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**GENDER RELATIONS IN WOMEN'S LIVES:
A STUDY OF FISHING HOUSEHOLDS
IN A CENTRAL PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY**

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Department of Geography, McGill University

1 June 1995

**A thesis submitted to The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT

This study argues that women's gendered experiences record distinctive features of their subordinate yet resilient positions at home and in society. It portrays the work and lives of selected women in a changing peasant fishing community in the Philippines and suggests directions by which power relations implied in their personal, local, and global lives might be more fully grasped. Despite an underlying perception of 'separate spheres' reflected in such local notions of work as *pangabuhì* and *pangita*, the women pragmatically pursue 'public' and market-related roles and activities for the immediate 'private' requirements for their households' sustenance and reproduction. Nevertheless, they are less discerning, and thus, less active in negotiating their strategic interests as women. The recommendations underscore the socially constructed character of gender divisions so demystifying the myths that sustain them. Social development projects that assist but not exacerbate the burdens of rural women are also endorsed.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude part du principe que les expériences des femmes, par ailleurs révélatrices de leur sexe, témoignent des différentes caractéristiques de leur rôle subordonné quoiqu'opiniâtre, à la maison et dans la société. L'étude décrit le travail et l'existence d'un certain nombre de femmes d'une communauté de pêcheurs des Philippines, soumise à plusieurs changements, et propose des moyens qui peuvent permettre de mieux comprendre les rapports de force qui sous-tendent leur vie personnelle, locale et globale. Malgré l'impression de «sphères séparées» que donnent les notions locales du travail comme *pangabuhi* et *pangita*, les femmes cherchent avec pragmatisme à assumer des rôles et activités publics, en rapport avec le marché, pour les besoins immédiats et «privés» de leur foyer, en vue d'assurer son maintien et sa reproduction. Il reste qu'elles sont moins perspicaces et actives lorsqu'il s'agit de négocier leurs intérêts stratégiques. Les recommandations formulées insistent sur le caractère socialement construit des divisions entre sexes pour démystifier les notions sur lesquelles elles prennent appui. Des projets de développement qui pourraient soulager et non renforcer le fardeau des femmes des communautés rurales sont également proposés.

FOREWORD

This study is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through the Food Systems Development Project (FSDP), an interdisciplinary and collaborative effort between McGill University and the University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV) from 1988 to 1994. FSDP's institution building emphasis assisted faculty and curriculum development at the Iloilo campus of the University of the Philippines (UP) system.¹ Its community action program focused on the research and training station of College of Fisheries within the municipality of Batan at the nearby province of Aklan. The latter activities spanned three of Batan's coastal villages, namely: Camaligan, Lalab, and Magpag-ong.²

With the UPV's mandate for the promotion of fisheries sciences in the region, the bias for addressing issues relevant to coastal communities is evident.³ Technical studies on current practices of marine and aquaculture production in the Batan Bay waters by UPV researchers⁴ as well as assessments of the community situation by Canadian partners at McGill and elsewhere⁵ have been conducted within the project sites. Other McGill

¹ UPV is the youngest autonomous units of UP, the state university. It has several campuses in the province of Iloilo with the main campus at Miag-ao. Administratively, UPV includes campuses on other Visayan islands, such as those at Cebu and Tacloban cities. The main campus of the UP system is at Diliman, Quezon City.

² See the project location on the figure attached to appendix E, page 401.

³ It is noted for its involvement and potential as an institutional base for nutrition programs to alleviate malnutrition through fisheries. George Kent, Fish, Food and Hunger: The Potential of Fisheries for Alleviating Malnutrition (Boulder: Westview, 1987), 68-69, 71. Through the FSDP, a demonstration fishfarm was set up on UPV property at Barangay Camaligan. Since the project's termination, this has been incorporated as the College of Fisheries' Batan Mariculture Station, an experimental as well as a community training and extension facility.

⁴ Members of the College of Fisheries have produced an initial publication of their studies: Rommel Lao, Jose Ingles and Nygiel Armada, Food Base of Batan Bay and Vicinities: Status, Problems, Implications and Some Suggested Solutions. Occasional Paper Series 2. ([Iloilo City]: Food Systems Development Project, 1991).

⁵ Warwick Armstrong, Development Beyond Doleouts. Entitlement to Food: A Systemic Approach. Occasional Paper Series 1. ([Iloilo City]: Food Systems Development Project, September 1991). Filipino-Canadian researcher, Edna Einsiedel of the University of Calgary

University students also based their studies at these villages of Batan.⁶ Further, socio-demographic, technical, and environmental studies were conducted as aides for undertakings with the communities. The FSDP participatory research program embodied its advocacy and promotion of self-help principles for improving people's entitlements for food and other livelihood resources. Various case studies on the supported core groups, associations, and the local cooperative were also undertaken as materials for integration into various curricular programs. These interests were pursued through community organizing (CO) and mobilization. Village women made up most of the groups that the FSDP worked with in Batan. Significantly, gender consciousness-raising and popular education activities addressed women's concerns in the communities as well as within the University.⁷

I was the first of the FSDP-sponsored UPV faculty members to come to study at McGill in 1988. Entering the ad hoc program through the Department of Geography has enabled me to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to the research problem herein presented. Between 1990 and 1992, I also became personally involved with the administration of the FSDP operations at the Batan sites. This assignment gave me the opportunity for extensive observation and direct interactions with the people of the villages, prior to field investigation for this study mainly conducted throughout 1993 at Camaligan.⁸

conducted a study on occupational activities of women within FSDP sites.

⁶ Philip Kelly, Development as Degradation: Aquaculture, Mangrove Deforestation and Entitlements in Batan, Philippines (Montreal: M. A. thesis, McGill University, 1993). Anthropology undergraduate student Michelle Smith based her Philippine visit with FSDP. Graduate research by other FSDP grantees at McGill were also grounded in these village sites: by Samson Sotocinal of the School of Technology and Environmental Resources for a masters degree in agricultural engineering, and Cynthia Ticao of the College of Arts and Sciences, for a doctoral degree in social psychology.

⁷ UPV set up the School of Technology and Environmental Resources (STER) in 1984; on the other hand, a Women's Desk, established in 1989, is engaged in networking and research in the promotion of gender-sensitivity and awareness of women's issues.

⁸ A sitio refers to an informal administrative sub-unit of villages, usually marked by the presence of housing clusters.

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To the innumerable persons who planned, promoted, and helped carry out the FSDP in various parts of Canada and in the Philippines, especially Dr. Warwick Armstrong, I am indebted the broad opportunities for my participation. Also at McGill University, I thank the staff of the Geography Department, McGill International, FSDP McGill, and the Centre for Developing-Area Studies for being readily available to help and advise; and Frances Aboud, Eugene Donefer, Sherry Olson, Roger Prichard, David Smith, and Judy Stymest for boosting my psychic and financial sense of security. At UPV, I thank past and present officials, Dan Rola, Roger Juliano, Dodong Nemenzo, Flor Lacanilao, and Arsenio Camacho, who smoothly upheld my commitment to pursue this degree. The late Lourdes V. de Castro was especially encouraging and animating; and Luz Lopez-Rodriguez's joining UPV was helpful for the resumption of my research. Most directly, I wish to thank the members of my committee at McGill -- Warwick Armstrong (Geography), Myron Echenberg (History), Ratna Ghosh (Education), Sam Noumoff (Political Science) -- for their patience and kind suggestions towards the completion of the lengthy outlines and drafts.

I acknowledge the computer graphics work for the base maps of the research area created by Jose Ingles and Nazis Dorego, which I modified with the help of Pablo Espanola of UPV and Joyce Sabados of the McGill University Computing Centre. Also, the McGill Translation Office for my resume. To Nide Bombay and others at the CIDA-Manila office, Jojo Deles and the staff of the Field Support Unit, thank you for being most considerate of my travel and other requirements; also Cathay Pacific at Montreal for graciously accommodating my extension request. Moreover, my appreciation to resource persons and library staff of both Cornell University and Auburn University which I had the opportunity to visit during my work at McGill.

For colleagues and relations, who have lightened the burden and sparkled insights on the present work, I am most obliged for your precious time and patience when it was most necessary; Fe Villanueva, for the unstinting help as research assistant/translator and former associates with the FSDP at Iloilo and Camaligan; my co-workers at the Social Sciences Division, thanks for timely reminders of what I needed to attend to. For my co-members of the UPV Women's Desk and BABAYE, more power; for other associates, at UP, ICLARM, and elsewhere, I value the reassurances, inspiration, and humbling humor that I deserved at various times.

I am profoundly grateful for the shelter, kindness, and support of my cousin Leny Corvera and her husband Victor Volkov for the duration of the crucial (re)writing days in Montreal and their friends with whom brief congenial respites relieved the job on hand. And for Ana and Anton Volkov, it was more than vodka and borscht that made me feel warm and welcome. I also value the occasions with Cynthia, Luzette, Nats, and Sonny and with other former students and schoolmates, housewives, domestic workers, and professionals who shared boons of their adopted countries. Special thanks go to Susie, Tiya Cande, and Socoy for the consultations.

I also mark my appreciation of my parents, the late Domingo Mabunay, Sr. and Josefa Escarrilla Mabunay, whose value for learning was the most important thing that animated the often flagging energies I needed to accomplish this craft. And, without the care, attendance, and creativity of Perla Soria and her family, this dissertation will not have been completed.

Over and above these linkages and supports, this study clearly owes its existence to the brave women of Sitio Talangban. For having dared to make public their private lives, may they persevere in the daily production of auspicious bargains for themselves and their families. To their spouses, friends, and families, key informants, officials of Batan and Camaligan, and the community at large, many thanks for the warm reception given myself and my undertaking.

However instrumental and stimulating these collective and individual contributions have been, I fully recognize the lapses and limitations of this work as solely mine. This work has helped me have a fuller understanding of myself. The women's stories, as genuine and unique as they are, reveal parallels and contrasts to my own experiences that I will have taken much longer, if ever, to discover in my own time and space. I hope that my translation of their lives adequately signifies the courage and potency of their own narratives.

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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1.1 An Overview of the Research Project

This study combines ideas from a wide variety of global feminisms and adapts them to interpret a particular set of women's narratives. It argues that the specific forms of inequalities produced and reproduced between men and women derive both from material conditions and ideological supports that shape the relationship between them. These constraints signify the constructed character of women's subordinated situation within patriarchal and capitalist conditions. This study also maintains that women's experiences record distinctive features of their subordinate yet resilient positions at home and in various arenas of the larger society. Harsh conditions for survival and subsistence lend to their conscious and unconscious struggles against diverse forms of dominance in their prevailing socio-economic and political systems.

Gender is used as an analytical category toward a grasp of rural women's conditions and situations. Since the meaning or ideology of gender relations vary both within and over time, their examination requires a characterization of the empirical subjects and their social organization. The accounts lead to the articulation the nature of the interrelationships between the agents and the structural conditions that affect their agency.¹ This study attends to the first task and indicates some directions by which power relations implied in the second might be more fully grasped.

The study is conducted with ten selected women in a peasant fishing community in the central portion of the Philippines which is becoming increasingly complex. It explores the changing features within their households and community circumstances as well as their perspectives and personal experiences. As it specifies the symbolic and concrete realities for

¹ Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," chap. in Gender and the Politics of History (New York: Columbia University, 1988), 29.

these women, the study augments grounds for theoretical formulations and practical development work with women of the Third World.

1.1.1. Statement of the Problem

The study examines how the selected women deal with resources and opportunities as reflective of their interests and priorities. In the process, it identifies specific forms of inequities through the strategies the women adopt around subtle and concrete constraints on their agency. What the women say and do are seen in terms of the dynamic of power and resistance. Their exercise of power intimates resistance in outright opposition or in attempts to minimize or postpone forms of gender domination. Their passive and active schemes are discerned as ways by which the women contest from presumably weaker positions within peasant households.

More specifically, the study qualitatively probes into the implications of the supposition that changes in the status of their community's fisheries environment generate more avenues and opportunities for negotiations and bargains in the women's work and lives, and ultimately, towards the reproduction of their households. Hence, while I focus on issues pertaining to the women's work, I also examine their relations with men on the basis of their sexuality and their entanglements in inherent power relationships entailed in these realms of women's realities.

1.1.2. Structure of the Thesis

This introductory chapter includes discussions of aspects of the methods that orient and apply to this study. As well, it provides a review of the literature on the particular conditions and prospects for women and thinking about gender in the Philippine context. The study's conceptual framework is presented in two parts. Chapter 2 deals with theoretical issues emerging from discourses of gender and power within the framework of emerging global feminisms and trends in international development. These lead into how women's interests and politics are understood in this study. Stimulated by the women's stories, this chapter includes reflections and clarifications of the core

concepts of 'reproduction' and 'production' as affecting the understanding of 'work' and the 'gender division of labor' in current scholarship. Chapter 3 focuses on conceptual reconstructions of women and fishers as among peasants. It also furnishes a review of related literature on women and gender issues in peasant fishing communities, particularly in the Philippines. More specific characteristics of the local environment and community life and the women's involvements therein are detailed in chapter 4. In combination, these chapters orient and situate my interpretation of the women's gendered notions and experiences.

The personal situations of the women appear in Chapter 5 along with a discussion of significant local concepts. These revolve around what I interpret as the overarching concerns of life/sexuality/reproduction in pangabuhi and the specificities of work/livelihood/production in pangita. Under selected themes, I depict main currents in their individual lives with excerpts from their narratives and self-expressions. They indicate the permeability of boundaries and oppositions constructed between these vital processes. Discussions in chapter 6 deal with specific conditions, activities, and practices which affect the peasant women's lives and livelihoods which are dependent upon conditions in the local fishery situation. The ways in which the women strategize to cope with various constraints that emerge from changing conditions therein are woven into the presentation. The concluding chapter 7 analyzes the women's experiences with the theoretical issues raised and other literature on women and gender relations. It also includes some recommendations about orientations and actions in the academy and social development policy as well as in daily life.

1.1.3. *Significance of the Study*

With gender as an analytical concept, this study illustrates ways by which evolving feminist thought and practice contribute to the formation of new perspectives and procedures for discriminated and disempowered peoples. It documents cases of women's coping with, or challenges to, specific forms of

patriarchy in the Philippines. As an investigation on needs, resources, and creativity of women in households and communities, it reveals specific, and often hidden, forms of oppression and multiple aspects of subordination. These hallmarks of realities help form alternatives and new visions and provide empirical grounds for developing concepts and methods by which to understand and transform gender hierarchies. In this way, this study advances shifts in social science perspectives and research methods in the academy.

This research integrates perspectives from several 'semi-autonomous' spheres to address issues pertinent to coastal communities. Most existing rural development studies focus on agricultural settings. Apart from the literature on techniques, the industry, policy and producer groups, there has been little interest on the human implications of fishers in Philippine society. The present work focuses on women and small-scale fishers and reconstructs them within predominantly 'genderless' and land-based conceptions of peasants as increasingly drawn into the realm of commodity markets, wage work, and capital-intensive technologies. Hence, the analyses and specific findings enrich academic debates as well as policy planning and implementation, organizational development and advocacy for coastal communities.

Ultimately, this dissertation is an opportunity to affirm with the women, as empirical subjects, the ways by which they recognize and explain any initiatives they express and do. Their insights are linked to theoretical grounds upon which a richer understanding of Third World women's work, lives, and aspirations may grow. In this way, women's knowledge and understanding of the world may be received by 'gatekeepers' of scholarship and public policy. Social research not only influences social understanding but also political action for women's emancipation and empowerment.

Other methodological issues emerge from this eclectic, holistic, and participatory study of gender relations. It approaches gender at the level of micro-units and in interpersonal relations embedded in daily life of peasant fishing households. It contextualizes specific conditions for women and reads

out implications of the interplay of gender relations herein into the larger society. At the same time, it draws attention to the limitations of narrow disciplinary perspectives in the study of social relations. It also contributes to the development of foci for and approaches to local history in the Philippines, particularly beyond the national capital region. Moreover, significances drawn from local conceptions strongly suggest that etymological issues may be pursued in comparative research.

A unique aspect of this research lies in its links to an institutional commitment in the researcher's home university for sustained involvements with the communities surrounding the study area. By taking a broad view of the community of small-scale fishers, the study poses to complement more available technical studies. It records indicators of the status, contributions, and characteristic relationships of poor women of peasant fishing households. It also marks whatever political efforts they undertake to overcome conditions perceived detrimental to their personal and group lives. At the same time, it points to the ripple-effects of intrusive interventions without genuine participation. These combined concerns are relevant for mobilization and any longitudinal evaluation of women's involvements in emergent local associations, cooperative ventures, and various other community-based activities. Hence, the study informs potential community-action programs related to the introduction of new fisheries technologies, from the university's mariculture station and with similarly-situated areas.

1.2. Methodological Considerations

1.2.1. *Research Rationale and Orientation*

This work flows with an emerging concern of scholars who, from visionary and pragmatic perspectives, seek to engage in holistic and participatory approaches to comprehend systemic problems of social equity. Important insights in this interdisciplinary study are drawn from the domains of social science scholarship, particularly those that pertain to development studies, subsistence rural households and economies as well as theoretical

efforts of global feminisms. Concerns for women in social development and in the everyday life of every man or woman also stimulate the scope and methods of this research.

The study queries the conceptual and epistemological grounding of research activities and knowledge claims -- what the generated knowledge is for and who ultimately benefits from it. Similarly, it engenders a consciousness of where we fit, as raced, gendered, and classed beings, in relations of power, domination, and subordination in our respective societies. The feminist, hence participatory, research approach is borne by my commitment to an 'imagined' women's movement in the Third World. Further is my intent to promote teaching and research work in gender and women's studies which indubitably require multidisciplinary work in the academy.² These interests complement my predispositions for history and area studies, where essentialist or 'context-stripping' perspectives and methods are deemed inadequate.³ They rouse an awareness of my experiences as colored by contradictory mechanisms of tradition that simultaneously project female subordination as well as privilege.

There have been questions on essentialist assumptions of common interests among women or peasants constructed as 'the oppressed' just as there are apprehensions on the notion of coherent subjects moving through history. Feminists are attempting to resolve these points through a conception of the constant creation and negotiation of selves within structures of ideology and

² Amaryllis T. Torres, "Introduction: The Filipina Looks at Herself: A Review of Women's Studies in the Philippines," in The Filipino Woman in Focus: A Book of Readings, ed. Amaryllis T. Torres (Bangkok: UNESCO, 1989), 2-3.

³ I did my bachelor's program majoring in history and a master's program in Asian Studies, with East Asia (Japanese Studies) focus, with a thesis on the local history of early twentieth century Japanese migration into the province of Iloilo. Ma. Luisa Mabunay, A Social History of Japanese Immigration into the Philippines with Special Reference to Japanese Immigrants in Iloilo (Quezon City: Asian Center, University of the Philippines, 1979). Since 1971, I have been teaching undergraduate courses in Philippine and Asian history at UPV; since the mid-1980s, I have also engaged in research projects with coastal communities.

material constraints.⁴ Hence I acknowledge my position as an active (even if somewhat disjointed) subject. Nevertheless, the idioms of knowing and doing will likely lead to more realistic theories, since the 'object' of research is not something static and homogeneous but an historical, dynamic, and contradictory entity.

Feminist historians argue that "the writing of women into history necessarily involves redefining and enlarging traditional notions of historical significance, to encompass personal, subjective experience as well as public and political activities."⁵ From this emerging methodology, specific genealogies of 'the common' among women may be framed. Women may then begin to construct their own history and reinvent one for all humanity.

The collective conscientization of women through a problem-formulating methodology **must be accompanied by the study of women's individual and social history....** Women do make history, but in the past they have not **appropriated** their history as subjects. Such a subjective appropriation of their history, their past struggles, sufferings and dreams would lead to something like a collective women's consciousness (in analogy to class consciousness) without which no struggle for emancipation can be successful.⁶

The study returns to the 'personal' and integrates the women's self-understanding of values and emotions. The behavior and interactions of their gendered selves are the starting points by which differing levels of reality are comprehended.

Women's experience writ large may and should be used as a way of defining a 'problematique' requiring the application of self-critical rational thought to immediate experience as it encounters constituted knowledge. Experience may and can provide insights into the relationship between gender and social structure.⁷

⁴ Kathleen Weiler, "Freire and a Feminist Pedagogy of Difference," in Politics of Liberation: Paths from Freire, ed. Peter L. McLaren and Colin Lankshear (London: Routledge, 1994), 34.

⁵ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 29.

⁶ Maria Mies, "Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research," in Theories of Women's Studies, ed. Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein (London: Routledge, 1983), 125-127.

⁷ Marnia Lazreg, "Women's Experience and Feminist Epistemology: A Critical and Neo-Rationalist Approach," in Knowing the Difference, ed. Lennon & Whitford, 1994, 55-58.

In regarding women as agents or active subjects, their everyday experiences, patterns, and interpretations are representations of their situated, thus, different and differing ideas, needs, and interests. The recovery and interpretation of women's lives have been crucial to feminist reconstruction of our understanding of the world.⁸

There is wisdom in according women's experiences as knowledge, and thereby, "pivot the centering" towards a new way of seeing and thinking. This approach includes but does not privilege theory as it frames the particularity of women's consciousness.

To map women's consciousness, to give examples of women's cultures ... is to make women's actions and beliefs intelligible on their own terms. It is to show connections, to form patterns. This is not to invent another theory of women's oppression; it is to suggest a method of representation, a sounding, a making visible. It is to recognize women's strategies of coping, surviving, shaping, and changing the parameters of their existence on their own terms, and not in contrast to predominantly male strategies as if these were natural, normative, or correct models.⁹

Martha Loutfi observes that "a person lives in a number of 'households' during a lifetime -- as a child, a spouse, a parent, an elder -- which affect his/her activities in these households. The individual is the only constant."¹⁰ Hence, I adapted the technique of life stories, guided by Jean Stubbs's observation that the life story deciphers "constructs used consciously or unconsciously by those conducting a study and those being studied." Also, it

⁸ Personal Narratives Group, eds., "Origins," in Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1989), 4. See also Liz Stanley and Sue Wise, "'Back into the Personal' or: Our Attempt to Construct 'Feminist Research,'" in Theories of Women's Studies, ed. Bowles & Klein, 1983, 192-209; Susan Geiger, "What's So Feminist about Doing Women's Oral History?" in Expanding the Boundaries of Women's History: Essays on Women in the Third World, ed. Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Margaret Strobel (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1992), 305-318; and Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck, eds., Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1988).

⁹ Bettina Aptheker, Tapestries of Life: Women's Work, Women's Consciousness, and the Meaning of Daily Experience (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1989), 14.

¹⁰ Martha Fetherolf Loutfi, Rural Women: Unequal Partners in Development (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 1980), 21.

"can pinpoint factual as well as attitudinal questions that need to be asked, and indicate what information is relevant." The method illuminates the "quantifiable and the unquantifiable, substantive and normative, in often unsuspected ways."¹¹ Life narratives are a form which produces its own knowledge-claims and should be evaluated in those terms. They are attempts at constructing coherence and identity in a fragmented and atemporal self.¹²

Steered by these considerations, my investigation pays close attention to how the women verbalize gendered notions and activities. The following strategies are markers for examining the women's stories:

- looking for what has been left out in the women's narratives
- analyzing my own role or position as affecting my understanding and the research process
- identifying the women's agency in the midst of specific social constraints
- exploring the precise ways in which gender defined power relationships
- identifying other important aspects of the women's social position and their implications, and,
- avoiding the search for a unified or coherent self or voice.¹³

I also adhere to the principles of participatory research (PR) consistent with the feminist perspectives that I embrace in the process of formulating,

¹¹ Jean Stubbs, "Some Thoughts on the Life Story Method in Labour History and Research on Rural Women," *IDS Bulletin* 15 no. 1 (1984): 34. See also Gareth R. Jones, "Life History Methodology," in *Beyond Method: Strategies for Social Research*, ed. Gareth Morgan (Newbury Park: Sage, 1983), 147-159.

¹² Liz Stanley, "The Knowing Because Experiencing Subject," in *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, ed. Kathleen Lennon and Margaret Whitford (London: Routledge, 1994), 134-135.

¹³ See a discussion of these recommendations offered as guides for reading and writing about women's lives in Abigail J. Stewart, "Toward a Feminist Strategy for Studying Women's Lives," in *Women Creating Lives: Identities, Resilience, and Resistance*, ed. Carol E. Franz and Abigail J. Stewart (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 11-35.

conducting, and reporting of this study.¹⁴ This approach is inspired by the belief that self-conscious people progressively transform their environment by their own praxis. As well, it is strategy to empower, to overcome domination rooted in the polarization of control over the means for material production as well as the means of knowledge production, "including control over the social power to determine what is useful knowledge."¹⁵ Also alluded to as participatory action-research, PR emerges as a research process to challenge both the centralization and professionalization of knowledge.¹⁶

PR refers to the style of work and commitment by which "people investigate their problems with the researcher, analyze the results of their investigation in a broader, structural context, and draw long range and short-term action plans to solve these problems."¹⁷ PR is often used as a preparatory phase for social development work involving community organizing in the Philippines. There are broad overlaps in its use by academic and research institutions as well as grassroots and women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs).¹⁸ Though not generalizable, the qualitative positions

¹⁴ See Orlando Fals-Borda, "Some Basic Ingredients," in Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action-Research, ed. Orlando Fals-Borda and Muhammad Anisur Rahman (New York: Apex, 1991), 3-12.

¹⁵ Muhammad Anisur Rahman, "The Theoretical Standpoint of PAR," in Action and Knowledge, ed. Borda & Rahman, 1991, 13-14. Transforming the relations of knowledge through "conscientization" popularized by Paulo Freire, is central to the task of empowerment. This process of self-awareness-raising entails collective self-inquiry and reflection. (p. 17) See also Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: The Continuum, 1970).

¹⁶ On the "undoing" of suppositions in PR applied in social development work, see Sylvia H. Guerrero, "Towards Research for Social Action: A Review of Participatory Research Experiences in the Philippines," Paper prepared for the Professorial Chair Lecture on Social Development Research, January 27, 1983, Institute of Social Work and Community Development, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

¹⁷ Ma. Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista, "Participatory Research and Academic Social Science: Some Reflections based on Shifting Methodological Frameworks in Sociology," Lambatlava [Network for Participatory Development] (1st and 2nd Quarters 1985): 3.

¹⁸ See Trinidad S. Osteria and Jonathan Y. Okamura, eds., Participatory Approaches to Development: Experiences in the Philippines (Manila: Research Center, de la Salle University, 1986); Virgilio S. Labrador and Angela Mía Serra, eds., A Relationship of Equals: Participatory Action Research and Community Organizing (Manila: PROCESS and Southeast Asian Forum for Development Alternatives, 1987); Maureen Pagaduan and Elmer M. Ferrer, "Working as Equals: Towards a Community-based Evaluation System," Diliman Review (January-February 1984): 60-

that emerge lead to deeper understanding of specific cultures and social groups.¹⁹

Admittedly, however, the research circumstances did not allow the development of the ideal relationship between myself and the narrators themselves as 'subject-subject.' For one, my pre-defined interest in the dynamic of gender was one which they were persuaded to follow. It has been said that communication is a means of "doing" power.²⁰ Hopefully, I have also contributed to the release of inherently creative ones. I acknowledge these reflections and situate the power contexts embedded in my having elicited and interpreted, and hence, appropriated, the women's words and lives.²¹ This work borrows heavily from the women and needs to be 'returned' to their rightful owners with 'interest.' It does not necessarily follow that with my acknowledged 'lenses' and propinquity to the group and culture under study, I have successfully unravelled my own conceptual baggages of patriarchal thought and practice. Regardless, categories of phenomena and approaches to investigation and/or intervention are subject to sensitivity, ingenuity, logistics, and invention. New ideas arise as a result of an unravelling of biases of established perspectives and techniques of older disciplines as well as social practice of mass movements.

66; and The Language of Organizing: A Guidebook for Filipino Organizers (Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines, 1990).

¹⁹ On the potential of participatory research and its organizing component for enhancing theoretically-based critiques and ideas of concrete alternatives, see Bautista, "Participatory Research & Academic Social Science," 1985, 3-7.

²⁰ See Kristina Minister, "A Feminist Frame for the Oral History Interview," in Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History, ed. Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York: Routledge, 1991), 27; see also Carole Boyce Davies, "Collaboration and the Ordering Imperative in Life Story Production," in De/colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography, ed. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1992), 3-19.

²¹ On the nuances of stances and voices, see Michelle Fine, "Dis-stance and Other Stances: Negotiations of Power Inside Feminist Research," in Power and Method: Political Activism and Educational Research, ed. Andrew Gitlin (New York: Routledge, 1994), 13-35.

Despite obvious limitations, I believe that I have maintained the principles that a participatory and feminist research project should promote and signify.²² With an implicit recognition of the need to break down monopolies of knowledge, I approached the women not as an expert but one who was ready to dialogue our experiences as women. My method was signified by attempts to bridge the learning process and knowledge gaps between myself as the student-researcher and the women as subjects. I recognize myself to have been an external animator, affected and transformed in many ways through our interactions just as the other participants. The value and significance of the processes and output shared rests as much with the women themselves and other readers; on my part, the immediate praxis lies in what I set down on paper.²³

These and other methodological musings, set in the environment of women and the fisheries in the Philippines, are woven into the study's conceptual framework (chapters 2 and 3). They owe much to the wisdom shared by the women and the community of Talangban.

1.2.2. Selection of the Research Site and the Subjects

The circumstances leading to this research at the barangay (village) of Camaligan in Batan, Aklan are mentioned in the foreword. The FSDP provided the resources, venue, and opportunity for this empirical research under conditions that allowed me to balance methodological concerns and substantive interests. My education in field techniques was enhanced by the practical exposure that my involvement with the training and other community-oriented activities the FSDP made possible.²⁴

²² See Patricia Maguire, Doing Participatory Research: A Feminist Approach (Amherst: Center for International Education, School of Education, University of Massachusetts, 1987).

²³ A reference that would have been useful since the start of my research, discovered only when I was already writing, is Max van Manen, Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy (London, Ontario: Althouse, 1992).

²⁴ Most useful were the formal and informal sessions with Rosario Asong, Aurora Bautista, Nuria Castells, Elmer Ferrer, Oscar Ferrer, Joseph Idemme, Luz Lopez-Rodriguez, Maureen Pagaduan, among a host of other resource persons and co-participants. Also valuable were various exchanges

My focus on Sitio Talangban was guided by a variety of considerations: this was a sizeable community where the people's lives are closely tied up with small-scale fisheries. It was a remote part of the village which was the least in touch with FSDP and other developments at the village center. Further, initial steps were being taken to closely involve an emerging fisherfolk organization among Talangban households in the implementation of an experiment with prospects for a livelihood activity supplementary, and perhaps an alternative, to capture fishing. However, the timing of my research did not favorably coincide with the association's consolidation. Hence, I amended my emphasis and drew the study's subjects from the community at large, rather than wait for ideal conditions to document and assess the women's involvements in this undertaking.

An important consideration in the eventual selection of the subjects was the inclusion of women whose households were involved with the new association. But as a whole, the women were judiciously selected with the intent to have as widely diverse cases within the confines of Sitio Talangban. The diversity sought was not only in terms of age, but also in levels of educational attainment, involvement in the fishery, marital situation, relative class position, as well as life experiences within or beyond the study area. What they have in common is that they have children.

1.2.3. Data-Gathering and Sharing Methods

The individual women's narratives became the basic material from which the study obtained the data analyzed for the stated problem. These were supplemented by more general observations of community life gleaned from other interviews as well as personal observations during my immersion in the community. Further, the growing literature on Filipino women and women in fisheries was consulted along with vast debates of contemporary feminisms and

with Aurora Javate-de Dios, Flor Caagusan, Lynn Lee, and Ana Maria Nemenzo, Ida Siason, and Lea Zapanta.

development. Hence, conventional and informal sources jointly shape this construction of life and livelihoods in the selected coastal community.

The field work required a base at Talangban. The FSDP field base at Minoro more than three kilometers away was an option; but I chose to stay within Talangban. Eventually, the home of "Ramona" became my working base from May 1993 until the end of January 1994.²⁵ The extended immersion enhanced my understanding of the research milieu and enriched the content of our conversations -- at interviews and group discussions with the subjects and other informants -- and interactions with other residents at large. This also allowed me to adopt the indirect method of participant observation that entailed my recording of miscellaneous observations of what women and men did and said in everyday situations.

The eclectic and participatory techniques allowed me to elicit and validate viewpoints with the participants. Accordingly, I attempt to conform to their reckoning of various names, places, categories, and periodization of turning points of their lives. I deemed the strict use of standard interviewing techniques as too intrusive; their use is contrary to the flexibility preferred for the subjects' participation in the learning-sharing process.²⁶ Opportunities to appreciate the subjects' world views through cyclical interviews and group sessions with the subjects were maximized.

The main source of the information from the women comes from a series of interviews (totalling 75 sessions ranging from at least an hour to about three hours) conducted with the ten women subjects. Aklanon, Ilonggo and Filipino usage, all of which the locals understood if not spoke, was employed

²⁵ Health reasons and some difficulties in the search for an appropriate assistant/translator delayed the start of my field work. But once we started, Fe and/or myself usually stayed for three to four days at a time.

²⁶ There are many who argue for interactive exchanges for a feminist participatory research approach. See Mary Margaret Fonow and Judith A. Cook, eds., Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991); and Shulamit Reinharz, Feminist Methods in Social Research (New York: Oxford University, 1992).

with the help of a translator.²⁷ Some inputs were contributed by husband, mother, father, sister, brother, daughter, and son. Some matters were added, confirmed, denied, or challenged by the other subjects, a process which served to validate prior statements and provided leads for subsequent exchanges.²⁸ Overall, I was interested in whatever dialogue (deemed contamination by others) took place as the women contributed their respective stories. More often than not, the exchanges took place in everyday situations within their homes, while the women were minding the children, resting, or simply pausing between tasks. Often, there were intermissions as, inevitably, various persons came in and out. Efforts to create rapport and a congenial atmosphere required huge investments of time and patience on both sides.

I started the interviews with the subjects by first collecting the more factual socio-demographic information about the women themselves and members of their past and present households. Only a list of broad topics was initially constructed to enable the women to tell their stories in their own fashion and to encourage them to initiate discussions. What I aimed for was for them to be able to relate and reflect on their own experiences as they narrated aspects of their lives that they deemed significant. The list was periodically modified and elaborated to ensure the inclusion of topics that arose from each woman's account. I frequently confirmed and substantiated my interpretation of their statements or to situate often implied contexts.

Gradually, broad aspects of various activities and relationships were embellished. When their stories began to take shape, I attempted to have the women take the lead at our sessions by asking what they then wanted to talk about. But the initiative I hoped to elicit was seldom forthcoming. The strategy often brought their narratives to a halt; they hesitated and simply

²⁷ At the time of the field work, Fe Villanueva was a part-time graduate student in education at UPV from Numancia, Aklan. Sociology and psychology were her undergraduate majors at the same institution. Interestingly, she discovered a number of common acquaintances with residents of Talangban, a fact which made our integration with the community much easier than anticipated.

²⁸ A list of the interview sessions with each of the subjects is found in appendix A.

asked me what else I wanted to know, as in conventional interviews. I then had to go back to something they previously mentioned but which needed to be clarified and take off from there.²⁹ A useful strategy was to draw attention to the local maps which I was constructing with their assistance. Step-by-step, the women's inputs and my own observations were organized and developed into massive and detailed case studies. Variations in content and style of their inputs certainly depended on a host of uncontrollable factors. Nevertheless, I beg to argue that the failures in uniformity are overcome by the compelling authenticity of their voices.

Towards the end of my field work, a few other interviews were sought with other key informants, particularly on Sitio Talangban.³⁰ Our conversations tapped collective memories and grounded particular aspects of community life to supplement the women's narratives. They helped confirm and substantiate impressions and references to historical trends that emerged from the women's experiences.

The focus-group discussions (FGDs) with the subjects were also significant. Only a single session was initially planned as an occasion wherein the women could begin to collectivize their experiences and develop some common understandings of changing structures that impinge on their lives. At the same time, this was a session in which to share and validate my initial observations with them.³¹ For this reason, the first part of intended program was a more or less structured one, with role-playing exercises to stimulate the

²⁹ My experience validates the arguments raised on the need to modify the communication frame and expectations in an oral history project involving women. Minister, "A Feminist Frame for the Oral History Interview," 1991, 27-39.

³⁰ Brief descriptions of the key informants are provided in appendix B.

³¹ Some of the women had met me or known of my prior involvement with the project; others, only during the field research. Except for those involved with the emerging fisherfolk organization, they knew very little of what the FSDP was all about and had only associated the project's personnel with the presence of UPV. The FSDP acronym must have been too much of a tongue-twister and, until then, had no significance on their lives. With Prof. Luz Lopez-Rodriguez, UPV's representative for FSDP, the first session served to establish closer links with the FSDP's continuing involvement with the women's community.

fullest participation in the discussions from everyone present. The FGD was also an opportunity to thank them for their participation in an undertaking which was largely for my interests.³²

After the session in December 1993, however, I felt that the enthusiastic and gratifying gathering we had merited another session. The exchanges served therapeutic, consciousness-raising, and simple socialization purposes. It was also necessary to accommodate those who were unable to attend the first meeting.³³ The second FGD in January 1994 was meant to be a much less structured follow-up session where the women could simply choose to raise concerns which they themselves deemed worthwhile discussing. An incident immediately prior to our meeting triggered fruitful discussions woven into chapter 6 that could not have easily happened otherwise.

Through all this time, my botched attempts to adopt the Aklanon speech as well as self-disclosures of my uncommitted and childless state were sources of many wisecracks and much laughter with the women. But the field work and play had to come to an end. Nevertheless, I sincerely feel that I found fast friends with whom I expect to have continuing contacts in the years to come. I should mention that there can be no substitute for the direct experience of all-season movement by foot, bus, boat, or jeepney that is the norm for life in this community. I eventually got used to the four-hour travel to and from my home base in Iloilo City.

Most of the interview sessions and both of the FGDs were recorded on cassette tapes. However, I could not afford the time and expense to have complete transcriptions and translations of each one. The process of building up each case study called for the recording and translation of significant excerpts and key phrases as they referred to particular aspects of their personal,

³² Coinciding with the Christmas season, my token gift of appreciation (mainly foodstuffs and a few stickers for the children) had dual significance.

³³ Seven women were at the session on December 21, 1993: Sela, Lerma, Virgo, Lolit, Star, Ruth, and Josie. Five women joined on January 26, 1994: Virgo, Ramona, Star, Ling, and Linda.

familial and community references. The recordings of the FGDs were especially problematic as they carried portions of simultaneous and rapid-fire Aklanon at times. I tried to capture the dynamic of the sessions through process documentation accounts for use in this report.

1.2.4. *Notes on References and Documentation*

Throughout this work, I use such associated terms as the 'Third World' or the 'South' not to imply a hierarchy nor a homogeneity among non-Western peoples and societies.³⁴ Rather, it is a shorthand to refer to diverse cultures and peoples beyond more industrialized societies alternatively referred to as the 'First World,' the 'West' or the 'North.'

The study's material is collectively drawn not only from conventional library sources but also from oral histories of local key informants, the women subjects, and various members of their families. These are supplemented from my own recordings and field observations, published and unpublished outputs of FSDP, available copies of which are drafts of case studies and reports which I also acknowledge.

The Philippines lies 966 kilometers off the southern Asian coast, between latitude 4°23'N and 21°25'N and between longitude 116°E and 127°E. It is one of the world's largest archipelagos, with a total land area of approximately 300,000 square kilometers. There are three main island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Administratively, the country is further divided into regions, provinces, cities and municipalities. Metropolitan Manila is designated as the National Capital Region where Manila, and more recently Quezon City, have been the country's historical centers. Regardless, the smallest administrative unit everywhere is the barangay. The triangular-shaped island of Panay in the west central portion of the Philippines is one of the

³⁴ A way of resisting the subtle hegemony of Western semantics is to depict the Third World as a 'non-aligned' force, not simply as the inferior tier of a vertical ranking system. Trinh T. Minh-ha, "Difference: 'A Special Third World Women Issue'," in Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1989), 97.

Visayan islands. It is the sixth largest of eleven principal islands, with a total land area of 11,515.1 square kilometers.³⁵ The province of Aklan is one of four, along with Antique, Capiz, and Iloilo, on the island. With the new province of Guimaras, Aklan is also one of six provinces of the administrative region called Western Visayas (Region VI).³⁶

There are eight major Malay-based languages throughout the country with Sanskrit, Arab, Chinese, Spanish and English influences. Tagalog is presently the most widespread, followed by Cebuano.³⁷ As the nation-wide lingua franca, it is known as Filipino; with English, Filipino is recognized as the official language in the 1987 Constitution. Throughout Panay, people generally speak Ilonggo, the colloquial form of the literary lingua franca, Hiligaynon.³⁸ The pronunciation of 'Akean' for 'Aklan' marks a linguistic boundary that separates Ilonggo from the dialect called Aklanon (or Akeanon).³⁹ Thus, I call attention to my use of local terminologies. There was inadequate detail and consistency in the dialects/languages/spellings on available maps and other written sources. I chose to construct local maps and use indigenous names and terms by which the locals referred to legendary figures, place names, rivers, and other local phenomena -- in Aklanon, Ilonggo/Hiligaynon, or Filipino. Translations and/or any alternate references, like scientific names, are indicated in parentheses or in footnotes.⁴⁰

There was considerable discussion of the matter of the use of their names with the subjects. Though I asked each of the them (more than once)

³⁵ 1992 Philippine Yearbook (Manila: National Statistics Office, 1992), 17-18 and 36.

³⁶ See figure 1 on page 21. On Western Visayas, see figure 3 on page 186.

³⁷ In 1960 and 1975, Cebuano was more widely used. Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 139.

³⁸ Hiligaynon finds variations in Kiniray-a (mainly in Antique and parts of Iloilo), the Aminhanon (in Capiz), and the Aklanon (in Aklan). Lourdes V. de Castro, "Western Visayan Verbal Lore," Danyag 2 (December 1986) no. 2: 2-3.

³⁹ Eliza U. Grino cited in Felix B. Regalado and Quintin B. Franco, History of Panay (Iloilo City: Central Philippine University, 1973), 7, note no. 3. The census for 1990 shows that those whose dialect spoken at home is Aklanon make up just over six percent (72,952) of the total population; Hiligaynon (Ilonggo) is the 'mother tongue' of more than nine percent (992,921); and Kiniray-a, less than two percent (100,626). Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 139, 199-200.

⁴⁰ A glossary for commonly-used non-English terms throughout is provided in appendix C.

for their preferred aliases, most did not volunteer any. Interestingly, only the pseudonyms of Virgo and Delilah were specifically chosen. Since the family connections and intermarriages are among significant features to relate, I have converted the names of the other subjects, their families, and some local personages as well into fictional ones. However, place names, historical characters, and key informants, remain constant. Many of my exchanges and the visions that the subjects and key informants shared are living testimonies. I choose to refer to them as sources by their pseudonyms when first mentioned in the text.⁴¹ Doing so lessens redundancy and contributes to the brevity of the discussions. More importantly, the practice enables readers to approximate what the women know and communicate about themselves, and thus, indicate the scope of their awareness, know-how, and opinions about various ideas and circumstances.

A review of literature on conditions and prospects for women in the Philippines follows. Along with the conceptual framework presented in chapters 2 and 3, it is within these contexts that the selected women's experiences and assertions are evaluated.

⁴¹ On the women and their families, see tabular presentations in appendix D.

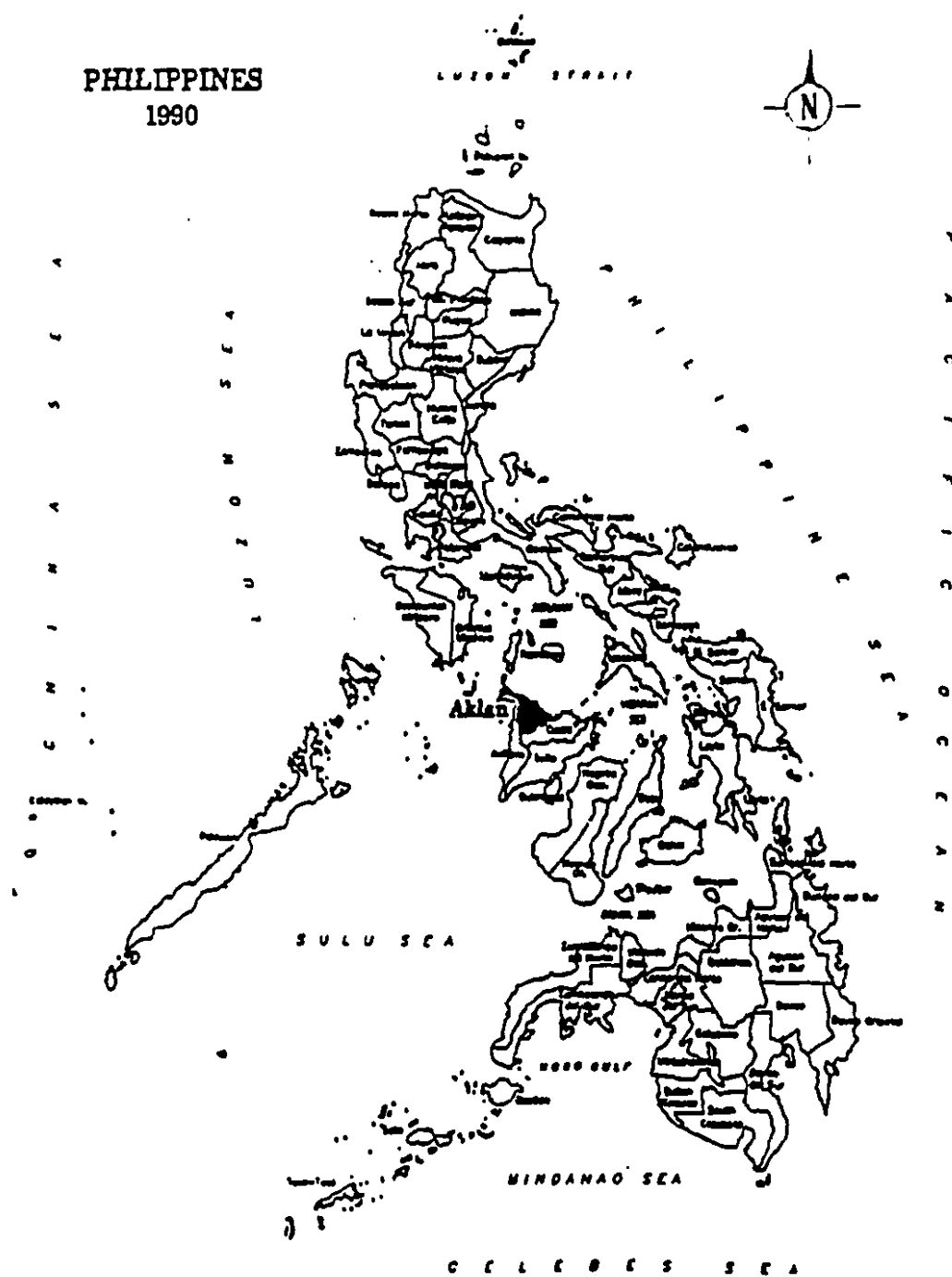


Figure 1. The Province of Aklan on Panay Island in Central Philippines

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing, 1992.

