad. OK now, off to the right a bit," alternately laughing at and sympathizing with the efforts of both pig and husband. She shared fully in her husband's work—it was equally her work—and the two performed their tasks like partners.

By early November, Haruko usually looked for part-time, wage-paying jobs. In previous years, she had worked in a small textile factory in Bessho. She had also commuted by bus to Akehama township to pick tangerines as a day laborer, earning four dollars a day (at a time when a tube of lipstick cost five dollars), but since she had returned home from that job too late to prepare the bath and fix dinner, she decided to look for work closer to home. Her options were limited, however.

The local economy offered various small jobs that called for manual dexterity, such as

scraping barnacles off oyster shells, wrapping pastry in leaves, or planting tobacco seedlings with chopsticks. This work was often unappealing, however: it usually required either sitting or hunkering for hours at a time, and in such jobs as tobacco planting one was not paid until the crop was harvested and sold.

A few women from Bessho had found office or sales positions in Unomachi, but these positions required special training. When I asked Haruko whether she could get an office job in town, perhaps at the telephone company, where a younger hamlet woman worked, she replied tersely, "I don't have the qualifications." Besides, some of these jobs required a full-time commitment. The best-paying jobs for women, she added, were jobs as schoolteachers, clerks in government offices, shopkeepers, and factory workers. Her own opportunities were confined largely to manual labor.

When day laborers were needed during the reorganization of the rice paddies, Haruko was taken on as a *dokata*, or construction worker (literally, a "mud person"), and she worked on a team with two other women and three men. In most other wage-paying jobs women and men worked apart, at distinct kinds of work, but on the construction teams they worked side by side. The women were paid about \$6.65 a day for eight hours' work, and the men were paid about \$11.65.¹ They took one hour for lunch and two additional breaks of one-half hour each.

The female *dokata*'s work was physically demanding: women hauled heavy boulders, climbed down into trenches to lay irrigation pipes, constructed bridges over irrigation ditches, and shoveled snow from steep mountain slopes. Though they feminized their work outfits with aprons and bonnets, some were embarrassed when I asked them what work they did, and one female *dokata* replied indirectly, "I do the same work as Haruko."

The *dokata*'s work could be hazardous, too, especially for women unaccustomed to it. In early January, after two months on the construction crew, Haruko was hit on the side of the head by a falling rock. Although her employer had distributed helmets to all workers,

Haruko did not like to wear hers. By a freak coincidence, her head was hit by another falling rock the very next day; she was wearing only her bonnet. This time she began to suffer fainting spells, dizziness, and headaches that prevented her from riding her motor scooter. X-rays did not reveal any bone damage, but the doctor decided that her "nerves" had been affected and prescribed one month's bed rest and a daily dose of eighteen tablets. She was also instructed not to take baths or wash her hair until she recovered. By the end of the month she was feeling better, though a brain scan now showed some abnormality and she had recurrent attacks of asthma. Daily injections at the hospital helped control the asthma; but whenever she tried to work in the fields, the headaches returned. National health insurance and her employee's insurance covered both the bulk of her medical expenses and her loss of income.

Haruko much preferred farming to construction work, she said. She was not thinking of hazards, however, or of physical demands; it was simply that she favored farming over any kind of wage labor. As a farmer, she could see the results of her endeavors. "The greatest pleasure of farming is the autumn harvest," she commented, and on more than one occasion she spoke of the "joy of producing one's own food," and of her "pride" in being the wife of a farmer. She also liked being able to work alongside her husband. Another advantage of farming was that "the farmer is master of himself; he can do whatever he chooses to do." In contrast, outside labor meant "you are used by others." When Haruko had worked in the Bessho knitting mill, she had always been watching the clock, "driven by time," because wages were determined by the worker's productivity—the number of finished goods she produced. Women stood hour after tedious hour in front of the machines, pushing a bobbin from right to left.

Not all farm women shared Haruko's views. Five women working in the Bessho mill, a one-room operation owned by a man in Yawatahama, said they enjoyed the piecework he sent them to do. "Paddy work is hard labor," said one woman. "This is easy." An-

other said, "We all live in Bessho. We are like relatives. It's pleasant here. Sometimes we sing songs." They worked their own hours, after the farm season was over. From late November they spent most of their time in the factory; in December, however, the factory abruptly closed down, a victim of market fluctuations caused by the oil scarcity in late 1974.

Women working in larger, more impersonal factories echoed some of Haruko's sentiments about factory work. In *Minori* (Harvest) magazine, published by the Women's guild of Uwa township, one woman voiced her complaints: "When I first started working, I felt uneasy about leaving the housework and the children, but there was no other way to pick up ready cash. Under today's completely changed work conditions, nerve fatigue, more than physical labor, is what quickly gets to you. You have to learn your work. You have to think about dealing with people you are working with in the organization. You have a lot of different feelings when you go out work-

ing. And you think: Aren't you taking money but making plainer meals? Can you really manage the household? Are you really taking care of your children's and your husband's health if you come home tired? By working [outside the home] won't you make your family unhappy?"

Factory work in Higashiwa county consisted primarily of making blue jeans (called g-pants) and canning and packing *mikan* (Japanese tangerines). Women working in blue-jeans factories could earn between \$5.60 and \$6.60 a day, depending on their experience and the number of jeans they completed. In one factory in Nomura township, women worked from eight in the morning until five at night, with one hour for lunch. Each woman received a flat wage for working on one part of the pants and a bonus depending on the group's productivity as a whole. In a *mikan*-packing plant operated by the Agricultural Cooperative in Unomachi, the women earned \$5.10 for eight hours of work; in Yawatahama, about thirty minutes away by

train, similar work paid between \$7.14 and \$8.50. Daily wages in the cooperative's plant were supplemented by a bonus, however, and by disability insurance like the *dokata*'s wages, which meant that the workers' real income in effect compared respectably with that of other non-salaried workers in the county (see the accompanying table), and was actually greater than that of a *dokata*, who did not work on rainy days.

Whereas the canning plant's equipment for folding and stapling cartons and sending fruit speeding along the conveyor belts was both modern and efficient, conditions of work were neither: some women knelt on cushions in a dimly lit, unheated building placing fruit into cartons, and others stood under a bare electric lightbulb separating out damaged fruit. Factory work was sought after because it paid a wage, but as a contributor to *Minori* wrote, the poor air, the indoor environment, the long work day, and the clatter of the machines could not compare with "farming under the endless blue sky, in clean air, doing the work as you want to do it."