1.3. Antecedents on Women and Gender in the Philippines

1.3.1. *Women and Gender in History*

It amounts to an understatement to say that reinterpretations of national and local cultures and histories have been hampered in representing women and the significance of gender issues. In the Philippines, the restrictions lie not only in the nature of conventional accounts but also in prevailing perspectives of mainstream social sciences, not least of which is the strict divide among disciplines. Moreover, "to challenge assumptions about Filipino women and reconstruct their history necessitates nothing less than the simultaneous defiance and destruction of imperial authority."⁴² Contemporary critiques of the seemingly blanket acceptance of all things western are producing counter-discourses which acknowledge historical as well as contemporary issues.⁴³ In this fertile environment for studies on women and gender relations, "we, as women in a Third World country, are only beginning to add our voices to the discourse."⁴⁴ The following discussions are based on information gleaned from available sources and reconstructed with (my own and other's) newer lenses.

Colonization started the polarization of wealth and power leading to the current 'systemic crises' in much of the Third World.⁴⁵ Colonial legacies, state formation, and the origins and effects of modern capitalism are the more

⁴² See a penetrating critique in Delia D. Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," chap. in The Feminist Challenge: Initial Working Principles Toward Reconceptualizing the Feminist Movement in the Philippines (Manila: Asian Social Institute, 1988), 28-48. The quotation comes from page 34.

⁴³ There is an evident trend toward indigenization of content, methods, and purposes. See, for example, Michael Tan, "Current State of Research on Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous Learning in the Philippines," in Indigenous Knowledge and Learning: Papers presented in the Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge and Skills and the Ways They are Acquired (Bangkok: Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, [1988]), 39-50, and Zeus Salazar, Sikolohiyang Pilipino: Isyu, Pananaw at Kaalaman (Manila: National Bookstore, 1985).

⁴⁴ Sylvia Estrada-Claudio, "The Psychology of the Filipino Woman," Review of Women's Studies 1 no. 2 (1990-1991): 4.

⁴⁵ See Gita Sen and Caren Grown, "Systemic Crises, Reproduction Failures, and Women's Potentials," chap. in Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives (New York: Monthly Review, 1987), 50-77.

recent conjunctures that inform perspectives on the relationship between sex and political economy.⁴⁶ Significant to understanding of the capitalist expansion process in the Philippines, Elizabeth Eviota asserts:

It is a specific, qualitatively distinct form of capitalist development, a legacy of colonialism: that continued to be reproduced first by import-substitution and then by export-directed industrialization, and, in recent years, by the accelerated pace of international capitalist expansion. The working of political and economic forces on international and national levels has resulted in the uneven development of the country and divisions among its peoples. This development, encapsulated in the concept "underdevelopment," is shared by a number of countries which have experienced roughly similar relations and conditions.⁴⁷

However, the sexual division of labor was not "spontaneously generated" by capitalism. Hence, it necessary to specify the "constellation of class and gender relations" at local and global levels.

[Capitalism] absorbs and releases women's labour differently from men's labour and women's productive work increases and decreases as it reacts to the demands made by the household. The differential absorption of women and men's labour is rooted in the merging of an ideology of gender, a male dominant sex-gender system, a pre-existing sexual division of labour and factors particular to capitalism -- a wage-labour system and separation of home and workplace. In the resulting sexual division of labour and separation of spheres, women become defined in relation to their responsibility for the home and economic dependence on a male wage; men, in relation to their responsibility for the public sphere, their role as household head and their primary right to work. When women enter the economy, their work is valued in relation to their subordinate position within the gender hierarchy.⁴⁸

Needless to say, these comprehensive views need validation in the light of uneven and heterogenous developments among regions and sectors of Philippine society. Regardless, it is from these perspectives that I review some

⁴⁶ See Elizabeth Uy Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender: Women and the Sexual Division of Labour in the Philippines (London: Zed, 1992), vii, 5-9. For the emphasis of this rich and comprehensive work on overall patterns of change, the importance of subjectivity and personal experience is recognized but admittedly not adequately discussed.

⁴⁷ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 18.

⁴⁸ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 20.

significant material and ideological forces which have affected the status and activities of Filipino women.

There are pre-existing contexts of "hierarchical gender relations," i.e., patriarchy within the diverse ethno-linguistic and kinship-based societies of pre-Hispanic Philippines. Here, production was for social use and not predicated on exchange. However, there was a complex set of gender-differentiated and autonomous spheres across various communities of shifting cultivators, hunters, and fishers as well as wet-rice cultivators. Women held and disposed of their property; they could obtain divorce, inherit equally with sons, and succeed to village headship.⁴⁹ Marriage required a man to pay a bride-price or provide bride-service, but there was no premium for premarital virginity. Monogamy was the common form but concubinage and polygyny were practiced.⁵⁰

A distinct activity of women related to their roles as babaylan (religious intermediaries) who officiated marriages, offered sacrifices to the spirits, and made prophecies. They made up a "specialist" group, along with the local rulers and technicians.⁵¹ Older women predominated among them, and when a male performed the rituals, he usually dressed himself as a woman.⁵²

⁴⁹ See the significance of the rulers' wives in Panay's oral tradition in chapter 5, page 176.

⁵⁰ Sr. Mary John Mananzan, "The Filipino Women: Before and After the Spanish Conquest of the Philippines," in Essays on Women, ed. Sr. Mary John Mananzan (Manila: Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1991), 6-35, and Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 31-37.

⁵¹ This influential group is alternatively described as religious functionaries, diviners, healers, astromers, and interpreters of culture. Zeus Salazar, "Ang Babaylan sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipino," in Women's Role in Philippine History. Papers and Proceedings of the Conference (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1989), 36-37.

⁵² Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 17. The search for the indigenous roots of Filipino psychology draws attention to these roles of the babaylan in the Visayas, called catalonan in Central Luzon. See Virgilio Enriquez, From Colonial to Liberation Psychology: The Philippine Experience (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1992), 4-6. Similar spirit mediums have been identified throughout Southeast Asia, variously referred to by terms derived from the classical Malay word belian, often associated with political authority upheld by men. But it was common practice to have women serving as baylan. Alfred W. McCoy, "Baylan: Animist Religion and Philippine Peasant Ideology," Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society 10 (1982): 144-145 and 154. Significantly, while as the Visayan term babaylan implies the largely female composition of this group of spiritual leaders, catalonan among Tagalogs imply their association with talon (forest). Jaime B. Veneracion, "From Babaylan to Beata: A Study on the Religiosity

Despite parallel roles and an apparent equality, there were limits to political avenues for women and regulations on their sexuality. Women could rule only in the absence of male heirs; they were the object of traffic in marriage for kinship-based alliances; marital infidelity was a serious offence for them, reflecting a concern for inheritance of wealth or social position.⁵³ Divorce was also not as easily obtained by a woman.⁵⁴

For more than three centuries as a Spanish colony, much of the archipelago was governed through a system that manifested a union of church and state.⁵⁵ Spanish interests dominated political, economic, and social life for mercantilist and commercial purposes. Significant among institutional changes that accompanied these processes were the institutionalization of sharecropping and debt peonage as well as the transformation of communal lands into private preserves.⁵⁶ Large areas were placed under the jurisdiction of friars and lay Spanish recipients of encomiendas (land grants) who acted as governors, exacting tributes and enforcing draft labor. The indios (natives) were baptized into Catholicism, with evangelization in more remote areas often resettling indios into compact towns and villages.⁵⁷ Members of the principalia (the elite classes), Spanish officials, Chinese merchants, and mestizos (inter-racial offspring) also acquired estates through purchase,

of Filipino Women," Review of Women's Studies 3 no. 1 (December 1992): 1-2.

⁵³ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 35-36.

⁵⁴ Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 19-20.

⁵⁵ See Emma Blair and Alexander Robertson, eds., The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898, 55 vols. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1903-1909). Spain's explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, reached the islands in 1521, though actual Spanish settlement took place with the Legaspi-led expedition in 1565. The Spanish cross and sword checked the spread of Islamized settlements already established in the southernmost island of Mindanao; but they never fully succeeded in incorporating some areas therein within the Spanish empire. Hence, their administration more fully addressed affairs in Luzon and the Visayan islands.

⁵⁶ Aida F. Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky? Notes on the Women's Movement in the Philippines," Essays on Women, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 38.

⁵⁷ The friars or missionary priests belonged to several religious orders (i.e., Dominicans, Recollects, Augustinians, Franciscans). They were assigned jurisdiction over specific areas of the archipelago, and thus, gained control of large tracts of lands.

foreclosures, or outright appropriation.⁵⁸ Peasant women served at households of landlords as debt settlement, enabling men to maintain the right to till the land as tenants.⁵⁹

The babaylan, as carriers of indigenous animist traditions, were competitors of the friars. They were undermined and depicted as witches, even subjected to persecutions.⁶⁰ However, most of Spanish prescriptions on women pertained to wives and daughters of the principalia. The Laws of the Indies and Catholic canons created a gender ideology which centered women's roles on the family and the church. Monogamous marriages without divorce became the norm.⁶¹ Seeking to preserve the unity of the family, they placed great power on the padre de familia (father of the family) and stressed the virtues of filial obedience and family solidarity. Among the privileged, a wife was addressed in the feminine version of her husband's title.⁶² Spanish law classified married women as non-persons;⁶³ yet chroniclers were wont to describe the Filipina wife as "queen of the home."⁶⁴

A transformation resulting from the intersection of gender relations, religion, and ideology is manifested in the friars' success in changing the meaning of 'the sexual,' particularly for the mujer indigena (native women). By associating sexuality with 'sin,' they established strictures on the chastity of

⁵⁸ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 39.

⁵⁹ Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 39-40. Men were often called away from farms to fulfill requirements of forced labor.

⁶⁰ Milagros C. Guerrero, "Ang Kababaihan sa Ika-labingpitong Siglo," in Women's Role in Philippine History, 1989. However, male babaylanes feature in movements against the Spanish and American colonial regimes (e.g., Buhawi and Papa Isio in Negros, Dios in Antique, and the pulajanes in central Panay). This appears to indicate that the movements recreated the traditional rulers "from elements of a once coherent magical world view." McCoy, "Baylan," 1982, 166.

⁶¹ Until the late nineteenth century, marriages usually took place before girls reached the age of fourteen. Encarnacion Alzona, The Social and Economic Status of Filipino Women, 1565-1932 (Manila: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1933), 27.

⁶² I.e., if he was a capitan, she was capitana. Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 12-13.

⁶³ They had rights to property and family only equal with that of minors, lunatics, and idiots. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 44 note no. 42.

⁶⁴ Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 34, especially note no. 25.

women.⁶⁵ They were profuse in their praise of devout converts who assiduously performed charitable works, religious duties, and especially those who joined the monastic life. Nonetheless, their tolerance of monogamy with concubinage (i.e., the mistress or *querida*) effectively created the 'double standard' in sexuality and morality.⁶⁶

Several congregations of nuns ran convents or boarding schools which removed the Spanish (and later other elite) women from economic and social involvements.⁶⁷ These formal schools provided limited training for some but hardly any for poorer women apart from religious instruction.⁶⁸ Despite reforms which led to the opening of more schools, women were denied an enlightened education.⁶⁹ They developed the passive and demure mien of a bourgeois lady embodied in "Maria Clara" in political satires.⁷⁰ The nurturing of religiosity occupied the women's energies and obscured their capacity for social awareness and action.⁷¹ The effect is also described thus:

⁶⁵ Through confession manuals, the missionaries established the 'sinfulness' of 'non-procreative sex' also regarded as deviant behavior. Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 23-25 and 41. Prescriptions include warnings against friendships with any man, against attending dances, talking bad about teachers, superiors, parents and priests. Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 26-29.

⁶⁶ This evinces the gradual transformation of the sexual autonomy of women and men into a situation where "female chastity was inordinately emphasized and male proclivities openly tolerated." Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 23.

⁶⁷ Non-elite women who wanted to join the convent first had to be servants. Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 42. The *beaterio*, literally meaning 'a retreat' was intended to shelter and educate Spanish girls but were later opened to girls from wealthy and influential families. Most of these were later called *colegio* but were not equivalent to a college in the American sense. Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 6-8.

⁶⁸ Upper-class women were taught catechism, embroidery, and, sometimes, reckoning and some reading and writing in Spanish. Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 8-9.

⁶⁹ The liberal reforms of 1863 required each town to maintain two elementary schools segregated for boys and girls. Outside of Manila, the Spanish language was not taught because friars feared that doing so would provide the natives a common language to discuss subversive ideas and facilitate the spread of Protestantism. Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 9-10.

⁷⁰ Maria Clara was a major female character in Jose Rizal's novel, *Noli Me Tangere*, a personification of the young lady educated by the Spanish friar. Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 29-30. See also Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 60-61.

⁷¹ Leonora C. Angeles, "Women's Roles and Status in the Philippines," in *Women's Springbook: Readings on Women and Society*, ed. Marjorie M. Evasco et al. (Quezon City: Women's Resource and Research Center and Katipunan ng Kababaihan para sa Kalayaan, 1990), 16.

On the pretext of putting a woman on a pedestal as an object of veneration and adulation, patriarchal society succeeded in alienating her from public life, public decisions and public significance. She should henceforth be a delicate ornament of the home or the victim soul of the convent.⁷²

For the first 200 years, the tempo of change away from the self-provisioning economy was slow.⁷³ Women and men engaged in subsistence tasks appropriate to their needs rather than confining themselves to a particular employment.⁷⁴ With an expanded foreign trade, women in urban areas became conspicuous as shopkeepers and small capitalists competing with Chinese merchants.⁷⁵ Others maintained homes and small businesses, or became lowly-paid hilots (traditional midwives), dressmakers, or teachers.⁷⁶ Weaving, embroidery, slipper and hat production were farmed-out to individual households or concentrated in small factories. However, the fate of the textile industry of Iloilo highlights how manufacturing and commercial changes by the late nineteenth-century affected women's opportunities and occupations.⁷⁷ Stevedores replaced weavers as the main wage earners in the province.⁷⁸

⁷² From a contemporary Filipina nun, this assessment is significant. Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 35.

⁷³ The pace intensified with the abolition of the monopoly of the "Manila-Acapulco" trade on the galleons. By the mid-eighteenth century, the shift in colonial policy was signified with the opening of international ports, including that in Iloilo.

⁷⁴ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 55.

⁷⁵ Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 23.

⁷⁶ Maria Luisa Camagay, "Doing Historical Research," in Empowering Women Through Research Networking, ed. Ricky Esguerra ([Manila]: Center for Women's Resources, [1987]), 7-9. Informal schools, known as the kartilya (so-called after the teaching manuals), were set up by individuals who aimed to help others learn to read and write.

⁷⁷ Weavers (using cotton, silk, pineapple, abaca, and maguey fibers) were concentrated in Jaro, Molo, Arevalo, and Mandurriao. Henry F. Funtecha, "Weaving Industry -- Iloilo's Pride during the 19th Century," Danyag 1 no. 4 (December 1981): 1-11. See also Alfred McCoy, "A Queen Dies Slowly: The Rise and Decline of Iloilo City," in Philippine Social History: Global Trade and Local Transformations, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Ed. C. de Jesus (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1982), 297-358.

⁷⁸ Circulation (rather than merchant) capital undercut the weaving industry of Iloilo and became industrial capital for sugar production in Negros. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 52-58 passim.

Adversities led more women to venture outside of their homes to work as governesses, domestic helpers, and farm workers in rice, copra, and sugar production.⁷⁹ Others entered factories, as cigar and cigarette makers for the government monopoly and as embroiderers for private enterprises.⁸⁰ There was sexual discrimination, harassment, and abuse especially for working-class women. They received lower wages than men and were susceptible victims of male employers. Exigencies led others to become prostitutes, mistresses, or vagrants, and were regulated as "undesirable" women.⁸¹ These situations are epitomized in literary images of demented women;⁸² as well, in actual events of strikes by tobacco workers or *cigarreras*.⁸³ On the whole,

men were integrated into the modern sectors of the economy as heads of households, as farmers in cash-crop production, or as large-scale traders, while women, together with children and the elderly, were left with household tasks and labour-intensive market work.⁸⁴

Some women like Gabriela Silang joined local rebellions against Spain.⁸⁵ Nationalists among the *ilustrados* (educated classes) of the late nineteenth-century denounced the friars' sexual exploitation of women and

⁷⁹ In 1930 most women in industrial establishments in the provinces were engaged in work with "dressed coconut" and "sugar centrals." Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 12 and 23. See also discussion of export crop production systems (tobacco, abaca, and sugar) and the commercialization of the economy in Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 47-61.

⁸⁰ The *cigarreras* started to work at government factories since 1781. In 1930, there were 3,721 women employed in 23 tobacco companies, the largest group in any industry; there were 1,384 women employed in 31 establishments in embroidery. Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 23-24 and 31.

⁸¹ There were also cases of friar abuse and *solicitaciones*; as well, wives or daughters were offered by Filipino men to clergy or officials for material rewards or favors. Nevertheless, sexual abuse was a major issue in tenant uprisings in Central Luzon. Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 40 and 61.

⁸² See characters of Sisa and Juli in Albina Pecson-Fernandez, "Rizal on Women and Children in the Struggle for Nationhood," *Review of Women's Studies* 1 no. 2 (1990-1991): 31-32.

⁸³ Since the late nineteenth century, there were demands for redress for the women in the tobacco factories. Camagay, "Doing Historical Research," 1987, 7.

⁸⁴ Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 61.

⁸⁵ Gabriela succeeded to lead the 1763 Ilocos uprising when her husband Diego was assassinated. She was captured and executed by Spanish authorities. Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman*, 1933, 15-16.

deplored the kind of education opened to them.⁸⁶ Jose Rizal lauded the demand of young women from Malolos for equal education in the Spanish language.⁸⁷ When Andres Bonifacio founded the Katipunan and led the revolution against Spain, his wife was active with the women's bureau, which, with elite women of a masonic lodge, linked the movement with intellectuals and other well-to-do families.⁸⁸ But women were generally denied full membership in the Katipunan for being incapable of keeping secrets.⁸⁹ Evidently, there were limits to what the leadership of the emerging nation were willing to grant the women; hence they were denied suffrage in the 1898 Constitution.⁹⁰

The independence and the Philippine Republic declared on June 12, 1898 by General Emilio Aguinaldo was a short-lived one. By the turn of the century, the Philippines became America's colony in Asia.⁹¹ For the revolution as well as in the war against the Americans, a few women like

⁸⁶ The propagandist Marcelo del Pilar is noted to have exhorted his niece not to confine herself to "lighting candles and mumbling novenas." Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 31.

⁸⁷ In his Letter to the Women of Malolos, Rizal comments: "What offspring will that be of a woman whose kindness of heart is expressed by mumbling prayers, who knows nothing by heart but awits, novenas and alleged miracles, whose amusement consists in playing panguinge and in frequent confessions of the same sins." Cited in Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman," 1991, 31. On these remarks of the physician-novelist-patriot, see Romeo V. Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," in Essays on Women, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 52-53.

⁸⁸ The Katipunan was established in 1892 and started the revolution in 1896. The women's bureau consisted mainly of family members of the katipuneros, including Bonifacio's wife, Gregoria de Jesus, and Rizal's sister Josefa, many of whom also joined the women's lodge. They worked as recruiters, meeting secretaries, and keepers of important documents; they also served as decoys for Spanish authorities and made flags for the Katipunan and the Philippine Republic. Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," 1991, 54-56.

⁸⁹ Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 15.

⁹⁰ Emilio Jacinto's Kartilya saw women as part of the "Brotherhood" of people, equal with men and instructs that the fragility of women must be respected. Apolinario Mabini proposed the granting of suffrage to women in his Political Program of the Filipino Republic for the 1898 Malolos Constitution, but his proposal was not approved by the all-male Congress. Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," 1991, 53-54.

⁹¹ American conquest was accomplished through a war initially waged with Spain in Cuba and prompted by American intent to gain entry into the lucrative Chinese trade then dominated by European powers in the area. See Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Milagros C. Guerrero, History of the Filipino People (Quezon City: R.P. Garcia, 1971); and Renato Constantino, The Philippines: A Past Revisited (Quezon City: Tala, 1975).

Trinidad Tecson procured arms and joined the actual fighting.⁹² Melchora Aquino (Tandang Sora) was among non-elite women who sheltered and fed the soldiers. Women were victims, too, as evidenced by incidents of rape from men on both sides during the revolution.⁹³ When Aguinaldo and other leaders were subdued by the Americans in 1901, his wife coordinated humanitarian services during the continued hostilities.⁹⁴ Protracted resistance in the provinces was led by those depicted as bandits or members of illicit cofradías (religious societies).⁹⁵

Elite women were called upon to aid the American pacification campaign through the Liga Femenina de la Paz.⁹⁶ Its leader also edited a national magazine for women, Filipinas, that became the mouthpiece of early feminist sentiments.⁹⁷ However, education was the most important instrument of 'benevolent assimilation,' essentially upholding the class and gender structures constructed under Spain. Education was needed for a trained bureaucracy (and later in corporations) and was, thus, an avenue for women's entry into paid work.⁹⁸ Women were among pensionados awarded

⁹² Tecson was appointed quartermaster to provision soldiers of the Philippine Republic. Other women in battles include Teresa Magbanua of Iloilo and Agueda Kahabagan of Paete. Nazaria Lagos sewed the flag raised in Davao, Iloilo, on the first anniversary of independence. Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," 1991, 55-56.

⁹³ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 62.

⁹⁴ The Red Cross association led by Hilaria Ro Reyes de Aguinaldo established branches across 13 provinces. See Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," 1991, 56, and Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 41.

⁹⁵ Cofradías represent a particular form of resistance to the Spanish regime; within these religious-political movements, women were treated as sexual objects to prove the power of their leaders. See Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 45. See also Reynaldo Ileto, Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910 (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1979).

⁹⁶ Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 41.

⁹⁷ This aimed 'to work with courage to achieve their (women's) equality with the members of the stronger sex and to take an active part in matters affecting the management of the government of our country.' Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 17.

⁹⁸ When women were employed, however, the character of the service work was redefined, i.e., secretaries became office servants and handmaidens rather than administrative or managerial assistants. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 69.

scholarships to the United States since 1903.⁹⁹ All the public schools established were co-educational.¹⁰⁰ The state university opened in 1908 admitted women into courses not previously open to them;¹⁰¹ but the private schools and universities established remained mostly within Manila.¹⁰²

There were continued pressures for self-government while the agricultural economy was recast to the demands of an internationalized economy. Aiming for legal equality, the Asociacion Feminista Ilongga in 1906 was the first to enunciate demands for women's suffrage.¹⁰³ Among other women's groups formed, the Society for the Advancement of Women became the prototype of women's clubs throughout the country.¹⁰⁴ Most supported the suffrage and independence movements, advocated prison, labor, and educational reforms, and did volunteer work for social and health services. Speaking of her time in the 1930s, Encarnacion Alzona argued that

the modern Filipino women who are demanding for civil and political rights are in fact asking for no more than the restoration of their ancient

⁹⁹ Ma. Luisa T. Camagay, "Women through Philippine History," in The Filipino Woman in Focus, ed. Torres, 1989, 33.

¹⁰⁰ At the secondary level, home-economics and health education courses sought to prepare girls for "the intelligent performance of the duties of women in the home and in society." Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 17. The American system for universal education formalized and strengthened the kartilya system which had flourished during the latter days of the Spanish regime.

¹⁰¹ Women were admitted into the UP's courses in law, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, and education. All female students were organized into a women's club to participate in campus activities and civic movements. Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 17-18.

¹⁰² Women's admission in 1924 into the oldest institution, the University of Santo Tomas ran by Dominicans, was first limited to pharmacy. Among the new schools was the Philippine Women's College. By 1931, over 3,000 women had academic degrees, most of whom were employed as teachers. Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 18-20.

¹⁰³ This was led by Pura Villanueva Kalaw, originally of Iloilo. Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 42. See also Teresa Subido, The Feminist Movement in the Philippines, 1905-1955 (Manila: National Federation of Women's Clubs, 1955).

¹⁰⁴ American suffragettes worked with Filipinas for this organization. Other women's organizations were the Asociacion Feminista Filipina, the Liga Nacional de Damas Filipinas, The Women's Citizen League, and the National Federation of Women's Club. See Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 41-43.

rights and freedom which had been taken away from them by an alien rule of more than three centuries.¹⁰⁵

Meanwhile, with agricultural production of coconut, sugar, tobacco, and abaca geared for export, the pace of restructuring accelerated and its impact more systemically, even if unevenly, felt.¹⁰⁶ Women's autonomous manufacture (of cloth, hats, and mats) was undermined by the introduction of mechanical mills in factories that tended to hire men.¹⁰⁷ As a whole, Filipino responses were affected by increased population pressures and the increasing shift to a commoditized economy. With labor surpluses, internal migration for seasonal work took men away from their families.¹⁰⁸ The United States began to represent the 'land of opportunity' for men, leaving women as heads of households and managers of small family farms or business.¹⁰⁹ Even as the economy was not uniformly able to absorb released labor, wage relations became established in factory work and on plantation agriculture and even in domestic and personal services. But most women in urban areas became dependent housewives.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Alzona, The Social & Economic Status, 1933, 5.

¹⁰⁶ With the infusion of American monopoly capital, manufacturing expanded significantly, raising the numbers of waged workers and increasing the range of economic activities. See Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 63-76 passim. See also Randolph S. David et al., Political Economy of Philippine Commodities (Quezon City: Third World Center, University of the Philippines, 1983).

¹⁰⁷ In the 1903 census, there were close to a million women weavers, about 70 percent of female productive workers; by 1939, the proportion dropped to 24 percent. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 69.

¹⁰⁸ This was particularly marked in the provinces of Antique and Capiz when men left to work on sugar plantations of Negros. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 72.

¹⁰⁹ Most of the early migrants were men from Ilocos who worked in the pineapple plantations of Hawaii or became bellboys, waiters, and apple pickers on the mainland. Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 18. In those areas which sent labor abroad or to other provinces, the proportion of households headed by women ranged from 13 to 19 percent of the total. For the country as a whole, 11 percent of households were headed by a woman. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 72.

¹¹⁰ The censuses show a rising number of women as housekeepers, not 'gainfully employed,' a categorization which masks subsistence production, seasonal participation in farm and other wage work, subsistence vending, and home-based businesses. On problems with census data on women's work, see Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 65-71.

Throughout the countryside, varying forms of subsistence farm and fish production, trading, and independent craft production persisted, mostly done by women. In smallholding households, women's work tended to be subsumed as unpaid family labor. But the work for household members generally became more intensive and less mutually complementary.

Agricultural workers were not only "de-peasantized," providing a labour market for capital; they were also "re-peasantized," selling their labour-power while at the same time reproducing part of it outside capitalist relations. Thus having many jobs and several income earners in one household ... lost their complementary character and became the immediate response to a specific type of capitalist development.¹¹¹

Women were active on the labor front though seldom as union leaders.¹¹² Specific concessions for working women were gradually gained through pressures from labor unions supported by various women's and other groups.¹¹³ Despite these achievements, conditions were detrimental for women since bosses began adopting hiring policies preferential to men. Reform advocates also run into conflict with traditionalists who perceived problems created by mothers who worked and attributed social ills like juvenile delinquency to the working mothers' neglect of their families.¹¹⁴

Contradictions developed as wealthy and middle-class women came into the 'public' spheres of wage work and politics even as they strove to retain the 'private' character of exemplary mothers and housewives. For the privileged,

¹¹¹ Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 72.

¹¹² As of 1931, there were 12 labor unions with women members. The largest female membership was in the Union de Tabaqueros, La Yebana; of 7,000 members, 1,800 were women. Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 32. By 1940, only five percent of more than five million in paid work were organized. Many unions carried a political agenda leading towards socialism. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 71.

¹¹³ In 1913, workers' organizations declared strikes and drafted demands for an 8-hour working day, protection for the labor of women and children, and social insurance. Rosario del Rosario, "Filipino Working Women," in The Filipino Woman in Focus, ed. Torres, 1989, 57. In response to labor unrest, a separate section for women and child workers was established in the Bureau of Labor in 1925. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, 71. Some reforms were brought by Act 3071 of 1923 and the Workman's Compensation Act of 1927. Alzona, The Social & Economic Status of the Filipino Woman, 1933, 24-25.

¹¹⁴ del Rosario, "Filipino Working Women," 1989, 57-61.

work at home was done by working-class women; for others, with older daughters who serve as housekeepers and mother-substitutes in school, the options for 'public' work were limited.¹¹⁵ Moreover, Filipino preferences and ideals began to emulate new lifestyles and tastes as the nation-wide market was flooded with American products.

Liberal ideas and attitudes affected manners, dress, and thinking about women especially in the urban areas. Women became interested in sports, co-education, and beauty contests; as well, in women's wage work, the professions, and suffrage.¹¹⁶ Some of women's disadvantages in law were corrected in 1932; the wife was empowered to dispose of her paraphernal property without her husband's consent.¹¹⁷ Ironically, however early women were allowed to advance in education, they got the right to vote only at the local elections of 1937.¹¹⁸ Further, only in 1952 was equal pay for equal labor legislated between women and men.¹¹⁹

Though interrupted by World War II and Japanese occupation, political independence and the Republic of the Philippines emerged on July 4, 1946, hailed as the "showcase for democracy in Asia."¹²⁰ With suffrage, a few elite women occupied political positions and worked for more entitlements and recognition. Apart from efforts to educate the general public on political issues, they mainly organized as back-up support for political parties and

¹¹⁵ Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 74-75.

¹¹⁶ Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 73-74.

¹¹⁷ The initiative for what its opponents referred to as "the infernal law" was led by the Philippine Association of University Women. Camagay, "Women through Philippine History," 1989, 34, and Ma. Luisa T. Camagay, "[Biographical Sketch] Encarnacion Alzona, An Indefatigable Feminist," *Review of Women's Studies* 1 no. 1 (1990): 59.

¹¹⁸ The 1935 Constitution specified the right only for males and made the extension of the right to women conditional on a plebescite. This was held in 1936, where watchers from various women's clubs were significant. Myrna S. Feliciano, "The Political Rights of Women in Philippine Context," *Review of Women's Studies* 1 no. 2 (1990-1991): 34-35.

¹¹⁹ With Republic Act 679, employers were also required to grant their female employees a 14-week maternity leave with 60 percent of their salary. del Rosario, "Filipino Working Women," 1989, 60.

¹²⁰ Since 1962, under President Diosdado Macapagal, the national celebration of independence shifted to commemorate June 12.

interest groups.¹²¹ Until the 1970s, except for demands for political rights and labor reforms, women's activist involvements consisted of humanitarian and civic activities which tended to emphasize women as mothers, wives, homemakers, and moral guardians.¹²²

Hence, the early women's movement has been assessed as an offshoot of male-led and male-defined struggles for political independence.¹²³ Women were not the initiators nor leaders but nevertheless drew legitimacy of 'public' roles from these causes. The efforts of elite women who led the suffrage and reform movements legitimized a sophisticated form of domination in which elite democracy consolidated its access to political and economic power with new masters.¹²⁴ Another view hazards that it was the Americans who pushed for suffrage for the Filipino women as a strategy to deflect pressures of the independence movement.¹²⁵ This may well be a context in which to interpret Governor General Leonard Wood's statement that "in the Philippines the best man is the woman."¹²⁶

Nonetheless, the effects of the war and repercussions of the 'Cold War' era constrained the country to the dogma of neo-colonial capitalist

¹²¹ The first women's auxiliary was that of the Liberal Party in 1946. Maita Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots of National Political Movements," in *Essays on Women*, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 59-60, and Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 44.

¹²² The women's clubs were among those who opposed the re-opening of Manila's 'red-light' district for reasons of health and morality; but they were silent on the material conditions and premise of male sexual needs that created it. The closure of the district in 1919 due to fears of 'venereal contagion' made the apprehension of "female vagrants" more difficult. Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 75-76.

¹²³ Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 57-79.

¹²⁴ Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 59-60.

¹²⁵ The intent to promote public acceptance of the government installed by the Americans was evident in activities of the League of Women Voters in the Philippines since 1939 and the first women's civic assembly in 1947 which highlighted the participation of women at the independence day celebration. Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 60, and Santos, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky?" 1991, 44.

¹²⁶ Cited in Alzona, *The Social & Economic Status*, 1933, 1. He could not have meant every one of them.

development.¹²⁷ Further, two decades of Ferdinand Marcos' authoritarian regime committed the country to international indebtedness for the globally promoted development scheme. These policies implicate Filipino women by the promise of cheap labor in export-processing zones.¹²⁸ The restored democracy in 1986 under Corazon (Cory) Aquino failed to signify a marked shift as revealed by the Women in Development and Nation Building Act.¹²⁹ President Fidel Ramos's crusade for a 'Philippines 2000' today is founded on an industrialization program explicitly caught up in the dominant paradigm.¹³⁰

The principle of sexual equality was recognized in the 1973 Constitution. 'Cory's' ascendancy as the first woman president calls attention to women's participation in recent Philippine politics.¹³¹ Popular support for her had grown out of the 1983 political assassination of her husband and

¹²⁷ The Philippines was bound with the international capitalist structure through uneven terms of trade and military agreements. Further, the parity rights amendment to the 1935 Constitution granted equal rights to American citizens in exploiting natural resources and establishing business locally.

¹²⁸ See Robin Broad, Unequal Alliance: The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Philippines (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1988); Amando Doronila, The State, Economic Transformation, and Political Change in the Philippines, 1946-1972 (Singapore: Oxford University, 1992); Vivencio R. Jose, ed., Mortgaging the Future: The World Bank and IMF in the Philippines (Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1982); and Roland G. Simbulan, "Rethinking Development," Philippine Development Forum 4 nos. 2-3 (1987): 5-15.

¹²⁹ The law promotes the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation building was approved in February 12, 1992 and was placed as a responsibility of the National Economic and Development Authority. It classifies projects for women as integrated programs/projects, women's components, and 'for women only.' Implementing Rules and Regulations: Republic Act 7192 Women in Development and Nation Building Act (Manila: National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 1993).

¹³⁰ His campaign slogan was "people's empowerment"; but neither he nor the largely male- and elite-constituted congress has abandoned the 'top-down' modernization program motored by development. See M. D. Litonjua, "Outside the Den of Dragons: The Philippines and the NICs of Asia," Studies in Comparative International Development 28 no. 4 (Winter 1994): 3-30.

¹³¹ During her term (1986-1989), there were two women senators (8.6 percent) and 18 representatives of the lower house (over nine percent). Women also held the following elective positions at the local government level: from a total of 60 chartered cities, five governors (less than seven percent), eight vice-governors (less than 11 percent), five mayors (over eight percent) and eight vice-mayors (over 13 percent); from a total of 1,532 municipalities, 109 mayors (over seven percent) and 94 vice-mayors (over six percent). Feliciano, "The Political Rights of Women," 1990-1991, 47.

Marcos' nemesis, Ninoy Aquino. Notably, the annual celebrations commemorating the role of women were formalized by her administration.¹³² The formation of an all-women's political party before the 1987 elections signals fuller participation in electoral processes.¹³³ Regardless, these attainments signify women's representation of themselves as part of the "ruling apparatus" of Philippine society.¹³⁴ "The public visibility of a few individual women has helped preserved the idea of dominance, exaggerating its dimensions to guarantee the Filipino woman's superiority over other Asian women and even over 'her Western counterparts'."¹³⁵

A different type of politicalization started with the Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) during this decade.¹³⁶ It placed women's liberation within the larger social context where dire economic conditions and resurgent nationalism had even led to the establishment of a communist party and its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA).¹³⁷ Riding on the crest of student activism in the national democratic struggle, the MAKIBAKA forged a campaign against women's degradation while exposing the evils of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.¹³⁸ But the urgency of struggle against Marcos's dictatorship curtailed this movement.¹³⁹ Like other militant organizations, the decidedly more nationalist than feminist

¹³² A women's week, an international women's day on March 8, and the observance of March as "Women's Role in History Month" are provided in presidential proclamation Nos. 224 and 227 in 1988.

¹³³ Feliciano, "The Political Rights of Women," 1990-1991, 46-47.

¹³⁴ See discussion in the conceptual framework, page 91 and page 95.

¹³⁵ Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, 35.

¹³⁶ Its origins traces back to male-led youth organization of the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK). Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 60. Translated, MAKIBAKA's name means Free Movement of New Women.

¹³⁷ Delia D. Aguilar, "Women in the Political Economy of the Philippines," chap. in The Feminist Challenge, 1988, 3-4.

¹³⁸ The movement was launched during a beauty contest in 1970 with members such as Lorena Barros who fought for and gave her life to the cause she believed in. Rosa C. Mercado, "Another Look at the MAKIBAKA Experience," Diliman Review 34 (1986): 60-62.

¹³⁹ This entailed struggles for the removal of American military bases as well as efforts to oust the Marcos dictatorship and alliances with progressive groups for struggles for national liberation as well as class politics of Third World movements.

MAKIBAKA was forced to go underground. On hindsight, its 'mothers' corps' suggests the potential of housewives and mothers for the women's movement.¹⁴⁰

1.3.2. *Contemporary Developments and Issues*

Castilian and Catholic values and norms of sexual behavior, succeeded by the standards of American popular education and religious liberty, continue to regulate both the scope of activities and assessments of position or worth of Filipino women. Even with broadened opportunities for education and employment, these forces contribute to the perpetration of patriarchal standards over women's sexuality and work. The legal system bears legacies from dominant traditions of Roman law, British common law, and the Muslim Sharia. Various Protestant and local denominations like the Philippine Independent (or Aglipay) Church and Iglesia ni Kristo (INK) gained adherents even if the country remains predominantly Catholic. Classes at secondary and tertiary levels are still predominantly conducted in English. And, Filipinos are entangled in subservient neo-colonial relations within an increasingly interdependent capitalist world economy.

By the 1990s, three overlapping phases may be discerned among the interests of Filipino women: the call on women's political involvement, understanding the bases of women's subordination within specific sectors, and, recently, understanding the cross-class bases of women's conditions.¹⁴¹ Hence, the portrait of the contemporary Filipina differs "drastically from the old caricature of simpering Maria Clara."¹⁴² A more comprehensive profile signifies her contradictory assets and facets: as a demographic statistic, a

¹⁴⁰ Composed of mothers of members and mothers of other activists, this was not fully integrated into the organization and functioned as a support group. Salome Ronquillo, "Makibaka Remembered," *Diliman Review* (May-August 1984): 51-52.

¹⁴¹ [Leonora] C. Angeles, "[Abstract] Feminism and Nationalism: The Discourse on the Woman Question and Politics of the Women's Movement in the Philippines (M. A. thesis: University of the Philippines)," *Review of Women's Studies* 2 no. 1 (1991): 118-120.

¹⁴² Torres, "Introduction: The Filipina Looks at Herself," 1989, 16.

matrimonial risk-taker, a child-bearer, an adolescent, a recipient of education, a migrant, and a participant in politics, in formal organizations, and in church activities.¹⁴³ However, most Filipino women are poor and have a predominantly subsistence existence in rural areas.¹⁴⁴ More positively, the *babaylan* of yore is symbolized as the subjective reality of the Filipina.¹⁴⁵ The merging of nationalist and women-centered images in indigenous religious groups is an area of further study and elucidation.¹⁴⁶

A resurgence of feminist consciousness was variously stimulated by activities of the UN decade for women (1976-1985), academic and development-oriented research with influences from the revitalized western feminism, and advocacy for political reforms by middle-class "cause-oriented" organizations. The advent of women's studies programs during the early 1980s advanced gender awareness and women's advocacy at various fronts.¹⁴⁷ Numerous works re-examine origin myths and other oral traditions, fictional works, representations in religion, prominent historical figures, and the planning and implementation of development projects.¹⁴⁸ There are also continuing efforts to reassess the environments of women's work and to strengthen a nation-wide women's movement.

¹⁴³ Gelia Castillo, The Filipino Woman as Manpower: The Image and Empirical Reality (Los Banos, Laguna: University of the Philippines at Los Banos, 1976), 12-13.

¹⁴⁴ See Gelia T. Castillo, Beyond Manila: Philippine Rural Problems in Perspective (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1979), 133-158 passim.

¹⁴⁵ Following an implication of historian Zeus Salazar, it is argued that "becoming and being *babaylan* is an inherent quality of the Filipino woman." Cruz, "The Filipina at the Time of the Fil-American Revolution," 1991, 52.

¹⁴⁶ Claudio, "The Psychology of the Filipino Woman," 1990-1991, 8.

¹⁴⁷ See Rosario del Rosario, "A Propitious Time for Women's Studies," CSWCD Bulletin, no. 6 (Special Issue: "The Women and Development Program," January-December 1990): 1. The institutionalization of women's studies has been limited to Metro Manila, notably, at the Institute of Women's Studies of St. Scholastica's College in Manila, the College of Social Work and Community Development of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, and Ateneo de Manila University. Prominent among the research and publication programs are those at the Women's Research and Resource Center; significantly, an ISIS International office opened in the Philippines in 1990.

¹⁴⁸ See "The Group of 10 -- Herstory, Networks and Formations," in Women, Development and Aid: Working Principles of the Group of 10 ([n.p.]: Diwata Foundation, [1991]), 11-21.

Views on the Filipino women's work initially addressed sexist discrimination couched within the framework of modernization. Some assessments emphasize positive aspects for women in Philippine society and call attention to

their high educational status, the egalitarian patterns of decision-making in the family, the formal acceptance of the equality of women in our basic laws and conventions, and the absence of the most blatant forms of discrimination against women that may exist in some countries and cultures.¹⁴⁹

There is a relatively high number of women in middle-level government and business positions, a fact hardly noticed by Filipinos though surprising to others.¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, amidst rising numbers of poor peoples in urban and rural areas, high educational attainment is not reflected in employment status. Despite the veneer of equality, more than just formal and informal discrimination exists in many aspects of the Filipinas' lives.

Other synchronic differences, including linguistic expressions, are increasingly noted. There is greater awareness of the relatively stronger hold of religious teachings among propertied classes who also tend to hold the view that heavy labor is fit only for men.¹⁵¹ Other disparities are directly traced to the colonial experience.

The woman of Central or Eastern Visayas, farther removed from the center of Spanish colonization and forced by an impoverished economy to leave her home and seek her living elsewhere, is generally more adventurous than the woman of Central and Southern Luzon or Western Visayas, more prosperous regions where agriculture follows tenancy or capitalist arrangements.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Patricia B. Licuanan, "Situation Analysis of Women in the Philippines," in Gender Analysis and Planning: The 1990 IPC-CIDA Workshops, ed. Jeanne Frances I. Illo (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1991), 15-28.

¹⁵⁰ Eleanor R. Dionisio, More Alike Than Different: Women, Men and Gender As Social Construction ([Manila]: National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 1993), 5.

¹⁵¹ Dionisio, More Alike Than Different, 1993, 5.

¹⁵² Dionisio, More Alike Than Different, 1993, 5.

Moreover, research that accompanied women's integration into mainstream development programs also highlight the lack of improvement of social and institutional supports for working women. Several impact studies indict the effects of global capitalism on women workers of the Third World which are aggravated by women's double burden rooted in traditional gender roles. Hence, reservations on the government's programs are evident in alternative reports for setting up the agenda and conferences attendant to the end of the UN women's decade.¹⁵³ Pointedly, the situation in the Philippines is appraised thus:

There is no denying that the blueprint for modernization that set in motion the process whereby the Philippines would join the "newly industrializing countries" also brought women into the sphere of public production or, to use a euphemism, "integrated women in development." The irony ... is that this integration has worked in contradictory ways, simultaneously pulling them into the realm of unremunerated labor and pushing them off into the seedy margins of society, displacing them and drastically deforming their lives. It is apparent that the international division of labor has effectively multiplied the points of antagonism in the class and gender struggles, in this case assigning to Filipino women the role of highly expandable gendered and race-typed worker in the export and sex industries as well as in agribusiness.¹⁵⁴

Undoubtedly, western styles of feminism that influenced the early women's movement emerge as struggles against sexist oppression, camouflaging internal class contradictions in Third World contexts.¹⁵⁵ New frameworks for global feminisms, which invest feminist theory and practice with new meaning and respect, emphasize the commonly perceived heterogeneity among women and women's movements as vital and politically

¹⁵³ Prominent among these works are those undertaken as aids for immediate action concerns (education, mobilization, political demands) coordinated by PILIPINA presented in Nairobi at the NGO alternative international women's conference in 1985. del Rosario, "Filipino Working Women," 1989, 62-64-68. See Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, Women of the Soil: An Alternative Philippine Report on Rural Women (Manila: Philippine Women's Research Collective, 1985).

¹⁵⁴ Aguilar, "Women in the Political Economy," 1988, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Amaryllis Tiglaio-Torres, "Directions for Third-World Feminism in the Philippine Locale," Sarilakas-Grassroots Development 4 nos. 3-4 ([1989]): 14.

salient forms of experiential diversity.¹⁵⁶ Hence, much of the earlier skepticism on the relevance of feminism have become outdated.¹⁵⁷

Government support and initiatives for women have expanded to cover issues of women's welfare and economic productivity as well as redistributive concerns of equity and empowerment.¹⁵⁸ The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and the Philippine Development Plan for Women complied with provisions of the Forward Looking Strategies of the 1985 Nairobi conference.¹⁵⁹ The Family Code of 1990 is significant towards the fulfillment of the fundamental equality of women with men embodied in the 1987 Constitution.¹⁶⁰ In 1992, the government census office produced a specific volume on women;¹⁶¹ by 1994, the University Center for Women's Studies at the state university was inaugurated.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁶ See Delia D. Aguilar, "Third World Revolution and First World Feminism: Toward a Dialogue," chap. in The Feminist Challenge, 1988, 17-24.

¹⁵⁷ Delia D. Aguilar, "The Feminist Challenge," chap. in The Feminist Challenge, 1988, 59-60.

¹⁵⁸ See NCRFW Term Report 1986-1992 (Manila: National Commission for the Role of Filipino Women, [1993]), and Rachel Polestico, "A Gender-based Framework for Project Planning and Design," Philidhra Notes no. 2 (March-April 1991): 3-7.

¹⁵⁹ The NCRFW was instituted in 1985 and the PDPW was launched in 1989. NCRFW Term Report 1986-1992, 1993; and Philippine Development Plan for Women 1989-1992 (Manila: National Commission for the Role of Filipino Women, 1989).

¹⁶⁰ This resulted from Executive Order No. 209 as amended by Executive Order No. 227. See Jose N. Nollado, ed., The Family Code of the Philippines (Metro Manila: National Bookstore, Inc., 1988). Among other things, the code enlarges the grounds by which a woman can file for legal separation from her spouse, repeals restrictions on the wife's receiving gifts and inhibiting the widow to remarry within 300 days from the death of her husband, accords the same rights to women as men regarding the transfer or receipt of property by inheritance. Further, the code provides joint administration of the absolute community property and conjugal partnership of gains, joint parental authority of father and mother, joint management of the affairs of the household, the right of the wife to exercise her profession or engage in business without the consent of the husband, and the joint right of the spouses to fix the family's domicile. But in at least two instances, the husband's decision is still to prevail, i.e., where there is disagreement concerning the rearing of a child, and where there is disagreement in the administration and enjoyment of community property of the spouses.

¹⁶¹ Statistics on the Filipino Woman (Manila: National Statistics Office and National Commission for the Role of Filipino Women, 1992).

¹⁶² This was completed with grants from countryside development funds of eight senators. The building houses research and curriculum as well as counselling activities of the center founded in 1988. "UCWS Forges Ahead," Panapaw 5 no. 1 (January-March 1994): 7.

As in much of the Third World, feminists in the Philippines are characterized as activists, mobilizers and organizers. Prior organizing work among different sectors and classes provides a venue to build a multi-class/sectoral women's mass movement which is able to give full play to initiatives and contributions of various women while recognizing the distinctness of women's situation.¹⁶³ Nonetheless, it is admitted that the newness of the movement leaves "insufficient tradition to grasp fully the threads of women's oppression that are interwoven into the fabric of Philippine oppression."¹⁶⁴ For this reason, the nation-wide alliance of GABRIELA is becoming an educational, informational, propaganda, and mobilization center and acts as the political center of the movement.¹⁶⁵ Among striking examples of self-effort are found among women's groups within male-dominated trade unions.¹⁶⁶ Further, the alternative day-care movement questions the basic assumption that child care is a woman's or a family's concern. The groups are consolidating into an alliance which can demand support from the state and challenge the devaluation of child care by the economic system.¹⁶⁷

Accompanying efforts to theorize, generally conceived in terms of the collective, strive to link theory, lived experiences, and political practice.

¹⁶³ Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 62-63.

¹⁶⁴ Intensive social investigation of women's condition within specific groups and activities should be a major agenda for women's organizations. Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 63.

¹⁶⁵ It is a powerful vehicle for unifying women's perspectives and actions, delineating women's goals as including a sound, self-reliant and productive economy free from neo-colonial influence, a democratic and participatory government, sovereignty and freedom from foreign intervention, and the recognition of women's rights and potentials in all spheres of life. Torres, "Third World Feminism," 1990, 31. See also Gomez, "Women's Organizations as Offshoots," 1991, 63. The GABRIELA acronym stands for General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action, and signifies the historical Gabriela Silang.

¹⁶⁶ Women in trade unions and peasant groups have formed along class lines: Amihan, Katipunan ng Bagong Pilipina, Kilusan ng Manggagawang Kababaihan, and the Rural Women's Program. Amaryllis T. Torres, "Third World Feminism," CSWCD Bulletin no. 6 (Special Issue: "The Women and Development Program," January-December 1990), 31.

¹⁶⁷ Eleonor R. Dionisio, "Beyond Women in Development," in Gender Analysis & Planning, ed. Illo, 1991, 57.

Theorizing requires a continuous, conscientious process of collective thinking where the experiences of women are validated not as each one's individual phenomenon, but as a social one. Therefore, an important ingredient for women's theorizing is participation in the women's movement where dialogue and systematic reflection in themselves are considered indispensable goals.... Recognition of women's problems has put to fore the discriminating, oppressive and exploitative practices that affect women's lives. They also contributed to an understanding of the mechanisms by which some practices continue to be reproduced. The research projects of activists and social scientists are slowly substantiating the general claims of feminists.¹⁶⁸

Recent studies on working women focus on topics which can raise feminist consciousness and hasten organizational work.¹⁶⁹ Women's organizations are stirred by consequences of the foreign debt and effects of structural adjustment especially on impoverished and marginalized Filipino women.¹⁷⁰ Those with a grassroots orientation and a feminist framework regard nation, class, and gender as integral dimensions of women's oppression. They assess women's status on three interactive levels: relative to their status with men, relative to other groups of women, and relative to women in other societies.¹⁷¹ These perspectives reveal insights deriving from national and class struggles. However, they stress that

while both men and women suffer similar experiences brought about by racial and class oppressions, ... there is a differential impact of political repression and economic contradictions on men and women. Oftentimes, the impact of militarization, poverty, inflation and

¹⁶⁸ Carolyn Medel-Añonuevo, "Possibilities of Theorizing in the Women's Movement: The Philippine Experience," Review of Women's Studies 1 no. 2 (1990-1991): 53.

¹⁶⁹ Future action is projected in three directions: dissemination of already collected information; continuity of research in areas where there are gaps (e.g., studies of tribal working women); and action to alleviate the plight of woman workers (e.g., the creation of women's centers for education, skills training, daycare, information, counselling, etc.). Networking appears to be a trend in realizing all these, and participatory methods are high on the agenda on how to better conduct future researches. del Rosario, "Filipino Working Women," 1989, 68-69.

¹⁷⁰ See Aida Fulleros Santos and Lynn F. Lee, The Debt Crisis: A Treadmill of Poverty for Filipino Women (Quezon City: Katipunan ng Kababaihan para sa Kalayaan, 1989); Leonor M. Briones, "Debt, and Poverty, Maldevelopment and Misallocation of Resources," and Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, "Women, Debt and Environment: A View from the South," Review of Women Studies 2 no. 2 (1991-1992): 19-26; 27-40.

¹⁷¹ See Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 15-24.

unemployment, and malnutrition are harsher on women because of their overall subordination to men in society, poorer men included, as a result of their gender identity.¹⁷²

The new international division of labor relies mainly on the devalued, docile, and dexterous female labor in homes and factories.¹⁷³ Since the mid-1970s, the export of 'brain and brawn' of humanpower has also been indispensable to national development plans.¹⁷⁴ Unlike the situation in the 1920s, wives, mothers and daughters are risking separation from their families.¹⁷⁵ The more than nine million women in the labor force in 1992 represent 52 percent of the total female population of working age. More than half are unpaid family workers, and a third are own-account workers.¹⁷⁶ The latter usually engage in petty trade at home or on the streets, activities which are insecure, unstable and subject to the vagaries of supply and demand in local and larger markets. Hence, they are more invisible, unprotected, and unorganized.¹⁷⁷ These circumstances also require longer hours of work

¹⁷² Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 19-20.

¹⁷³ See Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, "Philippine Domestic Outwork: Subcontracting for Export-oriented Industries," in Sociology of 'Developing Societies': Southeast Asia, ed. John G. Taylor and Andrew Turton (London: Macmillan Education, 1988), 158-164.

¹⁷⁴ Filipinas as domestic helpers, chambermaids, entertainers, and nurses throughout the world. See Mary Ruby Palma-Beltran and Aurora Javate de Dios, eds., Filipino Women Overseas Contract Workers . . . At What Cost? (Manila: Goodwill Trading Co., Inc., 1992); and Wilhelmina S. Orozco, Economic Refugees: Voyages of the Commoditized: An Alternative Philippine Report on Migrant Women Workers ([Manila]: Philippine Women's Research Collective, 1985).

¹⁷⁵ Domestic helpers in Hongkong, Singapore and the Middle East are the most exposed to sexual abuse by employers and other forms of domestic violence. Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 21.

¹⁷⁶ Ibon Facts and Figures 16 no. 15 (15 August 1993) 3. Though increasing, the labor force participation rate of women from 1975 to 1990 was generally lower than men: 40.4 percent in 1975, 42 percent in 1980, and 47.3 percent in 1985. The total work force has grown from 14.2 million in 1976 to about 23.4 million in 1991; the proportion of women employed for the past five years has remained at 36 percent. In manufacturing, the number of working women is catching up with men. In 1977, they made up 45.2 percent, and 46.4 in 1991. Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 80 and 86-87.

¹⁷⁷ Female homeworkers, mostly married women, are the worst off among these informal workers. Most are not aware of their rights as workers and are not organized into groups which can defend and advance their interests. Since homework is frequently invisible, irregular, and unreported, no reliable macro-statistics are available. Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, "Women and Work: Focus on Homework in the Philippines," Review of Women's Studies 1 no. 1 (1990): 43-46.

without social security benefits, protection from labor laws, nor much male support at home.¹⁷⁸ As well, it is emphasized that

the miserable condition and disadvantaged position of our women in the subcontracting chain, the plantation economies, and export processing zones are indeed deplorable. What is more deplorable perhaps is the fact that a macro-level, these industries, despite the heavy utilization of our human resources, do not contribute much to the development of our economy along nationalist lines and self-reliant efforts.¹⁷⁹

Paradoxes are also observed to inhabit the power structure or "the psychological space of the Filipino family." They derive from the fact that the domestic realm is neither as isolated nor as privatized as the white, middle-class family which premises much of feminist thinking. Domestic practice "extorts female acquiescence while simultaneously affording the protection of a sanctuary," thereby, producing the Filipina as a site of contradiction.¹⁸⁰ Hence, some views emphasize that the pursuit of the collective consciousness of oppression requires us Filipino women to overcome a legacy of patriarchal myths that makes us think of ourselves as occupying a superior rather than a subordinate status. We need to understand what is behind the adage that "woman is the light of the home" as well what is behind the comic discourse of the hen-pecked husband.¹⁸¹ Stereotypes and role models of women need to be disclosed as "molded in a fashion that heralds the primacy of their femininity."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ Domestic helpers and prostitutes are considered part of the informal sector category. They receive relatively lower remuneration than those working in the formal sector. Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 20, and Ofreneo, "Women & Work," 1990, 43.

¹⁷⁹ Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 20-21.

¹⁸⁰ Delia D. Aguilar, Filipino Housewives Speak (Manila: Delia D. Aguilar and the Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1991), 174. This volume is an anthology of women's stories from life story interviews with ordinary women from a cross-section of the population of Metro Manila conducted in 1984.

¹⁸¹ See Cynthia Nolasco, "The Women Problem: Gender, Class and State Oppression," in Essays on Women, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 80, and Antonio P. Contreras, "Political Ideologies of Western Feminism in the Context of the Women's Movement in the Philippines," Review of Women's Studies 2 no. 2 (1991-1992): 91.

¹⁸² Maureen C. Pagaduan, Power, Gender and Resistance (Quezon City: Research and Extension for Development Office, College of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, 1992), 21-22. In this work, notions of power in relation to class, state, and gender

Whether put on a pedestal or sexually exploited, Filipino women as a whole are treated as sex objects. That a woman is "only good for the home" accents the view that she is deemed biologically better suited for childcare and housekeeping. Her rightful place is at home where she performs "lighter tasks" and is better protected from harm and danger from men.¹⁸³ Filipino society condemns promiscuity in women but implicitly encourages this in men. Hence, the Filipina is in a double bind: she is expected to be desirable yet only to one man to whom she is both sexual and reproductive property.¹⁸⁴ Further, many Filipinas tend to pass on these internalized oppressions through a process captured in "bringing up Pepe and bringing down Pilar."¹⁸⁵ Ultimately, the collective consciousness is conceived to reflect that although the Filipino woman has statuses linked with her sex, class, and nation, the oppression resulting from her living out her roles are occasioned not by separate realities but only one.¹⁸⁶ This view embraces ostensibly disjointed images and avoids seeing women's condition as static and impervious to historical changes with "the articulation between the ideological domain of culture and the infrastructure that it maintains."¹⁸⁷

The wide and organized degradation of the Filipina is orchestrated by the government's reckless promotion of the tourism industry and workers abroad for whom local and national conditions could not provide meaningful employment.¹⁸⁸ So is the widespread prostitution, hitherto especially around the American bases and its subtler forms in Filipinas working for 'sex tours,'

are examined as a critique of gender-blind community organizing that could lead communities astray from social transformation.

¹⁸³ Carolyn Israel-Sobritchea, "The Ideology of Female Domesticity: Its Impact on the Status of Filipino Women," *Review of Women's Studies* 1 no. 1 (1990): 30.

¹⁸⁴ "Wifehood" is the highest feminine achievement; there is contempt for women who service many men and pity for those who service none at all. Dionisio, *More Alike Than Different*, 1993, 10.

¹⁸⁵ Pecson-Fernandez, "Rizal on Women and Children," 1990-1991, 11-15.

¹⁸⁶ Nolasco, "The Women Problem," 1991, 81.

¹⁸⁷ Sobritchea, "The Ideology of Female Domesticity," 1990, 41.

¹⁸⁸ See Sr. Mary John Mananzan, "Sexual Exploitation of Women in a Third World Setting," in *Essays on Women*, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 104-112.

as 'entertainers' and 'cultural dancers' in Japan and elsewhere, or as 'mail-order' brides to foreign nationals.¹⁸⁹ Various positions are signified in suggestions for a feminist legislative agenda.

Women's issues in the Philippines cannot be separated from the broader socio-economic and political issues that affect both the male and female sectors of society. In fact, it can be argued that women's concerns like the mail order brides, hospitality girls, overseas migrant workers and child prostitution and trafficking are very much tied up with the sorry state of the economy indicated by the soaring unemployment, huge national debt and rising cost of living as well as the poor and inefficient delivery of social services. This is what makes Third World feminism different from First World feminism because in countries like the Philippines a feminist is not only a gender activist but also a social reformist. She is in a double bind: as a citizen of a poor, under-developed, heavily indebted, graft-ridden country and as a subject of a patriarchal, male-dominated culture.¹⁹⁰

At home and abroad, the individual and collective lives and statuses of Filipinas are vividly confronted by contradictory realities of privilege and deprivation. Adverse conditions are manifest in malnutrition, a high infant mortality rate, unsafe water, lack of health services, low wages and underemployment, sexual violence and harassment, often in unstable peace and order situations. The reality of their double burdens are heightened when militarist tendencies aim to establish a stable political climate for economic investment and growth.¹⁹¹ Exploitation is most vivid in the control and abuse of women's (and children's) sexuality and their work.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Aguilar, "Women in the Political Economy," 1988, 5-11, and Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 21. See also Aurora Javate de Dios, "The Case of the Japayuki-San and the Hanayome-San," in Women's Springbook, ed. Evasco et al., 1990, 35-42, and Cynthia Enloe, Bananas Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (London: Pandora, 1989).

¹⁹⁰ Socorro L. Reyes, "Legislation on Women's Issues in the Philippines: Status, Problems and Prospects," Philippine Political Science Journal (June and December 1989): 86-87.

¹⁹¹ See Carolyn Israel-Sobritchea, "Sexism and Militarization in Philippine Society," Lila: Asia Pacific Women's Studies Journal 1 no. 1 (1992): 21.

¹⁹² See Susan Fernandez-Magno, "Child Prostitution: Image of a Decadent Society," 129-143, and Rowena Unas, "Violence Against Women in the Philippines," Lila: Asia Pacific Women's Studies Journal 1 no. 1 (1992): 5-11.

The theme of women's sexuality has been stressed to draw attention on women's health beyond reproductive health. Some women's groups argue that the salient issue is women's reproductive rights.¹⁹³ But from the position of the state and other health care providers, the issue of women's health simply pertains to reproductive functions and is explicitly addressed in welfarist nutrition and maternal and child care programs for "vulnerable" groups.

Sexuality affirms the fullness of a woman's humanity, at the same time it characterizes the separateness of women from men, our uniqueness, our special gifts and calling. Perhaps this is why the personhood and sexuality of women has always been a target of most forms of violence against us, ranging from genital mutilation, to sexual harassment, to spouse battering, incest, rape, pornography and mental and emotional torture.¹⁹⁴

Documentation and analyses of real-life women's situations and evaluations of personal and group experiences are increasingly available in English/Filipino.¹⁹⁵ Some works document the scope of women's oppressions and self-realizations through short stories, or popular media (comics, radio and television programs) that aim to reach a wide variety of audiences.¹⁹⁶ Yet many aspects of daily life and popular culture where women prevail are still considered 'grey' literature and deemed unacceptable in traditional scholarship.

¹⁹³ Priscilla S. Manalang, "Women on Body Politics," *Pananaw* 2 no. 2 (January 1991): 6.

¹⁹⁴ An excerpt from the statement of the Second National Conference on Women and Health, Tagbilaran, Bohol (November 1993), cited in the "At Large" column of Rina Jimenez-David, "Sexuality on the Cutting Edge," *Philippines Daily Inquirer*, December 2, 1993, 5.

¹⁹⁵ See Fe Capellan Arriola, *Si Maria, Nena, Gabriela Atbp.: Kuwentong Kasaysayan ng Kababaihan* (Manila: Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1989); Pennie S. Azarcon, ed., *Kamalayan: Feminist Writings in the Philippines* (Manila: Pilipina, 1987); Liberato Bautista and Elizabeth Rifareal, eds., *And She Said No!* (Quezon City: National Council of Churches in the Philippines, 1990); and *Peasant Women Study for Critical Consciousness and Self-Organization* (Davao City: Women's Studies and Resource Center, n.d.).

¹⁹⁶ Apart from Aguilar, *Filipino Housewives Speak*, 1991, a Filipino-English volume of life stories is produced by Harnessing Self-Reliant Initiatives and Knowledge Inc. They draw on themes of marginalization, subordination, double burden, gender stereotyping, violence against women, and women's loss of autonomy. Marie Christine Bantug et al., *Hugot sa Sinapunan: Stories from the Womb* (Manila: Harnessing Self-Reliant Initiatives and Knowledge Inc., 1992).

As a whole, the feminisms manifested in the Philippines are a "mixed bag of social, economic, and political women-related initiatives at the ideological and practical levels."¹⁹⁷ There are wide disparities in levels of awareness, advocacy, and activism among women, in feminist politics, theory-building, and in networking. But Filipino women are increasingly recognized as potent agents able to assert and fight for their rights and aspirations.¹⁹⁸ The emphasis on specifying and acting on the sources of women's burdens and responses underpins this study of gender relations in rural households.

1.3.3. *Focus on Rural Women*

Much of the literature on rural Philippines deals with various aspects of rice farming and agrarian systems, commercially-oriented production of export commodities, rising urban and overseas migration, assessments of development programs/projects, and various implications of the peace and order situation.¹⁹⁹ The literature on rural women follows this pattern.²⁰⁰ Nevertheless, new levels of gender awareness are influencing research orientations and analyses, reinforcing observations of the pressures as well as opportunities for women in Philippine peasant communities. Apart from the institutional and organizational efforts for teaching, research, and support services for women based in metropolitan Manila, NGOs are constructing gender-informed development initiatives throughout the countryside.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷ Belinda A. Aquino, "Philippine Feminism in Historical Perspective," in Women and Politics Worldwide, ed. Barbara J. Nelson and Najma Chowdhury (New Haven: Yale University, 1994), 604.

¹⁹⁸ IBON Facts and Figures 16 no. 15 (15 August 1993): 1.

¹⁹⁹ See Richard Ulack, "Ties to Origin, Remittances, and Mobility: Evidence from Rural and Urban Areas in the Philippines," Journal of Developing Areas 20 no. 3 (April 1990): 339-355.

²⁰⁰ See Maria Floro, "Women, Work and Agricultural Commercialisation in the Philippines," in Women's Work in the World Economy, ed. Folbre, et al., 1992, 3-40.

²⁰¹ Many support, advocacy, and development-oriented entities are indicated in citations herein. Some have established in provinces beyond Metro Manila, mostly supported or affiliated with national women's organizations. See Women, Development & Aid, [1991]; PHILDHRRRA National Secretariat, Women NGO Managers: Issues and Dilemmas (Metro Manila: Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas, [1987]); and OXFAM-Gender and Development Unit, Gender Considerations in Economic Enterprises AGRA East Meeting, 20-23 November 1990, Philippines.

Selected issues on rural women are raised here, including "snapshots" of their demographic and socio-economic characteristics.²⁰²

As of 1990, more than half (51.49 percent) of the total Philippine population reside in rural areas.²⁰³ This figure represents significant decreases since the proportion to the total of the rural population in 1980 stood at 62.56 percent. For the same year, Filipino women constituted nearly half (49.61 percent) of the total Philippine population, a proportion slightly lower than what they represented in 1980 (49.83 percent). During the early 1970s, the total rural population accounted for only 34.2 percent of the Philippine total, and there were twice as many women in rural (63.66 percent) than in urban areas (36.34 percent).²⁰⁴ With migrations, there are presently more females than males in urban areas. Males outnumber females in rural areas; but women represent a significant majority throughout the predominantly rural areas of the country.

Nationwide, the proportion of "economically inactive" women decreased from 59.6 percent in 1975 to 52.5 percent in 1990.²⁰⁵ Throughout the 1983-1988 period, women outnumbered men migrants, except in the 35-44 years category, and most significantly in the 15-24 years category.²⁰⁶ The men were predominantly former agricultural workers. The women were mostly single and with high school education, many to pursue higher

²⁰² Gender-disaggregated data in fisheries are still unavailable, often lumped in vague categories with rural-based workers.

²⁰³ Metropolitan Manila accounts for 27 percent of the total urban population. *Philippine Yearbook*, 1992, 135-136. See comparative statistics in table 1 on page 62 and table 2 on page 63.

²⁰⁴ Isabel R. Aleta, et al., "Women in the Rural Areas," in *The Filipino Woman in Focus*, ed. Torres, 1989, 110 and 113. This source is an excerpt from Isabel Rojas Aleta, et al., *A Profile of Filipino Women: Their Status and Role* (Manila: Philippine Business for Social Progress, 1977).

²⁰⁵ *Statistics on the Filipino Woman*, 1992, 76. See sex ratios in table 1 on page 62 and comparative sex distribution figures in table 3 on page 64.

²⁰⁶ The total number of rural women between ages 15-24 that moved to urban centers was almost double that of men: 406,000 compared with 218,000. *Statistics on the Filipino Woman*, 1992, 23.

education; but an even larger group was previously engaged in "non-gainful occupations," attracted by perceived work opportunities and better living conditions.²⁰⁷ As in the rest of Southeast Asia, more young women are leaving their rural base for urban areas (or even abroad) in jobs that usually entail extensions of women's domestic responsibilities.²⁰⁸

The literacy of rural females rose significantly from 71 percent in 1970 to 90 percent in 1990, representing two-percentage points increase higher than that of the males.²⁰⁹ Throughout the Philippines from 1970 to 1990, school attendance doubled for both males and females from ages seven to 19 years. In 1990, there were more males among school children aged eight to 12 years and more females among those aged 13 to 18; but there were more males within the 19 year-old category.²¹⁰ The study of Isabel R. Aleta *et al.* specifies that most rural women (61 percent) obtain at least an elementary schooling, and only seven and four percent go on to high school and college, respectively. Further, vocational/informal training reached only 1.1 percent of married rural women. Comparing their median years of schooling with urban women (6.9 years), rural women (4.6 years) have less years in school. More of them tend to drop out perhaps due to social and economic pressures which are usually greater on the females than the males of that age level.²¹¹

Though decreasing, the numbers of women in agriculture represent the bulk of the working female population. In the same study, over half (54 percent) of the rural women are employed in agriculture, 59 percent of which are farm workers in crop production, mainly rice and corn. Except for domestic services, the agricultural sector generates the lowest incomes

²⁰⁷ Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 24-25.

²⁰⁸ Noeleen Heyzer, "Women, Migration, & Income Generation," chap. in Working Women in Southeast Asia: Development, Subordination and Emancipation (Philadelphia: Open University, 1985), 36-40 *passim*.

²⁰⁹ Urban rates have consistently been higher but the gap has narrowed through this time. Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 44.

²¹⁰ Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 45.

²¹¹ Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 110-115 *passim*.

compared with other industry groups.²¹² In spite of women's significant involvement in farming, Aleta *et al.* show that most rural development or agricultural programs relegate women to concerns of home economics and family planning.²¹³ Within the 1977-1991 period, women made up about one-fourth of the agricultural work force, ranging from proportions of 30.9 percent to 49 percent. This decline is borne out by the proliferation of women in the informal sector, engaged in buy-and-sell or as street vendors.²¹⁴ Increased land concentration and depressed prices for agricultural products contribute to displace more females than males, especially among landless farm workers. This trend is boosted by developments directly accompanying the Green Revolution: the overall reduction of demand for hired labour, and for female labour in particular, and the creation of grain catching as a marginal task due to the introduction of the mini-thresher.²¹⁵

Between 1977-1991, national trends show that wholesale and retail trade, community and social services were areas where women predominated.²¹⁶ Aleta *et al.* ascertain that only 15 percent of rural women in the labor force are employed as wage or salary workers. Further, unlike women in urban areas, more of the employed women here are married; and, regardless of marital status, most do seasonal farm work outside of being

²¹² Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 119.

²¹³ Findings suggest that the segregated approach may work against, for example, the very purposes of the family planning program. Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 117.

²¹⁴ It was only in 1985 that their proportion stood at 50 percent. Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 89.

²¹⁵ Cynthia Banzon-Bautista and Nanette G. Dungo, "The Differential Impact of Farm Technology on Men and Women: A Case Study of Two Philippine Villages," in Women Farmers and Rural Change in Asia: Towards Equal Access and Participation, ed. Noeleen Heyzer (Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Centre, 1987), 308.

²¹⁶ Statistics on the Filipino Woman, 1992, 87.

unpaid family workers.²¹⁷ Regardless, husbands and wives have an almost equal significance as principal sources of household incomes.²¹⁸

The national demographic survey of 1973 shows that urban dwellers tend to marry about three years later than their rural counterparts.²¹⁹ As a whole, between 1948 and 1990, both women and men tend to marry later. In 1990, women married at 23.8 years and men at 26.3 years.²²⁰ Church rites solemnize the large majority of marriages with children considered as the seal of marital bonds.²²¹ From 1980 to 1989, national figures for legally contracted marriages have decreased, marked by the rising numbers of illegitimate children and partly attributable to the rising practice of consensual living arrangements.²²² These common-law couples are considered married; however, they are imprecisely defined and often undercounted. Further, a review of ideal conceptions of the husband-wife relationship reveals that the husband is not expected to be religious like his wife.²²³ It is also remarked that "in general, church attendance does not seem to be 'religiously' paid

²¹⁷ These informal activities, with less rigid working hours, allow married women to take part-time jobs or any occupation that they can combine with household routine. Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 119.

²¹⁸ The principal source of income is the husband in 45.3 percent of rural households; the wife contributes for 43.8 percent of the homes. The latter's contribution of annual cash income amounted to ₱ 1,000 in 1972; non-cash income ranged from ₱ 500 to ₱ 4,000. Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 112.

²¹⁹ Cited in Judy C. Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman and the Family," in *The Filipino Woman in Focus*, ed. Torres, 1989, 37. The median age for brides was 21.6 years in 1980 and 23 in 1990. *Statistics on the Filipino Woman*, 1992, 22.

²²⁰ Throughout this period, the singular mean age at marriage has increased 1.7 years for women and 1.4 for men. *Statistics on The Filipino Woman*, 1992, 20.

²²¹ Only about 16 percent are civil marriages. The first child usually arrives between 9-24 months after the wedding. Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 37.

²²² The marriage rate in 1980 was 7.3 marriages per 1000; in 1990, the rate was 6.6. Figures for illegitimate births have more than doubled from 1970 to 1983. Estimates for 1992 indicate a proportion of nine percent of total livebirths. *Statistics on The Filipino Woman*, 1992, 19-21. I adopt the term 'consensual' for the practice of cohabitation or living-in from *The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics* (New York: United Nations, 1991), 14-15.

²²³ Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 40.

attention to by Filipino wives and rural wives are even less 'religious' than their city counterparts."²²⁴

There are many gendered aspects of social life, deriving from less obvious sources which nonetheless govern social interactions. Particularly in many rural areas, social bonds of networks of community relations include kinship principles of consanguinity and affinity, compadrazgo (ritual co-parenthood) as well as the barkada (peer groups). These continue to regulate food-exchange, reciprocal labor, marriage rules as well as social and linguistic etiquette.²²⁵ Characteristic relations among these groups may be assessed among behavioral categories for modes of interactions among Filipinos. Pakikisama, as the fifth of eight grades, specifically refers to the level of adjusting in relations with "Outsiders."²²⁶ Significantly, the bonds of pakikisama (generally understood as 'oneness') refers to participation or joining in social activities out of friendship, for future benefit or because of pressing needs. When used by men to impose a sexual relation, they are seen as the expectation of favors in exchange; on the other hand, women usually understand this as cooperation for the good of others.²²⁷

Most importantly, accounts of the Filipino family stress that women have a single life world centered on the family and the home. Aleta *et al.* indicate that almost three-fourths of rural women surveyed regard their social role as that of housekeepers; they spend at least 29 days a month and at least

²²⁴ Castillo, Beyond Manila, 1979, 151.

²²⁵ Seniority status is sometimes conferred on the basis of generational affiliation rather than biological age. F. Landa Jocano, The Hiligaynon: An Ethnography of Family and Community Life in Western Bisayas Region (Quezon City: Asian Center, University of the Philippines, 1983), 120-138.

²²⁶ These levels, developed in the indigenous psychology of Sikolohiyang Pilipino in 1976, are group into broad categories that relate to the Ibang-tao (Outsider) and among people considered Hindi ibang-tao (One of Us). The levels range from the relatively uninvolved pakikitungo to the total sense of identification in pakikiisa. Enriquez, From Colonial to Liberation Psychology, 1992, 39-41.

²²⁷ Claudio, "The Psychology of the Filipino Woman," 1990-1991, 6.

eight hours a day on housekeeping.²²⁸ Another study cites that the rural women's daily housework consumes 11.1 hours compared to urban women's 8.8 hours. Their major concerns encompass household management and daily needs of the family as well as the organization of the family's economic, spiritual, and physical (health) life.²²⁹ The women's services are not considered an economic activity but "a labor of love which needs no quantification or reward."²³⁰ Men tend to perceive their role to be economic in nature; they do not feel that they have a home-management role even when several do accomplish household chores, especially the heavier tasks.²³¹ Aptly put, women's domestic service is not just "the expenditure of invisible labor"; "it also exacts, besides this unremitting labor of love, a degree of self-abnegation that only those prepared, by training, for this role can deliver."²³²

A more recent village study at the province of Laguna shows that most rural women identify themselves as mothers whose reality is focused on her children's welfare; less women idealize in terms of their roles as housekeeper and wife. Most female respondents idealize a woman who takes good care of her children's welfare and needs, who is loving, kind and understanding towards them, and who is a good disciplinarian, i.e., someone who plays her mothering role well.²³³ Wife-beating is even deemed acceptable for maintaining the viability of the family unit. Though only under 'extremely

²²⁸ A fifth of the rural women studied stated involvements in part-time selling, farming or other income-generating activities. Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 114.

²²⁹ Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 38.

²³⁰ Specific household tasks include washing and ironing, cooking, housecleaning, bathing and feeding children, and sewing. They also hold the family purse strings, determine daily expenditures for basic items, do the marketing, and keep whatever savings have been accumulated. Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 38.

²³¹ The availability and the ability to do the work rather than gender determines the performance of these tasks. Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 38-39.

²³² Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, 42.

²³³ Carolyn Israel-Sobritchea, "Gender Ideology and the Status of Women in Philippine Rural Community," in *Essays on Women*, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 102. Though both highlight the housekeeping role, different emphases in findings from those of Aleta, *et al.* (see page 56 above) and Illo and Polo (see page 172 below) apparently come from the particular orientation of each of these researches.

necessary' situations such as infidelity and willful disobedience, both sexes had a favorable attitude towards physical violence in marriage. Significantly, more female than male respondents favored the practice.²³⁴

Women seldom appear as household heads or are recognized as the sole creative resource in the family. In the implementation of development projects, a pro-male bias appears to be imposed by outside agencies and urban-educated field workers who have internalized male-oriented assumptions underlying household headship that are perpetuated in law and other formal institutions.²³⁵ However, there has been a decreasing trend for female-headed households in the Philippines: in 1985, there were about 9.8 million households of which 14 percent were headed by females; the proportion dropped to 13.7 percent in 1988 and to 11.3 percent in 1990.²³⁶

Significantly, observations about decision-making in rural households, pertinent to refining the identification of the household head, tend to emphasize that rural women are initiators, direct participants, and decision-makers on certain household and community activities. There are no vernacular equivalents for 'household head' to replace the notion of a singular male head implicit in the phrase *padre de familia*.²³⁷ Despite some notions of shared authority of the husband-father and his wife in rural homes, the same studies admit that the woman's authority could be overturned by the man at will or in cases of conflict.²³⁸ They assert the existence of egalitarian processes

²³⁴ Sobritchea, "Gender Ideology & the Status of Women," 1991, 102.

²³⁵ See Jeanne Frances Illo, "Who Heads the Household? Women in Households in the Philippines," in *The Filipino Woman in Focus*, ed. Torres, 1989, 245-266.

²³⁶ Over a majority (62 percent) of the female heads in 1985 were widowed, 23 percent married, nine percent were never married, and six percent were either separated or divorced. Most of the female heads were aged 60 years and belonged to households of single families of four or less members found in urban areas. Households are classified as single family, extended family, and non-related members. *Statistics on the Filipino Woman*, 1992, 35-39.

²³⁷ Hence the need to manifest the reality of shared authority within the home and shared responsibilities of producing goods and services in the design and conduct of research. Illo, "Who Heads the Household?" 1989, 257.

²³⁸ See a critique of family decision-making studies in the Philippines in Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, especially 43-46.

without specifying the kinds of decisions women are able to make compared with those specified for men related to farming.²³⁹

Many emphasize women's control of the family purse and imply this as the source of women's power.

The jointness and mutual consultation in household decision-making which is evidenced in many studies leads us to conclude that the husband is the acknowledged head of the family, but the wife has **institutionalized power** as treasurer and **indirect power** as a wife partner in a marital relationship.²⁴⁰

However, the lowered purchasing power of the peso and the overall economic crisis experienced by most households do not make financial management a source of power, dominance or liberation of women. Besides having very little or nothing to manage, both the burden of earning or somehow providing during periods of shortages fall on mothers, wives and daughters. "It is only the men who bring home the bacon; women do that and have to cook it, too."²⁴¹

The perceived egalitarian character of Philippine society, along with other parts of Southeast Asia, is often based on accounts of women's role and power within family and bilateral kinship systems. Ethnologies that account for practices of equal inheritance and patterns of postmarital residence identified with matrilocality are used to explain women's relatively strong influence and prestige, hence, high status and great power, and thus, even superiority over men.²⁴² Their significance, however, has been gradually eroded by the independence of nuclear families.

²³⁹ A study of decision-making on the amount of money to be spent on the farming indicates that the husband is the major decision maker in the use of family finances; another study of farm business decisions shows that the husband consulted the wife more than half the time on specific matters. Aleta, *et al.*, "Women in the Rural Areas," 1989, 121.

²⁴⁰ Castillo, *Beyond Manila*, 1979, 158.

²⁴¹ Angeles, "Women's Roles & Status," 1990, 21-22.

²⁴² Sobritchea, "The Ideology of Female Domesticity," 1990, 26-28, and Sobritchea, "Gender Ideology & the Status of Women," 1991, 93.

However, the alternate label of 'ambiguous' (rather than 'subservient') for the Filipina can apply only in so far as the 'separate spheres' model is upheld.²⁴³ Recent evidence specifies that even as rural women's decision-making is not generally at par with men, "women who are gainfully employed, who have higher education or who are older than their husbands tend to play a greater role in decision-making." More husbands tend to decide alone on 'serious' or 'important' family matters and relegate the 'smaller' ones to the wife. Also, more husbands than wives make independent decisions on matters pertaining to the education of their children, borrowing/lending money, purchase of major household items and purchases/sale of real property.²⁴⁴

Further, other subtle constraints that surround the ideal woman described as "virginal until married, fertile when married and long-suffering until death"²⁴⁵ are also being uncovered. Forms of social control include widespread beliefs about vicious spirits and creatures which effectively serve to restrict women's physical mobility.²⁴⁶ Among them are spirits that prey especially on pregnant women.²⁴⁷ Throughout the Western Visayas region, the prevalence of surviving animistic beliefs and practices leads to the observation that Catholic practices "have been incorporated into a pagan religion that remains the dominant religious experience of the region's peasantry."²⁴⁸

The ideal of the happy and protective family is increasingly shown to obscure violence against women and children.²⁴⁹ Controversies over the comparative measurement of time and value of housework of women and men

²⁴³ Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, 43.

²⁴⁴ Sobritchea, "Gender Ideology & the Status of Women," 1991, 98.

²⁴⁵ Claudio, "The Psychology of the Filipino Woman," 1990-1991, 6-7.

²⁴⁶ Sobritchea, "The Ideology of Female Domesticity," 1990, 30.

²⁴⁷ These appear common throughout the Malay world of insular Southeast Asia, known as patianak (Tagalog) and pontianak (Malay). McCoy, "Baylan," 1982, 143.

²⁴⁸ Among the types of spirits known are the bakunawa, bulalakaw, mantiw, kama-kama, and tamawo. McCoy, "Baylan," 1982, 161-165.

²⁴⁹ See Ma. Cristina D. Nagot, "Preliminary Investigation on Domestic Violence Against Women," in Essays on Women, ed. Mananzan, 1991, 113-128.

also serve to indicate more systemic asymmetries and inequalities. Since most Filipinas tend to devalue their work and think that they do nothing substantial, time-use data is recommended to demonstrate the magnitude and importance of women's work.²⁵⁰ There are important repercussions to the symbolic confinement of women to the domestic unit.

When women themselves strongly believe that their place is at home, they become household-centered. The material and psychological needs of their husbands and families assume greater importance than their personal needs.... Household needs, in fact, become defined as the wife's own needs. She tends to view her world solely in terms of home and family. Her own opportunities for advancement give way to her husband's or her children's personal development ... an action which a husband is hardy expected to take for his family. While the husband forms and maintains friendships (usually male) outside the home, the wife is more likely to associate with her own relatives, i.e., parents and siblings, and friends (usually female) in that order. However, her family and husband remain the first preferences for sharing her time.... This household orientation expectedly acts as a barrier to active and meaningful participation in community or social activities that improve her lot.²⁵¹

In summary, this introductory chapter provides an overview of the research project as well as a background into the history and literature for understanding the characteristic activities of Filipino women and the society, particularly of rural areas in the Philippines.

²⁵⁰ Virginia A. Miralao, "Time Allocation Studies," in *Valuing Women's Work*, ed. Riza Faith C. Ybanez (Quezon City: Women Development and Technology Institute, 1992), 33.

²⁵¹ Sevilla, "The Filipino Woman & the Family," 1989, 39.

Table 1. Comparative National and Western Visayan Statistics: 1990

AREA	LAND AREA (in sq. kms.)	POPULATION	POPULATION DENSITY	SEX RATIO		
				TOTAL	URBAN	RURAL
ENTIRE PHILIPPINES	300,000.0	60,703,206	202.3	101.1	97.7	104.4
WESTERN VISAYAS	20,223.2	5,789,000	272.5	101.2	96.7	103.7
Aklan	1,817.9	380,497	209.3	100.6	-	-
Antique	2,522.0	406,361	161.1	102.1	-	-
Capiz	2,633.2	584,091	221.8	100.9	-	-
Guimaras	(604.6)	(117,990)	(195.2)	-	-	-
Iloilo	5,324.0	1,647,486	331.6	100.3	-	-
Negros Occidental	7,926.1	2,256,908	284.7	101.9	-	-

Source: Philippine Yearbook, 1992.

Note: Figures for then subprovince of Guimaras are included in Iloilo. Sex ratio figures for urban and rural populations of the individual provinces are unavailable.

Table 2. Urban-Rural Population of the Philippines and Selected Areas: 1980 and 1990

AREA / PROVINCE	TOTAL POPULATION		URBAN		RURAL			
	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990		1980	
					Numbers	Percent	Numbers	Percent
PHILIPPINES	60,703,206	48,098,460	29,441,799	18,008,749	31,256,195	51.49	30,088,711	62.56
WESTERN VISAYAS	5,393,333	4,525,615	1,931,229	1,283,755	3,462,104	64.19	3,240,860	71.61
Aklan	380,497	324,563	92,447	39,424	288,050	75.70	285,139	87.85
Antique	406,361	344,879	117,536	71,230	288,825	71.08	273,649	79.35
Capiz	584,091	492,231	164,832	66,427	419,259	71.78	425,804	86.50
Negros Occidental	2,256,908	1,930,301	1,030,469	712,159	1,226,439	54.34	1,218,142	63.11
Iloilo	1,647,486	1,433,641	511,966	395,515	1,135,520	68.92	1,038,126	72.41
Guimaras	(117,990)		(13,979)		(104,011)			

Source: Philippine Yearbook, 1992.

Note: Figures for then subprovince of Guimaras are included in Iloilo.

Table 3. Sex Distribution of Population in the Philippines and Selected Areas: 1980 and 1990

AREA/ PROVINCE	1980				1990			
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	
			Numbers	Percent			Numbers	Percent
PHILIPPINES	48,098,460	24,128,755	23,969,705	49.83	60,703,206	30,443,187	30,115,929	49.61
WESTERN VISAYAS	4,525,615	2,265,780	2,259,835	49.93	5,393,333	2,708,512	2,676,710	49.63
Aklan	324,563	161,816	162,747	50.14	380,497	190,573	189,455	49.79
Antique	344,879	173,079	171,800	49.81	406,361	205,032	200,894	49.44
Capiz	492,231	246,541	245,690	49.91	584,091	292,995	290,496	49.73
Iloilo	1,433,641	713,326	720,315	50.24	1,647,486	822,464	880,140	53.42
Negros Occidental	1,930,301	971,018	959,283	49.70	2,256,908	1,137,448	1,115,725	49.44

Source: Philippine Yearbook, 1992.

Note: There are no separate figures for Guimaras, presumably included in Iloilo.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (I)

2.1. Women, Feminisms, and Development

The foundations of this research on gender relations lie in the wealth of literature and activities surrounding women. More specifically, my approach to the question of the status of women is influenced by contemporary feminisms which attempt to reformulate perspectives and premises of gender relations in history and international development.

Early views on women stress their roles as mothers and call attention to welfare supports they need to fulfill societal contributions.¹ With evidence of women's roles as workers within an expanding market economy, themes of the differential poverty and exclusion form the view that women are among the many victims of histories and social orders. The persistent regard for women as economically inactive, dependent, or merely helping out, indicates dimensions of women's subordination. More importantly, these perspectives reflect an enduring perception of their relative powerlessness. Rural women, among impoverished and subjugated peoples, bear the double burden, are prejudiced by double standards, and thus, are doubly disempowered.²

Current views highlight aspects of women's lives beyond mothering and economic production. They emphasize women's contributions to work, knowledge, and culture as well as to the reproduction of human lives and societies. This perceptible shift arises from the positive mapping of women's contributions and women's own assertions of alternate visions. The inherent power uncovered/discovered in women is the means by which they, hopefully

¹ Motherhood, associated with the destiny of all women, remains as the only role universally "recognized" for them. Huguette Dagenais and Denise Piche. "Concepts and Practices of Development: Feminist Contributions and Future Perspectives," in Women, Feminism and Development, ed. Huguette Dagenais and Denise Piche (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University for the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 1994), 60.