It was difficult to determine what portion of the women's income went toward household expenditures. For one thing, farm women, especially farm women of Haruko's generation, who were unaccustomed to having large sums of money at their disposal, tended not to keep a budget or records of their daily household expenses. As more and more farmers took wage-paying jobs, however, some kind of record keeping was becoming necessary. Since the practice in the countryside, following urban customs, was for men to turn over all of their money to their wives to manage, the Women's Guild of the Cooperative had recently begun to distribute record ledgers to teach farm women how to maintain household budgets separate from the family's farm records. At a meeting of the Uwa branch of the Women's Guild, a guild leader lectured on the virtues of frugality and disciplined spending. "If you follow a budget," she said, "you will not buy merely what your neighbor buys. Also, if you don't go shopping every day, but only every three or five days, you won't buy so much." Similarly,

during the cooking class sponsored by the guild, the instructor slipped in words of advice on budgeting. Women were told first to estimate their income for the coming year and then to apportion their spending as follows: thirty percent for farm equipment, fertilizer, and other farming needs; fifty percent for food, clothing, electricity, telephone, and other household expenses; ten percent for taxes; and the remaining ten percent for savings. If the women followed this advice, said the teacher, they would not overspend. "Budget yourselves," she urged. "Write it down." Haruko asked the instructor to repeat the numbers and hastily scribbled them down, but then forgot what each referred to. "I'm no good at budgeting," she muttered.

The Utsunomiyas were an exception in the sense that Shō-ichi handled money matters: when the family needed money, Shō-ichi withdrew cash from his savings account at the Agricultural Cooperative. He kept most of the vital figures in his head. Writing on the back of a napkin, he estimated that the family's annual income was a little over \$10,000—about the average for farmers in Japan. The income from rice was \$4,500 and the income from the pig business, in a good year, was \$5,600. Government statistics for 1971 showed that, like Shō-ichi, other farmers in the prefecture typically derived sixty to eighty percent of their incomes from nonfarm sources or supplementary farm occupations, such as animal husbandry.²

Shō-ichi's estimate did not include Haruko's earnings, which varied from year to year with the availability of part-time and seasonal work. I calculated that in a good year Haruko might earn as much as \$700 to \$800, which was in keeping with the average earnings of other farm women. A government survey conducted in 1973 showed that forty percent of all farm women took on outside work, and they earned between \$330 and \$660 annually.³ My own survey in Higashiwa county, distributed in the spring of 1975, set the average at about \$700, and the head of the local Agricultural Cooperative estimated it to be close to \$800.

Why were farm women taking outside jobs?

TABLE 1. Sample Daily Wages Paid to Female Workers in Higashiwa County in 1975 (U.S. dollar equivalent)^a

Job	Women's Wages	Men's Wages
<i>Dokata</i> in Bessho	6.80 + disability insurance	11.90
Jeans factory in Nomura	5.60-6.60 + bonus	
<i>Mikan</i> -packing plant in Unomachi	5.10 + disability insurance + bonus	
<i>Mikan</i> -packing plant in Yawatahama	7.14-8.50	
Piecework at home	1.20	
Silkworm cultivation in Nomura	7.82	
Textile factory in Nomura	5.10-5.80	11.90
Tobacco planting in nursery beds in Bessho ^b	7.82	9.52
Construction work in cities		16.00-20.00 after room and board
Pruning trees in commonly held forest in Bessho	70% of men's wages	
Rice transplanting in Bessho	equal wages with men	
Public works projects in Bessho	equal wages with men if woman is single head of household	

Note: A blank entry indicates that the information in question was either unavailable or inapplicable.

^aComputed from the 1975 rate of 294 yen = U.S. \$1.00. Some wages had recently been raised by 300-500 yen.

^bThe women placed tobacco seedlings into containers; the men did the planning, organizing, and record keeping. The women were paid their wages only after the crop was sold.

Or, to put it another way, how were their additional earnings used? In the 1973 government survey, sixty percent of the farm women who reported taking on outside work said that they did so in order to pay for the "basic necessities" of life. In my survey of women in the country, fifty percent said they spent most of their earnings on such essentials as food, and another twenty percent said they spent them on clothing for family members and on their children's education. Haruko believed that Bessho women worked not so much to eat as to make extra cash: "Even the wife of the head of Uwa township works."

When I asked Haruko how she spent her own earnings, however, and whether it was really necessary for her to work, I received conflicting responses. "If I had my choice," Haruko said, "I would rather spend every day knitting sweaters for the children and straightening up the house." Yet although Shō-ichi said she did not have to take part-time jobs, she would not stay at home. She admitted that she liked having the extra spending money, even if earning it meant exhausting herself and, as she once remarked, not being able to complain, because Shō-ichi had not asked her to do it. It is also true that she worried about having to draw on their savings to pay for the machinery. On several occasions, she even implied that her wage-paying jobs were necessary to cover the cost of the new farm equipment, and Obāsan, sharing this view, commented privately about how sad it was that Haruko had to work.

When I pressed the matter further, I hit a sensitive nerve. Shō-ichi claimed that even without Haruko's earnings their income could cover the monthly payments of about eighty dollars for the machines. "Haruko is a worrier," he said. Haruko retorted that I could not be expected to understand the problem, and Shō-ichi countered, "There is no problem!" Later, however, he modified his position, saying that unless the price of rice increased, women's work would still be necessary to supplement farm income.

It is likely that Haruko worked for a variety of reasons. Her earnings, like those of other farm women, helped the family keep pace

with inflation, contributed to mechanization efforts, and also satisfied new consumer desires. It was difficult for anyone to determine in exactly which of these areas expenditure was or was not "necessary." Shō-ichi and Haruko incurred many expenses that reflected the steady erosion of the Japanese farmer's traditional sense of self-sufficiency. Fertilizers, chemical sprays, and electricity and the telephone had become virtual necessities. Gasoline and animal feed, both imported, were among the family's greatest expenses, and these costs were tied to fluctuations in world politics and international trade, so that from one year to the next their incomes rose and fell with little predictability. Shō-ichi had a bad year in 1974, when the American corn crop was damaged and the Middle East oil embargo was imposed. The family's expenses thus varied from year to year, making outside sources of cash imperative.