² 'Disempowerment' is an elaboration of the double burden of women as members of poor households. Even as much of the physical, psychological, and material hardships and open discrimination of women have been recognized, wide-ranging consequences of these forces on women's double disempowerment are not clearly grasped. John Friedmann, Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), 109.

with men, transcend subordinate positions and transform oppressive conditions. Women's narratives and testimonies are ways by which they exercise power. They illustrate the speaking subject whose subjugated knowledges and voices "conflict with, and are never reflected in, the dominant stories that a culture tells about social life."³ Some accounts reveal more explicit and dramatic specific social realities.⁴ But I truly believe that each of us has a number of powerful stories to share.

Patriarchy is the central concept that feminisms resist from an array of philosophical positions and political practice.⁵ Variouslly represented as 'the sex/gender system,' 'relations of ruling,' or hierarchical gender relations, it refers to a systemic oppression of women. More explicitly, all of these notions indicate aspects of male culture or ideology, manifest in men's appropriation of, and control over, women's sexuality, work, and consciousness which thereby, structure gender relations.⁶ Feminists, whatever their specific stances, urge for a fundamental and necessary revolution in human comprehension leading to the conscious actions of every woman and man to transform this situation. Concrete instances of exploitation, subordination or oppression as well as the assumption of the inevitable hegemony of an historically male-defined industrial capitalist expansion are the subject of

³ Sandra Harding, "Conclusion: Epistemological Questions," in Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues, ed. Sandra Harding (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1987), 188.

⁴ Some recent works in a variety of cultural and historical settings are Gloria Anzaldua, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987); Ruth Behar, Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story (Boston: Beacon, 1993); bell hooks, Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism (Boston: South End, 1981); and Nita Kumar, ed., Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994).

⁵ Questions on the origins, persistence, and historical reproduction of patriarchy remain as feminist theoretical questions. See Luz Lopez-Rodriguez, "Patriarchy and Women's Subordination in the Philippines," Review of Women's Studies 1 no. 1 (1990): 15-25.

⁶ It developed before the formation of private property and class society with men's appropriation of women's sexual and reproductive capacity. Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (New York: Oxford University, 1986), 6. The historical origins, phases, or transitions of patriarchy (as well as capitalism), however, are not central concerns of the present study.

challenges and negotiations of various women's movements.⁷ Ultimately, despite the limited and limiting perspectives of one's particular gender, class, and race, every person is her/his own expert on any feminist agenda.

In the academy, current feminist theory as well as women's and international development studies are influenced by post-structuralist, post-modern, and post-colonialist thought.⁸ With post-humanism and post-essentialism, areas of subaltern and cultural studies also bridge gaps among the social sciences, literary theory, the arts and communications.⁹ Moreover, there have been shifting and overlapping positions taken by writers on core issues which refer to women's status worldwide.¹⁰ Collectively, these ideas evolve 'from below' as women's struggle experiences with patriarchy. They arise to deconstruct dominant androcentric discourses and to construct a non-hierarchical counter-hegemony.¹¹ Significantly, both deconstructivist and constructivist perspectives stress that "social context shapes knowledge, and

⁷ Feminist parlance tends to delineate women's grievances as wage workers in the economic 'public' arena as exploitation; those entailed in 'private' woman-man interactions are seen as manifestations of women's subordination or oppression. Maria Mies, "What is Feminism?" chap. in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour (London: Zed, 1986), 36-37.

⁸ On the disturbing influences of postmodern thought, see Jane Flax, "The End of Innocence," in Feminists Theorize the Political, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 445-463.

⁹ See Nicholas B. Dirks et al., eds., Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory (Princeton: Princeton University, 1994).

¹⁰ Notably, from the variable lenses of: equal rights for women (of liberal feminisms), men's individual and collective control over women's bodies and identities (of radical/cultural feminisms), labor and political economy (of the historical materialism of socialist and Marxist feminisms), and/or the associations of women with nature (ecofeminisms). See Rosemarie Tong, Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction (Boulder: Westview, 1989); and Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds., Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990).

¹¹ The basic concepts which have been 'occupied' like colonies by dominant sexist ideology need to be examined from the perspective of those who struggle for emancipation. Maria Mies, "What is Feminism?" 1986, 35-36, 47.

that meanings are historically situated and constructed and reconstructed through the medium of language."¹²

Articulations of poor and working class women, women of color, lesbians, and of the Third World make it difficult for feminists to sustain categorical statements inferred from representations of women and men.¹³ Questions on the generalizability of constructions of women's experiences lead to anxieties over the ahistorical and positivist premises of women's experiences as the foundation of feminist critical theory.¹⁴ They effectively push concerns beyond historical constructions of male power and female 'otherness' to redefine of the nature of gender relations.¹⁵

An important trend attempts to locate feminist practices within transnational links and flows across cultures. They emerge from critiques of feminisms which appear to have "willing participation in modernity with all its colonial discourses and hegemonic First World formations that wittingly or unwittingly lead to the oppression and exploitation of many women."¹⁶ Even as the feminist movement of the West arose in pursuit of Enlightenment ideals of equality, rights, individualism, justice, and freedom for women, significant self-critiques reveal how universalizing prototypes have been framed.¹⁷ They

¹² Rachel T. Hare-Mustin and Jeanne Marecek, "Gender and the Meaning of Difference: Postmodernism and Psychology," in Theorizing Feminism: Parallel Trends in the Humanities and Social Sciences, ed. Anne C. Herrmann and Abigail J. Stewart (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 50-51.

¹³ See Aida Hurtado, "Relating to Privilege: Seduction and Rejection in the Subordination of White Women and Women of Color," in Theorizing Feminism, ed. Herrmann & Stewart, 1994, 136-154.

¹⁴ Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in Feminists Theorize the Political, ed. Butler & Scott, 1992, 37. See also Marnia Lazreg, "Women's Experience & Feminist Epistemology: A Critical and Neo-Rationalist Approach," in Knowing the Difference, ed. Lennon & Whitford, 1994, 45-62.

¹⁵ Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory," in Feminism/Postmodernism, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1990), 43-44.

¹⁶ Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, "Introduction: Transnational Feminist Practices and Questions of Postmodernity," in Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practice, ed. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994), 2-3.

¹⁷ Feminist criticism has turned on its own theories, finding them "reductionist, totalizing, inadequately nuanced, valorizing of gender difference, unconsciously racist, and elitist." In various ways, it even appears to be skeptical of gender as an analytical category. Susan Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, and Gender Skepticism," in Theorizing Feminism, ed. Herrmann &

admit feminism's unfolding as defined by a historicism that presumes a "unified unity culminating in the West."¹⁸

Beyond the sense that knowledge enables empowerment, the legitimation of knowledge-claims is closely tied up with networks of domination and exclusion.¹⁹ This dialectic accounts for power and competing interests of women and men as well as among women with colonizing and colonized viewpoints.²⁰ In the Philippines, an undiscerning acceptance that women's status "improved" with influences from the conqueror races misrepresents pre-colonial experiences and may even reflect an ideological apparatus of "colonial mentality."²¹ This situation suggests that themes and concerns regarded as problematic among western feminists may not be as relevant for feminists and other women in different cultural contexts. Diverse structures of "indigenous global feminism" face the additional challenge of reckoning with the "bitter legacy of imperialism transformed in decolonization," a process in which the Third World is defined as Other.²² Hence, non-Western feminists are seen as grappling with "a double struggle in trying to find their own voice," learning to articulate their own differences from traditional cultures as well as from western feminism.²³ "The imperative we experience as feminists to be critical of how our culture and

Stewart, 1994, 459.

¹⁸ Aihwa Ong, "Colonialism and Modernity: Feminist Re-presentations of Women in Non-Western Societies," in *Theorizing Feminism*, ed. Herrmann & Stewart, 1994, 372.

¹⁹ Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, & Gender Skepticism," 1994, 458-481.

²⁰ See Kathleen Lennon and Margaret Whitford, "Introduction," in *Knowing the Difference*, ed. Lennon & Whitford, 1994, 1-14.

²¹ Both conventional wisdom and mainstream social science still shrink from owning distortions in historical evidence. Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, 28-34 passim.

²² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "French Feminism Revisited: Ethics and Politics," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Butler & Scott, 1992, 54-55.

²³ Uma Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives from a Nonwestern Feminist," in *Gender/Body/Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing*, ed. Alison M. Jaggar and Susan R. Bordo (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1989), 263.

traditions oppress women conflicts with our desire as members of once colonized cultures to affirm the value of the same culture and traditions."²⁴

On philosophical grounds and for practical exigencies, feminist scholarship is undergoing a process by which it seeks to resist the tendency to highlight pluralities and eschew the comforts of grand theory. The challenge lies in the framing of a theory (or sets of theories) that can specify 'the common' among women. This question leads to 're-visionings' which admit constraints to women's identity, agency, and solidarity at multiple levels of interpersonal and impersonal structures within particular societies. However, we need not abandon theory altogether to avoid totalizing categories of women and men. Theorizing that is explicitly historical minimizes the danger of false generalizations.²⁵ The literature of inclusive yet diverse feminisms specifies gender differences and inequalities in localized and issue-oriented contexts of different cultures and societies.

Postmodern feminist theory provides a view of reality as historically contingent and culturally variable. Feminist research now involves interpreting how power/knowledge/resistance work in the local, heterogeneous context of discursive production.²⁶

Development planning and evaluation have also made women and gender issues more visible particularly since the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985). But the rationale and techniques of development, which indicate that a heterogeneous and diverse majority is being molded in the terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority, have been questioned.²⁷ Herein, women are generally regarded as passive beneficiaries of "trickle down" effects

²⁴ Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology," 1989, 259.

²⁵ Linda J. Nicholson, "Introduction," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Nicholson, 1990, 9.

²⁶ Kathy Davis and Sue Fisher, "Power and the Female Subject," in *Negotiating at the Margins: The Gendered Discourses of Power and Resistance*, ed. Sue Fisher and Kathy Davis (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University, 1993), 10.

²⁷ Gustavo Esteva, "Development," in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, ed. Wolfgang Sachs (London: Zed, 1992), 7; and Wolfgang Sachs, "Bygone Splendour," in *Real Life Economics: Understanding Wealth Creation*, ed. Paul Ekins and Manfred Max-Neef (London: Routledge, 1992), 156-158.

of modernization obtaining from their integration within the dominant world economic system. Gender is used mainly as a variable that locates women and men in accounts of both causation and consequences, paralleling class, ownership, occupation, incomes, and family status to denote variable deprivations for women across cultures.²⁸

Feminist appraisals of modernization and development not only contest capitalist expansion on which dominant concepts and practices are based. They also demonstrate the key role of social relations of gender. Interestingly, themes of religion, violence, and sexuality, are emerging in the literature on "women and development."²⁹ Some studies associate the present condition of Third World women with tenacious bonds of colonial history and contemporary capitalist mechanisms.³⁰ Others link the destruction of nature with the violation and marginalization of women.³¹ Some also acknowledge that feminist economic theory might present its own paradigm which rejects both market economics and planning.³² These views are united in the observation that although much of the structure of development has been erected by

²⁸ A foremost influence was Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York: St. Martin's, 1970) which called attention to women's work and contributions. See also Irene Tinker, "The Making of a Field: Advocates, Practitioners, and Scholars," in Persistent Inequalities: Women and World Development, ed. Irene Tinker (New York: Oxford University, 1990), 27-53, and Irene Tinker and Jane Jaquette, "UN Decade for Women: Its Impact and Legacy," World Development 15 no. 3 (1987): 419-427.

²⁹ See Dagenais & Piche, eds., Women, Feminism & Development, 1994.

³⁰ Areas of influence include the colonial experience, imperialism and dependency, comparative history of development, international women's organizations in development, and culture and communications. Sue Ellen M. Charlton, Women in Third World Development (Boulder: Westview, 1984), 15-28.

³¹ Development is regarded as an arrogant western patriarchal project; and those who abide with it are blind to the quiet work and the invisible wealth created by nature and women and those who produce sustenance. Vandana Shiva, Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development (London: Zed, 1988), 44.

³² Nancy Folbre et al., eds., Women's Work in the World Economy (New York: New York University, 1992), xxiv.

impoverished women, they themselves experience little change, if at all, in their own lives.³³

Criticisms of development are levelled at the meanings and assumptions of specific frameworks by which policymaking, research, and international agency thinking addressed Third World women. Differing yet overlapping policy approaches and strategies reflect emphases on welfare, equity, and anti-poverty as well as efficiency and empowerment.³⁴ The dominant program for women in development (WID) increasingly draws Third World women into the world's workforce.³⁵ Its procedures presume that women are key 'actors' whose neglect in development plans leave out their potentially large contributions to economic development.³⁶ The neo-Marxist feminist perspective in women and development (WAD) highlights the relationship between women and development processes by calling attention to gender intersections with class.³⁷ WAD attributes many women's loss of control over their lives to male dominance in the expansion of state power and the

³³ See Noeleen Heyzer, "Rural Change, Women and Organizations: Barriers and Opportunities," in Women Farmers and Rural Change in Asia, ed. Heyzer, 1987, 3-38; Susan P. Joeckes, Women in the World Economy: An INSTRAW Study (New York: Oxford University, 1987); and Eleonora Masini and Susan Stratigos, eds., Women, Households and Change (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1991).

³⁴ Eva M. Rathgeber, "WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice," Journal of Developing Areas 24 no. 4 (1990): 489-502. See also Mayra Buvinic, "Women's Issues in Third World Poverty: A Policy Analysis," in Women and Poverty in the Third World, ed. Mayra Buvinic et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1983), 14-31.

³⁵ Equity, anti-poverty, and efficiency are variants of the dominant WID school. Articulated by American liberal feminists, it advocates legal and administrative changes to ensure that women are better integrated into economic systems. Caroline O.N. Moser, Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training (London: Routledge, 1993), 55-79.

³⁶ Women's activities, access and control of resources are systematically collected for planning, implementation, and evaluation purposes. See Catherine Overholt et al., eds., Gender Roles in Development Projects: A Case Book (West Hartford: Kumarian, 1985).

³⁷ See Lourdes Beneria and Gita Sen, "Accumulation, Reproduction, and Women's Role in Economic Development: Boserup Revisited," in Women's Work: Development and the Division of Labor by Gender, ed. Eleanor Leacock and Helen I. Safa (New York: Bergin and Garvey, 1986), 141-157; Charlotte Bunch and Roxanna Carrillo, "Feminist Perspectives on Women in Development," in Persistent Inequalities, ed. Tinker, 1990, 70-82; and Dagenais & Piche, "Concepts and Practices of Development," 1994, 48-73.

increasing influences of market forces.³⁸ Like WID, however, WAD is preoccupied solely with women and the productive sector and endorses income-generating projects (IGPs) at the expense of reproductive aspects of women's work and lives.

There is a more holistic framework in gender and development (GAD), with theoretical roots in socialist feminism. GAD does not focus on women in isolation and envisions a transformative and participatory, thus bottom-up, scheme for development. Here, development goals aim for "the emancipation of women from their subordination, and their achievement of equality, equity and empowerment."³⁹ Thus, GAD encompasses the social relations of gender and identifies the social construction of production and reproduction as the basis of women's oppression.⁴⁰ It applies the principle of equity to the concrete circumstances of everyday interactions between women and men anchored on an ideal of norms, mores, and conventions for a new social order. Hence its focus on strengthening women's legal rights and an ultimate commitment to power shifts and structural change.⁴¹

The GAD approach does not focus singularly on productive or reproductive aspects of women's (and men's) lives to the exclusion of the other. It analyzes the nature of women's contribution within the context of work done both inside and outside the household, including noncommodity production, and rejects the public/private dichotomy that commonly has been used as a mechanism to undervalue family and household maintenance work performed by women. Both the socialist/

³⁸ See Sen & Grown, Development, Crises, & Alternative Visions, 1987; Geertje Lycklama a Nijeholt, "The Fallacy of Integration: The U.N. Strategy of Integrating Women into Development Revisited," Netherlands Review of Development Studies 1 (1987): 23-37; and M. A. Bienefeld, "Structural Adjustment and Its Impact on Women in the Developing Countries," Discussion Paper. ([Ottawa]: Canadian International Development Agency, February 15, 1988).

³⁹ Moser, Gender Planning and Development, 1993, 1. See also Lynne Brydon and Sylvia Chant, Women in the Third World: Gender Issues in Rural and Urban Areas (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1989), especially 94-120; and Dionisio, "Beyond Women in Development," 1991, 53-57.

⁴⁰ Emerging from feminist writings and grassroots organizing by Third World women's NGOs, this is a largely unpopular and complex development approach. Rathgeber, "WID, WAD, GAD," 1990, 494.

⁴¹ Only partial GAD approaches are evident in projects and activities of international development agencies. Rathgeber, "WID, WAD, GAD," 1990, 494-495.

feminist and GAD approaches give special attention to the oppression of women in the family and enter the so-called "private sphere" to analyze the assumptions upon which conjugal relationships are based. GAD also puts greater emphasis on the participation of the state in promoting women's emancipation, seeing it as the duty of the state to provide some of the social services that women in many countries have provided on a private and individual basis. This issue has become increasingly politicized in the 1980s, as many states that formerly had provided social services in areas such as childcare and healthcare, for example, have reduced or privatized them in the face of economic recession.⁴²

The simultaneous and competing play of these perspectives does not share a consistent view of the multiple roles of women at home and in the larger society. Much of these divergences emerge from different conceptions of gender and how it shapes asymmetrical and inequitable human relations.

2.2. Gender and Power Relations

2.2.1. *Gender and Discourse*

This research addresses how particular forms of patriarchy are structured and how they are reproduced in the lives of a selected group of women. Underlying it, therefore, is a particular comprehension of gender.

The analysis of the patriarchal structures of society and the positions that we occupy within them requires a theory which can address forms of social organization and the social meanings and values which guarantee or contest them. Yet it must also be able to theorize individual consciousness. We need a theory of the relation between language, subjectivity, social organizations and power. We need to understand why women tolerate social relations which subordinate their interests to those of men and the mechanisms whereby women and men adopt particular discursive positions as representatives of their interests.⁴³

Gender is treated as an independent analytic concept, a specific differentiating and allocating structure which all human beings as sexed bodies must confront.⁴⁴ All human groups are gender-divided; conditions for

⁴² Rathgeber, "WID, WAD, GAD," 1990, 494.

⁴³ Chris Weedon, Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1987), 12.

⁴⁴ Henrietta L. Moore, Feminism and Anthropology (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988), 6.

women, however, show that they are also gender-dominated. No less important is the caveat that gender is a mechanism operating within a larger matrix of socially constructed distinctions (class, race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality). More than a set of attributes associated with individuals, gender is a pattern of social relations that alludes to the differentiation and asymmetric division of human traits and capacities. Hence, both women and men are "prisoners of gender" but men appear to be the wardens, or at least the trustees.⁴⁵ As an allocational principle by which social relations are organized, the phrase 'gender relations' becomes somewhat redundant; but the alterable uses of 'gender' call for this specification. Mindful of different levels of analysis, Joan W. Scott's two-part definition frames my elaboration of this concept: gender is a constitutive element of social relationships; and, gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.⁴⁶

Gender implies the organized sets of relationships or social roles with inherent values and norms that direct what women and men do -- in work, politics, marriage, and other forms of signification. These differentiating categories and roles are marked not only by physiology and biology but also by dimensions of human sexuality. They have been referred to as culturally specific and historically fluid symbolic constructs of 'sex/gender system.' The system is described as "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied." Hence, women are shown as mere tokens (Levi-Strauss), symbolic others (Freud), property (Marx), or gifts (Mauss) exchanged by men in search for autonomy, selfhood, power, and status.⁴⁷ The system

⁴⁵ Flax, "Postmodernism & Gender Relations," 1990, 45.

⁴⁶ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 42-46.

⁴⁷ Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review, 1975), 157-210.

manifests the ways by which "prestige structures" in every society manage sexuality and express gender.⁴⁸

This emphasis on sexual distinctions was an early tactical frame of reference that informed feminist scholarship's explanations of patriarchy.⁴⁹ However, there are essentialist implications in a categorical split between 'sex' (biology/nature) and 'gender' (sociology/culture) that may be rooted in and reflect gender arrangements.⁵⁰ The reliance on the variable of physical difference asserts a consistent meaning for the human body, and thus, the ahistoricity of gender itself.⁵¹ It leads to the politics of gender identity which tends to repress or obscure situated and experiential differences among men and among women. A corollary contention is that the traditional grand narrative of the self is a kind of ideology that promotes coherence and linearity; it should be challenged and replaced by "an understanding of the actual fragmentation, polyphony and atemporality of the self."⁵² Nonetheless, these sociobiological connections explain the alternate use of 'sex' or 'gender' labels.

Some constructionist views assert that families, households, and sexuality are ultimately products of changing modes of production. Literature on patriarchy differ on whether it is analogous to a 'mode of production' (single system view of capitalist patriarchy or patriarchal capitalism), or a part of it (dual systems view where patriarchy is related to or dependent on a mode

⁴⁸ Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, "Introduction: Accounting for Sexual Meanings," in Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality, ed. Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1981), 21-26. See also Hare-Mustin & Marecek, "Gender & the Meaning of Difference," 1994, 49-76.

⁴⁹ Nancy Fraser and Linda J. Nicholson, "Social Criticism without Philosophy: An Encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism," in Feminism/Postmodernism, ed. Nicholson, 1990, 27-28.

⁵⁰ Flax, "Postmodernism & Gender Relations," 1990, 46.

⁵¹ History, thus, would only provide endless variations on an unchanging theme of fixed gender inequality. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 34.

⁵² Liz Stanley, "The Knowing Because Experiencing Subject," 1994, 134.

of production).³³ These materialist perspectives are based on Engels' thesis that women's subordination resulted from the development of private property, leading to the convention of monogamous marriage, and hence, the cultural disciplining of women's sexuality.³⁴ Sexist dominance and gendered status are rationalized as natural and reinforced by the very processes and ramifications of a gendered division of work throughout an increasingly internationalized economy.

Outside the realm of labor and the economy, prescriptions of religious dogma, law, education, state policy, and mass media are other means by which patriarchal ideologies and practices transmit gender boundaries and inequalities. They maintain the 'ensembles of action' or the "reified, patterned regularities of thought, action, and interpretation," often embodied in laws and official codes that guide lived experiences of interacting individuals.³⁵ These are reproduced through socialization and reinforced or imitated by 'compulsory emotions' which manifest as forms of social control. Also, they are linked with processes of resource allocation linked with power and authority relations.³⁶

The 'male gaze' has excluded women, influencing epistemology, methodology, and scholarship, especially since the Enlightenment. Rationality, epitomized in scientific knowledge production, is aligned with the masculine; the feminine is associated with discourses marginalized or suppressed by rationalism. Hence the dominance of masculine attributes of autonomy and

³³ See Joan Kelly, "The Doubled Vision of Feminist Theory: A Postscript to the 'Women and Power' Conference," chap. in Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984), 51-64.

³⁴ See Frederick Engels, The Origin of Family, Private Property, and the State (New York: International, 1972), and, for example, Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework," in Theorizing Feminism, ed. Herrmann & Stewart, 1994, 171-197.

³⁵ Norman K. Denzin, Symbolic Interactionism and Cultural Studies: The Politics of Interpretation (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 27-28.

³⁶ Hanna Papanek, "To Each Less Than She Needs, From Each More Than She Can Do: Allocations, Entitlements, and Value," in Persistent Inequalities, ed. Tinker, 1990, 163.

independence, abstract critical thought, and a morality of rights and justice; conversely, feminine attributes of interdependence, intimacy, nurturance, and contextual thought are largely ignored. Male experience as defining human experience is most clear in models of intellectual development.⁵⁷

Most people, thus, have internalized changing 'masculine' and 'feminine' molds in which he is the norm and she is 'the other.'⁵⁸ Related products of Western philosophical traditions that rest on such binary oppositions are mental images that divide realities, such as, public/private, culture/nature, reason/emotion, work/leisure, mind/matter, universal/particular, production/reproduction. These constructions are "colonizing"; the inherent relationship between the sides is dynamic, hierarchical, and exploitative in which "one side progresses at the expense of the other."⁵⁹ They insinuate dominance and disadvantage, stress inequalities, and intimate the power proposition in Scott's definition of gender.

These overlapping discourses effectively legitimize hierarchical relations between the 'public' world of men and the 'domestic/private' world of women.

Established as an objective set of references, concepts of gender structure perception and the concrete and symbolic organization of all social life. To the extent that these references establish distributions of power (differential control over or access to material and symbolic resources), gender becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself.⁶⁰

In many ways, the oppression of women has been encoded, disguised, and obscured by applications of the notion of divided spheres or realms. This model has been interchangeably used to refer to "an ideology imposed on women, a culture created by women, a set of boundaries expected to be

⁵⁷ Mary Field Belenky et al., "Introduction: To the Other Side of Silence," chap. in Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 6-7.

⁵⁸ Renate Duelli Klein, "How To Do What We Want to Do: Thoughts about Feminist Methodology," in Theories of Women's Studies, ed. Bowles & Klein, 1983, 90-91.

⁵⁹ Maria Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," chap. in Patriarchy & Accumulation on a World Scale, 1986, 210.

⁶⁰ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 45.

observed by women."⁶¹ As a structural framework for conceptualizing activities of the sexes, underlying stereotypes or asymmetries, it has been uncritically, albeit inadvertently, used to determine relations between them.

More recent formulations about female devaluation and gender show the weakness of the 'separate spheres' model through the evidence of linkages of gender with race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality. These are derived from situated international and comparative contexts of convergences and contradictions in women's situations. By implication, "as female devaluation is not one fact but many, interlinked with specificities of culture, so also should we abandon the search for one cross-cultural cause."⁶² Pervasive asymmetries are increasingly understood as emerging from specific complex and layered structures of women's lives.⁶³

Gender, thus, discerns women as socially constituted, with individual interests and intentions constructed within local and specific realities. The call for meaningful explanation rather than universal causality is most explicit in Michelle Rosaldo's now classic statement which reformulates the model of separate spheres:

It now appears to me that women's place in human social life is not in any direct sense a product of the things she does (or even less a function of what, biologically speaking, she is) but of the meaning her activities acquire through concrete social interaction. And the significance women assign to the activities of their lives are things that we can only grasp through an analysis of the relationships that women

⁶¹ Susan M. Reverby and Dorothy O. Helly, "Introduction: Converging on History," in Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History, ed. Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992), 12.

⁶² Linda J. Nicholson, "Toward a Method for Understanding Gender," chap. in Gender and History: The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family (New York: Columbia University, 1986), 102.

⁶³ Louise Lamphere, "The Domestic Sphere of Women and the Public World of Men: The Strengths and Limitations of an Anthropological Dichotomy," in Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective, ed. Caroline B. Brettell and Carolyn F. Sargent (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1993), 77.

forge, the social contexts they (along with men) create -- and within which they are defined.⁶⁴

Gendered identity is constructed in specific systems of discourse that prescribe coherent, competing, and/or recurring meanings to daily experiences and guide human behavior. Gender asymmetries need to be examined in terms of how social and political meanings are ascribed to activities of women and men in specific historical contexts. Status, which is an ideological perception of ranking, is neither static nor timeless. It is the critical issue since the goal of change aims to improve women's position in society. Yet equality under the law and economic equality does not necessarily imply equal status.

Moreover, it has been asserted that the

differential participation in the public sphere is a symptom rather than a cause of structural inequality. While inequality is **manifested** in the exclusion of a group from public life, it is actually **generated** in the group's unequal access to power and resources in a hierarchically arranged social order."⁶⁵

In the Philippines, the regard for status as confined to the degree of participation in, and benefits from, domestic and public activities retards the comprehension of women's actual relations with men.⁶⁶

The concept of 'discourse' illuminates the workings of power and the opportunities to resist it. Discourses are historically, socially, and institutionally specific structures of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs. As texts, they assert truths and claims for authority and legitimation.⁶⁷ Textually mediated discourses are becoming new forms of social relations which transcend and organize local settings and bring about new sets of

⁶⁴ Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, "The Uses and Abuses of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding," *Signs* 5 no. 3 (Spring 1980): 400.

⁶⁵ Diane K. Lewis cited in Janet Sharistanian, "Introduction: Women's Lives in the Public and Domestic Spheres," Beyond the Public/Domestic Dichotomy: Contemporary Perspectives on Women's Lives, ed. Janet Sharistanian (New York: Greenwood, 1987), 5-6.

⁶⁶ Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Woman," 1988, 42.

⁶⁷ Joan W. Scott, "Deconstructing Equality-versus-Difference: or, The Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism," in Theorizing Feminism, ed. Herrmann & Stewart, 1994, 359-360; see also Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 42-44.

connections.⁶⁸ As they give meaning to life, the world, and social processes, the elaboration of any discourse is embedded in conflict and power. Not all discourses carry the same weight; those that deviate from, or challenge, the prevailing system and its practices are likely to be marginal and dismissed as irrelevant or bad.⁶⁹

Illusions in the shape of norms, values and beliefs are cultural fetters that generate passivity and engender dependence and complicity. As ideology, certain discourses suppress a collective awareness of women's subordination with impressions that contradict the reality of injustice, burdens, and repressions. Attention to the ideational domain of culture is important for theoretical as well as practical reasons. Ideas not only justify the unequal distribution of power, privilege, and prestige; they also make the inequalities acceptable and provide a rationale that makes the current state of affairs seem just or fair.⁷⁰ But while it is important to realize that discursive productions signify as locus of cultural control, it is also necessary to account for "the ways the discourses intersect with women's concrete material lives and become a site of struggle."⁷¹

Our humanity is formed by historical location, cultural perspective, and specific interests. We find the cultural symbols and normative concepts that project meanings for women and gender in competing discourses.

Meanings do not exist prior to their articulation in language and language is not an abstract system, but is always socially and historically located in discourses. Discourses represent political interests and in consequence are constantly vying for status and power. The site for this battle for power is the subjectivity of the individual and

⁶⁸ 'Meaning' in a material (often printed) form removes meaning from lived processes. Dorothy Smith, "Femininity as Discourse," chap. in Texts, Facts, and Femininity: Exploring the Relations of Ruling (London: Routledge, 1990), 167-168. In a seminar for sociologists at Concordia University in Montreal on 17 November 1994, Smith refers to these relations as existing in the realm of "virtual reality."

⁶⁹ Weedon, Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory, 1987, 35.

⁷⁰ Sobritchea, "Gender Ideology & the Status of Women," 1991, 95-96, and Sobritchea, "The Ideology of Female Domesticity," 1990, 26-41.

⁷¹ Davis & Fisher, "Power & the Female Subject," 1993, 11.

it is a battle in which the individual is an active but not sovereign protagonist.⁷²

As we participate and create our worlds of experience, we act on meanings located in discursive practices produced, contested, and transformed through face-to-face and indirect interactions. Our gender consciousness and culture come partly from experiences shaped by rational, emotional, and intuitive self-reflections of epiphanic or routine occurrences. "What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward; it is always contested, always therefore political. The study of experience, therefore, must call into question its originary status in historical explanation."⁷³

Significantly, discursive categories are grounded in and informed by the material politics of everyday life. They are especially relevant to comprehend the daily struggles for survival of people written out of history.⁷⁴

Since political structures and political ideas shape and set the boundaries of public discourse and of all aspects of life, even those excluded from participation in politics are defined by them. "Non-actors" ... are acting according to rules established in political realms; the private sphere is a public creation; those absent from official accounts partook nonetheless in the making of history; those who are silent speak eloquently about the meanings of power and the uses of political authority.⁷⁵

What emerges as a dominant gender ideology is a dynamic representation of dominant interests within a social system. Ideology, as meanings, is lived out by individuals and manifested in the patterns of their culture. It is not only changed by those who live it but also takes many forms and varies in intensity among different classes and social groups. Thus, gender ideology is characterized by "unevenness and contradictory unities than by constancy and

⁷² Weedon, Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory, 1987, 41.

⁷³ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 37.

⁷⁴ Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Introduction: Cartographies of Struggle, Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism," in Chandra Talpade Mohanty et al., eds., Women and the Politics of Feminism (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1991), 14. I also allude to the work of Eric Wolf, Europe and the People Without History (Berkeley: University of California, 1982).

⁷⁵ Joan Wallach Scott, "Women's History," chap. in Gender & the Politics of History, 1988, 24.

homogeneity; but it is these very contradictions which provide the basis for cultural and ideological resistance and transformation."⁷⁶

2.2.2. *Gender, Difference, and Subjectivity*

Prominent in feminist discourses in the 1980s, the concept of 'difference' helps to overcome homogeneous, often ethnocentric and hegemonic, perceptions of women and men. As a critique of dichotomous thinking, it guarantees that women's subjectivity contributes to the production of social knowledge. The demand to mark differences is part of a call for diversity, pluralism, for a multicultural academy. Besides gender and class that impoverished and marginalized many Euro-American women, the added dimensions of race, imperialism, as well as sexuality variously structure women's oppression and struggles worldwide.⁷⁷

Scholars have debated on the difference between unproblematic categories of women and men; a deconstruction of these categories leads to distinctions of the types of differences that exist within them.⁷⁸ For most Third World women in newly-independent states as well as those entangled in the civil rights movements in the West, neither independence nor legislation immediately improved their quality of life. These experiences have undoubtedly shaped their inclusive visions of entire communities "in which they were equal participants, and which addressed the racism, economic exploitation, and imperialism against which they continued to struggle."⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Eviota, *The Political Economy of Gender*, 1992, 25.

⁷⁷ Audre Lorde in 1979 stirred the waters of white, middle-class, heterosexual feminists by observing the lack of attention on differences between and among women. Christina Crosby, "Dealing with Differences," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Butler & Scott, 1992, 131.

⁷⁸ The concept is embedded in the 'difference or equality' debate where the issue is whether feminism should address that which defines women's condition at the present time or directed towards the fundamental eradication of the differences that generate this condition. Three types of overlapping, though sometimes contradicting, ways by which 'difference' are identified and should be treated separately: psychoanalytical accounts of sexual difference, those based on positional rather than absolute character of meaning, and situational and experiential diversity. Michele Barrett, "The Concept of Difference," *Feminist Review* no. 26 (1987): 29-41.

⁷⁹ Cheryl Johnson-Odim, "Common Themes, Different Contexts: Third World Women and Feminism," in *Third World Women*, ed. Mohanty et al., 1991, 316.

'Difference' opens theoretical space to historicize and politicize the empirical diversities of women's experiences. Interpreted as a "a social relation constructed within systems of power underlying structures of class, racism, gender and sexuality," 'difference' highlights experiential diversities of ideological and institutional practices and ways by which personal and group histories are created and recreated in daily life.⁸⁰ It comprehends movements of socially constructed gendered identities of 'usness' in processes of differentiation among women.⁸¹

Specific 'imagined identities' of Third World women are projected based on political (rather than biological or cultural) alliances.⁸² Parallel notions are the basis for current endeavors for cultural revivalism, nationalism, national liberation, religious fundamentalism, and sexual affirmation of gay and lesbian aggrupations. Though evidently non-homogeneous, Western feminists are urged to take account of changing world realities and recognize other forms of gender- and culture-based subjectivities and to accept that other women choose to live their lives with their own particular vision of the future.⁸³ They are exhorted to make known their "partial understandings" as members of hegemonic powers as they construct alliances with women worldwide.

Female oppression is not one universal block experienced the same way by all women, to which other forms of exploitation are then added as separate pieces. Rather, various oppressions interact to shape the

⁸⁰ Group histories that chronicle shared experiences contain their own contradictions since "there is no simple one-to-one correspondence between collective experience and personal biography." Avtar Brah, "Questions of Difference and International Feminism," in Women's Studies: Essential Readings, ed. Stevi Jackson et al. (New York: New York University, 1993), 30.

⁸¹ Joan Smith, "The Creation of the World We Know: The World-Economy and the Re-creation of Gendered Identities," in Identity Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective, ed. Valentine M. Moghadam (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 27.

⁸² From Benedict R. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1991), Mohanty visualizes an "imagined community of Third World women" in oppositional struggles against racism, sexism, colonialism, imperialism, and monopoly capital. Mohanty, "Introduction: Cartographies of Struggle," 1991, 10-11.

⁸³ Ong, "Colonialism & Modernity," 1994, 379. See also Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Third World Women, ed. Mohanty et al., 1991, 51-80.

particulars of each woman's life.... Seeing this interaction is vital for coalitions around issues.⁸⁴

Many feminists now admit common and varied visions and stress the need to be pragmatic rather than theoretically pure. There is "need to reserve **practical** spaces both for generalist critique (suitable when gross points need to be made) and for attention to complexity and nuance."⁸⁵ This implies that when we ask how basic gender differences are, we are also asking how basic they want them to be for particular purposes.⁸⁶ There are contexts for political strategies that need not invoke absolute qualities for women and men.⁸⁷ Some instances require abstractions and generalizations across 'difference' and emphasis on the commonality and connection, rather than the fragmentation of identity and experience.⁸⁸ Ultimately, conceiving patriarchy as a common oppression is not to signify that 'woman' is a **unitary** category; theoretically, empirically, and politically for both women and men, it is better acknowledged as a **unifying** one.

Anna Jonasdottir argues for a thorough reassessment of ourselves as gendered sexual beings, united both in suffering and in strength. At the most basic analytical level, individuals are "sexually and genderically related" with others. Although this commonality is "thin" and limited, "it is on the strength of the sex/gender capacities, the capacities for love and the creation of sexually 'empowered' and genderically dignified persons, that women do have a

⁸⁴ Charlotte Bunch, "Making Common Cause: Diversity and Coalitions," in Bridges of Power: Women's Multicultural Alliances, ed. Lisa Albrecht and Rose M. Brewer (Philadelphia: New Society, 1990), 52.

⁸⁵ Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, & Gender Skepticism," 1994, 478.

⁸⁶ Christine Di Stefano, "Dilemmas of Difference: Feminism, Modernity, and Postmodernism," in Feminism/Postmodernism, ed. Nicholson, 1990, 64-66.

⁸⁷ There are occasions when "it makes sense for mothers to demand consideration for their social role, and contexts within which motherhood is irrelevant to women's behavior; but to maintain that womanhood is motherhood is to obscure the differences that make choice possible." Scott, "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference," 1994, 368.

⁸⁸ Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, & Gender Skepticism," 1994, 472-474.

common basis for experience and thus a common basis for struggle."⁸⁹ Apart from the human power to make rational choices and labor power to create new "things," love is also a power that moves history and has been used largely for male-determined purposes.⁹⁰

Accordingly, the basis for women's common struggles is not found in the construction of a specific mode of production concept based on economy and work but in a mode of production and reproduction of people based on sexuality and love. These processes are codified in the principles of rights in marriage though not confined to home and family.⁹¹ Even so, this position does not contradict the stance that each one of these has a specific context. At the practical level, the

sex struggle occurs always in several social contexts and varies from one situation to another. But to deny that the sex/gender position itself has some uniting actuality for women (and men) is like denying that the class position has any common importance for workers (and capitalists) of both sexes.⁹²

Much of development literature on women, however, is enmeshed in discourses of modernization and capitalist and social transitions. Some understandings project a "fetishization of capital accumulation and the valorization of women and men as commodities."⁹³ Many writers tend to personify capitalism and its effects and confine women in their roles in these developments. Further, a lacuna exists where women are least represented.

⁸⁹ Anna G. Jonasdottir, "Introduction: Patriarchy as a Problem in Political Theory," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1994), 6-9. Her metatheory of contemporary patriarchy based on sexuality combines elements from socialist and radical feminisms. It aims to inform empirical studies and more directly testable middle-range theories as a reformulation of feminist theory of history and society. See Anna G. Jonasdottir, "Common Oppression and Specific Experiences: Abstraction and Concretization in Feminist Theory," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed, 1994, especially 33-46.

⁹⁰ Here, "love" denotes the capacity for "practical, human sensuous activity." "Care" and "erotic ecstasy" are incorporated as its two main elements. Anna G. Jonasdottir, "Taking Sex Seriously," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed, 1994, 221-223.

⁹¹ Jonasdottir, "Common Oppression," 1994, 39.

⁹² Jonasdottir, "Common Oppression," 1994, 41.

⁹³ Ong, "Colonialism & Modernity," 1994, 376.

The literature presumes that Third World women do not participate in politics and consequent policies do not fully recognize women's rights and interests.⁹⁴

When it does, there is the tendency to

seek a modern form of individual freedom in their analyses of gender relations in the non-Western world. There is insufficient attention to nonmodern social values which do not conceptualize gender relations in those terms (of individualism). Furthermore, the "non-Western woman" as a trope of feminist discourse is either nonmodern or modern; she is seldom perceived as living in a situation where there is deeply felt tension between tradition and modernity.⁹⁵

It is hoped that feminists and practitioners in the field of development accept that other women may not seek the "secular goal of individual autonomy" nor be willing to "renounce the bonds of family and community."⁹⁶

In constituting the meaning of women's lived reality, we necessarily deal with subjectivity with its implications on the scope and methods of gender research. As "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world," subjectivity illustrates 'difference' as a site of contradictions, disunity, and conflict at many levels. It may range from "institutional attempts to impose and monitor an all encompassing perspective (as in Catholicism)" to subjectivity as the "unsystematized accumulation of 'common-sense' knowledge."⁹⁷ In many ways, the stance of objectivity is a subjective choice of conforming to a male-defined model of reality. As well, there are tendencies among women to objectify the experiences of 'others.'⁹⁸ Some

⁹⁴ Katarina Tomasevski, Development Aid and Human Rights: A Study for the Danish Center of Human Rights (New York: St. Martin's, 1989), 181.

⁹⁵ Ong, "Colonialism & Modernity," 1994, 377.

⁹⁶ Ong, "Colonialism & Modernity," 1994, 379.

⁹⁷ Weedon, Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory, 1987, 8-9, and 32.

⁹⁸ Researchers not only objectify 'other' women by turning them into objects of study; but the process also results into the construction of a new subjectivity which may intersect with that experienced by the women in question. Lazreg, "'Women's Experience & Feminist Epistemology,'" 1994, 53.

perceptions of inequalities denote judgments of the failure of 'others' to achieve modernity.⁹⁹

Considering our interpersonal relations and everyday experiences as "socially given forms of subjectivity," we may specify meanings, values, and structures of women's oppression.¹⁰⁰ In this way, the study of gender relations becomes conscious of how women create new patterns of divisions of work or mechanisms for collectivity and solidarity. In like manner, gender analysis becomes more sensitive to the ways women construct new norms, expectations, and values for everyday life.

With 'difference,' cracks and fissures are found in blatantly repressive or subtle guises of patriarchal power and reveal diverse determinants in experiences of contemporary societies and histories. Specific patterns of power are discerned at different 'institutional' or 'spatial' levels; diverse patterns to resist and contest mechanisms of domination are devised or uncovered as well. Just as subjectivities are variable, there are multiple models and sites for struggles. Hence, feminist politics becomes complex as women (and men) unite on specific issues of common interests but divide on others.

Because of the deep social cleavages of class, race, or ethnicity among women, I suppose it is realistic not to presume genuine **sisterhood** among all women, or even **solidarity**. **Alliance** on certain issues is perhaps the only realistic kind of large-scale unitedness. Sisterhood, conceived as a bond of relatively deep affection, of friendship and sometimes love, is presumably only possible between **few**. Solidarity, understood as a relatedness that does not necessarily presume personal friendship but when practiced involves sacrifices and sharing of burdens, should be possible among **many**. Limited alliances, both

⁹⁹ When feminists look overseas in "women and development studies," "they frequently seek to establish **their** authority on the backs of non-Western women, determining for them the meanings and goals of their lives." Ong, "Colonialism & Modernity," 1994, 372-373.

¹⁰⁰ Discourse and ideology may be studied as "actual social relations ongoingly organized in and by the activities of actual people." Gender itself may be viewed as a distinctive effect of social relations that define femininity. Smith, "Femininity as Discourse," 1990, 160.

offensive and defensive, could be seen as the minimum of necessary unitedness among all women.¹⁰¹

Common visions and practical grounds are established by networking among women's groups.¹⁰² Comprehensive goals expressed by the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) address collective and individual ends for all women and men.

We want a world where inequality based on class, gender, and race is absent from every country, and from the relationships among countries. We want a world where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. Each person will have the opportunity to develop or his full potential and creativity, and women's values or nurturance and solidarity will characterize human relationships. In such a world women's reproductive role will be redefined: child care will be shared by men, women, and society as a whole. We want a world where the massive resources now used in the production of the means of destruction will be diverted to areas where they will help to relieve oppression both inside and outside the home. This technological revolution will eliminate disease and hunger, and give women means for the safe control of their fertility. We want a world where all institutions are open to participatory democratic processes, where women share in determining priorities and making decisions.... What is lacking is not resources, but political will.... It must be fostered by mass movements that give central focus to the "basic rights" of the poor, and demand a reorientation of policies, programmes, and projects toward that end.... Only by sharpening the links between equality, development, and peace, can we show that the "basic rights" of the poor and the transformation of the institutions that subordinate women are inextricably linked. They can be achieved together through the self-empowerment of women.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Anna G. Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest, Women's Interests, and the Limitations of Interest Theory," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed, 1994, 173.

¹⁰² One of the first global definitions of feminism as an ideology by Third World women contained two long-term goals: the achievement of women's equality, dignity, and freedom of choice through women's power to control their own lives within and outside the home; and, the removal of all forms of inequity and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. See the Bangkok Paper of 1979 in Bunch & Carrillo, "Feminist Perspectives," 1990, 77.