In addition, the desire for ready-made western-style clothing and for packaged food also drove the Utsunomiyas and other farm families in the area to supplement their farm incomes, making them dependent on the wider economy. Farm women everywhere in Japan, exposed to urban goods and life-styles on television screens, expected more out of their life than their parents' generation did. Haruko was no exception, and her greatest pleasure was shopping for western-style clothing. Yōko wanted the fashionable blue jeans, whose popularity was sweeping the countryside and created jobs for women in blue-jeans factories. Hisashi asked for a record player. Both children preferred packaged white bread to boiled rice for breakfast, and they toasted the bread in a new red electric toaster. The children also expected to go beyond the free junior high school level of education to the high school level, for which tuition fees were charged. Haruko's wages, in other words, went toward attaining a middle-class life-style for her farm family.

Even Obāsan entered the paid labor market, working for a pittance in order to accumulate ready cash of her own. The piecework she did at home for a local factory paid her

only one dollar a day for seven or eight hours of knitting pocketbooks. Still, the money enabled her to give cash as birthday gifts to her grandchildren.

In their search for wage-paying jobs, residents of Bessho commuted to Unomachi, if they were lucky enough to find employment there, or they traveled by train to Uwajima, Yawatahama, or even Matsuyama. Almost every woman in Bessho, except those above the age of sixty and mothers of pre-school children, held some kind of part-time job. As a result of this daily exodus, Bessho by day was a ghost town, a bedroom community whose population of children, men, and women emptied into Unomachi early in the morning and headed for schools, jobs, or the railroad station, leaving behind only children under six years of age tended by their grandparents or even great-grandparents, and dogs, caged or tied up outside.

Unlike younger farm women in their late twenties and early thirties, Haruko did not view her income as a passport to independence. It is true she squirreled away her earnings, saving some for old age, spending the rest as she pleased. But for younger women still living in the shadow of their mothers-in-law, possession of one's own money implied something more. One of Haruko's neighbors, who worked part time as a store clerk and lived with her husband's parents, described how she had deliberately lied to her mother-in-law about the sum she had spent on groceries for the household. She told the older woman she had spent less than she actually had, because she did not want to be fully reimbursed from her mother-in-law's purse. That extra amount represented her small measure of economic independence. Other women hearing the story laughed in agreement.

Haruko viewed her position in the family as depending more on her labor than on her wage earnings. Indeed, work itself, rather than her separate though modest pin money, was Haruko's way of ensuring that her voice would be heard. "Do you want to know why I have a say in this family?" she asked one day, angrily interrupting a conversation I was hav-

ing with one of her friends about the position of Japanese women. "I'll tell you why. Because I work harder than anybody else. It's for that reason that we've been able to increase our landholdings. You saw how my husband was dressed today to attend Yōko's graduation: in a white shirt, a silk tie, and a brown suit. That's the way it's always been. I've done all the work."

Any discussion of Haruko's household work provoked a similar emotional response. Although she felt angry about the way she had been worked in her husband's household, her belief that her status depended on her labor value made her reluctant to allow her mother-in-law to undertake too many household tasks; she seemed to fear that if she were no longer indispensable, her worth might be diminished. Was it perhaps this fear that also made her less than enthusiastic about her husband's mechanization project, even though it promised to free her from some of the most tiring aspects of rice farming? Haruko needed to be needed.

Haruko's anxiety about further investment in machinery, and her resistance to it, also reflected the more general confusion felt in the farming community over the future role of farm women. Would machinery eliminate altogether the need for female labor in the fields or would it simply tie women to other crops, while removing their husbands from the farm? Over one-third of farm women already farmed on their own. Again, would farm households become dependent on the wage labor of women as well as men, and would enough nonagricultural jobs be available?

In the face of these uncertainties, numerous suggestions from various sources floated around the countryside. A speaker addressing the Agricultural Cooperative in Uwa advised women to make more of their own food, as they did in the self-sufficient economy of the past, but then to sell it. And Shō-ichi, who thought it might be profitable for women to stick with farming, suggested that after the harvest they plant rice paddies with cash crops such as tobacco and wheat.

What such proposals had in common was

the idea of added reliance on women's work of one sort or another; for during the transitional period at least—while the machines were still new and their efficacy uncertain—women were actually being called upon to perform more functions, rather than fewer. It is not surprising that the almost universal complaint of farm women was lack of sufficient time for rest, for domestic work, and for child care. Moreover, mechanization did not necessarily promise the economic security that would ease the demands on women in the near future. "We have put in machines to do our work," wrote one contributor to *Minori*, "and now we must work to pay for the machines. No sooner do we repay our loans than we have to buy machines. We want binders and automobiles. Our ideals are high, our income is low."

It was understandable that most farm wives envied the comparative leisure enjoyed by their middle-class counterparts in the towns, in their more secure roles as the wives of white-collar salaried men. Even Haruko, though she was perhaps too restless and ambitious to enjoy being anything but busy, nevertheless aspired to the kind of life-style such women represented. Many of her friends were affluent town women whose sole responsibility was homemaking, and perhaps she hoped that by her labor, in farming and in part-time work, she too might one day become, literally, just a housewife.

Haruko's town friends, cheerful and girlish, with graceful, refined manners, seemed to belong to a social class that set them apart from Haruko, who was accustomed to strenuous manual labor and blunt, direct communication. Their fashionable dress (skirts with dainty blouses and cardigan sweaters), their curler-set hairstyles, and their hobbies (raising parakeets and growing prize-winning chrysanthemums) gave evidence of their leisure and affluence. Their lives were so com-

fortable, in fact, that at least one of the women, in her late thirties, had begun jogging to keep her weight down. All of them wore face cream and powder and had beautiful teeth. (They all used dental floss, whereas Haruko was often too tired at night to give her teeth even a perfunctory brushing.) Because they had no need to take jobs, they had withdrawn into their homes, where they concentrated on being attentive mothers and attractive wives.

One day, one of Haruko's town friends bicycled out to the farm, her skirt gently billowing in the breeze, to get cabbage for her son's pet rabbits. Haruko, dressed in her ankle-high boots, baggy pantaloons, and apron, looked more than ever like a gnome, standing next to her elegant friend and loading the homegrown cabbage heads onto the back of the bicycle. The two women, who lived less than one mile apart, were a study in contrasts, and watching them, it was easier to understand why most farm women, inspired by the middle-class feminine ideal of the housewife, wished they were the wives of salaried men and wanted their own daughters to marry one.

NOTES

1. Money values have been calculated from the fall 1974 exchange rate of 300 yen = U.S. \$1.00.
2. I am grateful to Ms. Miho Nagata of the Uwa branch of the Farmers Extension Bureau (Nōkyō Kairyō Fukyūshō) for providing this figure.
3. Fujin ni kansuru shomondai chōsa kaigi (Conference for investigating various problems concerning women), ed., *Gendai Nihon josei no ishiki to kōdo* (Contemporary Japanese women's attitudes and behavior) (Okurashō [Ministry of Finance]: Tokyo, 1974), p. 267.

The Position of Women in Pastoral Society (The Fulani WoDaaBe, Nomads of the Niger)

Marguerite Dupire

In Bororo beliefs, the sexes are opposite and complementary, but belong to one and the same human category which is totally different from, and excludes, all other categories. Here it should be briefly mentioned that in the Fulani language masculine and feminine genders do not exist, but nouns are arranged in a number of classes which indisputably indicate a manner of conceiving the universe which is both qualitative (classes of plants, trees, insects, birds, antelopes and the like, liquids, bounded objects) and geometrical or quantitative (plurals, length and duration, small quantities, parts of a whole, diminutives, augmentatives). Among these classes, the ones which appear to us Europeans as the strangest are probably the most important, or at least were so for a pastoralist society.

The first of these is the human class, to which belong both sexes of human beings and a certain number of abstract nouns. With domestic animals, however, males and females belong to different categories (class *ndi* comprising most male domestic animals, castrated and uncastrated; class *nge*, cows). The term used as the generic term for the species is sometimes the one that designates the female of the species (as in the case of the goat, the ass, the cow, the sheep) and sometimes the male (the dog, the horse), the reason for this probably being the importance ascribed,

in the cases where the female term is employed, to the producer of milk, an important feature in the pastoral economy.

The second important class presents a most fascinating riddle to which so far no answer has been found. This is the class *nge*, which includes, as well as the cow (female and generic), also fire and sun. Although no discoverable common element exists between these three things, one must suppose that whatever people it was (the Fulani?) that originally invented this class must have done so in virtue of some essential value shared by all the things assigned to it, and this might also mean that a ritual meaning was attached to them.

Thus, linguistically speaking, while the class of things human is asexual, with domestic animals the males belong to a different class from the females. But there are constant similarities and interrelations between the three orders of animate objects, human, animal and vegetable, all of which depend, for the maintenance of the species, on the same basic principle—prolificacy. Procreative power is thought of as being transferable from one order to the other, evidence for this belief being provided by numerous magic recipes, particularly those concerning the increase of the herd. However, although stress on this common factor is carried to great lengths in the universe of magic, where like is called upon to produce like in a different but parallel order (without any conscious appeal to a superior power), that does not mean that the human order is regarded as sharing anything except this one common factor with the other

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two orders. Thus the human species, male and female, is on a different level from the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

If we leave linguistics and the philosophical concepts they imply and turn to every day life, we find that it is characterized by a cleavage between the sexes, whose contrasted roles are expressed either directly, by the activities each engage in and by the behaviour manifested, or symbolically, by the difference between the male and the female manner of arranging material objects, or by the ritual distribution of meat at ceremonies, to mention only the more obvious instances.

Man and woman complete each other like the prow and poop of a ship, the west and east of a line on the horizon, the head and hind-quarters of an animal, the blood and the milk of a living creature. The man precedes and the woman follows, as is indicated by the word for woman, *debbo*, from the root *rew*, to follow. In contrast to what has often been observed in societies of hunters or farmers, it is the man, the herdsman, who, when camp is struck, goes on ahead, with his herd following him, to spy out the grazing lands in advance, while the women, in Indian file behind the pack oxen which are in their charge, follow at the tail-end of the procession, carrying on their heads the household calabashes filled with goods. If the pack ox is primarily a pack animal for the women which a man would scorn to ride, a woman for her part never uses a camel saddle, for when she rides with her husband she sits behind him, astride against the hump.

Within the camp, the arrangement of the women's huts, of the cattle enclosures, and of all material objects always follows the principle of sex differentiation. When the members of an extended family live together, the eldest of the heads of the component individual families—the father or the eldest brother—takes up the position furthest to the south, with his juniors following in order of seniority. But within each separate polygynous group, each man's wives will arrange their huts in hierarchical order in the opposite direction, that is, from north to south. The eastern part

of the camp is the women's domain, and the western the men's. Behind each hut (to the east of it), the woman washes her cooking utensils, and also herself. Here she can be metaphorically protected from view, if not actually so, since the hut is no more than a simple screen of thorn, unroofed. This is also the place where she will be buried. The man, on the other hand, does his work on the other side of the hut, for the cattle corral is to the west, near the entrance to the hut, and it is in this corral, or a little beyond it, that his grave will be dug. Because they come under the sphere of masculine activities, the calves are tethered in a row running in the masculine direction, from south to north, arranged according to age, from the oldest to the youngest; while the calabashes belonging to the women are arranged on a raised table in order of decreasing size running in the feminine direction from north to south. In the foreground, then, are the men and the goods that belong specifically to them, while behind are the women with their property arranged in a hierarchy like the men's and according to the same principle, the essential difference between them being expressed by an inversion of orientation: to the women belong the east, and the direction north-south; to the men, the west, and the direction south-north.