¹⁰³ Gita Sen and Caren Grown, "Alternative Visions," chap. in Development, Crises, & Alternative Visions, 1987, 80-82. DAWN founders in 1984 had broad experiences with grassroots initiatives at the community level and sought to link macro-level perspectives through a "platform" document for the 1985 UN conference and eventually published as this volume.

2.2.3. *Power, Agency, and Empowerment*

The concept of power is variously conceived and used by individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions; hence, the processes and outcomes of the exercise of power and empowerment variously signify. Unlike functionalist readings of the power of collective, homogenizing, and structured systems of coercive and subtle domination and authority, power in gender relations denotes oppositions stemming from competing claims of women and men (as well as among them). The classic patriarchal view of power is as a property or quality possessed by certain people situationally and understood in terms of domination and control. Contemporary feminist perspectives tend to view power as a process in which people transform themselves personally and collectively. These views posit alternative leadership styles which involve decentralization and shared decision-making.¹⁰⁴

Power, derived from energy and strength in people, requires an openness and vulnerability. It involves linking the personal domain with the public domain to redefine the self as a whole and as vitally connected with others. Thus, when feminists speak of power, it is often that we speak about power-with, rather than power-over.... This synergistic framework recognizes the interdependency of the private and public domains of reality.¹⁰⁵

Gender in relational terms of power and resistance is prominent in discourses of post-modern feminisms. Feminist readings of Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci as well as explorations in social history and anthropology argue how power and resistance produce and reproduce each other.¹⁰⁶ In reconceptualizing 'social power' and the 'political,'

¹⁰⁴ Lisa Albrecht and Rose M. Brewer, "Bridges of Power: Women's Multicultural Alliances for Social Change," in Bridges of Power, ed. Albrecht & Brewer, 1990, 4-5.

¹⁰⁵ Albrecht & Brewer, "Bridges of Power," 1990, 5.

¹⁰⁶ See Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality, Vol. I, An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random, 1978), and Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International, 1971). See also James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance (New Haven: Yale University, 1985) and Clifford Geertz, Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology (New York: Basic, 1983).

we need to replace the notion that social power is unified, coherent, and centralized with something like Michel Foucault's concept of power as dispersed constellations of unequal relationships, discursively constituted in social "fields of force." Within these processes and structures, there is room for a concept of human agency as the attempt (at least partially rational) to construct an identity, a life, a set of relationships, a society within certain limits and with language -- a conceptual language that at once set boundaries and contains the possibility for negation, resistance, reinterpretation, the play of metaphoric invention and imagination.¹⁰⁷

Power and resistance are redefined and relocated within a comprehensive and vibrant political sphere.¹⁰⁸ Power in gender relations operates in everyday social practices. In organized or diffused contexts, it is established in concrete (e.g., control of means of production) as well covert (e.g., ideals of the feminine) ways. Power embedded in discourses and ensembles of action organize women's oppression through material and ideological forces (control of women's work, sexuality, and procreativity). The accompanying "ensemble of social relations" link "sexually and genderically related" individuals.¹⁰⁹

Dorothy Smith brings to the fore the convergence of institutions or "ruling apparatus" of an "apparently neutral and impersonal rationality" which eclipses women.¹¹⁰ This concept comprehends the hierarchy of patriarchal power and the hegemony against which women variously struggle. Herein, we find different forms of power (in forms of knowledge, organized practices, institutions, consciousness, experience, and agency) that govern and hold women's interests subordinate to men's.

¹⁰⁷ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 42.

¹⁰⁸ The expansion of the concept of the political results from influences of Gramsci's notion of the state as "political society + civil society" or "hegemony protected by the armor of coercion," by Foucault's characterization of power as having a "capillary form of existence," and by the feminist notion of the personal as political. Ana Maria Alonso, "Gender, Power, and Historical Memory: Discourses of Serrano Resistance," in Feminists Theorize the Political, ed. Butler & Scott, 1992, 404.

¹⁰⁹ Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 163.

¹¹⁰ Dorothy E. Smith, "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," in Feminism and Methodology, ed. Harding, 1987, 86-87.

"Relations of ruling" is a concept that grasps power, organization, direction, and regulation as more pervasively structured than can be expressed in traditional concepts provided by the discourses of power. I have come to see a specific interrelation between the dynamic advance of the distinctive forms of organizing and ruling contemporary capitalist society and the patriarchal forms of our contemporary experience.... I am identifying a complex of organized practices, including government, law, business and financial management, profession organization, and educational institutions as well as discourses in texts that interpenetrate the multiple sites of power.¹¹¹

Our individual and group experiences participate in, and are shaped by, this organization since "these are the institutions through which we are ruled and through which we ... participate in ruling."¹¹² Women reproduce the gender hierarchy "but they also confront and discursively penetrate the practices of which they are a part."¹¹³

That certain activities are perceived as 'public' or 'private,' social or individual, is a matter of struggle, not a pre-determined 'given.' Those overtly represented as social confer social power. We need to specify at what level we see women's power operating since private power is not co-equal with social power.

Social power is collective power, reproducible through social processes, relatively autonomous from the characteristics of particular individuals. But private power is purely individual power, contingent as the specific characteristics of particular individuals, reproducible only by chance.¹¹⁴

In marital relations, for example, "manifest power" (visible outcomes of decisions and conflicts), "latent power" (wives may not express their desires since they anticipate negative reactions from their husbands), and "invisible power" (perceptual biases in everyday family life -- e.g., estimation of mutual

¹¹¹ Dorothy E. Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987), 3-4.

¹¹² Smith, "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," 1987, 87.

¹¹³ Davis & Fisher, "Power & the Female Subject," 1993, 10.

¹¹⁴ Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson, "The Subordination of Women and the Internationalisation of Factory Production," in *Of Marriage and the Market: Women's Subordination in International Perspective*, ed. Kate Young et al. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 25.

contribution of spouses to domestic labor and household income) are distinguished. Significantly, Aafke Komter attributes the slow pace of change toward gender equality in marriage to perceptual, thus hidden, power in everyday understandings and legitimations.¹¹⁵

This situation indicates that most women are not often in positions of authority and often exercise their power as influence. They tend to use informal channels (persuasion, suggestion, bargaining or manipulation) rather than command or impose sanctions.

Power and authority are concepts that characterize the way in which decisions are made and carried out. Power, according to Weber, "is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests".... When power rests on legitimacy (that is, on the notion that an individual has the "right" to impose his will), and when it is exercised within a hierarchy of roles, it is defined as authority. Authority ... "is the aspect of a status in a system of social organization ... by virtue of which the incumbent is put in a position legitimately to make decisions which are binding, not only on himself but on the collectivity".... Most systems, of course, contain unassigned power, so that an individual or group not in authority may, in some circumstances, make decisions and gain compliance from those in authority. For instance, in domestic groups where men hold the authority positions and have the legitimate right to make decisions binding on others, women may hold unassigned power, that is, the means of gaining compliance with their actions through withholding food and sexual services.¹¹⁶

The expanded perspective of the political also leads to the discernment that socially specific and subjective language and symbols of everyday life are "used by the powerful to label, define and rank."¹¹⁷ On representing the unpaid caring work of feeding the family, Marjorie DeVault observes:

Discursive constructions of "woman" render invisible or mystify many central activities of women's lives, as well as many differences in the

¹¹⁵ Aafke Komter, "Hidden Power in Marriage," *Gender & Society* 3 no. 2 (June 1989): 214.

¹¹⁶ Louise Lamphere, "Strategies, Cooperation, and Conflict Among Women in Domestic Groups," in *Women, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University, 1974), 99-100.

¹¹⁷ Hare-Mustin & Marecek, "Gender & Meaning of Difference," 1994, 51.

lives and experiences of actual women. These absences and mystifications in everyday language extend as well into ostensibly "objective" discourses, such as the vocabularies and frameworks of the social sciences. To represent women's lives more fully and adequately, then, is an act of resistance to partial, taken-for-granted, ideological understandings of social life. But we can only speak and write from within the systems of thought that we now see as partial, shaped by the interests and concerns of those men who wield power.¹¹⁸

Nevertheless, changes in the social organization of relationships always correspond to changes in representations of power though the direction of change is not necessarily one way.¹¹⁹ Towards a counter-hegemony by weak and subjugated subjects, Spivak articulates a theory of change. The "moment(s) of change" in histories of domination and exploitation are "pluralized and plotted as confrontations rather than transition" and signalled by "a functional change in sign-systems." Notably, there is a shift in the location of "the agency of change," i.e., to the insurgent or the 'subaltern'.¹²⁰

There has been ambivalence, confusion, and even schizophrenia, in the ways 'the West' "invades and redefines the interiority of the colonial subject."¹²¹ Most feminists who seek to contribute to democratic politics pursue specific demands that express women's interests as citizens or feminine values (e.g., morality in the family) that could be a model for its practice.¹²² Mainstream politics have not been changed by prominently placed women leaders; nor have activist pressures by women greatly affected government policy and functioning.¹²³ The unrepresentativeness of Indira Gandhi and

¹¹⁸ Marjorie DeVault, Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991), 227.

¹¹⁹ Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1988, 42-43.

¹²⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," chap. in In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics (New York: Routledge, 1988), 197.

¹²¹ Kalpana Ram, "'First' and 'Third World' Feminisms: A New Perspective?" Asian Studies Review 15 no. 1 (July 1991): 91-92.

¹²² Chantal Mouffe, "Feminism, Citizenship and Radical Democratic Politics," in Feminists Theorize the Political, ed. Butler & Scott, 1992, 373-374.

¹²³ Rajan, "Gender, Leadership & Representation," 1993, 104-105.

Corazon Aquino is seen in the context of the "overall inconspicuousness of women in political activity precisely in those countries that have been led by women."¹²⁴

There are also those who deem "feminist/feminine" values (associated with caring, maternal and pacifist roles) as antithetical to the intrinsically dominant and repressive authority of the state. An opposition is depicted between men's ethics of "rights" against women's ethics of "care."¹²⁵ The ambivalence towards political power leads some feminists to assign women to a separate social sphere (women's culture) and envisage a social order beyond existing political structures and machinery.¹²⁶

Post-modern influences in feminist thought create dilemmas for conceiving women with power as political agents or active subjects.¹²⁷ Confronted by unstable identities and fragile notions of selfhood, we might regard ourselves as 'conflicted actors' rather than 'fragmented selves.'¹²⁸ Women's 'agency' insinuates "those individual or group actions deemed significant within a particular social or institutional setting."¹²⁹ Attending to the scope and limits of women's agency averts the danger of romanticizing resistance and seeing women as 'patient/client/victim' or 'super-agent.'

If 'victim' and 'agent' are adopted as exclusive and excluding labels for the female subject, and if, further, victimhood is equated with

¹²⁴ Rajan, "Gender, Leadership & Representation," 1993, 116-117.

¹²⁵ Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982).

¹²⁶ Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, "Gender, Leadership and Representation: The 'Case' of Indira Gandhi," chap. in *Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture and Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1993), 103-104.

¹²⁷ Flax, *Postmodernism & Gender Relations*, 1990, 40-43.

¹²⁸ Such a definition is framed within a "micro-political theory of agency for multicultural sites of social transformation" in an era fraught with changing kinship structures and gender relationships. Patricia S. Mann, "Introductory Reflections," chap. in *Micro-Politics: Agency in a Postfeminist Era* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994), 2-4.

¹²⁹ Mann, "Introductory Reflections," 1994, 14.

helplessness and agency with self-sufficiency, all feminist politics will be rendered either inauthentic or unnecessary.¹³⁰

While it may be useful to regard resistance as a diagnostic (thus, illuminating power),¹³¹ a focus on the magnitude of power and the activities of the powerful tends to obscure difference and resistance as well as render women powerless.¹³² Paradoxically (like Taoists), we could usefully conceive of the obverse, the resistance or 'power of the powerless.' Women can (and should) exact their needs and prioritize their interests. I believe with others that "women can consciously and collectively change their social place."¹³³

The seizure of power, symbolized as woman's resistance, begins in "the struggles of everyday life to develop consciousness of the powerless."¹³⁴ Their power is not confined to personal, domestic and everyday life and, hence, separate from struggles against dependency and subordination. As well, the power that they are urged to take is not a negative force that denies, restricts, prohibits, or represses; it is positive and productive of forms of pleasure, systems of knowledge, goods, and discourses. Women's involvement in traditional revolutionary movements, for example, has been marked as an "awakening of women's power" rather than a "capturing of state power."¹³⁵

In feminist visions of development, the empowerment of women is premised on the view of women as 'subjects' or 'agents' rather than 'problems'

¹³⁰ Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, "The Subject of Sati: Pain and Death in the Contemporary Discourse on Sati," chap. in Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture and Postcolonialism (London: Routledge, 1993), 35.

¹³¹ Lila Abu-Lughod, "The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women," in Women's Studies, ed. Jackson et al., 1993, 102-103.

¹³² Davis & Fisher, "Power & the Female Subject," 1993, 10.

¹³³ Maggie Humm, ed., Modern Feminisms: Political, Literary, Cultural (New York: Columbia University, 1992), 1.

¹³⁴ Pagaduan, Power, Gender & Resistance, 1992, 25.

¹³⁵ Gail Omvedt, "Women, Peasants, Tribals, Environment," chap. in Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements and the Socialist Tradition in India (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), 230.

targeted by planners and agencies.¹³⁶ Their empowerment does not imply the ability to dominate over others but for the greatest number to increase their own internal resources, strengths, and self-reliance. It begins with the recognition of needs and interests and their prioritization in political claims, bargains, or negotiations. In practical terms, it is the women's "right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material resources."¹³⁷

Distinct forms of patriarchy present women with different rules and call for different strategies to maximize security or optimize life options. Women's movements expose the sociocultural and psychic roots of gender inequities and act upon social and historical realities. Women's groups seek a language and a voice, often through consciousness-raising activities and praxis, and thus, contribute to the growth of wisdom in women's individual and collective lives. These activities lead to shaded meanings of empowerment that encompass a range of strategies involving social mobilization and learning through collective action to changes in individual women's psyche. Enhanced feelings of self-worth arise from mobilization, alliances, and solidarity among similarly situated women. Personally, I also feel so with similarly perceptive men.

2.2.4. *Women's Interests and Women's Politics*

Towards understanding real-life interactions, Jonasdottir's concept of gender interests is valuable. Taken from below, this view is central to the theory of participatory (rather than service) democracy.¹³⁸ It presumes that people participate (i.e., that they try to expand their interests) and thereby

¹³⁶ Bunch & Carrillo, "Feminist Perspectives," 1990, 77.

¹³⁷ Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 74-75.

¹³⁸ Jonasdottir's thinking challenges the Marxist notion of class as the only relevant basic social category; as well, her view of women as a group with shared interests negates the prime significance of the individual of liberal theory. Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 154-157.

shape social reality.¹³⁹ Her distinction between form and content of sex/gender-differentiated interests parallels that between 'agency' and the 'result of agency.' The formal aspect makes up the 'conditions for choice,' where women and men are inter esse (being among) or demanding active participation. The content aspect refers to the 'consequences of choice,' alluding to the participants' substantive views and values that politics puts into effect and distributes as the dynamic of power relations operate.

In individual or collective bargaining situations, women have interests motivated by needs and desires based on historically conditioned circumstances. Their values and preferences may be partly generated by critical emotional responses to specific life situations.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, these are prone to conflicts and compromises. By distinguishing between form and content, women prioritize and determine their needs and desires that remain open to negotiation and conflict.¹⁴¹ Beyond the bearing of children, the gender division of labor is never absolute; nor does the connection between experience and attitude mechanically follow. Hence, the historical character of gender interests may be actualized.¹⁴² On a micro-level analysis of human actions (rather than human nature), individual self-systems, expectancies of others, and contextual influences are among salient factors to the processes by which gender scripts organize human interactions.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Women are not simply another interest group. "The point of seeing women as a group whose position has given rise to special interests . . . means to question from the aspect of sex/gender, the 'individual' as one, and as an isolated unit, without throwing out the individual level as unimportant in social analyses." Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 162.

¹⁴⁰ Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology," 1989, 262.

¹⁴¹ Leela Acharya et al., Institutionalization of Women and Development: Cooptation or Empowerment. A Group Synthesizing Paper for the Women and Development Program: Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands, November 1990 (Quezon City: College of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, n.d.), 7.

¹⁴² Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 157.

¹⁴³ Kay Deaux and Brenda Major, "A Social-Psychological Model of Gender," in Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference, ed. Deborah L. Rhode (New Haven: Yale University, 1990), 97-99.

In development work, women's interests are categorized into strategic and practical needs or claims.¹⁴⁴ 'Strategic' gender interests are formulated from an analysis of women's subordination to men and refer to requirements of an alternative organization of society. 'Practical' gender needs derive from concrete conditions that women experience, including survival.¹⁴⁵ Women's strategic interests address institutional and legal changes and entail long processes. Compliance to a new framework of gender relations cannot be forced unless there is widespread agreement on its premise of an emancipatory project. It is unlikely that strategic interests or claims pertain to poor women whose needs have yet to be satisfied, often incrementally and on a piecemeal basis.

In gender planning, 'interests' are specified as "a prioritized concern" which translates into 'need' for which a means (in response) should satisfy.¹⁴⁶ An important distinction, thus, lies between the concept of interest that "works on the level of human agency and autonomy" and the concept of needs that "works on the level of the content of which is, so to speak, the object for human agency."¹⁴⁷ The needs perspective presupposes that "those affected do not necessarily need to be where the lines are drawn and decisions

¹⁴⁴ Both Moser and Young refer to "practical needs" and "strategic interests"; by comparison, Molyneux refers to "interests"; Friedmann prefers to speak of "political claims." Friedmann, Empowerment, 1992, 112; Moser, "Gender Planning in the Third World," 1989, 1802-1806; and Maxine Molyneux, "Mobilisation Without Emancipation? Women's Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua," Feminist Studies 11 no. 2 (1985): 227-254.

¹⁴⁵ The latter are formulated by the persons concerned as a response to an immediately perceived necessity, like water. Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 38-41.

¹⁴⁶ 'Women's needs' are referred to by planners in general policy terms, but has limited use for planning interventions. It is necessary to distinguish between 'women's interests' and 'strategic and practical gender interests': the former imposes a false homogeneity where there really is a variety of criteria that position women in societies. Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 37-38.

¹⁴⁷ Jonasdottir, "Taking Sex Seriously," 1994, 234.

taken in society."¹⁴⁸ Hence, any categorization of needs implicitly prioritizes for women and may transform a 'private' patriarchy into a 'public' one.¹⁴⁹

Development assistance that addresses women's practical needs does not necessarily affect the conditions by which women pursue strategic interests. An empowerment approach for women may play down the issue of domination and work on practical gender needs to build a support base to address strategic ones.¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, it is important for planners to locate the 'focus of power and control' in gender relations as 'entry points' for interventions into communities. Whether at the level of the family, civil society, the state, and the global system, the focus marks encounters for negotiation and debate on issues identified.¹⁵¹

All women have the political potential to counter pervasive biases that neglect their interests. Nancy Folbre emphasizes that both production and (social) reproduction are affected by forms of collective action.¹⁵² The "costs of children," for example, affect the motives and mechanisms of elder male control over women.¹⁵³ In a metaphorical game, she sees individuals cooperating with various teams to seek their advantage (i.e., their interests), ultimately, to reproduce the social system. Presuming favorable conditions for participation, determinant constraints are objects of human choice and action. Gender and age groups that foster allegiances seek to understand, respond to,

¹⁴⁸ Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 164.

¹⁴⁹ See Nancy Fraser, "Women, Welfare and the Politics of Need Interpretation," chap. in Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1989), 144-160. See also Esther Ngan-ling Chow and Catherine White Berheide, "Introduction: Studying Women, Families, and Policies Globally," in Women, The Family, and Policy: A Global Perspective, ed. Esther Ngan-ling Chow and Catherine White Berheide (Albany: State University of New York, 1994), 1-29.

¹⁵⁰ See Lise Ostergaard, ed., Gender and Development: A Practical Guide (London: Routledge, 1992), 175.

¹⁵¹ Moser brings up this point in discussions of the scope of constraints and opportunities of women NGOs. Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 205-211.

¹⁵² See discussion of production and reproduction on page 110.

¹⁵³ The dynamic of women's interests here cut across issues of economic development, political conflict, and social welfare. Nancy Folbre, Who Pays for the Kids? Gender and the Structures of Constraint (London: Routledge, 1994), 1-2.

and modify social institutions that influence the constraints imposed upon them. Just as women may subordinate their gender interests for their children, wage-earners may subordinate their class for benefits for their gender, race or nation.¹⁵⁴ Even though the greatest potential beneficiaries in the game are women and children who have the least power, "some groups will fare better than others, and there is no guarantee that any particular solution will be stable or optimal."¹⁵⁵

These inequities are both consequences and determinants of degrees of exclusion from social, economic, and political power as well as participation. Hence, Jonasdottir declares that "transactions" rather than "interactions" adequately depicts practical aspects of gender relations. The term incorporates relations stemming from erotic attraction, work, and political relations.¹⁵⁶ It recognizes the bargaining and compromises that realistically occur as women reshape relations with men. Evidently, the concept of interest is not meaningful if limited to the rational search for gain. It cannot transcend the result-oriented and utilitarian conventional understanding to deal with needs like love and caring generated as specific bio/social (material) interests emanating from sex/gender relationships. "Women, to a greater degree than men, and in different ways, initiate, pursue, and support issues concerning bio-social production and reproduction, that is, those questions having to do with control over, responsibility for, and care of people, and other natural resources."¹⁵⁷ Hence, additional categories have to be tested as points of departure to construct valid indicators of a broader reality.

A theory of the division of labor based on gender is necessary but not sufficient for describing and explaining different -- and partially

¹⁵⁴ Folbre, Who Pays for the Kids?, 1994, 2.

¹⁵⁵ Folbre, Who Pays for the Kids?, 1994, 6-7.

¹⁵⁶ Anna G. Jonasdottir, "Sex/Gender, Power, and Politics: Patriarchy in the Formally Equal Society," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed, 1994, 21.

¹⁵⁷ Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 156.

opposed -- sex/gender interests. What is needed, as a further foundation, is a historical theory of the gender division of love.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, Deniz Kandiyoti speaks of "patriarchal bargains" as "the set of rules and scripts regulating gender relations, to which both genders accommodate and acquiesce, yet which may nonetheless be contested, redefined and renegotiated."¹⁵⁹ More narrowly and concretely, Ann Whitehead's "conjugal contract" implies bargaining processes in sharing as the basis for both marriage and household concerns for the daily maintenance of members. The contract refers to the terms by which husbands and wives exchange goods, incomes, and services, including work within the household. It implies specific material interests (e.g., a common household subsistence fund, a family wage, or housekeeping allowance). The terms and nature of such contracts vary according to the location of the household in the wider economy. Hence, the valuing of women's work and incomes becomes an issue since patriarchal ideologies normally render non-comparable the work that women and men do and the incomes that they earn.¹⁶⁰

Moreover, Amartya Sen's notions contribute to an analysis of intrahousehold bargaining processes over material and perceptual conditions germane to gender relations. His views on gender bargaining underscore the significance of qualitative factors such as perceived well-being and agency. Here, women's politics includes struggles for 'entitlements' through 'cooperative conflicts.' The concept of 'entitlements,' usually associated with legal and economic contexts, refers to the bundle of goods and services that a person or household can command through laws, regulations, conventions, rights, and other opportunities.¹⁶¹ 'Cooperative conflicts' imply the

¹⁵⁸ Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 156.

¹⁵⁹ Deniz Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," *Gender & Society* 2 no. 3 (1988): 275, note no. 1.

¹⁶⁰ Ann Whitehead, "I'm Hungry Mum: The Politics of Domestic Budgeting," in *Of Marriage & the Market*, ed. Young *et al.*, 1984, 93-94.

¹⁶¹ See Amartya Kumar Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981).

coexistence of congruence and conflict of interests at different periods and at different levels of human interaction.¹⁶²

What we can eat depends on what food we are able to acquire. The mere presence of food in the economy, or in the market, does not entitle a person to consume it. In each social structure, given the prevailing legal, political, and economic arrangements, a person can establish command over some alternative commodity bundles (any one bundle of which he or she can choose to consume.) These bundles could be extensive, or very limited, and what a person can consume will be directly dependent on what these bundles are. The set of alternative bundles of commodities over which a person can establish such a command is referred to as this person's "entitlements."¹⁶³

Unequal entitlements at home are corollary to relations at more inclusive levels. 'Extended entitlements' alludes to the household's command over limited or extensive commodity bundles of goods and services, the internal allocation of which is transformed through 'cooperative conflicts.'¹⁶⁴

The members of the household face two different types of problems simultaneously, one involving **cooperation** (adding to total availabilities) and the other **conflict** (dividing the total availabilities among the members of the household). Social arrangements regarding who does what, who gets to consume what, and who takes what decisions can be seen as responses to this combined problem of cooperation and conflict. The sexual division of labor is one part of such a social arrangement, and it is important to see it in the context of the entire arrangement.¹⁶⁵

'Entitlements' are thus extended from a focus on the consequences of the system of legal rights to the results of broader and more informal types of rights sanctioned by accepted notions of legitimacy or convention.¹⁶⁶ They call attention to the possible causal influence of subjective perceptions of propriety and legitimacy (perceived interests) on more objective measures of well-being (perceived contributions). These constructions of material and

¹⁶² Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, Hunger and Public Action (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 56-57.

¹⁶³ Dreze & Sen, Hunger & Public Action, 1989, 9.

¹⁶⁴ Amartya K. Sen, "Gender and Cooperative Conflicts," in Persistent Inequalities, ed. Tinker, 1990, 123-149.

¹⁶⁵ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 129.

¹⁶⁶ Dreze & Sen, Hunger & Public Action, 1990, 10-11.

social aspects of entitlements signify sites of transactions that shape women's and men's subjectivities and circumscribe their gender ideology.

'Extended entitlements' meaningfully embraces symbolic dimensions on which women and men may differ through conventions in law, morality, respectability, and decency. Consistent with Sen's approach, and basic towards the formulation of strategies for change, Hanna Papanek stresses the need to assess the symbolic aspects of women's socialization to feelings of value and worth (perceived contribution to survival and well-being) and power (agency) as 'socio-cultural entitlements.' These are inferred from differential outcomes of gender inequalities in intrahousehold consumption which include nutritional intake, clothing, education, health care, and other resource shares.¹⁶⁷

The allocation of material resources reflects judgments on the value of women, in power and authority relations as well as in the moral basis of the consensus on distributive justice. Principles of equality, merit, and relative need or welfare are competing criteria for justice in the distribution of social goods (including property, power, and prestige).¹⁶⁸ Hence, one's material entitlements may be affected by a psychological construct of 'personal entitlement,' deemed synonymous to 'deservingness' as well as 'just desert' or merit.¹⁶⁹ On the whole, these valuations are the sources of discourses and ideologies of femininity and female domesticity that serve as a kind of false consciousness and give license to gender hierarchies.

¹⁶⁷ With the scarcity of studies of expressed consensus about entitlements, ideas of differential entitlement should be pursued through empirical research so that beliefs and practices in the socialization for inequality may be directly confronted. Papanek, "Allocations, Entitlements, & Value," 1990, especially 168-171.

¹⁶⁸ Jane S. Jaquette, "Gender and Justice in Economic Development," in *Persistent Inequalities*, ed. Tinker, 1990, 56-64.

¹⁶⁹ Distributive justice in work and social relations may be based on mechanisms for cognitive processes, namely: a history of occupational and wage discrimination against women, restricted social comparisons, and the ways in which male and female performances, attributes, and tasks are valued in society. Brenda Major, "Gender, Justice, and the Psychology of Entitlement," in *Sex and Gender*, ed. Phillip Shaver and Clyde Hendrick (London: Sage, 1987), 124-148 passim.

However, problems in the formulation of a bargaining problem applied to women's relative disadvantage are recognized:

Especially in dealing with poor economies, there are great advantages in concentrating on such parameters as longevity, nutrition, health and avoidance of morbidity, and educational achievements rather than focusing purely on subjective utility in the form of pleasure, satisfaction, and desire fulfillment, which can be molded by social conditioning and a resigned acceptance of misfortune.¹⁷⁰

Also, where household responsibilities are 'legitimately' expected of females, the position of women of poorer families is especially precarious in the event of 'breakdown' in bargaining processes (i.e., when there is conflict as a result of a failure to cooperate). This situation becomes vivid where threat exists and is carried out during or after the bargaining process. Frequent pregnancy and persistent child rearing activities tend to make the outcome of cooperative conflicts less favorable to women through a worse breakdown position and a lower ability to make a perceived contribution to the economic situation of the family.¹⁷¹

Further qualifications to 'cooperative conflicts' within families or domestic groups derives from the ways conflicts on household arrangements are perceived. They are usually treated as aberrations since they exist within a context of pervasive cooperative behavior.¹⁷² 'Bargaining problems' tend to confine gender issues to the matter of material interests (i.e., the overall affluence and relative shares of the family's welfare).¹⁷³ "Togetherness" in households presumes sharing concerns and interests and acting (as well as benefitting) jointly. Qualitative relations help establish a "directional structure" to relate complex social and personal parameters with differential outcomes to 'extended entitlements' within households. Hence the need for a wider

¹⁷⁰ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 133.

¹⁷¹ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 136-137.

¹⁷² Usual conflicts entail "who does what type of work in the household and enjoys what benefits." Thus, gender conflict in households has some very unique characteristics. Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 147.

¹⁷³ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 148.

informational base for the "game structure" of 'cooperative conflicts' to assess not only interests and well-being but also to evaluate women's contributions and claims. Women's interests tend to be merged with family well-being. Perceptions of well-being and agency are thus important guides for empirical observations of gender divisions in households.

Neither the well-being nor the agency of women coincides with the utilitarian (or welfarist) mental metrics of happiness or desire fulfillment (though there are obvious connections). Well-being may be best analyzed in terms of a person's "functionings" and the "capability" to achieve these functionings (i.e., what the person can do or can be), involving evaluation of the different capabilities in terms of the person's ability to live well and to achieve well-being. But a person is not necessarily concerned only with his or her own well-being and there are other objectives a person may pursue (or value pursuing if he or she had the opportunity to think freely and act freely). Our actual agency role is often overshadowed by social rules and by conventional perceptions of legitimacy. In the case of gender divisions, these conventions often act as barriers, to seeking a more equitable deal, and sometimes militate even against recognizing the spectacular lack of equity in the ruling arrangements.¹⁷⁴

Beyond a person's ownership and control of assets and the social repercussions of the mapping of his/her exchange endowments within households, Bina Agarwal calls attention to entitlements stemming from traditional rights in communal resources (village commons, forests) and external social support systems (such as patronage, kinship, and friendship), i.e., under the rubric of the 'moral economy'.¹⁷⁵ Because communal resources and kin support systems are eroding, access to land, employment, and other income-earning opportunities acquire particular significance. Under

¹⁷⁴ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 148-149.

¹⁷⁵ These entail non-market relationships between social groups or persons in which considerations other than the solely economic take precedence, e.g., informal credit without interest during a drought. Bina Agarwal, "Gender Relations and Food Security: Coping with Seasonality, Drought, and Famine in South Asia," in Unequal Burden: Economic Crises, Persistent Poverty, and Women's Work, ed. Lourdes Beneria and Shelley Feldman (Boulder: Westview, 1992), 181-218, especially 183.

conditions of calamity, women of poor households are more vulnerable to destitution than the men.¹⁷⁶

Importantly, the critical issue may be "not only of being **entitled**, but of being able to enforce these entitlements effectively, through **empowerment**." Consistent with the views expressed above, empowerment (within the family or of the family vis-a-vis the community or the state) is understood as "the ability of an individual or group to successfully challenge existing economic and political power relations and so ensure that decisions relating to entitlement are made in its favor."¹⁷⁷ Prominent practical examples of local initiatives include the Grameen Bank and the Self-Employed Women's Association.¹⁷⁸

In South Asia, group organizing has been one of the significant means of empowering the vulnerable sections ... not only to better enforce their legal entitlements within the community and family, but also expand the scope of these through agitating for changes in the laws themselves. Group approaches have been effective also in the provision of credit to the rural poor. Credit ... plays an important role in the family's coping mechanisms and has received considerable emphasis in State policies for poverty alleviation. Typically, however, government policies, pitched at the individual, have had little success in reaching the poorest.¹⁷⁹

Apart from the range of possible state interventions to improve entitlements and to empower local initiatives of organized groups, there is also the need for measures that strengthen women's bargaining position within the household to "decrease intrafamily gender bias in subsistence resource allocations as well as strengthen the ability of the whole family to cope with calamity."¹⁸⁰ In situating 'food battles' within the family where women and children are persistent losers, a low-key and clinically academic discussion of

¹⁷⁶ Agarwal, "Gender Relations & Food Security," 1992, 199-202.

¹⁷⁷ Agarwal, "Gender Relations & Food Security," 1992, 203-204.

¹⁷⁸ See Poona Wignaraja, Women, Poverty and Resources (Delhi: Sage, 1990) and Ann Leonard, ed., Seeds: Supporting Women's Work in the Third World (New York: Feminist, 1989).

¹⁷⁹ Agarwal, "Gender Relations & Food Security," 1992, 204.

¹⁸⁰ Agarwal, "Gender Relations & Food Security," 1992, 205.

the problem is inadequate; Sen urges that "we can do with a bit more rage, a bit more passion and anger."¹⁸¹ Some interventions are broadening structures of opportunities (e.g., access to credit and technical training) even where women are not known as household heads.¹⁸²

On the whole, different responses have been obtained for women's interests and demands posed at various levels and circumstances. As changes take place (e.g., in the structure of access and control over production and consumption), they reflect the bargaining powers of the respective parties.¹⁸³ More significant attention towards the improvement of women's health is an indicator of favorable transactions or bargains for women. However, despite efforts that address women's important roles in food production and nutritional care for children, there is still a higher incidence of morbidity among women compared with men.¹⁸⁴ Women health activists join debates over demographically driven population policies. They recommend program strategies that empower women to overcome inequities in the distribution of resources and the exercise of human rights. As well, they press for adequate provision of reproductive and sexual health services.¹⁸⁵

The diversity of women's interests, thus, embraces worker exploitation, control of the means of production, and even moral persuasion, calling on the state for rights related to family survival. The abuse of power and women's resistance to rape, domestic violence, child abuse, unfair job dismissal, or

¹⁸¹ Amartya Sen, "Food Battles: Conflicts in the Access to Food," Food and Nutrition 10 no. 1 (1984): 88.

¹⁸² See Marguerite Berger, "Giving Women Credit: The Strengths and Limitations of Credit as a Tool for Alleviating Poverty," World Development 17 no. 7 (Special Issue: "Beyond Survival: Expanding Income-Earning Opportunities for Women in Developing Countries," 1989): 1017-1032.

¹⁸³ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 131.

¹⁸⁴ Gerd Holmboe-Ottesen *et al.*, "Women's Role in Food Production and Nutrition: Implications for Their Quality of Life," Food and Nutrition Bulletin 10 (1988): 8-15.

¹⁸⁵ See Gita Sen *et al.*, "Reconsidering Population Policies: Ethics, Development, and Strategies for Change," in Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights, ed. Gita Sen, *et al.* (New York: International Women's Health Coalition and Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, March 1994), 3-11.

polluted waters are also defined as political matters.¹⁸⁶ Women's individual and collective strategies include the building up of strong relationships with their children and others. In the Latin American experience of economic crisis, the 'split' between public and private spheres breaks down and the spheres of production and reproduction are linked more closely. Women tend to collectivize at a neighborhood level for reproductive concerns.¹⁸⁷ In the face of intensified pressures for survival throughout Southeast Asia, adjustments reveal women's tendencies to engage in extreme 'occupational multiplicity.' Short-term strategies for survival involve food production and distribution, preservation of sources of fuel and water, regulating fertility, or generating forms for health and child care services.¹⁸⁸ Women worker migrants rely on family and kinship systems, create mutual aid networks, or even enter into patron-client relations.¹⁸⁹

Within these contexts of the potential and actual exercise of women's power, novel ways of power in negotiation rather than coercion are observed. The strength and success of any claims women make may be gauged from a combination of the notions mentioned above. To reiterate, the effectiveness of women's claims for their perceived interests (i.e., the conditions for choice for their agency or their bargaining power in cooperative conflicts) and entitlements (i.e., results of agency, consequences of choice, bundles of

¹⁸⁶ Violence associated with power not only exists within their homes where it is often privately tolerated but also radiates up to the international arena where, as war, it is often publicly celebrated. Joke Schrijvers, The Violence of 'Development': A Choice for Intellectuals (Amsterdam: Institute for Development Research Amsterdam, 1993), 9.

¹⁸⁷ Edna Acosta-Belen and Christine E. Bose, "From Structural Subordination to Empowerment: Women and Development in Third World Context," Gender & Society 4 no. 3 (Special Issue: "Women and Development in the Third World," September 1990): 312-313.

¹⁸⁸ Noeleen Heyzer, "Women and Rural Change," chap. in Working Women in Southeast Asia, 1985, 20-21. See also Benjamin White, "Measuring Time Allocation, Decision-making and Agrarian Changes Affecting Rural Women: Examples from Recent Research in Indonesia," IDS Bulletin 15 no. 1 (1984): 18-32.

¹⁸⁹ Heyzer, "Women, Migration, & Income Generation," 1985, 50. See also Cynthia Banzon-Bautista, "The Saudi Connection: Agrarian Change in a Pampangan Village, 1977-1984," in Agrarian Transformations: Local Processes and the State in Southeast Asia, ed. Gillian Hart et al. (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), 144-158.

commodities) is dependent upon their own and others' perception of their resources and contributions for life-giving and life-sustaining conditions.

The above delineation of women's power and gender relations is closely tied up with controversies surrounding the understanding of the processes of production and reproduction and their impact of the mentality of separate spheres and on the valuation of women's work in the gender division of labor. The following exposition deals with these critical conceptions that feature as pangabuhi and pangita among the women of Talangban. They substantiate the inadequacy perceived in the separate spheres model for the analysis of women's situations.

2.3. Production and Reproduction

Processes of production are typically understood in political economy as activities creating material wealth and benefits (surplus value) indispensable for people's existence. In explicitly materialist and economic terms, they refer to the extraction or transformation of natural objects through the deliberate application of human activity (work or labor) on these objects through a particular means (instruments and objects of labor, including skills, technology and capital). People engaged in these endeavors enter into (social) relations of production characterized by the types of their work and degree of control over the means of production (particular modes of production of material wealth). The nature of the relations of production determine features of distribution, exchange, and consumption.

Significant to all this is the understanding that production presumes that (skilled) male work in the 'public' arena is more vital than that of the (unskilled) female which is often 'privately' confined to, and deemed unproductive in, households. In orthodox economics, "exchange values take their concrete form through the market and, in that sense, the market becomes the basic source of information for a quantitative evaluation of society's

output."¹⁹⁰ The gendered domains reflect hierarchies and generate/reinforce ideologies of women's femininity/domesticity. Further, work (labor power) is perceived as a necessary burden which has to be reduced by the development of technology. However, conventional assessments of production and reproduction neglect the social contexts of technology within and beyond households where gendered arrangements permit the use of specific techniques.¹⁹¹ Patriarchal standards go hand in hand with surplus accumulation and expansion.¹⁹²

The significance of women's reproductive work has been one of the most pervasive themes of the revived feminist movement since the 1970s. In contexts of labor and the economy, processes of reproduction entail not only biological or human reproduction and daily maintenance of the labor force (human reproduction) but also the perpetuation of social systems (social reproduction). All tasks involved in human reproduction and daily maintenance are associated with women, even if only childbearing and early nurturing of infants are of biological necessity confined to them. That men are generally absent from these activities is a social phenomenon. Mechanisms such as religion, law, policy, marriage, the family, and inheritance regulate the social reproduction of the household as the means to sustain and reproduce the human species.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ The almost exclusive attention to quantitative relations in neoclassical economics has often led to the identification of these relations with the essence of economic analysis. And, while Marxists insist that hidden behind these quantitative relations are the primary social relations underlying commodity exchange, use value lies beyond the sphere of what is accounted in political economy; hence a relative neglect of noncommoditized sectors, i.e., subsistence production and the household economy. Lourdes Beneria, "Accounting for Women's Work," in Women and Development: The Sexual Division of Labor in Rural Societies, ed. Lourdes Beneria (New York: Praeger, 1982), 128-129.

¹⁹¹ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 128.

¹⁹² Sexism and patriarchy are identified as central ideological and institutional props of the industrial system and its model of accumulation. Maria Mies, "Introduction," in Women: The Last Colony, Maria Mies et al. (London: Zed, 1988), 2.

¹⁹³ See Felicity Edholm et al., "Conceptualizing Women," Critique of Anthropology 3 nos. 9-10 (1977): 101-130; and Olivia Harris and Kate Young, "Engendered Structures: Some Problems in the Analysis of Reproduction," in The Anthropology of Pre-Capitalist Societies, ed. Joel Kahn

Various anthropological and historical investigations have documented a wide variety of gender divisions of labor, kinships structures, and ideological conditions (including taboos and restrictions), practices that constitute power relations between the sexes. Despite historical specificities, Mies maintains that the rise of universalized civilizations is based on conquest and war.¹⁹⁴ Alluding to the origins of slavery as a form of acquisition of labor power, she argues that female slaves were valued not only as agricultural workers but also because they could produce another kind of surplus, more slaves. Notably, this perspective indicates that what is 'necessary' and what is 'surplus' is not confined to an economic question; rather, it is a political and/or cultural one.

We can attribute the asymmetric division of labour between women and men to this predatory mode of production, or rather appropriation, which is based on the male monopoly over means of coercion, that is, arms, and on direct violence by means of which permanent relations of exploitation and domination between the sexes were created and maintained.¹⁹⁵

The processes of production and reproduction were historically separated only with the rise of capitalism in the West which led to 'domestication of women.'¹⁹⁶ However, explaining gender relations as emanating from the division of labor in production privileges the centrality of labor as "the essence of history and being human."¹⁹⁷ In this way, the phenomenon of the 'feminization of poverty' within developed countries has been recognized.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, the persistent denigration of 'the housewife'

and Josep Llobera (London: Macmillan, 1981).

¹⁹⁴ Implicitly, this indicates that the concept of a unilinear, universal process of history may be given up in the analysis of patriarchy. Maria Mies, "Social Origins of the Sexual Division of Labour," chap. in Patriarchy & Accumulation on a World Scale, 1986, 66.

¹⁹⁵ Mies, "Social Origins of the Sexual Division of Labour," 1986, 65-66.

¹⁹⁶ See Barbara Rogers, The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies (New York: St. Martin's, 1979), and Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, Women, Work, and Family, new ed. (New York: Methuen, 1987).

¹⁹⁷ Flax, "Postmodernism & Gender Relations," 1990, 46-47.

¹⁹⁸ See Ruth Sidel, Women and Children Last: The Plight of Poor Women in Affluent America (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986).

and her work has signified "other women" (i.e., of the Third World) as the 'last colony.'

The housewife ... is the result of a protracted historical process comparable with and closely related to that of proletarianization: we, therefore, term this process 'domestication' or 'housewifization' in this context (Hausfrauisierung).... She was created -- by the church, through legislation, medicine and the organization of the workforce (protective legislation, the 'family wage').¹⁹⁹

These notions project a conception of women not only as vast reserves of cheap labor but also as the most docile workers of the world's homes and factories.²⁰⁰ The onerous conditions of sharing in women's increased work load resulting from employment and the control of women's income are indicators of patriarchal control in households.²⁰¹

From many viewpoints, feminists argue that the division of work expresses women's roles in both production and reproduction. Nevertheless, it is useful to recognize that the two concepts are not of the same order.²⁰² Notably, Ken Kusterer asserts that social reproduction underpins all forms of production and is the foundation of the processes which create the material basis for all forms of social existence. He reinterprets Marx's notion of reproduction in a capitalist mode of production as

an ongoing process of production by which a society each day simultaneously (1) replaces the material goods which it has consumed; (2) puts back into its stock of productive capital ("means of production") at least as much as has been depreciated; and (3) reinforces or recreates the institutional structure ("relations of

¹⁹⁹ Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, "Why Do Housewives Continue to be Created in the Third World Too?" in Women: The Last Colony, Mies et al. 1988, 159. See also Maria Mies, "Colonization and Housewifization," and "Housewifization International: Women and the New International Division of Labour," chaps. in Patriarchy & Accumulation on a World Scale, 1986, 74-111; and 112-144.

²⁰⁰ See Elson and Pearson, "The Subordination of Women," 1984, 18-40.

²⁰¹ See Devaki Jain and Nirmala Banerjee, eds., The Tyranny of the Household: Investigative Essays on Women's Work (New Delhi: Shakti Books, 1985), and Maithreyi Krishnaraj and Karuna Chanana, eds., Gender and the Household Domain: Social and Cultural Dimensions (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989).

²⁰² Maureen Mackintosh, "Gender and Economics: The Sexual Division of Labour and the Subordination of Women," in Of Marriage & the Market, ed. Young et al., 1984, 12.

production") by once again perpetuating the work role experiences of the past into the present.²⁰³

The process of (temporally simple or extended) social reproduction of households constitutes the means to sustain and reproduce the human species as well as the work (labor power) expended by production. What is referred to as 'social relations of production' is better regarded as 'relations of human reproduction.' These rest on the system wherein men hold power over women's sexuality and labor. Seen in this manner, the understanding of women's oppression goes beyond the 'public' realm of wage work and motivations of material gain or profit and is linked with the work that women do in the 'private' sphere. Public and private lives are integrated and obtain their meaning from historical circumstances, cultural contexts, individual identities, and actions.²⁰⁴

Among those who challenge Marxist orthodoxy and its productivist bias, Delia Aguilar admits: "I eventually doubted the sufficiency of the paradigm that sees all aspects of social relations as determined by the mode of production, and situated women's emancipation mainly in their participation in the public realm."²⁰⁵ The isolation of 'separate spheres' fragments different aspects of women's lives since there are "indissociable links between the public world of paid work where judicial and other inequalities are acknowledged to exist and the private domain of the family where women were presumed to exert influence."²⁰⁶

The allocation by gender of complementary tasks presumed to be biologically linked, the collapsing of the wife's treasurer function with

²⁰³ Ken Kusterer, "The Imminent Demise of Patriarchy," in *Persistent Inequalities*, ed. Tinker, 1990, 243-245.