In all ceremonies in which the women take part along with the men, they have a customary right to certain portions of the meat. Normally the portions are distributed to groups, according to age-grade, and there are only two occasions when an individual receives a portion: at a betrothal ceremony, when the wife of the paternal uncle of the fiancé (this uncle having directed the distribution of the animal offered up by his brother) and a cross-cousin of the fiancée each receives an individual portion; and at a ceremony for naming a child, when the mother receives a portion of the sacrificial animal. When specially reserved parts such as these, as well as portions assigned to men who have played certain designated roles in the ceremony, have been set aside, the following groups receive collective portions: adults (*ndotti'en*: old men and adult

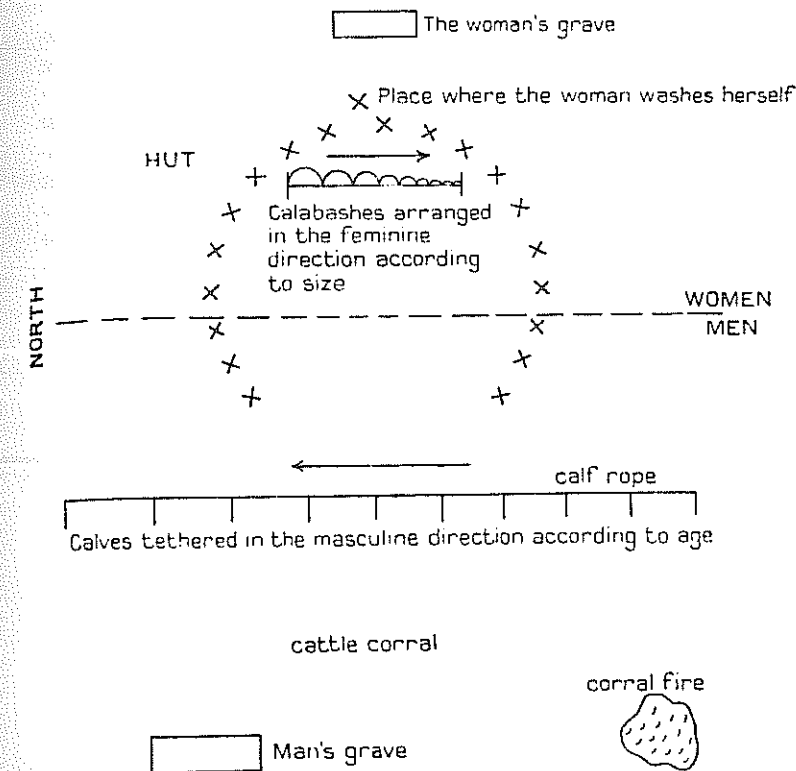


FIGURE 1

men who have reached the age when they can direct public affairs), young men, young girls, married women and their children, old women. This distribution underlines differences in sex, age, and role, and does so not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively, because a particular portion of the animal is assigned to each of these groups in accordance with the idea that certain qualities are shared in magical participation by the human and the bovine species. According to this principle, women have a prior claim not only to the intestines (*vedu*, the belly, comprising the first stomach, the uterus, and the large intestines), which are regarded as the seat of procreation, but also to the hind quarters, including the hinder end of the vertebral column: "Is it not natural that the women should have the hindquarters? Is it not they who follow the men?" So, whether it be the assignment of hindquarters "because they follow" or of the

intestines because of their procreative capacities, the distribution of meat to women differentiates not only between age-grades, but also between social roles. Just as the portion assigned to married women is in contrast to that assigned to adult men, so that assigned to young girls is in contrast to that assigned to young men: they receive the heart, the centre of the feelings, while the young men receive the *biol*, a piece of the breast regarded as the organ of potency. The group of senior members on either side (maternal and paternal) of the family each receives one of the two sides of free ribs. As for the cross cousins of the fiancée, young or old they all fight tooth and nail, along with the full cousins who have cut up the animal, for the half of the skin which is their due and from which each individual attempts to cut off a piece to make sandals from. Neither age nor sex counts, and a brutal free-for-all momentarily abolishes all the

usual rules of the code of politeness. A young man will jostle his mother-in-law, who may be a cross-cousin with the same rights as he has, and will only say with a laugh: "Too bad! It is my mother-in-law", knowing that she will make a scene when she gets home because he has prevented her from bringing back anything from the slaughter. Everything will calm down later, but on this unique occasion, and in public, the differences of role and of sex are abolished.

At these ceremonies which bring together the kin on both sides as well as the neighbours, the distribution of meat seems to express symbolically a recognition of the various social roles. The women figure as companions of the men, whom they have to follow; as mothers, whose warm flow of affection makes them the paramount representatives of that "kinship through the milk" that characterizes uterine descent; as old women, who have the right to certain special marks of respect; and as cross cousins—and in this capacity they have to compete on the same level as their masculine counterparts, beyond all the rules of kinship, sex, age and status which ordinarily regulate social relations.

DIVISION OF LABOUR

The characteristic association: man-cattle, as against woman-household, is a feature that has already been stressed. The basis of the differences in rights between the sexes must be sought in a division of labour which has the characteristic features common to most cattle-keeping peoples, in Africa at least.¹ To look after the humped cattle, which are only semi-domesticated, demands activities of which a woman is physically incapable. It would be beyond a woman's strength to draw water for the herd in the dry season, to go on long marches to reconnoitre for grazing-lands, to protect the herd against wild animals and thieves, to hold her own with a buyer at the market, to castrate bulls, or to train the pack oxen. This hard, dangerous life, full of uncertainty and of prolonged absences from

the camp, would be incompatible with the duties of motherhood, which require a more sedentary and more regular life.

Thus among the activities required for the care of the herd, only those that are compatible with staying at home are assigned to her: those of milking and of making butter. She also looks after the minor ailments of the animals under her care, and has a direct interest in doing so; but for anything requiring more forceful treatment (blood-letting, yoking . . .) she passes all responsibility over to the head cattlekeeper. Among the Bororo it is inconceivable that a woman should be *jom-na'i*, master of the herd.

It should be noted that this division of labour is not in any way a hard and fast affair. Apart from the period of married life preceding the birth of the first child and the month or two following upon each time she gives birth, there is no period in a woman's life when she may not do the milking. However, although the reason why Bororo men do not undertake this task is because they have never learnt to do so, should the necessity arise, they would not hesitate to assume this feminine role. Thus it is the very conditions of existence that have determined cultural choice. This is proved by the fact that among the semi-nomad Fulani of the Niger it is the men who practise the technique of milking, while the women are unversed in it. The reason why, in this society, it is the herdsmen who have learnt how to milk, is because they spend half the year, parted from the women, looking after the cattle in the bush at some distance from the village. The few milch cows left behind in the village are milked by the older men, while the butter is churned by the women.² It is obvious therefore how much these habits, which sometimes persist long after there has been a change in the mode of life, are functional in origin, and not based on any magico-philosophical concepts of irreducible differences between the sexes. In any case, a man sometimes has to intervene when things go wrong with the milking, for if the cow is restive, or if her milk does not flow after the first calving, she has, in the first case, to be

controlled by tying her up, or, in the second, to be treated by blowing air into the vagina or, in the last resort, by appealing to a specialist in incantations.