²⁰⁴ The characteristics of the gendered domains of public and private and their relationship to power were never more clear than in the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill controversy in 1991. See Reverby & Helly, "Converging on History," 1992, 23-24.

²⁰⁵ Aguilar, *Filipino Housewives Speak*, 1991, 4.

²⁰⁶ Delia D. Aguilar, "Feminist Dialogue: A Rejoinder," *New Progressive Review* 3 no. 1 (1986): 56. See the source of the exchange in Delia D. Aguilar, "Managing Subsistence: Matrix of Equality or Subordination," *New Progressive Review* 2 no. 1 (1985): 35-38; and Rosanne Rutten, "A Feminist Dialogue," *New Progressive Review* 2 (1985) no. 4: 54-56.

possession of power, the precaution that development programs avoid stirring tranquil marital waters -- all these reflect alignment with the philosophy of the separate spheres.²⁰⁷

Gender-typing incorporates male dominance and control of women's sexuality which are especially rigid in social relations of human reproduction (marriage, procreation, and filiation).²⁰⁸ Significantly, while Jonasdottir uses the vocabulary of production/reproduction from the materialist conception of history, she adopts creation/re-creation as synonyms in the field of sexuality.²⁰⁹ The inclusive reach of sex/gender connections is rendered by Elizabeth Eviota thus:

The scope of political economy is the process by which human beings, as they daily renew themselves, transform nature into objects for their own consumption. Sex is the process by which human beings reproduce themselves from generation to generation. Sex and the political economy then is the relationship of processes which satisfy three fundamental needs: hunger, sex and procreation. But sex is also the category which differentiates human beings engaged in the process of transforming material life daily and of reproducing themselves generationally. Sex and the political economy then, is also the relationship between women and men, which sex works at what, and who does what to whom.²¹⁰

The merits of an emphasis on reproduction lies in its capacity to facilitate the integration of different levels of reality: from the most private (sexuality and conjugal relations) to the most public (market relations and state policies), as well as community and institutional intermediaries, including religious organizations.²¹¹ Women's work in 'public' and 'private' domains

²⁰⁷ Aguilar, "The Social Construction of the Filipino Women," 1988, 45.

²⁰⁸ Mackintosh, "Gender & Economics," 1984, 12-13.

²⁰⁹ She even suggests that we could speak of historically and culturally variable modes of production or creation of people. Jonasdottir, "Taking Sex Seriously," 1994, 219.

²¹⁰ Theoretically, Eviota deals with gender relations, looking at women in articulation with societal processes, informed by and responding to them. She admits the specificity of social transformations, and that the search for the origins of sex/gender asymmetries is a continuing and collective process of ethnographic unravelling and reconstruction, posed more as probabilities and connections rather than as certainties and determinations. Eviota, The Political Economy of Gender, 1992, v.

²¹¹ Dagenais & Piche, "Concepts & Practices of Development," 1994, 61-62.

spans the totality of production processes in traditional as well as in modern societies where their unpaid or low-wage labor is actually burdened with most of these tasks.²¹² Ironically, these remain trivialized or underrated, if not ignored, in national accounts and even within their own homes.

Concern over these overwhelming implications of the gender division of work is foremost among feminists. Hence, they promote a thorough deconstruction of the divide between production and reproduction and parallel "colonizing divisions." Reproductive work implies a number of productive tasks. Denoting a continuum (rather than an opposition) between production and reproduction, and ultimately with consumption, Kusterer declares that "housework is production, not reproduction or consumption." That the market is a rigid separation between production and consumption is ultimately false since all production is also consumption.²¹³ The oversight of non-market household production of use values not only derives from monetary considerations but also from ideological overtones of "simple sexist domain assumptions."²¹⁴ The issue of remuneration brings out systematic biases in the perception of who is producing and earning and determines who are primary participants in development projects.²¹⁵

Further, feminist critiques of patriarchal and rational science and technology reinstate a valuing of a holistic and humanistic respect for diversity. Accordingly, instead of regarding these processes of production and reproduction as operating in contradiction, their combined functions for producing and maintaining life are emphasized. Some writers argue that a unity of life processes is embodied in humanity's interactions with nature. However, nature's diversity, its regenerative capacity, and its production of life

²¹² Subsistence activities usually omitted in statistics of production and incomes are largely women's work. Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development, 1970, 163.

²¹³ Kusterer, "The Imminent Demise of Patriarchy," 1990, 242-245.

²¹⁴ Kusterer, "The Imminent Demise of Patriarchy," 1990, 241.

²¹⁵ Sen, "Gender & Cooperative Conflicts," 1990, 130.

are not often recognized since all production is essentially conceived as deriving from human and technological intervention.²¹⁶

Upholding the feminine principle in cosmology and critiquing development, Vandana Shiva indicts colonialism and contemporary development for wholesale extraction and transformation of natural resources:

The existence of the feminine principle is linked with diversity and sharing. Its destruction through homogenisation and privatisation leads to the destruction of diversity and of the commons. The sustenance economy is based on a creative and organic nature, on local knowledge, on locally recycled inputs that maintain the integrity of nature, on local consumption for local needs, and on the marketing of surplus beyond the imperatives of equity and ecology. The commodity and cash economy destroys natural cycles and reduces nature to raw materials and commodities. It creates the need for purchase and sale to centralised inputs and commodity markets. When production is specialised and for export, surplus becomes a myth. There is only indebtedness, of peoples and nations. The debt trap is part of global commodity production and sale which destroys nurturing nature and nurturing economies in the name of development.²¹⁷

Hence, as Mies avers, the aim of all work and human endeavour ought not to be "a never-ending expansion of wealth and commodities"; rather, it should be human happiness or the production of life itself.²¹⁸ Masculine values that determine the development and application of technology should be redirected toward new ones. Similarly, values for economic growth that emphasize hierarchy, competition, immediate measurable results, material accumulation, depersonalization, and economic and political expansionism should be reoriented to goals of human growth, conservation, decentralization, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and caring.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Vandana Shiva, "Women, Ecology and Health: Rebuilding Connections," in Close to Home: Women Reconnect Ecology, Health and Development Worldwide, ed. Vandana Shiva (Philadelphia: New Society, 1994), 8.

²¹⁷ Shiva, Staying Alive, 1988, 45.

²¹⁸ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 212.

²¹⁹ Susan C. Bourque and Kay B. Warren, "Access is not Enough: Gender Perspectives on Technology and Education," in Persistent Inequalities, ed. Tinker, 1990, 86.

Both nature and women are producers (and reproducers) of life. Women reproduce life not only biologically but also through their provision of sustenance. "The basis of human social life is that people, related in one way or another to each other, use their powers to act upon nature. Nature is the absolute source of life, and for people nature has two sides, the environmental and the human side."²²⁰ These connections are most evident among forest-dwellers and peasants who have not been colonized and broken up to participate in life-destroying activities, and where women have not yet lost their capacity to provide for sustenance directly from nature.²²¹ However, colonization, commodification, commercialization, and 'maldevelopment' have alienated and deprived women of their ecological and plural power as well as autonomy. Consequently, both their ways of life and traditional knowledge are marginalized. The apparent neglect or rejection of these positions governs the subordinated status of women's work.

2.4. Work and the Gender Division of Labor

Though an apparently fundamental and unambiguous word, 'work' lacks precision and is often confused with employment. This confusion arises from an over-emphasis on links with a specific conception of production and a neglect of other productive work connected with reproduction and consumption (e.g., self-employment, and unwaged work). Thus, 'work' is regarded as an income-earning activity involved in participation in paid production where social relations based on wage labor and capital are central. Productive labor hinges upon the creation of surplus (commodities, including labor itself) with an exchange value in the market. Surplus is employed for personal consumption or as a means of production (use value) and/or expressed in exchange relations (exchange value). This narrow concept of productive work is still the most formidable hurdle in women's struggles to understand their

²²⁰ Jonasdottir, "Taking Sex Seriously," 1994, 222.

²²¹ Shiva, Staying Alive, 1988, 38-48. See also Irene Dankelman and Joan Davidson, Women and Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future (London: Earthscan, 1988).

own contributions to home and society both under capitalism and actually existing socialism.²²²

Feminist reconstructions of 'work' sees it as all the labor involved in "acquiring what is deemed necessary for survival." It includes unpaid work on family farms or farms, volunteer work for organizations and individuals, work done for pay in the informal (or 'underground') economy, and all unpaid domestic work.²²³ Hence, it encompasses 'work' perceived as 'private' and undertaken for 'love' rather than wages. Most of women's work remains 'invisible' because their goods and services are not priced and traded in the labor market and economy; most of men's work is 'public,' valued directly through remuneration or indirectly through status and political power.²²⁴

Attention on reproduction highlights women's work beyond the formal and even the informal labor force, especially at home. What continues to be largely ignored is the comprehension that 'work' was formed as a contradiction to 'home,' a sphere of 'non-work' for men who historically earned the however inadequate 'family wage.' Hence, there are no markers to distinguish work from rest and/or leisure for women.

It is for men that "home" is the domain of "non-work," where they expect to relax, let their barriers down and be looked after. Home and work are not opposite for women, even if they are experienced as such by men. Much of their "work" takes place at "home"; wives might act as unpaid and unacknowledged secretaries to their husbands as well as taking on domestic responsibilities and "supplementary" paid work. Home is not a respite from work but another workplace. For some women, work may actually be a respite from home, as the place where

²²² Mies, "Social Origins of the Sexual Division of Labour," 1986, 47-48.

²²³ Unpaid domestic work includes management of the household and its finances, bearing and rearing of children, personal services provided for the elderly and for husbands and children of all ages. In the underground economy, women's work include selling of sex, typing, cleaning, babysitting, laundry, and sewing services. Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, Theorizing Women's Work (Toronto: Garamond, 1990), 13.

²²⁴ Moser, "Gender Planning," 1989, 1801.

they relax and have their social time, away from the demands of husbands and children!²²⁵

Most attempts to reconceptualize 'economic activity' involve the quantification of women's work in households, signifying a move to 'formalize' the division of work in the informal economy. However, orthodox economics applies market-oriented microeconomics concepts to the domestic economy, and thus, tends to blur the distinction between use and exchange values as it describes changes that occurs in the economic system. It assumes that housework might not produce an income but is implicitly a part of production. Hence, if women's work is not paid, it should at least be imputed or calculated as part of the GNP.²²⁶ Thus, the new household economics (NHE) does not contest the division of work between the productive and public (male) domain and the unproductive and private (female) domain. While it recognizes multiple activities of different household members, the NHE approach rests on an analogy between the household and the firm. Households are formed by means of a marriage market and they "deploy labor in response to differences in marginal productivity between home and market."²²⁷ Hence, its primary concerns focus on the measurement of time and labor as resources allocated for the production of 'home goods' as outcomes of women's work (e.g., children, health, and nutritional status).²²⁸

These studies observe that the analysis of labor supply from households to labor markets does not appraise the demand for labor within the household

²²⁵ Linda McDowell and Rosemary Pringle, "Defining Work," in Defining Women: Social Institutions and Gender Divisions, ed. Linda McDowell and Rosemary Pringle. (Cambridge: Polity with The Open University, 1992), 131.

²²⁶ See Marilyn Waring, If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics (San Francisco: Harper, 1988).

²²⁷ Nancy Folbre, "The Black Four of Hearts: Toward a New Paradigm of Household Economics," in A Home Divided: Women and Income in the Third World, ed. Daisy Dwyer and Judith Bruce (Stanford: Stanford University, 1988), 251.

²²⁸ See Elizabeth King and Robert E. Evenson, "Time Allocation and Home Production in Philippine Rural Households," in Women and Poverty in the Third World, ed. Mayra Buvinic et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1983), 35-61.

itself.²²⁹ They recommend that the value of women's time is raised by improving the economic opportunities and investment in human capital of women as a means to indirectly change behavior and resource flows within the household, and thus, improve the well-being of women and children in particular.²³⁰ Significantly, they also account for women's performance of community obligations that eventually redound to the welfare of their families and, thus, demonstrate the breadth of women's work. For practical purposes, data on the quantification of housework are useful as educational tools for changing women's own perceptions of themselves and of the work they actually perform.²³¹

Other ways of thinking about 'work' and 'non-work' by feminists and Marxists distinguish between use and exchange values, raise political questions on the economic system, and focus on the role of women within this system. While women's domestic work does not necessarily produce earnings for the household, it has been essential to the living unit's reproduction. It extends beyond 'subsistence production' into 'social production' and contributes to the households' capacity for accumulation.²³² With women and peasants as subsistence producers, the separation of 'subsistence production' from 'social production' is a basic contradiction within the capitalist mode of production but fundamentally necessary for capitalist accumulation.²³³

²²⁹ Robert E. Evenson, "Food Policy and the New Home Economics," Food Policy 6 no. 3 (August 1981): 180.

²³⁰ Based on an assessment of three studies (including one in the Philippines). Benjamin Senauer, "The Impact of the Value of Women's Time on Food and Nutrition," in Persistent Inequalities, ed. Tinker, 1990, 161.

²³¹ Miralao, "Time Allocation Studies," 1992, 33.

²³² Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, "Subsistence Production and Extended Reproduction: A Contribution to the Discussion About Modes of Production," Journal of Peasant Studies 9 no. 4 (July 1982): 241-254.

²³³ Bennholdt-Thomsen, "Subsistence Production," 1982, 242.

Lourdes Beneria asserts that social relations are embodied in use-value production and should be included in analyses of economic activity.²³⁴ Like the NHE, her approach implies replacing the relationship between wage labor and capital with a comprehensive contradiction between human labor (including non-wage labor) and capital. Challenging the prevailing bias, she declares:

If we use the expression "make" instead of "earn" a living, it is ... [clear] that very little difference exists between the various types of subsistence and domestic activities in terms of their contribution to making a living. A similar argument can be made for activities such as food processing, cooking, washing, repairing the house, and taking care of the aged. If, further, we include reproductive tasks as an integral part of the overall process of production/reproduction, we are adding activities such as the care of children to the above list. Taken together, they include all use-value production -- of tangible goods as well as services. On the other hand, the list would not include nonwork activities such as recreation and leisure.²³⁵

Another view stresses women's activities beyond being participants in the labor force. Papanek suggests that women's 'family status-production work' should also be assessed, highlighting the outcomes rather than the content of unremunerated women's work. In the absence of institutional substitutes, household maintenance and home production tasks include participation in the children's schooling, direct 'status politics' in the community, and performance of religious ritual.²³⁶ Status-production work can be a multiplier of the efforts of earning members as well as a causal factor of stratification among households. Women's voluntary withdrawal from paid work may be a strategy as well as result of gaining social mobility, though only some households can afford to have members do this. When with paid

²³⁴ Her arguments relate to issues of the invisibility, underestimation, and subordination of women's economic activities in the compilation of labor statistics which concentrates on "how people earn their living." Beneria, "Accounting for Women's Work," 1982, 119-147.

²³⁵ Beneria, "Accounting for Women's Work," 1982, 137.

²³⁶ Papanek, "Allocations, Entitlements, & Value," 1990, 167-168.

work, a manner of status-production (not just consumption) may be the purchase of consumer items for show.²³⁷

Other expressions of the feminist rejection of dominant paradigms circumscribing 'work' seek to integrate material and cultural elements for a global new society.²³⁸ Mies, Jonasdottir, and Shiva speak of 'work' not only as 'making a living' but as 'producing life.' Mies' concept of labor takes a mother and peasants as models of the 'worker' in an alternative economic system. Herein, labor is a burden as well as a source of enjoyment, self-fulfillment and happiness, an interplay found in the work-process involved in non-market oriented subsistence production. This view carries an implicit revision of the concept of time "not segregated into portions of burdensome labour and portions of supposed pleasure and leisure, but in which times of work and times of rest and enjoyment are alternating and interspersed."²³⁹

Appropriate labour which is spent in the **production of life, or subsistence production** ... is largely non-wage labour mainly done by women. As this **production of life** is the perennial precondition of all other historical forms of productive labour, including that under conditions of capitalist accumulation, it has to be defined as **work** and not as unconscious "natural" activity.²⁴⁰

Mies' view stresses the need to reject the narrow definition of productive labor (i.e., as only as producing surplus value as long as it can tap, extract, exploit other resources) and reassess the significance of women's work.

A feminist concept of labour has to be oriented towards the **production of life** as the goal of work and not the production of **things and of wealth** ... of which the production of life is then a secondary derivative. The **production of immediate life** in all aspects must be the core concept for the development of a feminist concept of work.²⁴¹

²³⁷ Papanek, "Allocations, Entitlements, & Value," 1990, 168.

²³⁸ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 211.

²³⁹ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 212-213; 216-217.

²⁴⁰ Mies, "Social Origins of the Sexual Division of Labour," 1986, 47.

²⁴¹ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 217.

The 'production of immediate life' refers to childcare, housework, the care of the sick and the old, the relationship work, or all types of work usually considered 'housework.' All these should be shared by every man, woman or child; no one should be able to buy himself free from this work. "Only by doing this life-producing and life-preserving work **themselves** will they be able to develop a concept of work which transcends the exploitative capitalist patriarchal concept."²⁴²

Mies' position characterizes work as a "direct and sensual interaction with nature, with organic matter and living organisms." Work will retain its usefulness, necessity and purpose only by the gradual elimination of the division and the distance between production and consumption.²⁴³

Transcending the framework of capitalist expansion and accumulation, her views reverse the expansion of forces of production through the development of technology and the non-reciprocal exploitation of nature, women, and colonies. Another aspect of her alternative economy is a shift "from economies **outside** ... national boundaries towards greater **autarky**." She admits that "a totally self-sufficient economy or society is an abstraction, but a largely self-sufficient economy is possible."²⁴⁴

These struggles for autonomy over production are accompanied by struggles for human dignity, most explicit in contemporary demands of women worldwide for autonomy over their lives and bodies.

Body politics implies a struggle against all kinds of direct violence against women (rape, woman-beating, clitoridectomy, dowry-killings, the molestation of women), and against all forms of indirect or structural violence embedded in other exploitative and oppressive relations, like class and imperialist relations, as well as in patriarchal institutions like the family, medicine, and the educational systems. Within this sphere of **body politics**, there is unity among women about the central goal of their struggles. This is ultimately the insistence on the human essence of women, on their dignity, integrity and

²⁴² Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 222.

²⁴³ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 218-219.

²⁴⁴ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 219-221, note no. 7.

inviolability as human beings, and a rejection of their being made into objects or into natural resources for others.²⁴⁵

Historical and practical material circumstances not only create different needs, interests, and priorities for women. They also act as constraints on the form and content of negotiation processes between women and men.²⁴⁶

Jonasdottir's formulation is meant to interpret women's perceptions and experiences in 'formally equal' democratic societies where social forces that shape "possibilities in life as women and men" have centered on the sexual relationship.²⁴⁷ The material character of sex/gender identities and interests demonstrates male power and closely weaves structural relations of not only economy/labor but also sexuality/love. In effect, she identifies a view of legitimated agency as a parallel way of looking at Smith's "relations of ruling" or Mies' "patriarchy," all of which are variable expressions of the existence of gender hierarchies and inequalities.

Women and men, and people as sexual beings in general, are related to each other in the specific process of production (and reproduction) of life. In this process we (people as gendered sexual beings) are the productive agents as well as the products. And in this process our living human bodies-and-minds are both the raw materia (which in this case is social by nature) and the means of production. What men control and exploit in this mode of production is not primarily women's work and labor power but women's love and the living power love results in. The specific product, the result of this process of human practice, which men appropriate incomparably more and otherwise than women do, is thus not directly or primarily of an economic nature. The sex/gender specific product is not "surplus value" measurable in money or in capital. It is surplus gendered dignity, that is, a legitimate socioexistential power of agency. This

²⁴⁵ Mies, "Towards a Feminist Perspective of a New Society," 1986, 230. Mies provides a caveat to the notion of autonomy. Individualism, ultimately based on the 'freedom' of private owners of property and their purchasing power, is Western feminism's most serious handicap. "Instead of seeking a social solution to some of the problems afflicting women, the market and technology offer them an individual solution in the form of a commodity, at least to those who have money." (p. 212, including note no. 3).

²⁴⁶ Jonasdottir, "Sex/Gender, Power, & Politics," 1994, 24.

²⁴⁷ This has become "central in a way it was not when our chains were directly formalized and perfectly visible in laws, or fixed in almost insurmountable economic obstacles." Jonasdottir, "Sex/Gender, Power, & Politics," 1994, 24.

surplus power, then, is used (consumed) for achievements and accumulation of gendered control in economic, political, and other social activities. The collective, structured form of this male power should be defined in terms of Herrschaft, or authority in the Weberian sense.²⁴⁸

Jonasdottir distinguishes two dimensions of work as the 'production of immediate life': namely, the 'production of the means of existence' and the 'production of people' (of life itself). For this reason, the sexual struggle does not merely revolve around work nor products of work, but on human love: caring and ecstasy, and the products of these activities.

Women and men, in their total intercourse in pairs and groups, also create each other. And the needs and capacities that generate this creative process have our bodies-and-minds as their intertwined living sources. These needs and capacities must be satisfied and developed for the human species to survive, and for us as individuals to lead a good and dignified life. Our bodies and souls are both means of production and producers of this life process, and herein lies the core of the power struggle between the sexes.²⁴⁹

To accept a focus on the production of life (rather than the 'production of the means of existence') is to embrace our existence as sexual beings from societal and historical oppositions (i.e., the unequal power relations between sexes) formed by this production process. Jonasdottir's theory of interest contends that "by focusing on conditions of choice and not just on the contents of those choices, people as producers/creators of their life conditions are seen as united with people as consumers/choosers of ready-made packages."²⁵⁰

However, interests are pursued better once needs are fulfilled. Indeed, productivity from the perspective of survival differs significantly from productivity defined in contexts of processes of capital accumulation. Shiva supports Mies' vision appropriate to the situation of poor women:

²⁴⁸ Sex and class (but not race nor ethnic oppression) are "the only societal relational concepts that point to such kind of **productive processes** (of life and the means of life) that **cannot be substituted for anything else** (that is, how or why they are 'determining in the last instance')." Jonasdottir, "Common Oppression," 1994, 39-40.

²⁴⁹ Jonasdottir, "Sex/Gender, Power, & Politics," 1994, 22-24.

²⁵⁰ Jonasdottir, "The Concept of Interest," 1994, 167.

The recovery of the feminine principle would allow a transcendence and transformation of the patriarchal foundations of maldevelopment. It would redefine growth and productivity as categories linked to production -- not the destruction -- of life.

The recovery of the feminine principle is thus simultaneously an ecological and feminist political project that legitimizes the ways of knowing and being that create wealth by enhancing life and diversity and that delegitimizes the knowledge and practice of resource destruction as a basis for capital accumulation.²⁵¹

It is in these reformulations of work as both production and reproduction that we see women working, i.e., producing or creating lives. This is possible only if we are able to look beyond women as 'problems' or 'victims' and willing to acquiesce to new understandings of power and politics. Beyond educating ourselves on the richness of women's knowledge and history, there is also a need to engender women's power and leadership through alliances for social change. Accordingly, research and development work should increasingly support women's valuable activities, power, and creativity.

For the study on hand, some elucidation of these and alternate notions related to peasant fishing households, especially in the Philippines, is necessary. The conceptual framework extends to discussions in chapter 3 that lead towards the understanding of the situation of women and fishers as peasants. This is accompanied by reviews of the literature on conditions of the Philippine fisheries and gender studies on Philippine peasant fisheries.

²⁵¹ Shiva, Staying Alive, 1988, 13.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (II)

3.1. Women and Fishers among Peasants

Apart from general discourses that shape gender relations, specific material and ideological constraints emerging from within a peasant economy and society that are relevant to the pangabuhi and pangita of the women of Talangban. Their influence on the women's strategies and contributions to reproductive and productive activities of their households lie at the core of this investigation.

Following the assumption that women and peasants, allied with nature, are models for workers in an alternate social order, peasants in this study are presumed to be various types of small-scale rural workers. This understanding unifies ideas about peasants distilled from various conceptions and empirical realities of rural life. Moreover, it allows for a consideration of peasant fishing households as units of production, exchange, and consumption based on parameters of empirical situations.

The 'peasant' concept has been construed as an ahistorical category associated with 'traditional' and rural existence where agriculture prevails. Here, individuals and groups are engaged in subsistence and/or commercial cultivation of food and fiber products. In post-colonial societies, the label 'peasant,' as used by educated town-dwellers, tends to be a semantic successor to 'native,' with condescending, derogatory, and even racist undertones.¹ It is also linked with rustic or 'folk' qualities in contrast to the 'modern' lifestyles of town or city dwellers.² Some views emphasize their being a residual category, dependent on modern urban culture while exploited and subordinated

¹ Polly Hill, Development Economics on Trial: The Anthropological Case for Prosecution (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1986), 8.

² As communities, rather than as individuals, there are typologies of peasants within Durkheim's opposition of organic and mechanical solidarity as well as Tonnies' Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. See Ma. Cynthia Banzon-Bautista, "Capitalism and the Peasantry: A Review of the Empirical Literature," Philippine Sociological Review 31 nos. 3-4 (July-December 1983): 17.

by it. Contemporary critiques of an 'urban bias' projects the perception of interests that work against and subordinates efficient peasant agriculture.³

Despite numerous studies on small fisher communities, the understanding of peasants remains both land- and male-oriented.⁴ Yet the specification of production, exchange, and consumption relations developed from circumstances of agriculture are all applicable to fisheries. Peasants have been characterized as "small agricultural producers, who, with the help of simple equipment and the labour of their families, produce mostly for their own consumption, direct or indirect, and for the fulfilment of obligations to holders of political and economic power."⁵ Based on an extensive study of Kelantan fisheries in Malaysia, Raymond Firth outlines characteristics which incorporate small-scale fisherfolk:

Such a peasant economy is not necessarily either a closed economy or a pre-capitalist economy in the literal sense of these terms. It commonly has external market relationships. There is production of a limited range of capital goods, with some degree of individual control over them; there is some lending of them out to people requiring them, and interest in commodity or money form may exist as an economic category. There may even be some persons whose major economic role is the provision of such capital goods for the process of production. But the economy does not function mainly by its dependence on foreign markets, nor do its providers of capital constitute a separate class, nor has its elementary capitalism developed any concomitants of extensive wage labour and complete divorce of the worker from control of the means of production.⁶

³ See Michael Lipton, Why Poor People Stay Poor: A Study of Urban Bias in World Development (London: Temple Smith, 1977).

⁴ See Conner Bailey, "Social Relations of Production in Rural Malay Society: Fishing, Rice Farming, and Rubber Tapping," Paper presented at the 88th Annual Meeting American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., 15-19 November 1989; Thomas M. Fraser, Jr., Fishermen of South Thailand: The Malay Villagers (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966); Richard B. Pollnac, ed., Panamanian Small-Scale Fishermen: Society, Culture, and Change (Kingston: International Center for Marine Resource Development, University of Rhode Island, 1977).

⁵ Teodor Shanin, "Introduction: Peasantry as a Concept," in Peasants and Peasant Societies: Selected Readings, ed. Teodor Shanin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 3.

⁶ Raymond William Firth, Malay Fishermen: Their Peasant Economy (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1966), 5.

The technical factors, whether tools and traction in agriculture, or boats and gear in fishing, are relatively simple. The production units are small and a set of persons often fulfils all three functions of capitalist-rentier, organizer of production, and worker. The allocation of the product is unclearly defined when the producing unit is an individual family or based on rules of custom. There are also difficulties in establishing clear-cut categories of rent, interest, profits and wages. Moreover, "inequalities in the possession of capital goods are often levelled out or at least lessened by free borrowing or the exercise of communal rights, on a scale or of a kind not ordinarily operative in a capitalist economy."⁷

Admittedly, "analytic marginality does not imply numerical insignificance or particular instability."⁸ As individuals, households, or other groups, difficulties in devising precise contexts for peasants (including artisans, traders, farmers, farm laborers, fishers, pastoralists) lies in the complexities of differentiation among them.⁹ Nonetheless, it has been argued that the wide range of 'adaptive problems' in fishing communities are capable of generating wisdom in the use of gender as a conceptual tool in social analysis especially in areas imperiled by modernization and development processes.¹⁰

The general absence of recognition of women's importance in fishing communities reveals that the idea of progress through technological change is informed not only by Western class-based assumptions but also by gender bias.¹¹ Much of research and development work as well as established

⁷ Firth, Malay Fishermen, 1966, 6.

⁸ Shanin, "Introduction: Peasantry as a Concept," 1987, 5-6.

⁹ Hill, Development Economics on Trial, 1986, 15-16.

¹⁰ In a variety of material and psychological situations, essays in Jane Nadel-Klein and Donna Lee Davis, eds., To Work and To Weep: Women in Fishing Economies, ed. Jane Nadel-Klein and Donna Lee Davis (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1988) highlight "the nexus of subsistence and ideology in fishing economies in order to examine some complex systemic relationships between work, gender, power, and prestige." (p. 1-2).

¹¹ Jane Nadel-Klein and Donna Lee Davis, "Introduction: Gender in the Maritime Arena," in To Work and To Weep, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 17.

academic fields and disciplines ignore the fact that the division of labor among peasants is in fundamental ways structured along gender lines. Agricultural economics, for example, generally treats 'labor' as a concept undifferentiated by gender. Peasant studies is replete with references to 'the peasant 'he,' despite the fact that wives and daughters of male peasants not only carry out tasks crucial to the economic and social survival of male-headed peasant households. The latter are often major economic 'actresses' in their own right as the primary food producers and as rural traders.¹²

In most contemporary contexts, peasant societies include simple commodity producers and market-oriented entrepreneurs.¹³ The women and men in peasant households exist where there are established systems of private property, competition, and a market circulation of commodities.¹⁴ However, competition may not exclusively nor principally define social relations in these communities since neither peasants nor their households relate to markets individually.¹⁵ Attention has been drawn to reciprocal and sharing practices related to cohesive notions of the peasants' "shared poverty" and subsistence ethic or "moral economy."¹⁶ Nor are peasants usually organized and able to mobilize on a large-scale for common economic or political purposes. Their vulnerability vis-a-vis external forces is demonstrated in World Bank-supported

¹² Christine Pelzer White, "Rural Women: Issues for Research, Policy and Organisation for Gender Equality," *IDS Bulletin* 15 no. 1 (1984): 1.

¹³ This understanding is drawn from empirical generalizations of peasant studies or from distinctions of peasants from theoretical and observed characteristics of simple commodity producers. Ma. Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista, "Capitalism and the Social Differentiation of the Philippine Peasantry" (Ph.D. diss., Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1983).

¹⁴ See Judith Ennew et al., "'Peasantry' as an Economic Category," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 4 no. 4 (July 1977): 295-322; Carol A. Smith, "Forms of Production in Practice: Fresh Approaches to Simple Commodity Production," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 11 no. 4 (July 1984): 201-221; and Gavin Smith, "Reflections on the Social Relations of Simple Commodity Production," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 13 no. 1 (October 1985): 99-108.

¹⁵ Harriet Friedmann, "Household Production and National Economy: Concepts for the Analysis of Agrarian Formations," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 7 no. 2 (January 1980): 165.

¹⁶ See Clifford Geertz, *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Ecological Change in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California, 1963) and James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University, 1976).

irrigation schemes which have imposed risky and expensive farming systems on a largely "silent population."¹⁷

Ultimately, an economic conception of peasants focuses on their partial integration into incomplete commodity, capital, and labor markets. This characterization distinguishes peasant households from commercial family farms and "uncovers the implicit purpose" of much of rural development policy, i.e., to transform peasants into commercial family farms.¹⁸ Price trends of commodity, capital, and labor markets present opportunities as well as pressures on peasants. Hence, peasant relations with the market contains "a continuous tension between the risky advantages of market participation and the preservation of a non-market basis for survival."¹⁹

Beyond the implications of their unequal economic power in imperfect local markets, adverse results for peasants may also originate from price trends in wider and more competitive markets. Conditions are never static as they respond to demands of subsistence and survival (i.e., food). Local factors in their food systems are affected by a multitude of others implicit in a continuum of production-distribution-consumption processes. Major elements are found in government policy (including development/modernization strategies, commercialization and technology) and international (market) factors, embedded values, beliefs and ideologies which shape political and economic controls as well as specific ecological and social processes in communities.²⁰

The varying rather than total commitment of peasants to the market implies a variable capacity to withdraw and still survive. This is due in part to

¹⁷ Hill, Development Economics on Trial, 1986, 14-15. See also Erich Jacoby, "World Bank Policy and the Peasants in the Third World," Development and Change 10 no. 4 (1979): 489-494.

¹⁸ Frank Ellis, Peasant Economics: Farm Households and Agrarian Development (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988), 3-4.

¹⁹ Ellis, Peasant Economics, 1988, 6-7.

²⁰ Warwick Armstrong, "Access to Food: An Analysis, An Overview," in Food Systems and Development: Self-Sufficiency, Sustainability, Nourishment, ed Warwick Armstrong and James Putzel. (Montreal: Centre for Developing-Area Studies, McGill University, February 1986), 5-16.

the incomplete character of the markets in which they participate.²¹ Their lack of market power may also be due to existing practices that rely on people in an economically inferior position. Tied-labor arrangements, for example, push peasants to work hard to ensure the renewal of their contracts. In many instances, an added benefit to the employer is access to the labor of women and children of the employee's household.²²

There are also perspectives that reveal peasants as historically transitory, i.e., moving along the path between primitive and modern or industrial society.²³ Other writers represent the peasantry as a system of (agricultural) production characteristic of entire societies at certain historical periods. Peasant economies are distinguished from other historical systems such as slavery, capitalism and socialism.²⁴

Moreover, variously interpreted, Marxist views project peasants as signifying a mode of production embroiled in the evolution of contradictory classes through processes of differentiation. Historical change here is seen as the inevitable movement from peasant and other pre-capitalist modes of production towards world communism.²⁵ In uneven and sometimes paradoxical ways, peasants articulate as well as contend for hegemony in heterogenous relations of production as capitalism expands into rural areas.²⁶

²¹ Ellis, Peasant Economics, 1988, 10.

²² Gillian Hart, "Agrarian Change in the Context of State Patronage," in Agrarian Transformations, 1989, 37.

²³ Eric R. Wolf, Peasants (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), vii; and Robert Redfield, The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture (Chicago: Phoenix, 1960), 40.

²⁴ Daniel Thorner, "Peasant Economy as a Category in History," in Peasants & Peasant Societies, ed. Shanin, 1987, 62-68.

²⁵ Aidan Foster-Carter, "The Modes of Production Controversy," New Left Review, 107 (January-February 1978): 47-78; and Henry Bernstein, "African Peasantries: A Theoretical Framework," Journal of Peasant Studies 6 no. 4 (1979): 421-443.

²⁶ Populist perspectives following Chayanov argue that a specific peasant mode persists despite the advancement of competing modes. Gavin Kitching, Development and Underdevelopment in Historical Perspective: Populism, Nationalism and Industrialization (London: Methuen, 1982). Other writers negate the contemporary significance of peasants in a world dominated by the capitalist order. Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century (New York: Academic, 1974); and Samir Amin, Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World (London: Zed, 1990).

In this connection, I broadly take 'differentiation' as the qualitative changes in the form, or at least in the function, of production (and consumption) relations in a stagnating, expanding, or declining rural economy.²⁷

The idea of transition implies change and adaptation. It admits the possibility of reversal, even if the rate of change and its consequences are largely undetermined. Features of colonialism and neo-colonialism are external events that impinge on peasants' lives and with which they continually adapt.²⁸ I agree with Joel Kahn's observation that the more significant aspect of the transformation of peasant production system has not been the change from a 'natural' subsistence economy to that dominated by the market principle; rather, it is that marked by market penetration of the reproductive circuits of peasant household enterprises.²⁹ Peasant households tend toward self-exploitation through an intensification of labor (e.g., increased fishing effort), as production outputs and factors become commoditized, even if at different rates. These circumstances entail women's (and children's) voluntary and directed ventures into petty enterprises and poorly-paid wage labor markets.³⁰

The fate of farming households in the Philippines may apply to the realities of class fractions among other types of rural workers. Already, upland farmers, landless laborers, and small fishers share characteristics of extreme poverty, marginal resources, uneven competition, and a separateness (or alienation) from the means of production.³¹

²⁷ I add consumption relations, pertinent to my discussions, to the definition in Benjamin White, "Problems in the Empirical Analysis of Agrarian Differentiation," in Agrarian Transformations, ed. Hart *et al.*, 1989, 19-20.

²⁸ Ellis, Peasant Economics, 1988, 5.

²⁹ Joel S. Kahn, "From Peasants to Petty Commodity Production in Southeast Asia," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 14 no. 1 (January-March 1982): 3.

³⁰ See Deniz Kandiyoti, "Women and Rural Development Policies: The Changing Agenda," Development and Change 21 no. 1 (1990): 5-22.

³¹ George Carner, "Survival, Interdependence, and Competition Among the Philippine Rural Poor," Philippine Sociological Review 29 nos. 1-4 (1981): 45-57.

Because the social formation from which the character of the peasant households derive may change in a variety of ways, one cannot speak of a homogeneous peasant economy. This means that the peasant form under feudalism no longer obtains under capitalism. Furthermore, the penetration of commodity relations in agriculture has had diverse effects on the reproduction of the peasantry. At one extreme peasants are transformed into capitalist producers. At the other extreme, they are dispossessed. A heterogeneous rather than a homogeneous group evolves in the process. Between these poles lie a variation of other types of peasant households which are determined by the relations between the household unit and external economic forces.³²

Direct harvest or extraction from nature's productivity is characteristic of capture practices in peasant fisheries. The waters and their renewable resources, unlike land in agriculture, are subject to but are not the instrument of labor. The development and expansion of irrigated fields constitute "the humanized rural landscape par excellence," a testimonial of "land conquered by the labour of several generations of peasants."³³ Aquatic resources have not been as yet as manipulated and harnessed by human effort. Nevertheless, transition is insinuated in development policies for marine fisheries:

Past development efforts have focussed almost exclusively on large-scale fisheries presumably in the belief that small-scale fisheries were only a temporary feature of the transition from artisanal to industrial fisheries. It was presumed that small-scale fishermen would either acquire the new technology and join the race for off-shore and distant-water resource or they would find employment as crewmen in the large-scale fisheries. Alternatively, they could move to more lucrative occupations inland which presumably would have been generated by rapid economic growth.³⁴

³² Bautista, "Capitalism & the Peasantry," 1983, 24.

³³ Rodolphe de Koninck, "Work, Space and Power in the Rice Fields of Kedah: Reflections on the Dispossession of a Territory," in The Southeast Asian Environment, ed. Douglas R. Webster (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1983), 86.

³⁴ Theodore Panayotou, Management Concepts for Small-scale Fisheries: Economic and Social Aspects (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 1982), 1. This notion reflects the observation of Ellis pertinent to commercial family farms on page 132.

Despite unequal access to the means of harvest among capture fishers, "the resource belongs to the fisherman who harvests the catch."³⁵ Further, a feature observed in peasant fishing is that their work organizations are socially- rather than production-determined.³⁶ For this reason, authority in production relations is not only acquired by those who control capital and labor; authority over productive resources may also be conceived as a variable.³⁷ For centuries, traditional rights over sedentary resources (oysters, mussels, and seaweeds and enclosed water bodies) have been subject to exclusive use rights.³⁸ Individual, corporate, and/or communal forms of proprietary rights are maintained, or are being developed, over fishery resources.³⁹ The designation of fishing grounds as common-pool resources are attempts to regulate of this mode of exploitation of natural resources.⁴⁰

Recently, territorial use rights in fisheries (TURFs) attempt to redefine existing practices, including systems for new technologies like fish aggregation devices.⁴¹ TURFs formalize state and/or community control of access to the means of production. Community-based management systems seek to empower

³⁵ Ian R. Smith et al., Philippine Municipal Fisheries: A Review of Resources, Technology and Socioeconomics (Metro Manila: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management/Fisheries Industry Development Council, 1980), 4.

³⁶ James L. Norr and Kathleen L. Norr, "Environmental and Technical Factors Influencing Power in Work Organizations: Ocean Fishing in Peasant Societies," Sociology of Work and Occupations 1 no. 2 (May 1974): 219-251.

³⁷ Norr & Norr, "Environmental & Technical Factors Influencing Power," 1974, 220-221.

³⁸ Francis T. Christy, Jr., Territorial Use Rights in Marine Fisheries: Definitions and Conditions (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 1982), 1.

³⁹ Paul Alexander, Sri Lankan Fishermen: Rural Capitalism and Peasant Society (Canberra: Australian National University, 1982), 261.

⁴⁰ See Bonnie J. McCay and James M. Acheson, eds., The Question of the Commons: The Culture and Ecology of Communal Resources (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1987), and Elinor Ostrom, Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990).

⁴¹ Christy, Jr., Territorial Use Rights in Marine Fisheries, 1982, 1. See also Ian R. Smith and Theodore Panayotou, Territorial Use Rights and Economic Efficiency: The Case of the Philippine Fishing Concessions, Fisheries Technical Paper No. 245. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 1984.

local peoples in specific fishing areas.⁴² As common property systems, they are used as strategies for development work to improve the welfare of small fishing communities.⁴³ Herein, common-pool problems are addressed by voluntary organizations rather than by a coercive state. The approach is unlike the Indonesian government's ban of trawl fishing off Java and Sumatra in 1980, a 'top-down' protective measure for the resource as well as for small fishers.⁴⁴ Studies cited here indicate that women's participation in these endeavors is crucial. Nevertheless, this regulation presupposes both jointness and exclusion of some community members from common resource systems.⁴⁵ However, a potential exclusion point is at village fish landings where, in the absence of ice storage, the catch is immediately disposed to direct consumers as well as traders.⁴⁶

Processes of surplus extraction and intensified differentiation create marginalized and oppressed sectors among fishers and the women among them. An example in a small-boat fishery in northern Portugal shows that women's roles were effectively redefined from those of productive workers in a household-based fishery to those of consumers and housewives at home within a span of three generations. Since the 1960s, their increased dependence on wage employment and the consumption of manufactured goods, together with

⁴² See Elmer Ferrer, "Prospects for Territorial Use Rights in Fisheries in the Lingayen Gulf Area," in Towards Sustainable Development, ed. Silvestre et al., 1989, 157-162. On Regional Management Councils for these purposes, see "RMCs Set Up in San Pablo Lakes," Lundayan Magazine 2 no. 1 (January-March 1991): 11.

⁴³ See Conner Bailey, "Equity, Sustainability and Participation: An International Development Agenda," in Rural Policies for the 1990s, ed., James A. Christenson and Cornelia Flora (Boulder: Westview, 1991), 320-332.

⁴⁴ Conner Bailey, "Government Protection of Traditional Resource Use Rights - The Case of Indonesian Fisheries," in Community Management: Asian Experience and Perspectives, ed. David C. Korten (West Hartford: Kumarian, 1986), 292-308.

⁴⁵ Elinor Ostrom, "Issues of Definition and Theory: Some Conclusions and Hypotheses," in Proceedings of the Conference on Common Property Resource Management, April 21-26, 1985, National Research Council (Washington, D.C.: National Academy, 1986), 604-605.

⁴⁶ Wilfrido D. Cruz, "Overfishing and Conflict in a Traditional Fishery: San Miguel Bay, Philippines," in Proceedings of the Conference on Common Property Resource Management, 1986, 119.

local cultural constructions of status and gender, created new burdens on women and curtailed their autonomy within households. Even with a flexible division of labor to meet seasonal demands and additional production activities to make ends meet, especially during periods of male absence from the household, female socialization reproduced the structure of gender relations. With wage labor in factories, control of production was removed from the household and, thereby, reduced women's significance as household managers. Domestic work was privatized and more rigidly defined as women's work in the increasingly industrial economy of the village. "The locus of change is the household, where women are demanding changes in the sexual division of labor."⁴⁷

Beyond the extractive character of the fishing process, we also need to recognize the transfer of the peasant fisher's surpluses to a dominant group of "rulers," i.e., powerful external forces who tend to regard peasants as resources.⁴⁸ The state and other forms of public or private intervention are known forms of extraction and accumulation that generate tensions and contradictions that lead to change and differentiation. State patronage, urban interests, and rural elites are sources of structural relationships that effectively subordinate the peasantry.⁴⁹ Peasants are inserted or subsumed through mechanisms such as excessive rents and other obligations as tenants, exclusionary arrangements, usurious interests on loans, profits of intermediaries, and taxes. From these arrangements emerge various types of patron-client relations, including that in which the patron is a "merchant-creditor-rent-capitalist."⁵⁰ This is exemplified by the phenomenon of the suki

⁴⁷ Sally Cole, "The Sexual Division of Labor and Social Change in a Portuguese Fishery," in To Work and To Weep, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 187. In a more detailed work, she presents women's stories. See Sally Cole, Women of the Praia: Work and Lives in a Portuguese Coastal Community (Princeton: Princeton University, 1991), especially 29-41.