Women also do the milking of the smaller livestock, and here their responsibilities have a wider range (including looking after the animals and negotiating sales), due to the fact that these smaller animals are more amenable to treatment which requires less physical strength. Normally, small flocks of sheep and goats belong to women rather than to men. Being a form of capital that is easily convertible, they provide women with the same kind of "savings bank" as castrated cattle do for men.

Women also undertake all the tasks concerned with the house. As soon as the head of a camp has decided upon the place where they will stay for several days or several weeks, it is the women who build the huts from the thorn branches they have gathered, while their husbands busy themselves with tethering their calves and taking the herd to graze. It is also they who decorate the calabashes, fabricate the mats made out of bark, weave the winnowing fans. They look after the fires belonging to the hut, while the men look after those for the cattle—a task which requires knowledge of the magic talismans associated with it. The women plait the light ropes that are all that is required for their own use, while the men plait the heavy ones needed for drawing water or for tethering the calves; but it is the men who collect the bark used in making them. Helped by her children, the mistress of the house fetches water from the well for domestic purposes, while it is the man's job to draw water for watering the livestock. At the market which both attend, the wife sells her milk and her butter, while the husband buys salt, millet when necessary, and tobacco, sugar and tea for himself, as well as haggling over prices for the sale of cattle.

Both men and women know how to ply a needle for sewing or repairing their own clothes. Nor do men despise doing some cooking, although they usually leave this task to the women. When a man is on his own, or

when he is taking part in a ceremony, he cooks meat by grilling it on a skewer, while women boil it in one of the pots they have made.³

In this allocation of work between the sexes there is no idea whatsoever of inferiority of status being associated with those tasks normally assigned to women. But it is obvious that in a pastoralist society, in which it is the man who undertakes the heavy work and the responsibilities involved in looking after the cattle, that he, as master of the herd, will achieve social and economic superiority over the woman, whose tasks are confined to managing household affairs and looking after her sheep and goats.

The few fields cultivated by some families at the beginning of the winter season do not employ more than one or two men; and as soon as the crops are sown, these men hasten to rejoin the other members of the camp who are on the move with their herds. Here again it is considerations of a practical order which determine the arrangement, and this is particularly the case with the WoDaaBe, among whom the men are responsible for providing the supply of millet for the family, while the women supply the milk. The Bororo, however, are not unaware of the magical associations which link woman with the fertility of the soil, for one of their recipes for the fertility of the herd includes some seeds from a field belonging to a female sedentary farmer, which are called *umma* (meaning "arise"! in their language).

In the Niger region, WoDaaBe women do not either spin cotton or know how to make cheese, in contrast to their Fulani sisters belonging to tribes that practice sedentary farming.

From this picture it can be seen that upon women fall the less strenuous tasks, but also those which are the most monotonous and which take up the most time. In the dry seasons, they often walk a distance of 20 to 30 kilometers to sell one or two litres of milk in the village. It is the woman who is the first to get up in the morning, at dawn, to pound the grain, when the air is still chilly. But her night

will have been undisturbed, unless her baby has wakened her; whereas her husband may have had to stay up half the night getting his herd watered; or he may have had to get up in the middle of the night because a jackal was prowling round the camp.

PROPERTY BELONGING TO WOMEN

From their earliest years, children enjoy undisputed rights of possession over their personal belongings. No mother will give away or exchange her little girl's doll without first asking her permission. With stock, however, the situation is different, for, although both boys and girls are indeed the owners of the cattle given to them by their father, mother, or other relatives, and refer to them in the possessive, yet they have no active control over this property so long as they remain members of the paternal household. The father looks after the cattle, while the mother does the milking and uses the dairy products to supply the needs of the household. If the father's herd is failing to produce enough to support the family, the children cannot raise any objection if the cattle-keeper finds himself forced to sell one of their animals which had been given to them in front of witnesses. It will be accepted philosophically as "God's will", in the same way as nobody will be held responsible for the good or ill luck that may attend the first heifers given to them by their parents. At birth and as the children grow up, portions of the herd are allotted to them which cannot then be re-allotted or compensated for (in principle, at least). These allotted portions remain under the exclusive control of the father until his children marry, or more precisely, until they leave the paternal camp. This economic dependence acts as a stimulus to married sons to set up on their own as soon as possible. When a daughter gets married, the care of her cattle passes from her father to her husband, who is then responsible for their well-being in the interests of his wife and her children. That women consider this question of control to be a delicate one is proved by the fact that young wives

are in the habit of leaving their stock with their father until they can feel sure of the integrity of their husbands, preferring to be temporarily deprived of the dairy products of their herd. Some of them even leave them there for good. When the husband becomes cattle-keeper, he keeps his wife's animals along with his own, but is aware that they do not belong to him.

If a woman wants to sell one of her animals, she must first ask the consent of her husband, and he in turn, should he find himself in difficulties, may not sell one of his wife's animals without her consent. Any sharp practice concerning the cattle will immediately bring complaints on the part of the wife and departure to her family. But if husband and wife get on well together and the husband has shown himself to be trustworthy, his wife is not likely to refuse him one of her animals in order to pay tax or, as is more often the case, to make up the *sadaaki* to be given by one of their sons to his fiancée. In such an event, the combined wealth of husband and wife provides for the maintenance or for the future of their children, thus playing the normal role for which the double contribution of cattle was intended.