⁴⁸ Wolf, Peasants, 1966, 3-4.

⁴⁹ Hart, "Agrarian Change in the Context of State Patronage," 1989, 31.

⁵⁰ Brian Fegan, "Accumulation on the Basis of an Unprofitable Crop," in Agrarian Transformations, ed. Hart et al., 1989, 177.

in the Philippines.³¹ Granting that seasonality governs both farming and fishing activities, women and men among fishers handle a much more perishable food product; they are uniquely vulnerable to state patronage, urban interests, and elites on land.³²

Part of the particularity of peasants lies in the way they respond to these external forces, potentials, and impacts. However, the compulsion to define 'peasant' in sweeping terms for macro-economic and development policy analysis and application has played down inequalities and differences. Among other things, this results in the lack of serious interest in the landless and the neglect of important non-farming occupations, including trade.³³ Where women are most involved in the distribution of fishery products, the asymmetrical power relationship between those who generate a surplus and those who control its disposition is crucial.³⁴

Most fishers are not exclusively engaged in this occupation; like most semi-nomadic populations, they have casual, seasonal, or simultaneous economic and social relations with the agricultural sector.³⁵ They have different forms of access to material resources, social power, and entitlements; assorted technologies generate additional gender biases. The structure of labor demand in fishing does not require sustained participation, with more opportunity for the entry of marginal workers during the peak seasons which brings about a consequent fall in the incomes of those who depend on fishing alone for their livelihood.³⁶ Increases in the number of entrants and fishing effort brings economic and cultural disadvantages.

³¹ See discussion on page 165.

³² Donald K. Emmerson, "The Case for a Maritime Perspective on Southeast Asia," Journal of South East Asian Studies 11 no. 1 (March 1980): 144.

³³ Hill, Development Economics on Trial, 1986, 15-16.

³⁴ Emmerson, "The Case for a Maritime Perspective," 1980, 144.

³⁵ Firth, Malay Fishermen, 1966, 4-5.

³⁶ Alexander, Sri Lankan Fishermen, 1982, 258.

More than farming households, those in fishing depend upon cultural rules to prevent individual greed from harming community welfare. Differentiation between efficient and non-efficient producers becomes more pronounced subject to the economics of a zero-sum game. The effect of greater fishing effort is a decline in overall profit while the household responsible for the decline lifts its standard of living. Despite self-exploitation by women and men, the outcome of sustained efforts are declining welfare and dispossession. This is unlike what happens in agriculture where interests of the farming household as a production unit are generally congruent with those of the community. Increased investments on their land do not greatly affect conditions for other cultivators.⁵⁷

Over and above these economic relations, the subordination of women and peasants implies unequal social and cultural status, coercion, unequal access to political power. The view of women as 'social actors' has been stressed. Yet there is an enduring bias that credits fisheries as an exclusive male activity and explains the persistence of the term 'fisherman.' In describing the sexual division of labor in the Sinhalese fishing village of Gahavalla, for example, the undervaluing of the role of women in the economic process is a bias of research procedures, especially the dependence of male field workers on male informants who, thus, tend to designate men as immediate beneficiaries of rural and/or fishery development projects.⁵⁸

A long-term modernization project in villages of Kerala in India, started in the 1950s, intended to increase productivity in fishing and fish preservation, primarily aimed to involve men. Only through the accompanying intent to improve health services and sanitation did the project come to involve women. Beyond one generation, the most important changes pertained to health education and economic independence. Work opportunities increased and some

⁵⁷ Alexander, *Sri Lankan Fishermen*, 1982, 261-262.

⁵⁸ Alexander, *Sri Lankan Fishermen*, 1982, 40-42. See also Carol A. B. Warren, *Gender Issues in Field Research* (Newbury Park: Sage, 1988).

activities brought considerable incomes from mechanized fisheries; the family size reduced as a result of the project's sterilization campaign. There was an overall movement of women towards activities beyond the home and more participation from men in running the daily affairs of the household.⁵⁹

Recent studies indicate that sometimes the "fisherman" is also a woman. Women appear as commercial fishers, fish plant laborers, proletarian processors, subsistence or artisanal fishers, processors and marketers, political agents, financial managers, dependent housewives, and complementary partners in a wide variety of ecological, cultural, political and economic arenas.⁶⁰ Moreover, planning studies indicate that "development changes which impact activities of females in fishing communities will be more likely to have an effect on other activities than in non-fishing societies."⁶¹

Fishing as a way of life depends on women's unpaid as well as wage work.⁶² However, women's work in fishing communities is presumed to take "parallel forms in fishing societies."⁶³ Women are not expected to combine childcare and housework and are consistently seen as participants only in 'secondary' processes. Further, the productivist view leads to the conclusion that the higher a community's dependence on fishing, the more likely for a shift to female participation in certain land-based activities "which can be

⁵⁹ Leela Gulati, "Women's Changing Roles in the Kerala Fishery," in *To Work and To Weep*, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 149-168. This article was drawn from a larger Indo-Norwegian study supported by the International Labor Office entitled *Fisherwomen of the Kerala Coast*.

⁶⁰ See Donna Lee Davis and Jane Nadel-Klein, "Terra Cognita? A Review of the Literature," in *To Work & To Weep*, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 18-50.

⁶¹ Richard B. Pollnac, "The Division of Labor by Sex in Fishing Societies," Anthropology Working Paper no. 44. ([Kingston]: International Center for Marine Resource Development, University of Rhode Island, September 1984), 12.

⁶² The situation in temperate, off-shore, and commercial-scale fishing such as the Scottish and East Anglian herring fisheries, are discussed in Paul Thompson with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis, *Living the Fishing* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983) and Trevor Lummis, *Occupation and Society: The East Anglian Fishermen, 1880-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1985).

⁶³ Paul Thompson, "Women in the Fishing: The Roots of Power Between the Sexes," *Comparative Study of Society and History* 27 no. 1 (1985): 3. See also Rosemary Firth, *Housekeeping Among Malay Peasants* (London: Athlone, 1966).

performed near home and would not interfere with child-care responsibilities."⁶⁴ Most studies fail to perceive that the dependence on women to control land-based food production creates a greater role differentiation among males/females and greater independence for women.⁶⁵

Significantly, an account of women's fishing in Oceania highlights the absence of prior accounts of a form of subsistence by women, often done in the company of young children, i.e, reef gleaning for octopus, shell fish, echinoderms, crabs, and other invertebrates. It suggests that "the highly regular nature of women's fishing makes women more reliable, and therefore more effective than men as suppliers of protein for subsistence." Nevertheless, women's fishing is characterized as spatially restricted, with simple technology, secular, moderately productive, and temporally regular; in contrast, men's fishing is spatially unrestricted, technologically diverse, highly religious, highly productive, and temporally variable.⁶⁶

In a local culture in Indonesia, subsistence fishing and agriculture are both regarded as heavy work, hence a male occupation. Women seldom fish alone or on canoes, usually using a hook-and-line by wading waist-deep into the lagoon. Interestingly, "when fishing takes on the character of 'gathering,' female participation is high."⁶⁷ The only gathering activity not performed by women (deemed too strenuous for them) is that involving swimming and diving for rockborer bivalves. None of the food gathered was sold, and if bartered, "it is only on the principle of delayed exchange in kind."⁶⁸

Further, in another 'low-energy' type of fishing in Malaysia, there are frequent cross-overs in customary gender roles and performance of tasks

⁶⁴ Pollnac, "The Division of Labor by Sex in Fishing Societies," 1984, 1.

⁶⁵ M. Estellie Smith, ed., *Those Who Live from the Sea: A Study in Maritime Anthropology* (St. Paul: West, 1977), 4.

⁶⁶ Margaret D. Chapman, "Women's Fishing in Oceania," *Human Ecology* 15 no. 3 (1987): 267.

⁶⁷ Harald Beyer Broch, "Between Field and Sea: The Role of Miang Tuu Women in Village Economy and Society," in *To Work and To Weep*, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 73-90.

⁶⁸ Broch, "Between Field & Sea," 1988, 79.

governed by Islamic and Malay regulations.⁶⁹ Here, women play a central role in fishing; and, even if they did parallel tasks, each 'owned' his or her produce. This study stresses that

despite the bias of government development programs towards men, women have not been locked out of the economy nor into the household. The Btsisi' socioeconomic organization and the ideology of cooperation seem to buffer the negative effects on women which are commonly associated with "modernization" and development.⁷⁰

Beyond technical and environmental characteristics of fishing activities, women's relative invisibility in fisheries is also founded on symbolic grounds. An application of the cultural approach to supplement materialist explanations of women's subordination by Kalpana Ram merits some extended discussion.⁷¹

Among the formally Catholic Mukkuvars in Tamil Nadu, cultural norms governing sea tenure prohibits women's access to places associated with fishing, thus, indicating a sexual distribution of space. The Mukkuvars combine contradictory elements of the wider Tamil culture with the power and hegemony of the church. With the belief that women have the power of destroying and subverting the social order, their association with the ocean is avoided.

The female space *par excellence* is the domestic space in and outside the home, or in areas associated with domestic labour: the wells and taps, certain parts of the river. The male space *par excellence* is the sea, and the beach where all the gear and boats are stored. Many men are barely to be seen at home, preferring to spend even their nights sleeping on the beach in the cool of the open air. However, male space is not restricted to what is strictly necessary in the course of work -- for relaxation they have access to public spaces....

⁶⁹ This study was set on a community on the Selangor coast of West Malaysia in Barbara S. Nowak, "The Cooperative Nature of Women's and Men's Roles in Btsisi' Marine Extracting Activities," in *To Work and To Weep*, ed. Nadel-Klein & Davis, 1988, 51-72.

⁷⁰ Nowak, "Cooperative Nature," 1988, 52.

⁷¹ Kalpana Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity and Women's Work in a Fishing Community of South India," in *Women, Poverty and Ideology in Asia: Contradictory Pressures, Uneasy Resolutions*, ed. Haleh Afshar and Bina Agarwal (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 128-147.

Potentially, the public venues of the world are open to them. Women, by contrast, are rarely seen loitering in public spaces. Relaxation for them must be found sitting on the front verandah of the home, or in the sandy lanes outside the home.⁷²

Deeply imbued notions of modesty and public invisibility of respectable women also inhibit their acquisition of any skills or 'incorporeal property' related to fishing.⁷³ Very young girls, women over forty, and fish traders among the women are allowed to transgress the norms of femininity; but women traders are the bottom rung of the market hierarchy. Recent community-based agitations involving women have been vendors; however, they only participate in a sporadic fashion, always as followers rather than as mobilising agents themselves.⁷⁴ However, within the female space of the home, there are references to the women's strength, responsibility, and authority. There are few income-earning opportunities for women in the village, and the limited avenues for employment in distant towns, supervised closely by church authorities, sometimes proved "even more restrictive and isolating than life back in the village itself."⁷⁵

With the appearance of mechanized fishing enterprises, these peasant fishers are gradually being converted into a source of labor supply for the wider capitalist economy. Furthermore, with the marked absence of men from the village on seasonal trips (sometimes for seven months), the traditional female control over cash is being replaced by a passive wait for remittances.⁷⁶ However, Mukkuvar women mobilize around issues of concern to them as women in the community, e.g., bringing greater sanitation, electricity and water to the villages and fighting against the sand-mining which erodes the

⁷² Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 135.

⁷³ 'Incorporeal property' describes certain privileges which constitute wealth in certain societies; here, this refers to the Mukkuvars' transmitted specialised skills in the operation of fishing gear, knowledge of fishing grounds and breeding habits of the fish, navigation skills, astronomy, and so on. Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 132.

⁷⁴ Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 141-142.

⁷⁵ Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 143-144.

⁷⁶ Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 145.

beaches they live on. Apparently, women who lead restricted lives are prepared to fight to maintain their homes and village environment. Hence the need to pay attention to the tacit struggle over cultural meanings, as a crucial component of political change, as well as to view ideology as significant to the lives of the economically dispossessed.⁷⁷ Significantly, Ram declares that

the very contradictions of culture allows it to be reshaped and reinterpreted to a certain extent, from within.... I am suggesting that we cease to view ideology and culture as purely repressive, external constraints. Rather, culture also produces a positive identity and a subjectivity which has a stake in the current system. This positive identity -- which is the case of Mukkuvar women is their identity as the wives, mothers and mainstays of the household -- can also empower them in the social struggle.⁷⁸

Clearly, today's peasants (and the women among them) are not a united nor homogeneous set of individuals and groups. They have competing and contradictory interests and circumstances, though still socially-mediated by redistributive cultural practices. However, occupational and gender distinctions among peasant groups may be more apparent than real. Despite obvious differences in technology, production cycles, yields, planning requirements, consequences of additional labor inputs, pressures from large-scale enterprises, spatial boundaries and other physical properties, a conceptually heuristic parallel may be drawn among them.

3.2. Gender in Peasant Households

This investigation strives to establish how the selected women of fishing households perceive and act on conditions as among peasants. For this purpose, the centrality of the social group, variously called the 'household,' 'family,' or 'domestic unit,' is inescapable.⁷⁹ This is where production and

⁷⁷ Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 145.

⁷⁸ Ram, "The Ideology of Femininity," 1989, 145.

⁷⁹ Conventional literature of anthropology that focuses on the family, domestic group, or marriage does not consider the woman's point of view; hence, the need to explore how women respond to norms and institutions governing family life. Lamphere, "Strategies, Cooperation, & Conflict," 1974, 98.

reproduction of social life is carried on. It is touted as the women's primary domain, but it is also where most women are powerless in decision-making as well as marginalized in access to and control of resources. But it is where women are most effectively exploited and subordinated in housework, and increasingly, in homework as well.

Feminist analyses of the household stress its being the locus of women's work and other non-economic aspects of intrahousehold relations and where gender and age are variables.⁸⁰ My preference for using the 'household' is founded on the view that it is in the arrangements for everyday living, especially those associated with human reproduction made through household forms, that the major causes of women's work burdens lie.⁸¹ The implication of a firm, unchanging entity, always similar in shape and content that notions of the family strongly tend to suggest is avoided. Feminists have long challenged this imagery, reified in functionalist theories of the family, as falsifying the actual variety of household forms and for perpetuating male dominance.⁸² The 'household' more clearly manifests the developmental cycle of domestic groups, how its structure changes, how authority roles shift, and how property is transferred over time.⁸³ Ethnocentric biases are also circumvented.

⁸⁰ Besides other works cited see Alison Evans, Women: Rural Development Gender Issues in Rural Household Economies (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, January 1989), and Nancy Folbre, "Household Production in the Philippines: A Non-neoclassical Approach," Economic Development and Culture Change 32 no. 2 (January 1984): 303-330.

⁸¹ Ruth Pearson *et al.*, "Introduction: The Continuing Subordination of Women in the Development Process," in Of Marriage & the Market, ed. Young *et al.*, 1984, xiv-xv.

⁸² Among related issues raised as controversial are those that entail abortion rights, efforts to legitimate varied household and sexual arrangements, and challenges to men's authority, and women's economic dependence and exclusive responsibility for nurturing. Barrie Thorne, "Feminism and the Family: Two Decades of Thought," in Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions, ed. Barrie Thorne with Marilyn Yalom, rev. ed. (Boston: Northeastern University, 1992), 4-7.

⁸³ In a seminar at McGill University on 22 September 1994 entitled "Should Feminists Reject the Idea of Home?" Iris M. Young referred to instances where a woman is deprived of her ability as a subject within the home. Her stance for a feminist agenda aims to democratize the constricting values of home which have historically served to provide a bounded, secure, and privileged space mainly for men. How this is going to be done remains a question to be resolved.

It is entirely Western-centric to insist that the household arrangements in the periphery and the semi-periphery are traditional while in core industrialized countries they are "modern." How can it be that "their" institutionalized relationships are so fixed while "ours" are so changing? All institutional arrangements are responsive to their current circumstances and reproduced by those circumstances and responses.⁸⁴

The peasant household here is understood as the social unit or sphere where systemic processes of food production and consumption take place. For this reason, the household is regarded as both a family and an enterprise.⁸⁵ It represents a sub-set of neighboring or distant families or kin groups, distinguished by characteristics of co-residence and some common domesticity (men, women, and/or children sharing the same abode or hearth). It does not presume a necessary identical relation between the social unit and the production, consumption, investment, and accumulation activities of all its members. Beyond being an organization of "clusters of task-oriented activities" and a place "to live/eat/work/reproduce," the household is also a source of identity and social markers indisputably "located in structures of cultural meaning and differential power."⁸⁶

However, power and inequality as well as sharing and reciprocity are meaningless in a static, and often supposed unitary, household. Conventional neo-classical and Marxist paradigms of the household are both shaped by assumptions of equality and harmony within the family.⁸⁷ They implicitly assume that the household is a monogamous nuclear unit, with an altruistic household head, and acts as a single decision-making unit rationally optimizing 'joint utility.' This picture renders women invisible and conceals structural,

⁸⁴ Smith, "The Creation of the World We Know," 1994, 39, note no. 8.

⁸⁵ Ellis, *Peasant Economics*, 1988, 7.

⁸⁶ Jane I. Guyer and Pauline E. Peters, "Introduction," *Development and Change* 18 no. 2 (Special Issue: "Conceptualizing the Household, Issues of Theory and Policy in Africa," ed. Jane I. Guyer and Pauline E. Peters, April 1987): 209.

⁸⁷ Folbre, "The Black Four Hearts," 1988, 249-254.

cyclical, and historical processes determining consumption, investment, and long-term change.⁸⁸

The household is not just a variable structure but also the site of "separable, often competing, interests, rights and responsibilities." It is a segmented unit, just as labor markets are segmented by gender, age, clan, or ethnicity.⁸⁹ Moreover, household structures are constantly remolded by cyclical rhythms and the secular trends of the world economy. The limitations of NHE models to explain family behavior in the Third World are challenged by evidence from monogamous and polygynous households in southern Nigeria. Even 'modernized' wealthier conjugal units among the Yoruba do not show consumption or investment behavior as predicted by this model, i.e., that household preferences are the same and that the members' economic resources are pooled.

The existence of gender-specific expenditures and patterns of divided conjugal financial responsibilities implies that Yoruba households do not have joint utility functions or a family altruist.... Altered household consumption patterns ... result from changes in men's and women's personal access to income, or renegotiated responsibility for expenditures by gender, assuming constant gender-specific incomes.⁹⁰

Shifts from household production for subsistence to household-based market-oriented economy effect changes in the structure of households and the power relations within them. Discourses of male dominance are reflected in changing patterns in Philippine households.

As society modernizes, the family sheds its other functions and becomes mainly a source of companionship and emotional security, a shelter away from an inhospitable occupational world. Now ask: who are they who need and receive that security and that shelter? The men, of course, and the women are forced out of their other roles in order to provide it. So this supposedly scientific proposition amounts to an ideology of sexual discrimination and to a belittling of the many

⁸⁸ See Guyer & Peters, "Introduction," 1987, 197-214.

⁸⁹ Guyer & Peters, "Introduction," 1987, 210.

⁹⁰ See Eleanor R. Fapohunda, "The Nonpooling Household: A Challenge to Theory," in A Home Divided, ed. Dwyer & Bruce, 1988, 152-153.

necessary types of 'home production' that women continue to provide in the modern family.⁹¹

With time as an objective measure, however, the developmental state of communities shows a greater effect on men's time in households than on women's and locates some constraints on peasant women's situations. Only in traditional arrangements where wives stay home and men engage in market work are women and men's total production time equal, although in unequally recognized spheres of activity.

Greater variation is found in the time husbands devote to housework as communities modernize. Husbands who participate in housework in the more modern communities tend to devote more time to this than their rural counterparts, but a considerable number of husbands in the more modern communities are also shown to drop out completely from housekeeping activities.⁹²

Besides time, resources such as the allocation of space within households are consumed and managed collectively, albeit often inequitably.⁹³ They are subject to different interests and claims of members and suggest other areas of conflict and negotiation. Cooperation and competition even among women in domestic groups demonstrate distribution of power and authority.⁹⁴ In addition, as Whitehead contends,

although in market economies the sexual division of labour separates men and women outside the family based household, they come together within it, and in doing so, arrangements for personal and collective consumption needs have to be met out of total household income. Thus the relations of exchange, distribution, and consumption which comprise the conjugal contract characterize household relations even where the household is not a unit of production.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Rodolfo A. Bulatao and Elizabeth Eviota, "Editors' Preface," Philippine Sociological Review 26 nos. 3-4 (Special issue: "Women: Old Roles and New Realities," October 1978): 149.

⁹² Virginia A. Miralao, Women and Men in Development: Findings from a Pilot Study (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1980), 19-20.

⁹³ Whitehead, "I'm Hungry Mum," 1984, 93-116.

⁹⁴ Lamphere, "Strategies, Cooperation, & Conflict," 1974, 97-112.

⁹⁵ Whitehead, "I'm Hungry Mom," 1984, 96.

Further, John Friedmann argues that households are not just consuming units; they are both production-centered and public-oriented entities which articulate market and non-market relations. His views depart from the neoclassical model which sees production as taking place outside of the home and requiring cooperation of others (hence, inherently a public activity) and consumption as essentially individualizing (hence, a private activity).⁹⁶ Households form miniature polities and economies characterized by variable yet inequitable struggles among their members in daily processes of joint decision-making. They are arenas of struggle over allocation of household resources for particular claims, rights, or purposes, i.e., access to entitlements and social power.⁹⁷

In the dynamic of intrahousehold gender relations, preference in both agency and entitlements (e.g., access to and control of income) go to the male.⁹⁸ Cultural restrictions on women as mothers are compounded by early pregnancies, undereducation, domestic isolation, and a restricted access to the bases of social power. That these conditions are flexible is argued on the basis of a politics of negotiation.

Neither agency nor entitlements are fixed forever, although men are likely to cling tenaciously to power. In large matters as in small, both are always subject to renegotiation. It is this continuing struggle over agency and entitlements that gives households their political character.⁹⁹

The household hierarchy mediated by gender, age, and kinship is based on contractual relations, explicit in marriage, and implicit in cohabitation.

⁹⁶ Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 31-33. He attempts to transcend the household as a "black box" by indicating the pattern of relationships and processes that connect the household to extended family, neighbors, the market economy, and civic and political associations. (pp. 45-48).

⁹⁷ Friedmann's discussion of claims for social power deals with the households' collective struggle and negotiation for solutions to their problems with agents of the state. Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 70.

⁹⁸ Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 109-112.

⁹⁹ Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 111-112. The current struggle for entitlements in the pension plan is one such issue in the politics of the 'McGill household.'

Tasks are divided according to custom in a rough, though flexible, allocation of labor time often manifest in cooperative and conflictive behavior. Jointness in households may be "crystallized" in a traditional gender and age division of labor or may be "more or less open and conflictive."¹⁰⁰ The structural inequality of gender as a major source of tensions and struggles becomes especially agitated when women enter the labor force.¹⁰¹ Often, the process results into the erosion of women's economic autonomy. Women tend to become deprived of their autonomy as farmers, fishers, craftworkers, and entrepreneurs with the encroachment of a cash-based economy.

All these circumstances contribute to common issues in intrahousehold relations related to the gender division of work, sexual relations, procreativity, control over income, property rights, children's education, and women's participation in civil and political affairs. Through networks and organizations, women's struggles for practical interests seek gains in access to bases of social power. What they obtain as individuals or groups may be identified from among features that Friedmann asserts as available to a household economy's production of life and livelihood: defensible life space, surplus time, knowledge and skills, appropriate information, social organization, social networks, instruments of work and livelihood, and financial resources.¹⁰²

Social arrangements relating to notions of sexuality and love are at issue as well. Kusterer calls for the need to distinguish "life enhancing love between partners and between parents and their children from soul-deadening domestic servitude."¹⁰³ Jonasdottir further observes that "work can be loving and love can be laborious. But we experience the contrasts and know that both are

¹⁰⁰ Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 32.

¹⁰¹ Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 107-109.

¹⁰² Friedmann, *Empowerment*, 1992, 66-71; 113-119.

¹⁰³ He adds: "Only by eliminating patriarchal exploitation can society preserve a family institution that serves its adult and child members at the same time as it serves society. . . . Feminists are the ones who are trying to 'save' the family by separating it from patriarchy, so that our children may finally have noncoercive and nonviolent homes in which to grow." Kusterer, "The Imminent Demise of Patriarchy," 1990, 250.

necessary for a good and worthwhile life."¹⁰⁴ For these reasons, development analysis and policy for women need to penetrate peasant households.

There are connections between the patriarchal power and authority of the household head and the state. The status of household head derives not only from intrahousehold relations but also from the state's assumptions and use of households as legal, economic, administrative, and political units.¹⁰⁵ Apart from women's single-person or widowed households, female-headed households exist mainly "among poor and marginal social groups which are anyhow excluded from the structures of power," i.e., where migration, urban poverty, and chronic insecurity prevail.¹⁰⁶ With household units vertically integrated and articulated with market-oriented commodity production and exchange, designated heads are endowed with patriarchal ideology. However, the fulfillment of the patriarch ideal is not always fully realized. Male authority is seldom absolute, especially where the material conditions for such dominance are absent or inadequate.¹⁰⁷ Notwithstanding, women are not usually enumerated as household heads unless they are either living alone or there is no adult male in the household.¹⁰⁸ Available statistics understate women's household responsibilities, but they give a useful indication of the number of households where women have sole authority and responsibility for supporting the household. Asia, however, has the lowest proportions of women-headed households (14 percent) and one-person households.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Anna G. Jonasdottir, "Patriarchy, Marxism, and the Dual Systems Theory," chap. in Why Women are Oppressed (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1994), 73.

¹⁰⁵ See Olivia Harris, "Households as Natural Units," in Of Marriage & the Market, ed. Young et al., 1984, 136-156.

¹⁰⁶ Harris, "Households as Natural Units," 1984, 147.

¹⁰⁷ Harris, "Households as Natural Units," 1984, 147.

¹⁰⁸ In the Philippines, the current census explanation of "head of household" reads: "The person responsible for the care and organization of the household is generally considered as the head of the household. He usually provides the chief source of income for the household." [emphasis mine] 1990 Census of Population and Housing, 1992.

¹⁰⁹ The World's Women, 1991, 17-18.

Irrespective of how work in households is organized, the above views presume an understanding of the peasant household as both a production and a consumption unit.¹¹⁰ But it is readily discerned that most household 'consumption tasks' that nurture, sustain, and reproduce life are allocated upon or simply assumed by women.

The peasant unit is ... not merely a productive organization constituted of so many "hands" ready to labor in the fields; it is also a unit of consumption, containing as many mouths as there are workers. Moreover, it does not merely feed its members; it also supplies them with many other services. In such a unit children are raised and socialized to the demands of the adult world. Old people may be cared for until death, and their burial paid for from the unit's stock of wealth. Marriage provides sexual satisfaction, and relationships within the unit generate affection which ties the members to each other.¹¹¹

Peasant households are increasingly dependent on broader markets for the four 'funds' that Eric Wolf specifies (caloric minima, surplus for replacement, ceremonial, and rent) as requirements for their reproduction.¹¹² Brian Fegan adds an 'establishment fund' to insure generational transfers, defined as the "cost of setting up a household with access to a means of living adequate to support the culturally given lifestyle of the last generation." An important implication lies in the argument that "if an increasing proportion of the children of peasants cannot be set up with the means to be proper peasants, then they become a new sub-class, and the system has in that sense changed."¹¹³ In this context, intrahousehold relationships are deemed unlike those in a business firm. Rather, constituting a family, the household is concerned with not only its own perpetuation but also to provide the fund for

¹¹⁰ The peasant unit of production is "both a family and an enterprise." Ellis, Peasant Economics, 1988, 7.

¹¹¹ Wolf, Peasants, 1966, 13.

¹¹² Wolf, Peasants, 1966, 4-6.

¹¹³ This study focuses on how demographic, ecological, and political conditions such as population increase, the absence of frontiers, and ecological setbacks generate new classes in agrarian Philippines. Brian Fegan, "Establishment Fund, Population Increase and Changing Class Structures in Central Luzon," Philippine Sociological Review 31 nos. 3-4 (July-December 1983): 31.

each of the children as they reach marriageable age, i. e., access to a means of living.¹¹⁴ The transmission of life chances is perceived as a moral obligation by parents and is similarly evaluated by their children and peers.¹¹⁵ The rapid increase of landless laborers indicates failures to acquire adequate establishment fund in terms of stock of productive capital or regular wage labor.¹¹⁶ This as well has serious implications for women and the social reproduction of vulnerable peasant households primarily dependent upon a diminishing fishery.

The broad scope for women's interests within and beyond the household derives from their 'triple roles' in production, reproduction, and community management.¹¹⁷ In a continuum with spatial dimensions, these roles diminish the significance of separate 'private' and 'public' spheres. Community management chores of women involve tasks undertaken for the allocation, provisioning and managing of items of collective consumption (e.g., water, health care, and education) and are usually regarded as extensions of their reproductive roles.¹¹⁸ Performed on a voluntary and unpaid basis during women's 'free time,' they project women's nurturing beyond the home and into collectivities at neighborhood or wider levels of their community.¹¹⁹

Nevertheless, rural women and their households are increasingly marginalized in the multiple layers of 'coreness' and 'peripheryness' in the "commodification of everything."¹²⁰ There are multiple forms of incomes

¹¹⁴ Fegan, "Establishment Fund," 1983, 32.

¹¹⁵ Fegan, "Establishment Fund," 1983, 31.

¹¹⁶ Fegan, "Establishment Fund," 1983, 42.

¹¹⁷ Moser, Gender Planning and Development, 1993, 27-36, 74-79; see also, Caroline Moser, "Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs," World Development 17 no. 11 (1989): 1801-1802.

¹¹⁸ Moser presumes that this link of community management roles with reproductive work is due to the preliminary character of feminist formulations about consumption. Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 34.

¹¹⁹ Moser, Gender Planning & Development, 1993, 28-36.

¹²⁰ Joan Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Core-periphery and Household Structures," in Creating and Transforming Households: The Constraints of the World Economy, [ed.] Joan Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992), 261.

(wages, market sales (or profit), rents, transfers, and 'subsistence' or direct labor input) that make up, in varying proportions, the real incomes of households. Variable wages are a flexible (and perhaps unstable) portion of the total in any society. Wage differentials also exist among household members depending, among other things, on age and gender.¹²¹ In 'traditional' and subsistence economies, the division of work tends to be flexible and household production is not clearly distinct from any other production activity. Informal activities of rural women in petty market operations (not just production) in both core and peripheral areas persist largely beyond the tentacles of the capitalist world-economy. In complex 'modern' societies, state welfare policies and other institutions (restaurants, schools, hospitals, and day-care centers) serve as substitutes for, or supplements to, household reproductive tasks as women tend to become wage earners.¹²² Nevertheless, poor households are less prone to become proletarian since they exist through the efforts of members not fully integrated into the wage labor market.¹²³

What may inhibit or undermine the continuity of the peasant household may be its capacity to meet its own internal reproductive needs. Peasant households are not simply reproduced by the workings of the wider structure; they also depend on cultural rules and social relationships that affect access to and use of essential resources. These reproductive processes influence their work ethic and generate different types of social consciousness.¹²⁴ Vital aspects of housework and childcare that draw upon networks of neighborhood and extra-domestic kin for access to resources are tasks associated with

¹²¹ Immanuel Wallerstein and Joan Smith, "Households as an Institution of the World-Economy," in Creating and Transforming Households, 1992, 7-12.

¹²² Most persons engage in several different income-procuring activities — "in a week, in a year, in a lifetime." Wallerstein & Smith, "Households as an Institution of the World-Economy," 1992, 12.

¹²³ Wallerstein & Smith, "Core-periphery & Household Structures," 1992, 253-262.

¹²⁴ Norman Long, "Introduction," in Family and Work in Rural Societies: Perspectives on Non-Wage Labour, ed. Norman Long (London: Tavistock, 1984), 2.

women. It is women's work within and beyond the peasant household on which the basic institution of the capitalist world-economy depends upon for its existence and reproduction. Hence, the expanded understanding of power and the political incorporates new gender dimensions in the analysis of peasant household struggles for survival, subsistence, and accumulation.

3.3. The Philippine Fisheries Environment

In the world economy of the 1990s, countries of the South are subjected to imperatives for economic adjustment, with public indebtedness as a corollary problem. Development and national policies encourage the expansion and diversification of agro-export industries which accelerate the exploitation of productive environments. The most prejudiced are those who derive their subsistence from renewable resource systems in the countryside. With rapid population growth and finite resources, human regulation over the use and control of land and aquatic resources, has become increasingly concentrated. The growing recognition of the economic potential of the oceans, particularly the commercial prospects for minerals and various forms of aquatic life in the oceans, raises disputes over territorial waters.¹²⁵

Moreover, analogous to the issue of distributive justice, the issue of the sustainability of the world's fisheries has become central to policy debates worldwide, as the current Canadian experience so clearly brings out.¹²⁶ The application of science and technology for environmental and even social management and control has not adequately protected nor prevented the over-exploitation of renewable resources. The promotion of new fishing

¹²⁵ Elizabeth Mann Borgese, The Future of the Oceans: A Report to the Club of Rome (Montreal: Harvest House, 1986). National and international implications of conflicts over fishery and other natural resources in the Asian-Pacific area are discussed in Lim Teck Ghee and Mark J. Valencia, eds., Conflict over Natural Resources in Southeast Asia and the Pacific (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University, 1990). See also Richard Bailey, "Third World Fisheries: Prospects and Problems," World Development 16 no. 6 (1988): 751-757.

¹²⁶ The Canadian stance in the controversy with the European Union over endangered turbot stocks off the Grand Banks and the overfishing by Spanish vessels raises the level of awareness on matters of jurisdiction as well as the depletion of fisheries resources. Dave Todd and Juliet O'Neill, "Both Sides Stand Firm in Fish War," The Gazette (Montreal), March 11, 1995, 1.

technologies throughout the developing world sponsored by international donors and carried out by national agencies have a direct negative impact on harvests and incomes of millions of small fishers.¹²⁷ The terms of competition are conspicuously unequal without the simultaneous strengthening of the institutional capacities of disadvantaged users to manage and allocate resources.¹²⁸ There are many tales of woe, especially along the polluted and congested waters around Metro Manila in the Philippines.¹²⁹

Throughout world fisheries, 'capture' technologies are distinguished from 'culture' techniques that entail a purposive harnessing of water and/or land resources for the rearing of particular aquatic species. 'Capture' technologies include small-scale direct harvesting methods (variously called artisanal, subsistence, sustenance, or traditional fisheries) as well as commercial or industrial fisheries. Philippine fisheries exist in an international milieu wherein production is divided evenly between developed and developing countries. However, much of direct and indirect consumption is among affluent areas of the world food system. About 27 percent of world fish production is used as feed for livestock.¹³⁰ Asia is a leading fish producing continent with numerous problems arising from the increasing industrialization and internationalization of fishing for human consumption and industrial purposes.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Conner Bailey, "The Political Economy of Fisheries Development in the Third World," Agriculture and Human Values 5 nos. 1-2 (1988): 35-48.

¹²⁸ Conner Bailey et al., "Fisheries Development in the Third World: The Role of International Agencies," World Development 14 no. 10-11 (1986): 1270-1271.

¹²⁹ See Robin Broad and John Cavanagh, Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment in the Philippines (Berkeley: University of California, 1993).

¹³⁰ Kent, Fish, Food & Hunger, 1987, 9-10.

¹³¹ See George Kent, National Fishery Policies and the Alleviation of Malnutrition in the Philippines and Thailand (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 1984); Theodore Panayotou, ed., Small-Scale Fisheries in Asia: Socioeconomic Analysis and Policy (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1985); and various articles in Geoffrey B. Hainsworth, ed., Village-Level Modernization in Southeast Asia: The Political Economy of Rice and Water (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1982).

The Philippines has 34,600 kilometers of discontinuous coastline. Apart from numerous mountain streams, it also has 132 rivers and 59 lakes.¹³² With the 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the 1980s, Philippine marine waters now cover a total area of 2,200,000 square kilometers. Marine waters increased by more than 75 percent from the original 1,666,000 square kilometers. As fisheries environments, the waters are broadly divided into marine and inland areas. Around 266,000 square kilometers of marine waters are coastal areas covering 200 meters deep, and only less than half of these (126,000 square kilometers) make up the traditional fishing grounds for both commercial and municipal fisheries. As production resource systems, marine resources are categorized as commercial and municipal fisheries, and aquaculture resources, consisting of brackishwater fisheries, freshwater fisheries and seafarms.¹³³

National legislation has technically apportioned near-shore waters as exclusive grounds for the small-scale sector of municipal fishers. Municipal fishing is defined as that which uses boats of three gross tons or less, or uses gear without the use of boats. This delineation, based on a martial law legislation in 1975 (Presidential Decree 704), signifies as an attempt to resolve conflicts between municipal fishermen and operators of destructive commercial trawl enterprises.¹³⁴ Their coexistence with commercial or industrial outfits on marine waters manifests a dualism based on the scale of operation, type of technology, degrees of capital intensity, employment generation and ownership.¹³⁵ The capture techniques include simple or no technologies for gathering mollusks, seaweeds, finfish, and crustaceans as well as active and passive fishing gears with or without the use of small boats or rafts. The municipal fishing grounds include not only freshwater (inland) streams and

¹³² Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 18-19, 23.

¹³³ The EEZ resulted from the ratification of the 1982 Convention of the Law of the Sea, declared through Presidential Decree 1599. Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 355.

¹³⁴ Smith et al., Philippine Municipal Fisheries, 1980, 3.

¹³⁵ Panayotou, Management Concepts for Small-scale Fisheries, 1982, 2.

lakes within the municipality but also marine waters within three nautical miles of the coastline. With motorized vessels the actual fishing grounds of municipal vessels often extend far beyond the three mile limit.¹³⁶

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, fisheries development projects concentrated on the improvement of production techniques and an almost total exclusion of non-technical considerations. Socio-economic research on small-scale fishing arose to precede and complement technical development programs for this sector during the 1970s, with some studies exploring the links between the production and distribution.¹³⁷ More recently, there has been an increased acceptance of the premise that fisheries development cannot be segregated from resource management.¹³⁸

Yet fisheries development and management of the 1980s have been mainly guided by the interests of producers rather than those of local consumers. Investments for the fisheries sector are guided by concerns over increases and distribution of domestic food supply, the alleviation of poverty of small-scale fishers, increased revenues, foreign exchange earnings, employment, and the conservation of future fish stocks.¹³⁹ Some non-economic measures are undertaken as investments to protect the interests of small fishers. But return on investments in human capital (e.g., nutrition) is deemed small and uncertain. Even as fish is recognized as the cheapest source

¹³⁶ Smith et al., *Philippine Municipal Fisheries*, 1980, 3.

¹³⁷ See a multi-volume series on a specific fishery, represented by Ian R. Smith and Antonio N. Mines, eds., *Small-scale Fisheries of San Miguel Bay, Philippines: Economics of Production and Marketing* (Manila: Institute of Fisheries Development and Research, College of Fisheries, University of the Philippines in the Visayas, Quezon City, Philippines; International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, Manila, Philippines; and United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan, 1982); and Geronimo Silvestre et al., ed., *Towards Sustainable Development of the Coastal Resources of Lingayen Gulf, Philippines* (Manila: Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development and International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, 1989).

¹³⁸ Conner Bailey, ed., *Small-scale Fisheries of San Miguel Bay, Philippines: Social Aspects of Production and Marketing* (Quezon City: Institute of Fisheries Development and Research, College of Fisheries, University of the Philippines in the Visayas; Manila: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management; Tokyo: United Nations University, 1982), 2.

¹³⁹ Kent, *Fish, Food & Hunger*, 1987, 177.

of animal protein, policies are couched in terms of production and the market.¹⁴⁰ Thus, the incentives established through various legislations largely cater to the interests of big business investors.¹⁴¹

Aquaculture, often promoted as the agriculture of aquatic environments, represents an intensification of the 'husbanding' of naturally regenerative resources, premised on intervention into nature's processes. As the scientific farming of aquatic species, it is a means not only to increase food sufficiency but also generate export earnings for the state to manage outstanding debts and current expenditures.¹⁴² The 'Blue Revolution,' referring to breakthroughs in aquaculture and mariculture technologies, implies greater productivity and efficiency on the part of their practitioners.¹⁴³ Recent technologies involve the cultivation of more than just finfish on ponds, tanks, or cages and entail huge capital outlays and access to scientific and technical resources. But the rapid expansion of capital-intensive aquaculture enterprises limits the options for small fishers.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, the lucrative demand for certain types of Philippine fisheries products for Japanese consumers (especially tuna and prawns) has skewed production patterns from domestic needs.¹⁴⁵ The income and status of females relative to males in households have been adversely affected by changes thought of as beneficial for development, e.g., the Green

¹⁴⁰ Based on 1978-1980 figures, fish represents 62 percent of animal protein intake. Kent, Fish, Food & Hunger, 1987, 67.

¹⁴¹ Not least among these was the liberalization of fish importation in the early 1980s. See Jeanne Frances I. Illo and Jaime B. Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives: The Life Stories of Ten Women in a Fishing Village (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1990), 17-19.

¹⁴² Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 34-48.

¹⁴³ Conner Bailey, "The Blue Revolution: The Impact of Technological Innovation on Third-World Fisheries," Rural Sociologist 5 no. 4 (July 1985): 260-262.

¹⁴⁴ A production and market orientation that inadequately regulates the growth of aquaculture allows the widespread removal of mangrove forests for fishpond construction. It also ignores the periodic flushing of the ponds that release chemical-laden effluents into the bio-physical environment. Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 48-58.

¹⁴⁵ See Eduardo C. Tadem, Japanese Interests in the Philippine Fishing Industry (Quezon City: Third World Studies, University of the Philippines, August 1977).

Revolution and the creation of modern dairies;¹⁴⁶ so should the effects of the Blue Revolution be more clearly addressed.

In estimates drawn in 1976-1977 for two previous decades, municipal fisheries production quadrupled, rising from 218,983 to 874,934 metric tons.¹⁴⁷ Marine and inland municipal fisheries maintained approximately 55-60 percent share of total production throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Comparatively, based on figures for 1970-1975, commercial fisheries produced more than 28 percent, and aquaculture just over 10 percent. With a majority (55.4 percent) share to the total volume of fish production, the value of municipal fisheries catch was estimated only at 37 percent (₱ 2.7 billion) of total value. While the average wholesale prices for aquaculture and commercial production were estimated to be ₱ 7.60 per kilogram and ₱ 7.35 per kilogram respectively, that for municipal fish catch was only ₱ 3.50.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the sector contributed only about three percent (₱ 7.3 billion) of the annual gross national product (GNP), even as it provided employment for five percent of the Philippine labor force of 14,000,000.

For the three decades since the 1970s, harvests from aquafarms have had the highest growth rate in production, growing at an annual rate of 10.43 percent. Western Visayas had the biggest quantity of aquaculture harvests in 1970, but was overtaken by Central Luzon in 1980.¹⁴⁹ In 1990, the municipal fisheries sector had a lower, yet still the biggest output (45.21 percent); commercial fisheries produced 27.98 percent, and aquaculture, 26.81

¹⁴⁶ Loutfi, *Rural Women*, 1980, 21.

¹⁴⁷ It was only in 1976 when an attempt to improve municipal fisheries statistics, assisted by the South China Sea Fisheries Development and Coordinating Programme, indicated a much higher level of small-scale fisheries catch than hitherto supposed. Even with improved methods to date, however, these figures are, at best, estimates. See Smith *et al.*, *Philippine Municipal Fisheries*, 1980, 9.

¹⁴⁸ Smith *et al.*, *Philippine Municipal Fisheries*, 1980, 3.

¹⁴⁹ In 1980, of the total number of persons employed in the aquaculture sector (124,741), 26,411 (over 21 percent) were in Central Luzon, 25,910 (over 20 percent) were in Ilocos, and 24,525 (over 19 percent) were in the Western Visayas regions. Available statistics for 1988 continues to reflect the first and second position of the same areas. See *Philippine Yearbook*, 1992, 355-356; and 399-400.

percent. With the total volume of fish production reaching 2.50 metric tons valued at ₱ 52.18 billion, the Philippine fishing industry produced 4.29 percent (or ₱ 30.78 billion) of total GNP.¹⁵⁰

Appropriations from the fisheries affect numerous peasant households throughout the Philippine archipelago. The small fishers numerically make up the bulk of the country's fish producers and direct consumers. In the early 1980s, more than half of the 795,000 who depended on fish for their livelihood were the 574,000 in municipal fishing. There is also an estimated 176,000 in inland fishing (aquaculture, oyster farming, and fisheries support services) and 45,000 in commercial fishing.¹⁵¹ As recently as May 1988, 675,677 persons are recorded as employed in the municipal fisheries sector, each earning a gross monthly income of ₱ 1,986.50. The 41,553 persons in commercial fisheries earned ₱ 19,695.10, while the 250,000 persons employed in aquaculture earned ₱ 3,771.20.¹⁵² Their lives are characterized by conditions of indebtedness, unemployment, landlessness and other forms of inequities, deprivation and scarcity. Impoverished fisherfolk suffer poor material living conditions, inadequate consumption patterns, and have simple life expectations.¹⁵³

Recent rural studies emphasize an integral relationship between specific poverty groups and the set of resources upon which they depend.¹⁵⁴ Small-scale fishers, along with landless agricultural laborers and upland farmers, are the most impoverished and disadvantaged in the country.¹⁵⁵ Further,

¹⁵⁰ This 1990 figure also represented 4.46 percent of total agricultural output (₱ 689.69 billion). An estimate for 1991 shows a rise to 4.40 percent contribution to GNP by the fisheries sector. *Philippine Yearbook*, 1992, 337; and 354-356.