Astonishing though it may seem, a wife maintains a much stricter supervision over the *sadaaki*, of which she is only co-owner with her husband, than she does over her own stock given to her by her family. To a woman, keeping the *sadaaki* intact is equivalent to preserving a tangible symbol of her matrimonial rights while also safeguarding the future of her children. For this reason, it is the most socially sacrosanct part of the herd, and the one which must remain the last to be depleted. A wife will as little pardon her husband for having misappropriated their *sadaaki*, especially if he has done so for the children of another wife, as she will be willing to distribute it during her lifetime among her children when they get married. This prevents further quarrels with her husband on the subject without entirely depriving her of her rights to the dairy products, for a mother can easily go to live with one of her sons. Thus a married woman as often as not prefers to hand over

her stock to her family or to her children rather than to her husband.

A second way in which women play an important role in the transmission of cattle derives from the manner in which the herd belonging to the father of the family is divided out.

To his chief wife a husband entrusts, in addition to the *sadaaki*, a certain number of milch cows (*darnaaji*), the milk of which will belong to her personally, and which immediately become part of the stock which her children alone will inherit together with the dairy rights. His other wives, with whom he is united by the *teegal* form of marriage, do not receive any *sadaaki*, but he assigns to them a certain number of animals (*senndereji*) on a scale comparable, in so far as is possible, with the combined *sadaaki* and *darnaaji* of the chief wife. In addition to those cows which have been divided out, the head of the family may possess others which he can entrust to anyone he pleases for varying lengths of time. He is free to dispose of these animals and their progeny as he wishes. Along with the steers and bulls which do not come from the *sadaaki* or *darnaaji* they will form part of the common inheritance of all his children.

This manner of dividing out the herd accentuates the economic basis of the group of full brothers, who share common interests with their mother. Their calves are tethered in front of their hut, and the children get to know them and are aware that they can be certain of inheriting some of them, to the exclusion of their half-brothers and sisters. They understand, too, that the well-being of the animals depends on the care their mother bestows on them and on her firmness in preventing any depredations. In this way, the mother, without herself being its source, is the channel through which a large part of the father's stock is transferred to his children.

A woman enjoys much greater economic independence with regard to the small livestock which she acquires out of her personal savings. She can in fact do what she likes with it. She is free to a considerable degree to put to use the results of her labours. The milk from her cows belongs to her, but out of the income derived from this she must contribute

towards the household needs. In principle, the husband is responsible for expenditure required for the cattle (natron, taxes . . .), and for clothing and the supply of millet, while the woman's share of the budget covers expenditure on daily requirements such as cereals, cooking salt, and condiments (which are however a luxury). But actually, in the dry season it is customary to barter milk for millet, and during the winter season the Wo-DaaBe do not eat cereals. There remains the difficult period before the harvest, at the end of the dry season, when the milk yield is low and there is no surplus for exchange. The husband is then often obliged to sell one of his sheep, or even a bullock, although this is an extreme measure to which he is loath to resort. It is in fact also in the wife's interests to safeguard the family capital, and in the dry season it is much more sensible to exchange milk, which is scarce, for millet, than to sell a skinny animal at a low price. Milk and butter are the basis of the household economy. Particularly during the winter season, the women manage to accumulate large quantities of butter stored in calabashes, which, already rancid, is sold in the villages on return from winter quarters. This provides pocket money for buying, for themselves and their children, extra gowns, trinkets, and even sheep. It is astonishing what a Bororo woman manages to do with the small savings from the "butter money", which gradually mount up. During the worst time of the year, four cows give a daily yield of a pat of butter weighing about 250 grammes (costing 15 C.F.A. francs in 1951). This butter is exchanged in the villages or sold on the market, and the women spend quite a lot of their time on these petty commercial transactions.

They may also mend calabashes for village women, or, when food is very scarce, offer to pound grain for a slight payment in cereals or bran. But a young and active Bororo woman will avoid such menial tasks. Similarly, it is only young men who have no cattle of their own who will offer themselves as herdsmen in a locality where they are not known, where they will be less likely to feel ashamed. None of the other articles which women make, such

Rights of Ownership Held by the Nominal Master of the Herd over His Cattle

Category of cattle	Description and source	Looked after by . . .	Alienation rights held by . . .	Rights to use the milk held by . . .	Inheritance rights held by . . .
<i>birnaaji</i>	Stock held by the head of the family. Acquired through inheritance, gifts, purchases, or <i>nannga na'i</i> loans . . .	Father of the family.	Father of the family.	All the wives alike as required.	The children of all the wives.
<i>darnaaji</i>	Portion of the stock of the head of the family entrusted to the chief wife, <i>koowaaDo</i> (same sources as <i>birnaaji</i>).	Father of the family.	Father of the family.	Only the wife to whom they have been entrusted.	Only the children of the wife who has rights to the milk.
<i>sadaaki</i> (Western Niger region).	Stock given to the <i>koowaaDo</i> wife.	Father of the family even after divorce or repudiation.	Husband or wife with the consent of spouse.	Only the wife who is co-owner.	Only the children of the wife who is co-owner.
<i>sadaaki</i> (Islamized Eastern Niger region).	Stock given to the <i>koowaaDo</i> wife.	Father of the family except in cases of repudiation.	Husband or wife with the consent of spouse.	Only the wife who is co-owner.	Only the children of the wife who is co-owner.
<i>senndereji</i>	Portion of the stock of the head of the family entrusted to secondary wives (in place of <i>sadaaki</i> and <i>darnaaji</i>).	Father of the family.	Father of the family.	Only the wife to whom they have been entrusted.	Only the children of the wife who has rights to the milk.
<i>sukaaji</i> of the children.	Gifts received by the children.	Father during their minority, sons after setting up households, husband of married daughters.	Father of the family during their minority, sons on coming of age.	Usually the wife who is the mother of the children who own the stock.	This is an inheritance in advance of each child in question.
<i>sukaaji</i> of the wives.	Gifts received by each wife from her family.	Father of the family.	The wife with the consent of her husband.	Only the wife who is the owner.	Only the children of the wife who is the owner.

as mats, winnowing fans or ropes, are saleable.

Occupied as she is with her house and her children, a woman is nevertheless just as much sentimentally attached to the cattle as the men are. In her earliest years she was accustomed to stroke gently the ears or the vagina of the cow her mother was milking. She has to keep constant watch over the calves entrusted to her, and like her husband and her children, she knows the history of every single animal. When she has to part with a cow that is ill or too old and that has to be killed, it is like parting from a human being, and her sorrow speaks volumes for the attachment she feels for these companions in good times and bad.

It goes without saying that for men as for women the expression *min-jei*, "I possess", covers various methods of appropriation entailing varying rights: of alienation, of administration, of usufruct. A woman will say of the pack ox that forms part of her *sadaaki* "my pack ox", and it is true that she has exclusive use of it so long as she remains with her husband; but she can neither sell it without her husband's consent, nor take it with her should her marriage be dissolved (this at least is the case among the WoDaaBe groups of the western Niger region).

If a woman's rights over the large livestock are restricted owing to the fact that she is considered incapable of looking after it, those of a married man over the herd of which he is nominally "master" are no less so, (1) by his wife's co-ownership of the *sadaaki*, (2) by each wife's ownership of the cattle given to her by her family, (3) by the wives' exclusive rights over the milk of certain animals, (4) by his children's rights of ownership and of inheritance over the stock divided out during his lifetime.

A glance at the above table in which the various types of ownership are listed will show that a wife not only has exclusive rights to the use of the milk from the animals in one category or another (*darnaaji* and *sadaaki* for the chief wife, *senndereji* for the others, as well as the *sukaaji* of their children and their own

sukaaji), but also enjoys co-ownership of her *sadaaki* with her husband and exclusive rights of ownership over the animals given to her by her family, although the care of them is entrusted to her husband, the master of the herd. The restrictions on the rights of the father of the family over his cattle are connected with his children's future. As for the wives, their rights to the use of the milk and the co-ownership of the *sadaaki* act as a guarantee for the services they render their husband.

These rights of ownership, co-ownership or merely of use of the milk which a wife enjoys over certain animals are connected with the fact that the capital which these animals represent is inalterably destined to be transmitted to her own children (table col. 6). A mother not only transmits to her children life and "milk", but also channels to them the cattle belonging to their father, simply in virtue of being married to him.

The ownership of all other goods belonging to husband and wife (clothes, furniture and other articles) remains completely separate throughout their married life. When a wife leaves her husband or is repudiated by him, she leaves the hut, people say, with "nothing but the dust" in it, and perhaps also the old blackened cooking pot which would be too cumbersome to take away. She removes all her possessions, including her own livestock and the dowry given to her by her parents. But the presents given to her by her husband's family are left behind: the *sadaaki* and the furniture lent to her by her mother-in-law. Clothes, furniture, and other articles down to sewing needles, are individually acquired either by the husband or by the wife. Marriage does not entail any sharing of such belongings by the couple.

Thus the only rights of ownership that marriage brings to a woman are her rights of co-ownership or of usufruct in cattle belonging to her husband, while her husband only has the use of his wife's possessions (dowry and stock) for as long as she remains with him. Whatever the reasons for the dissolution of a marriage (separation, repudiation, death),

the sharing of goods in common ceases with the physical separation of the couple.

The belongings over which a woman possesses permanent rights of alienation or usufruct are, in fact, not those which come from her husband, but those which come from her own family or which have been acquired as a result of her own work under her husband's roof: the gifts of cattle and the dowry given to her by her parents, and the livestock bought with her "butter money".

She is, however, complete mistress of those belongings which do not fall within the large number of restricted categories. But a BoDaaDo woman possesses little enough stock: a few cattle calved by the heifer given to her by her parents, supposing it has survived, and a small flock of goats and sheep. It is usually childless women that have the flocks of sheep, because otherwise a married woman finds that most of her slender income goes on necessary household expenses. Among the WoDaaBe there are no much-sought-after widows whose personally owned cattle and *sadaaki* make them wealthy, such as can be found among the sedentary Fulani, because when a husband dies it is the children and not the wife who inherit the stock. I only came across one widow possessing a small herd of cattle, who was married to an old man without any property at all, and lazy into the bargain. This man who allowed himself to be kept by his wife soon became the laughing-stock of his neighbours. The widow lived with her son, the future inheritor, who threatened to go away, taking the herd with him, if she did not get rid of her good-for-nothing spouse. Even if a widow has no son, her property is controlled by the consanguineous kin who will inherit it, directly if she has made a leviratic marriage with her husband's brother, indirectly if she has opted for some other arrangement.

The Bororo maintain that women are thus incapacitated both because of their lack of physical strength and because of their marital instability. But it is clear that the situation arises from the very nature of the structure of inheritance in this thoroughly patrilineal society.

Since among pastoralists women are usually not owners of capital, that is to say, of cattle, which belong to the men, their economic position would appear to be less favourable than it is in some agriculturalist societies in Africa. There it is land, inalienable in the traditional context, that represents capital, but capital that is less valuable because it is neither mobile nor easily convertible. Hence the position of the women, who are the direct producers, should be, by comparison, higher in relation to the men of the lineage, who own the land that they cultivate. But this would appear to be too summary a generalization, because in some pastoralist societies women do have the right to manage the herd. J. H. Driberg reports that among the Lango a man may not dispose of his property without the permission of his wife, who is co-owner of the property which the children will inherit. She even has sole rights of administration over the property of her husband during the minority of the inheritors. In this society a woman also enjoys far greater political rights than is the case with a BoDaaDo woman, for the widow of a village head may even govern a village during the minority of her son. Thus there is considerable variation in the economic and legal rights of women in African pastoralist societies, whether of Nilotics, Nilo-Hamitics, or Fulani, in spite of the fact that in all of them it is the men who deal with the cattle.

The prestige which her wealth confers upon a woman is similar to that which a man derives from his cattle. At the ceremonies that take place when the lineage segment gathers together in the winter season, the heads of families who are celebrating the marriage of a son parade the herds of the extended family to display in public how many of them there are, and how strong and beautiful they are. The women have their own display, exhibiting their possessions in their huts: calabashes and polished-up spoons from their dowry stores, gourds and countless straw hats from the *haakol* bags. . . . The whole display bears witness for all to see of feminine wealth, which gives personal prestige to the woman who owns it.

NOTES

1. J. H. Driberg, "The status of women among the Nilotics and Nilo-Hamitics," *Africa*, V, 5, 1932.
2. J. H. Driberg, *op. cit.*; among the Nilotics, the milking is done by the men, but by the women among the Nilo-Hamitics.
3. Driberg (*op. cit.*) has already recorded this difference.