¹⁵¹ Ruth S. Callanta, *Poverty: The Philippine Scenario* (Manila: Bookmark, 1988), 67.

¹⁵² *IBON Facts and Figures* 12 no. 16 (31 August 1989): 2.

¹⁵³ Venancio B. Ardales and Fely P. David, "Poverty among Small-scale Fishermen in Iloilo," *Philippine Sociological Review* 33 nos. 1-2 (January-June 1985): 35-39.

¹⁵⁴ See Jose Ventura Aspiras, "Towards Genuine Fishery Reforms," in *Our Threatened Heritage: The Transcript, Recommendations and Papers of The Solidarity Seminar on the Environment*, ed. Chip Fay (Manila: Solidaridad, 1989), 126-135.

¹⁵⁵ Carner, "Survival, Interdependence, & Competition," 1981, 45-57.

adaptive strategies of small fisher households aim more for continuity and social reproduction rather than surplus accumulation. Their schemes for survival are aptly described as "different responses to the condition of being without resources." As an occupational activity, theirs is identified "as a last resort" for peasants pushed out of already marginal environments.¹⁵⁶ The present study posits that the women among peasant fishers are among other victims of development. Yet creative strategies and solutions are adopted under adverse conditions.¹⁵⁷

Municipal fishing activity is carried out by individuals or small fishing units (usually kin groups), often using one or several banca (small boat or canoe, occasionally powered and with outriggers). It is conducted on a part-time and/or seasonal basis, with household subsistence requirements supplemented by a variety of non-fishing activities. The low incomes and standards of living of these fishers are attributed to limited fisheries resources, inadequate vessels and gear, lack of alternative income sources, lack of market power, and inflation.¹⁵⁸ In competition with large-scale commercial outfits, small fishers are the losers; because of their dependence on near-shore waters, increased fishing effort entails overfishing.

There are no well-developed laws of private property over 'open-access' fisheries, a condition that leads to a rapid depletion of resources.¹⁵⁹ Overall declining catches create pressures on poor fishers to intensify efforts, diversify livelihood sources, and even engage in violent and illegal acts. Yet among individual or group fishers, there may be marginal increases since improved

¹⁵⁶ Anita Ellen Kendrick, "'Hanap Buhay': Survival Strategies of Coastal Households in Mashate, the Philippines" (M.S. thesis, Cornell University, 1988), 2-3; 47-48.

¹⁵⁷ Bimboy Peñaranda, "A Situationer on the Fishing Industry: Mutiny on the Seas and Elsewhere," Diliman Review 33 no. 2 (March-April 1985): 13-16. See also IBON Facts and Figures 12 no. 16 (31 August 1989).

¹⁵⁸ Ian R. Smith, A Research Framework for Traditional Fisheries (Manila: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, 1979), 9. See also Jaime B. Polo, "Philippine Municipal Fishery Resource, Production and Research: A Social Profile," Philippine Sociological Review 35 nos. 1-2 (1987): 39-46.

¹⁵⁹ Smith et al., Philippine Municipal Fisheries, 1980, 4.

vessels and gears tend to increase fishing effort to the detriment of the community's resources. These circumstances displace fishers and lead the women among them to seek menial wage incomes in the service sectors, e.g., the women around Laguna Lake who sell their labor as laundrywomen or as subcontractors in the garments industry.¹⁶⁰

The widespread debates between neo-classical economists advocating maximum economic yield (MEY) and biologists and welfare economists favoring maximum sustainable yield (MSY) signify the perception of problems of over-exploitation in marine fisheries.¹⁶¹ Many traditional rich fishing grounds throughout the Philippines have reached the limits of sustainable yield and the potential of marine fisheries production lies in areas beyond the capabilities of small fishers. By 1980, among areas marked by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources as overfished is the immediate area of Batan Bay and tributaries in Aklan.¹⁶²

The decline in total municipal catch is attributed to commercial fishing practices, enclosure activities, pollution of fishing grounds, reef and mangrove destruction, overfishing and destructive fishing practices.¹⁶³ Overfishing also results from encroachments on preserves of municipal fishers. Illegal competition from more efficient, some even destructive, gears of commercial outfits causes levels of exploitation beyond the biological and economic limits of a given fishery.¹⁶⁴ Restrictions on these violations and the use of destructive and illegal devices even among small fishers have been largely

¹⁶⁰ Lorna Q. Israel, "Women in the Fisheries Sector: A Review of Literature," Lundayan Magazine 2 (2nd Quarter, April-June 1991) 2: 2-3.

¹⁶¹ Donald K. Emmerson, Rethinking Artisanal Fisheries Development: Western Concepts, Asian Experiences (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1980).

¹⁶² See figure 2 on page 167. However, the area marked "Tinagong Dagat" is recorded as within the jurisdiction of the province of Capiz. Among other overfished areas are San Miguel Bay and Lingayen Gulf which are cited in various studies. Smith et al., Philippine Municipal Fisheries, 1980, 17-22.

¹⁶³ IBON Facts and Figures 12 no. 16 (31 August 1989): 5-8.

¹⁶⁴ Smith, A Research Framework, 1979, 10-14, 22.

ineffective.¹⁶⁵ The recent surge to establish TURFs signify enclosures of communal resources. Significantly, the indiscriminate licensing of fishponds, fish-pens, and fry gathering concessions on the public domain is deemed a result of patronage politics and powerful interests.¹⁶⁶

Loan programs and development of fisher associations with group projects were launched as remedial measures during the 1980s. But the failure of the Biyayang Dagat which targeted fishers' associations is well known.¹⁶⁷ There have also been marginal benefits for fisher families from credit schemes which provided opportunities for women's fish processing projects.¹⁶⁸ Regardless, various progressive fisher organizations supported by NGOs, particularly PROCESS (Participatory Research, Organization of Communities, and Education towards the Struggle for Self-Reliance), endorse women's participation in fish production to improve conditions of their households.¹⁶⁹

Beyond production, the practices of the suki system, especially prevalent in subsistence marketing networks in rural Philippines are significant.¹⁷⁰ It intimates tied-labor arrangements in the arena of circulation. The significance of the suki (a preferred customer, wholesale/retail buyer or seller) varies at different levels in the chain of marketing intermediaries, with

¹⁶⁵ See Roberto Galvez et al., "Sociocultural Dynamics of Blast Fishing and Sodium Cyanide Fishing in Two Fishing Villages in the Lingayen Gulf Area," in Towards Sustainable Development, ed. Silvestre et al., 1989, 43-62.

¹⁶⁶ IBON Facts and Figures 12 no. 16 (31 August 1989): 6. See also Anna Kristina U. Gono and Kimberly Wylie, "A Glimpse into the Marketing System of Milkfish Fry Industry in Antique," Sarilakas 2 no. 3 (1987): 8-11; and Ian R. Smith, The Economics of the Milkfish Fry and Fingerling Industry of the Philippines (Makati: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management/Iloilo: Aquaculture Department, Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, 1981).

¹⁶⁷ See Peñaranda, "A Situationer on the Fishing Industry," 1985, 14; see also Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 19-20.

¹⁶⁸ As of 1988, 101 women in six fishing communities throughout the provinces of Palawan, Davao, Davao del Sur, and Pangasinan were assisted to engage in small and medium-scale fish processing ventures. Women in Fisheries Development as of Year End 1988 (Quezon City: Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, n.d.), 4-9.

¹⁶⁹ Israel, "Women in the Fisheries Sector," 1991, 2-3. See also Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 1990, 20.

¹⁷⁰ See Maria Cristina Blanc Szanton, A Right to Survive: Subsistence Marketing in a Lowland Philippine Town (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1972).

degrees of protection and patronage offered to local fishers. In a lake fishing community, the rigaton (large-scale fish dealer) is featured as a dominant suki.¹⁷¹ In many villages throughout Iloilo, there are the kilohan or ilador, terms that evoke their possession of a weighing scale and/or provision of ice.¹⁷² Each of the persons or institutions at higher rungs have 'captive' sets of suki who supply them with harvests; the latter also depend on the former for capital, credit, and other provisions for security.¹⁷³ Women feature in the majority only at lower levels of the marketing chain, often as sellers of increasingly meager household harvests.

¹⁷¹ Based on a study at Bay, Laguna, see F. Landa Jocano and Carmencita Veloro, San Antonio: A Case Study of Adaptation and Folk Life in a Fishing Community (Quezon City: UP-NSDB Integrated Research Program, University of the Philippines, 1976).

¹⁷² Based on research at villages of Concepcion, Nueva Valencia, and San Joaquin, see Ma. Luisa Mabunay, "Socio-economics of Marketing Practices of Small-Scale Capture Fisheries in Iloilo Province," in Resources, Management and Socio-economics of Philippine Marine Fisheries, ed. Daniel Pauly *et al.* (Quezon City: UPV College of Fisheries, 1986), 165-177.

¹⁷³ See Robert S. Pomeroy, "The Economics of Production and Marketing in a Small-scale Fishery: Matalom, Leyte, Philippines" (Ph. D. diss., Ithaca: Cornell University, 1989).

3.4. Women in Philippine Peasant Fisheries

Fisheries literature in the Philippines is mainly made up of technical studies of specific maritime communities with growing attention to the impact of human involvements and interventions on these resources.¹⁷⁴ However, gender analysis is relatively recent in the literature and developments in this area.¹⁷⁵ The substance and methods reflect changing emphases in women's and international development studies. The following review focuses on material on peasant fisheries.

Early works tend to describe a cooperative relationship between men and women in fishing environments. A study of entrepreneurship at Estancia, Iloilo indicates that women's fish vending is marginal or supplemental. Selling appears to be

an extension of family production and are not noticeably affected by changes in demand in the marketplace.... Their commitment to the marketplace is thus limited, for they view it as an adjunct or source of specialized goods they cannot produce themselves, and they participate in it only when and if they feel a specific need for those goods.¹⁷⁶

Women are socialized into and have internalized stereotypes engendered by the 'private-public' opposition which presumes that women's reproductive tasks are her primary obligations. Tensions result from women's entry into fish vending perceived to be a male domain activity.

Men clearly dislike having women join them in fish dealing because of the great difference in their styles of business operation and the sanctions that can be pressed against them. As they put it, 'women

¹⁷⁴ See David L. Szanton, Estancia in Transition: Economic Growth in A Rural Philippine Community, rev. and exp. ed. (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1981), and Brian Lockwood and Kenneth Ruddle, eds., Small-Scale Fisheries Development: Social Science Contribution (Honolulu: East-West Center, 1977).

¹⁷⁵ From 1984-1987, I was a participant for UPV at the start of the Asian Fisheries Social Science Research Network organized by the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management based in Makati, Metro Manila. Here, interest in social issues in has focused on socio-economic aspects of specific fisheries and aquaculture technologies. The gender dimension has yet to be more widely appreciated and applied in the work of constituent members across Southeast and South Asian government agencies and universities.

¹⁷⁶ Szanton, A Right to Survive, 1972, 136.

fight with words' which circumvent and nullify threats of physical violence, the basis for controlling business transactions among men. As a result, the few women fish traders operate alone and are not brought into the various sharing partnerships characteristic of fish dealing among men. Commonly men try to avoid doing business with the women.¹⁷⁷

An attempt is made to place economic values on non-cash incomes and activities by estimating the value of domestic services of women and children around San Miguel Bay in the Bicol region. Recognizing the significance of non-quantifiable roles of women (managing family finances, determining daily consumption patterns, and in influencing investment decisions), these traditional roles of wife and mother are deemed 'well-understood,' suggestive of conventional assumptions of intrahousehold relations.¹⁷⁸ Links of female and child labor to cooperative earning and non-earning economic roles are also investigated in fishing households in Matalom, Leyte. Here, one-third of full-time trading intermediaries studied are women; their significant role as 'middlemen' is attributed partly by the presence or absence of other 'middlemen.'¹⁷⁹ These studies echo a review of women's participation in the fisheries sector which presumes that women's income-generating activities are secondary to those of men. In addition, the latter express a concern over the implications of women's time in commercial activities on the quality of childcare.¹⁸⁰

Other works more pointedly indicate the potential of political agency from women and the prospects for organizing.¹⁸¹ A survey of fishing households in Bayawan, Negros Oriental poses that concern for women's

¹⁷⁷ Szanton, A Right to Survive, 1972, 139.

¹⁷⁸ Luz R. Yater, "The Fisherman's Family: Economic Roles of Women and Children," in Small-scale Fisheries of San Miguel Bay, ed. Bailey, 1982, 42-50.

¹⁷⁹ Robert S. Pomeroy, "The Role of Women and Children in Small Scale Fishing Households: A Case Study in Matalom, Leyte, Philippines," Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society 15 (1987): 353-360.

¹⁸⁰ Israel, "Women in the Fisheries Sector," 1991, 2-3.

¹⁸¹ For example, see the pamphlet on women in fisheries by a task force of NGOs: Bugsay Kababaihan, Buhay Mandaragat: Kalagayan ng Sektor Pangisdaan at ng Kababaihang Manggigisda (n.p.: [Shield and Women's Resource and Research Center], 1991).

situation is a concrete step towards finding solutions for rural poverty.¹⁸²

Women risk their health without any protection covered by a state agency, unlike the case of women workers in labor groups or workplaces regulated by the government's labor agency. Compared with men, women have a more critical attitude towards conditions at home and in the community; they are also willing to attend organization meetings as their husbands' proxies.

Among participatory studies aimed for community mobilization on specific issues is that which reports on the 'red tide' phenomena disastrous for communities around Manila Bay. Certain types of fish and shellfish are particularly prone to ingest these toxins.¹⁸³ The sharing sessions call attention to the fact that women are "invisible even at the level of language, of naming." As in English, the Filipino term *mangigisda* conjures an almost exclusive image of man and the sea.¹⁸⁴ The women are affected as much by the crisis, as managers of their homes and as part of the fishery's workforce. When men are forced into inactivity, women have more alternative income-generating activities despite continuing home responsibilities. They wash clothes, retail foodstuffs, provide domestic work for relatives and neighbors, engage in temporary factory work, and make or repair clothes; they also identify more sources of alternative financing, listing their in-laws, the charity of relatives and the Church.¹⁸⁵ The study recommends that women be involved in creating community-based disaster preparedness programs.

An essay on communities surrounding the Lingayen Gulf also highlights women's actual and potential community contributions towards sustaining

¹⁸² Betty C. Abregana, "The Weaker Sex (?), The Stronger Force," *Lundayan Magazine* 2 (April-June 1991) no. 2: 16-19. This study was based on a CIDA-funded project.

¹⁸³ Lina Sagara Reyes, "Women in Fisheries," in *Valuing Women's Work*, ed. Ybanez, 1992, 12-13. A rise to critical level of the red-tide microorganisms (*Pyrodinium*, a marine algae the bloom when fed with nitrates, phosphates, and other chemicals and garbage on the seabed) occurred towards the end of 1988. Broad & Cavanagh, *Plundering Paradise*, 1993, 82.

¹⁸⁴ Sagara Reyes, "Women in Fisheries," 1992, 12.

¹⁸⁵ Sagara Reyes, "Women in Fisheries," 1992, 12-13.

socioeconomic life.¹⁸⁶ It explicitly links deteriorating economic conditions and increased pressures on women in poor households. Despite women's expanded roles, however, the economic-political life in the fishing village continues to be male dominated. The prospect of community-based management schemes underscores the trend to involve coastal peoples in decision making and action programs to protect the environment.¹⁸⁷

In substance and in approach, two recent works are most salient to the present study. Jeanne Illo and Jaime Polo examine the life stories of women from the village of Bantigue in Quezon province for a closer understanding of Philippine fishing communities.¹⁸⁸ Focusing on changes in family and personal strategies, their analyses of the women's stories directly address the issue of the deployment of female and male family labor over time, with the prospect of the study's applications to development work with fishing communities. It examines the following major themes for family survival: diversification of resources and means of livelihood, investment in education and/or recourse to migration, and maintenance of mutual-support networks. On the personal level, it probes into dimensions of women's work in terms of their identity, worth, and context.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ The main data sources are the ethnographic studies of seven fishing villages in Pangasinan and La Union. Ma. Theresa Tungpalan, et al., "Women in Fishing Villages: Roles and Potential for Coastal Resources Management," in Towards an Integrated Management of Tropical Coastal Resources, ed. L.M. Chou, et al. (Singapore and Manila: National University of Singapore, National Science and Technology Board, and International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, 1991), 237-243.

¹⁸⁷ See Elmer M. Ferrer, Learning and Working Together: Towards A Community-based Coastal Resources Management (Quezon City: Research and Extension for Development Office, College of Social Work and Community Development, U.P. Diliman, 1992).

¹⁸⁸ Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 1990. This work reports on cases representing the fishery production system within the municipality of Pagbilao for a research series of the Institute of Philippine Culture in 1985-1986. In each of four research sites (with others dealing with lowland rice-farming, plantation, and upland systems), a common research strategy was adopted entailing the collection of a community profile, complete enumeration of households, and collection of women's life stories.

¹⁸⁹ Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 1990, 107.

Illo and Polo emphasize how the women are socialized into, and inured by, work roles that entailed home and more than just the fishery. They indicate that women have diffused identities and see their livelihood activities as secondary to their being wives and mothers. "On the one hand, the women were socialized into being female, with roles and responsibilities revolving around the home and housework; on the other hand, they were taught to be more than female, to work alongside men."¹⁹⁰ However, the women's ability to contribute to the family's support is an important element of their self-worth and social value. With their focus on livelihood options and strategies, the authors make observations relevant to concrete situations of bargaining in rural households.

The ambiguous economic worth associated with multiple roles dissipated the leverage which females could have vis-a-vis males, whether these were fathers or husbands. Only the women who had an enterprise distinctively their own were able to negotiate effectively with others for what they wanted; embarking on a trip or a new employment, or setting the terms for marital peace. Space for negotiation, however, rarely existed as men and women were trapped by the vicious demands of poverty which blurred gender-based roles and behaviors.¹⁹¹

Carol Sobritchea's report on a fishing village in Bohol is also sensitive to other venues for, and types of, women's bargaining and negotiation.¹⁹² It focuses on "how women resist, reduce and/or postpone the experience of male domination within the context of economic changes" that take place in the fishery.¹⁹³ Life stories document how the decline of household incomes of small-scale fishing households increased the economic and social importance of

¹⁹⁰ Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 1990, 112.

¹⁹¹ Illo & Polo, Fishers, Traders, Farmers, Wives, 1990, 112.

¹⁹² This review is based on a condensed report from the intensive anthropological study in one of the villages of Loay in the island of Bohol found in Carolyn Israel-Sobritchea, "An Anthropological Study of Economic Change, Gender and Power in a Visayan Fishing Community," Review of Women's Studies 3 no. 2 (1993): 27-41. The study was a joint research program of UPV College of Fisheries and the University of Tsukuba. Data is derived from a household survey of the village and life story interviews of ten village women, supplemented by government records and a time-allocation study involving 30 households.

¹⁹³ Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 27.

women. The decline is attributed to the depletion of marine resources due to encroachments of large vessels and 'outsiders' with fine nets and illegal fishing devices. Moreover, the conversion of mangrove and nipa swamps into fish and prawn ponds excluded most community members from traditional resources (crabs, snails, fish, firewood, and nipa).¹⁹⁴

With the women's active participation in fisheries production and other economic activities, the situation provides women with opportunities to challenge male dominance. Most common are the manufacture of roof shingles, managing retail stores, commercial manufacture of salted fish and fish sauce, and peddling of cooked food. Backyard production of vegetables and livestock also augment family incomes.¹⁹⁵

Where both husband and wife are economically active, male contributions to home management and childcare are most significant. "It is in these households where negotiations for a more judicious share of household responsibilities and decision-making powers take place."¹⁹⁶ However, based on the results of an accompanying time-allocation study, women continue to perform most household chores. Gainfully employed women spend less time for domestic work and childcare than full-time housewives. They tend to relegate home responsibilities to other female household members or to their husbands. Husbands of working women also tend to contribute more to these tasks than husbands of women who stay at home all the time.¹⁹⁷ Citing details from four cases, Sobritchea asserts:

The experience of women in reducing the burden of domestic and production work indicates the extent to which they actively participate in redefining their relationship with men. The challenge to male

¹⁹⁴ Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 29-30.

¹⁹⁵ Interestingly, the study identifies twenty-five different sources of livelihood for women and only fifteen types for men in the village. Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 29-33.

¹⁹⁶ Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 33.

¹⁹⁷ Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 33.

domination in everyday life occurs when women start to question and resist the uneven share of work and power in the household.¹⁹⁸

Despite exemptions, therefore, Sobritchea maintains that the processes of the reproduction and the erosion of asymmetrical gender relations occur simultaneously.

3.5. Summary Thoughts

The theoretical arguments, reflections and redefinitions, and supporting literature cited above weave around the conception of the ways gender allocates power and shapes human relations. Relations between women and men are marked by differences in their attitudes, perceptions, contributions, interests, and aspirations. These are simultaneously, and no less significantly, expressed in, and influenced by, broader cultural, political, and economic structures in particular environmental and historical settings.

The discussions lead to an understanding of how gender inequalities persist, both in the larger society and as reflected within poor households. It is knowing how inequalities are produced in the discourses of the gender stratification order that is essential to the process of change or resistance. Ultimately, this can make change, or the unlearning and undoing, more effective.¹⁹⁹ Contending intentions, interests, and claims for status and power are effected only through doing, or the actions of individuals and/or groups. These views underlie my reconstruction of some women's lived

¹⁹⁸ In one case, a young wife opened a small retail store in front of their house since his earnings from his marginal participation in fishing were inadequate; a middle-aged woman did "something about her life" in the face of an abusive husband by seeking various sources of income. In both these instances, the writer stresses the women's concern for earning to become less dependent on their husbands' incomes as well as to provide for their children's needs. In the third example, a young married woman publicly abused by her husband left him and found employment; another young married woman prevailed upon her husband to limit their sexual relationship to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. Among other interesting strategies cited of the women's resistance are the practice of giving male family members derogatory appellations as well as winning the children's and the neighbor's loyalty by talking about their husbands' shortcomings. Sobritchea, "Economic Change, Gender & Power," 1993, 33-36.

¹⁹⁹ A personal narration of this process is found in Maureen Castillo Pagaduan, "Knowing, Negating, Transcendence: An Evaluation of the Learning, Unlearning Process in Women's Studies," Review of Women's Studies 2 no. 1 (1991): 2-12.

realities, expressed in terms of life and livelihood as pangabuhi and pangita, respectively, acknowledging myself in the process as an intermediary.²⁰⁰

The following chapter 4 provides a local history and community background that highlight and locate the specific contexts of the women's individual and communal work and lives. Along with discussions in chapters 5 and 6, the presentation deals with local conditions and personal circumstances of the subjects that demonstrate the gendered and peasant character of pangabuhi and pangita in this remote riverine fishing community.

²⁰⁰ That this process reflects a degree of appropriation of the women's voices is an inescapable aspect of doing research. See discussion of methodological issues in chapter 1.

CHAPTER 4

GETTING TO KNOW THE COMMUNITY OF TALANGBAN

4.1. A Historical Mapping of Aklan and Batan

There are distinct sources of the human record on Panay island. Oral traditions provide the accounts of pre-Hispanic societies at the present-day provinces of Antique and Aklan, while Spanish sagas of the sixteenth-century encounters, conquests, and conversions created the early histories of Capiz and Iloilo. Prominent in the folklore of Aninipay, the name that the Ati (Aetas or Negritos) inhabitants had for the island of Panay, is the story of ten Malay datus (petty rulers) from Borneo. They fled on sail boats with their villagers from an oppressive overlord, Sultan Makatunaw, reportedly in the early thirteenth century.¹

Their leader Datu Puti transacted the famed 'barter of Panay' with the Ati leader Marikudo. In this transaction, their respective wives were active participants. The lowlands were purchased by the Malays in exchange for a golden saduk (broad-brimmed hat) and a basin made of gold, and a necklace that Marikudo's wife Maniwantiwan asked for from Datu Puti's wife Pinangpangan. In exchange, Pinangpangan asked for and received a tagad (a hand implement used for digging) made of gold, a basket of crabs, a wild boar with long fangs, and one white cross-eyed deer.² Apart from the lands, the Ati threw in their huts and farms and moved into the rugged interiors of the island where some of their descendants still live today.

¹ See Pedro Monteclaro, Maragtas sang Panay (Iloilo City: Iloilo Times, 1907). The timing of these events, roughly between 1212 and 1250 A.D., is still under question; Malay-based accounts use the ancient syllabary and the Muslim hijira calendar. The events are assumed to have signified the break-up of an early Southeast Asian empire, the Shri-Vijaya, within the thirteenth century. Other local epics, like the Labaw Dunggon and Hinilawod, have yet to be fully recorded, transcribed, and studied against these accounts. See the island of Panay in the Western Visayas map in figure 3 on page 186.

² The first Bornean landings are believed to have been at the present village of Sinugbahan at the mouth of the Sirawaga river on the southern Iloilo border with Antique. After the initial settlements, Datu Puti returned to Borneo. See Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 81-93.

Among the early Malay settlements was the minoro it Akean (the village of Aklan) established by Datu Bangkaya west of the banks of the Aklan river, the village later called Madyanos (Madianos). 'Aklan' derives from that vernacular term that connotes the bubbling sounds of the river, traceable to the root akae (to bubble or boil).³ Datu Bangkaya's rule (covering Capiz and Aklan) paralleled those of Datu Sumakwel over the settlement of Hamtik (Antique) and Datu Paiburong over Irong-irong (Iloilo). Each was considered a district of the Malay confederation on the island which they renamed Madya-as (Madia-as).⁴ Sumakwel at Hamtik was the first overlord; Bangkaya succeeded and the Minoro it Akean became the island's capital; and when Paiburong succeeded him, Ogtong (Oton) in Irong-irong became the center.⁵

The Madya-as confederation allegedly grew beyond the confines of the Panay districts. Hence the claim that the minoro it Akean was once a capital of pre-Hispanic Philippines.⁶ By the fifteenth century, the despotic rule of a usurper king named Kalantiao briefly made Batang (Batan) the seat of his realm which encompassed the Malay confederation.⁷ After Malay leadership was restored, inland areas of present-day Banga and Libacao successively became the seat of government. Other petty rulers, with such titles as lakan,

³ Roman A. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand (Kalibo: Macar, 1993), 2. The Malay syllabary or Abakada, said to have been popularized by Datu Bangkaya. Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 54-55.

⁴ Madya-as is still the name for the mountain range along the Aklan-Iloilo boundaries of Antique, believed to be where the abode of the Atis' chief deity (Bulalakaw) lies. Datu Puti, through the Malay bangutbanwa (chief priest or shaman), sought counsel from Bulalakaw when choosing a place to settle after the 'barter.' Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 92.

⁵ Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 93-99.

⁶ Lusong (Luzon) became an island province of the Panay confederation, settled under the leadership of Datu Dumangsil at what is now the province of Batangas. Datu Bangkaya himself is said to have distributed other settlers at Buglas (Negros), Romren (Romblon), Sugbu (Cebu) and Ma-i (Mindoro). Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 97-99.

⁷ He was allegedly a Chinese pirate who proclaimed himself a raja and was followed by his son, Kalantiao II. A code of behavior contained in the Maragtas and the set of promulgations attributed to Kalantiao II are subject of controversy. However, blocks of cemented quarried stones excavated during the 1950s during the construction of a wharf along the shores of Batan Bay, predate Spanish presence in the Philippines; these are believed to be foundations of ancient capitals in the area. Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 99-102; 106-107.

rajah, or sultan, established autonomous regimes, reflecting inroads of Muslim raiders, some of whom settled on the island.⁸

The Spanish expedition led by Miguel Lopez de Legaspi reached Panay in search of better food provisions after an initial settlement at Cebu in 1565. He entered the pan-ay (literally, 'the mouth of a river') in what now is Panay, Capiz; hence, the name for the island as Panay.⁹ After subduing local resistance, Legaspi sent Martin de Goiti to push farther into unexplored regions, leading the latter to make successive landings at Batan.¹⁰ Legaspi moved the center of Spanish operations on Panay south, to Irong-irong;¹¹ he then proceeded to conquer Luzon in 1571 through treaties with native rulers. Evangelization throughout Panay was the responsibility of the Augustinian friars.¹² Soon after the Spaniards relocated the people of Madyanos to the present site of Kalibo, mass baptisms were held in 1569.¹³ The Batan settlement also became a parish in 1605. With other administrative changes in the late eighteenth century, Batan was organized as a municipio (municipality) in 1789.¹⁴

⁸ Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 99.

⁹ The name 'Capiz' for the Spanish settlement on the northeast derives from folk references to Capid (literally, 'twin'), after the twin grandchildren of Datu Bangkaya symbolized as Aklan and Capid, but which the Spaniards obviously found difficult to pronounce. Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 5-6, 99-100, 106-107, 111-112.

¹⁰ Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 5-6, 99-100, 106-107, 112-113. The Spaniards apparently also had difficulties in pronouncing 'Batang.'

¹¹ Under Governor-General Gonzalo Ronquillo, the Spanish capital was moved to the Villa Rica de Arevalo. These centers at Irong-irong were the centers of Spanish presence until the late nineteenth century. Henry F. Funtecha, "Iloilo Up to the Close of the 19th Century: Factors in its Development," Danyag 2 (December 1986) no. 2: 46-47.

¹² The first mission on the island was in 1569. There were 83 parishes by 1865 when a separate diocese was established in Jaro separate from the administration formerly emanating from Cebu. McCoy, "Baylan," 1982, 157.

¹³ Henceforth, Madyanos was known as Eaging-banwa (literally, 'old town'), now a part of the municipality of Numancia. The name of Kalibo is derived from the vernacular phrase 'sangka libo' (literally, 'a thousand'), the number the Spaniards initially baptized at the site. Kalibo was made a parish when it was assigned as an encomienda in 1581 to a certain Antonio Flores. It included all of present-day Aklan and the towns of Ivisan and Sapian of Capiz.

¹⁴ Batan was assigned as an encomienda to a soldier named Gonzalo Riquen. As a municipality, Don Martin Dionisio was the first gobernadorcillo; and Father Miguel Josef was its first parish priest. Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 94 and de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand,

The late nineteenth century saw the participation of the people of Panay with the Katipunan-led revolution. The Aklan unit of the revolutionary society was the first outside of Luzon and drew support from hundreds who underwent initiation in 1897.¹⁵ Marianito (Kitoy) Almanon speaks of his father, Agapito Almanon, as having participated in the ambush on Spanish forces entering Aklan from Capiz. The ambush at Maeubong, Lalab was carried out by a local support force of the Revolution organized by Eustaquio Gallardo, a fisherman-farmer.¹⁶ Further, Almanon was the person who received the surrender of Spanish supporters at Batan.¹⁷

The martial law imposed during hostilities with the Americans was particularly harsh in northeastern Panay. The relatively isolated Aklan was spared the ruthless character of the 'pacification'.¹⁸ Regardless, under American rule, Aklan was classified as the third district of Capiz and its administration was once more in the hands of local leaders. The area was also spared the initial blows of the Japanese invasion on the island in 1942; but many of its citizens joined the local civil and military resistance forces.¹⁹

1993, 2-7 passim.

¹⁵ Among prominent organizers were Francisco del Castillo, Candido Iban, Valeriano Dalida and Albino Rabaria. Among local leaders were Teodorico Motus and Gavino Suggang. Pacto de sangre or sandugo (blood compacts) marked the initiation of rebel. To this day, March 3, 1897, when hundreds of men enlisted, is celebrated in New Washington (then known as Lagatic) as an official holiday. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 30-38. See also Regalado & Franco, History of Panay, 1973, 171-175.

¹⁶ He had his headquarters at the hills of Macawiwili at Ea-eab (Lalab), now a village of Batan. At that time, Lalab was a part of the village of Jimeno (now the town of Altavas). de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 59-63.

¹⁷ When the Spanish banner was formally surrendered at Batan, Eustaquio Gallardo, Rafael Maraingan, and General Ananias Diokno of the revolucionarios gave Agapito Almanon the title of capitan del banderabos, which, Kitoy claims, is equivalent to a present-day town mayor. For this reason, his father had elaborate burial services, brought by boat from his home at Caiyang to the town of Batan. Agapito Almanon died at 81 in 1951.

¹⁸ The intransigent leader Rafael Maraingan at Macawiwili died from illness without surrendering to Spain or to the Americans. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 63-65.

¹⁹ Japanese forces landed at Hamtik in San Jose de Buenavista, Antique and at Capiz (now Roxas City) in April 1942. The main body landed at Trapiche in Oton, west of Iloilo City. Filipino soldiers of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) 6th Military District and civilian volunteers who did not heed the order for surrender were reorganized by Lt. Col. Macario Peralta as the Free Panay guerrilla forces. On the civilian side, the Panay resistance movement

With massive Japanese reinforcements early in 1943, a Panay-wide drive reached Antique and Aklan.²⁰ Japanese penetrations reached the town of Batan in October, when the people had just begun to prepare their fields. These continued until the 1944 harvest and dealt a blow to local food production.²¹ No known account comments on any consequences of these events on the local fisheries; but older residents of Camaligan still remember those harrowing days without fish.²² Panay was eventually 'liberated' by returning American forces in March 1945.

Aklan gained its present political status as a province through Republic Act No. 1414, a decade after independence in 1946.²³ It is bounded on the north by the Sibuyan Sea, on the east by the province of Capiz, on the west by Antique, and on the southeast, by Iloilo. It has a total area of approximately 1,817.9 square kilometers, with 17 municipalities, including the capital Kalibo, and 327 villages.²⁴ In 1990, Aklan had a population of 380,497 or 0.62 percent of the national population of 60,703,206.²⁵

Until the creation of Guimaras in 1993, Aklan was the smallest province in Western Visayas. With Guimaras and Antique, Aklan is relatively

was led by Iloilo Governor Tomas Confesor. Jose D. Doromal, The War in Panay: A Documentary History of the Resistance Movement in Panay During World War II (Manila: Diamond Historical Publications, 1952), chap. 1 passim.

²⁰ The severity of Japanese campaigns into Aklan in 1944 is described thus: "[People] saw blood spilled in the hills of Balete and Altavas, in the marshy shores of Batan, in the creeks and mountains of Ibajay, Libacao, and Makato. There were merciless killings, endless terrors and inhumanities against the civilians.... Hundreds of innocents lay bathing in their own blood in the streets and fields of Banga." From a report submitted to Governor Confesor on February 7, 1944, cited in Doromal, War in Panay, 1952, 93.

²¹ Doromal, War in Panay, 1952, 112.

²² Specific circumstances at Camaligan are discussed in section 4.2.2 below.

²³ The present area was separated from the northeast that remained as the province of Capiz. Early attempts at separation started at the peace negotiations with the Taft Commission in 1901, with Simeon Mobo Reyes as spokesperson for Aklan. The successful post-World War II effort was led by personages such as Rafael S. Tumbokon and Godofredo P. Ramos of New Washington. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 95-97, 136-138.

²⁴ Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 37-39 and 163. See reference data on Aklan and other provinces of the region in table 1 on page 62; see also the towns of Aklan in figure 4 on page 187.

²⁵ Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 156-160. See changing Aklan population by municipality since 1960 in table 4 on page 188.

less developed compared with other provinces in the region. As of 1991, it is classified as a third-class province, with an average annual income of ₱ 15,000,000 or more but less than ₱ 20,000,000.²⁶ Throughout Western Visayas, the proportion of rural population decreased from 71.61 percent in 1980 to 64.19 in 1990. For the provinces therein, census figures show that Aklan has not only had the highest proportion of rural dwellers in both instances; it also had the highest decrease of over 12 percentage points within this decade.²⁷ The overall tendency of the female population of Aklan to move to urban centers and enter into particular occupations follows national trends.²⁸

The interior areas of the duck-shaped province are rugged and mountainous, though plains are found on the northern coastal districts.²⁹ Creeks and rivers form natural boundaries between settlements and flow north towards the Dumaguít and Batan Bays and into the Sibuyan Sea. Aklan's land-based resources are found in 59,136 hectares of timberland, 85,437 hectares of agricultural land, 7,380 hectares of areas suitable for fishpond development, and some mangrove areas.³⁰ Aklan has been known for its agricultural and forest products, (abaca, lumber, and coconuts) and its textile weaving industry; more recently, it is known for banana fruit and coco-lumber production, the manufacture of bamboo furniture and handicrafts, and a variety of palm leaf products. The Dumaguít and Batan Bays and Tinagong Dagat in the municipality of Batan are the province's most important actual and potential

²⁶ *Philippine Yearbook*, 1992, 1220.

²⁷ See comparative urban and rural population figures in table 2 on page 63.

²⁸ The sex distribution for urban and rural populations of Aklan and Batan is found in table 5 on page 189. See also a profile of occupations in Aklan in table 6 on page 190. Though not gender-disaggregated, I have detailed the categories which include fisherfolk as well as elementary and non-gainful occupations which expectedly include most women.

²⁹ The mountain ranges run south from Madalag, Libacao, and Malinao, affecting the course of the road that cuts across Panay and links Kalibo with Roxas and Iloilo cities. See figure 4 on page 187.

³⁰ Lorenza Padojinog et. al., "Socio-economic Conditions and Technological Practices in Selected Barangays in Batan, Aklan." (Iloilo City: University of the Philippines in the Visayas, [1988]), typescript. This was a report prepared for the proposal for funding of FSDP.

aquatic resources. The province supplies bangeos (milkfish, Chanos chanos Forskal) and lukon (tiger shrimps or prawns, Penaeus monodon) for national and international markets.³¹ In addition, the alimango (mud crab) and the kasag (blue crab) are also highly-valued aquatic species.

The town of Kalibo is province's politico-administrative and religious center; it is also the hub of commercial, educational, health, communications, and transport activities.³² Post-secondary and college education throughout Aklan is available only at Kalibo, or at the neighboring towns of Banga, New Washington, and Numancia.³³ There are daily flight connections with Manila from Kalibo, and inter-island shipping is served by two ports at New Washington and one in Batan.³⁴ For most people, however, Kalibo is most known for the "Ati-atihan."³⁵ Anachronistically represented by a majority of Ati, festivals commemorate Christianization every third Sunday of January throughout Aklan, including the town of Batan. The most elaborate rituals are held at Kalibo where week-long festivities culminate with the fiesta, dedicated to the Santo Niño (Holy Child).

Almost 97 percent of Aklanons are Catholics, and the Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes Memorial Foundation, Inc. (AGMRFI) is a renowned NGO throughout the province.³⁶ Active proselytizing by local variants of

³¹ Milkfish is bangeos in Aklanon; bangrus in Ilonggo; bangus in Filipino. The Aklanon and Ilonggo term for prawns is lukon, sugpo in Filipino.

³² Kalibo lies 90 kilometers from Roxas City, 160 kilometers from Iloilo City, and 175 kilometers from San Jose, Antique.

³³ See a population profile for Aklan and Batan by educational attainment in table 7 on page 191.

³⁴ The earliest was at the center of New Washington and another port was opened at Batan. The most recent is that at the village of Dumaguít, part of New Washington. The main shipping companies that use these facilities are the Aboitiz, Go Thong, Sulpicio, and William lines, with connections primarily with Manila and Cebu.

³⁵ See de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 66-74. With endorsements of local governments and private businesses, the Ati-atihan has become a commercially-successful annual draw. Local and international tourists aim to join the festivities, along with vacations on the famed white beaches of the island of Boracay, off the town of Malay in northwestern Aklan.

³⁶ Aklanons take much pride in the fact that the very first Filipino Archbishop of Cebu in 1934 and Manila in 1949, the late Gabriel M. Reyes, was from Kalibo. The present bishop of Kalibo, Gabriel V. Reyes is a nephew of his close namesake. Kalibo was elevated as a diocese in 1976, with Monsignor Juan N. Nilmar as first bishop. Moreover, the incumbent Archbishop of Manila

Catholicism and other religious groups soon after the war have gained adherents. Notably, followers of the Aglipay church (7,004) and the Iglesia ni Kristo (458) followed the overwhelming Catholic majority (353,281) in 1990.³⁷ In the same year throughout Batan, the churches of the Jehovah's Witnesses (334) and the Seventh Day Adventists (162) follow the Catholics who make up over 96 percent (24,883) of the town's population.³⁸

The municipality of Batan occupies the northeastern coast of the province of Aklan. More specifically, it is located between coordinates 122°26'00" and 122°33'10" longitude and 11°31'12" and 11°39'06" latitude.³⁹ With its islets, the municipality has a total land area of 85.40 square kilometers, less than five percent of the total land area of Aklan.⁴⁰ It is bounded on the north by the Sibuyan Sea; on the east, it is adjacent to the municipality of Sapián of the province of Capiz. South and southwest are the contiguous municipalities of Altavas and Balete, respectively; northwest across the bay is municipality of New Washington. The almost linear dispersal of villages along the coast make water transportation an important part of the immediate economic and social life of Batan's population. As of 1 May 1990, Batan is the fifth most populous of the Aklan municipalities, with a population of 25,710, a figure which has doubled since 1939.⁴¹ However, as of 1 July

and one of the few Filipino cardinals, Jaime L. Sin, hails from New Washington. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 100-101, 185-188, 218.

³⁷ 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Aklan, Report No. 3-4F: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics (Manila: National Statistics Office, June 1992), 23-24.

³⁸ 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Aklan, 1992, 23-24. For the same year on a national scale, Roman Catholics make up 82.92 percent (50,217,801) of the population; Protestant, 5.43 percent (3,287,355); Aglipay, 2.62 percent (1,590,208); the INK, 2.62 percent (1,414,393); Islam, 4.57 percent (2,796,643). There are no disaggregated figures for Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists. Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 201.

³⁹ Luz Lopez-Rodriguez and Sylvia M. Hondrade, Food System in Batan: The Community Profile of Barangays Camaligan, Lalab and Magpag-ong (Iloilo City: Food Systems Development Project, 1994).

⁴⁰ Batan Comprehensive Development Plan, Municipality of Batan, 1983.

⁴¹ It follows Kalibo, Ibajay, New Washington, and Banga. 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Aklan, 1992, 1.

1991, Batan is classified among the lowest category of municipalities, the sixth, with an average annual income of less than ₱ 1,000,000.⁴²

At the turn of the twentieth century, Batan included areas of the present areas of Altavas, Balete, Batan, New Washington, and even Sapián of Capiz province.⁴³ Reorganization under the Americans, as recounted by Teófilo (Pilo) Vicente, made Batan a district of a new town called New Washington.⁴⁴ As of the 1918 census, Batan's population was included with the 24,453 recorded for New Washington.⁴⁵ The latter's name clearly reflects the era of the new colonizers and it had the best strategic potential for a pier for small row boats and barges. Pilo contends that Batan's inclusion with New Washington did not last long because the elected officials at New Washington, who were really from Batan, worked for the separation of the older settlement.

By 1951, Batan was once more a separate politico-administrative entity; it included island and mainland villages spread across Batan Bay and Tinagong Dagat (literally, 'hidden sea').⁴⁶ However, areas that became parts of Balete cut off three northwestern villages (Camaligan, Magubahay, and Caiyang) from Batan areas south and west of the town center. Pilo describes the paradox of geographic location and administrative classification of these villages as a "political freak": influential absentee landowners retained areas within their jurisdiction when the separate municipalities were reconstituted. Connections between political families of Batan and Camaligan continue today: the wife of Batan mayor, Jayner (Bodong) Demeterio, is a niece of Camaligan's village

⁴² Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 1239.

⁴³ Kalibo then included the present municipality of Banga. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 28. The census figures for Batan in 1903, which specifically includes New Washington, reports a population of 14,315. 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Aklan, 1992, 1.

⁴⁴ It was created from Lagatic, a village formerly administered by Batan. de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993, 28.

⁴⁵ 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Aklan, 1992, 1.

⁴⁶ This body of water is almost entirely separated from Batan Bay by the island village of Tabon. It has no physical connection with the municipality of Banga. However, it is marked as Banga Bay, e.g., in various maps issued by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA). See also figure 5 on page 193. Note that figures 5, 6, and 7 were created for this thesis based on figures constructed for Rodríguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

leader, Anacoreto (Coret) Bautista. Other prominent political families of Batan included the del Rosarios and Suggangs who were also residents of Camaligan.⁴⁷

Unlike many place names throughout the Philippines, "Batan" derives from the vernacular; it does not refer to any place in Spain or Mexico, or a name of a prominent family. Both Pilo and Kitoy relate an oral tradition that describes the mouth of Batan Bay as a very narrow one; the opposite banks were connected by a swaying piece of wood laid across the water on which people crossed. 'Batang' is an allusion to a sensation similar to swaying on a hammock [gabatang-batang]. Today, this crossing is traversed almost daily by inter-island vessels plying routes to Manila and Cebu. Similarly, the folk origin of the name of Camaligan, derives from kamalig (shed-like temporary shelter) which featured on its shores.⁴⁸ For Talangban, various stories refer to people, animals, and other phenomena that tend to talang (stray).⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Pilo also shares the information that some areas were given up, e.g., present-day villages Fulgencio and Feliciano (now parts of Balete), since most of these families' lands were also within other parts of Balete. Moreover, most landowners in the present municipality of Altavas were from Capiz, led by then Congressman Altavas who also had holdings in Camaligan.

⁴⁸ One version says they refer to the temporary dwellings of the Bornean datus who settled in the area. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994. Kitoy's version asserts that the name alludes to a more recent past. The presence of sheds are attributed to the presence of Muslim pirates who rested in the area while they looted prosperous residents nearby.

⁴⁹ There are stories about Japanese soldiers and pasturing cattle that could not find their way in the area. Herein, a large coconut tree (now destroyed by a typhoon) developed three trunks.

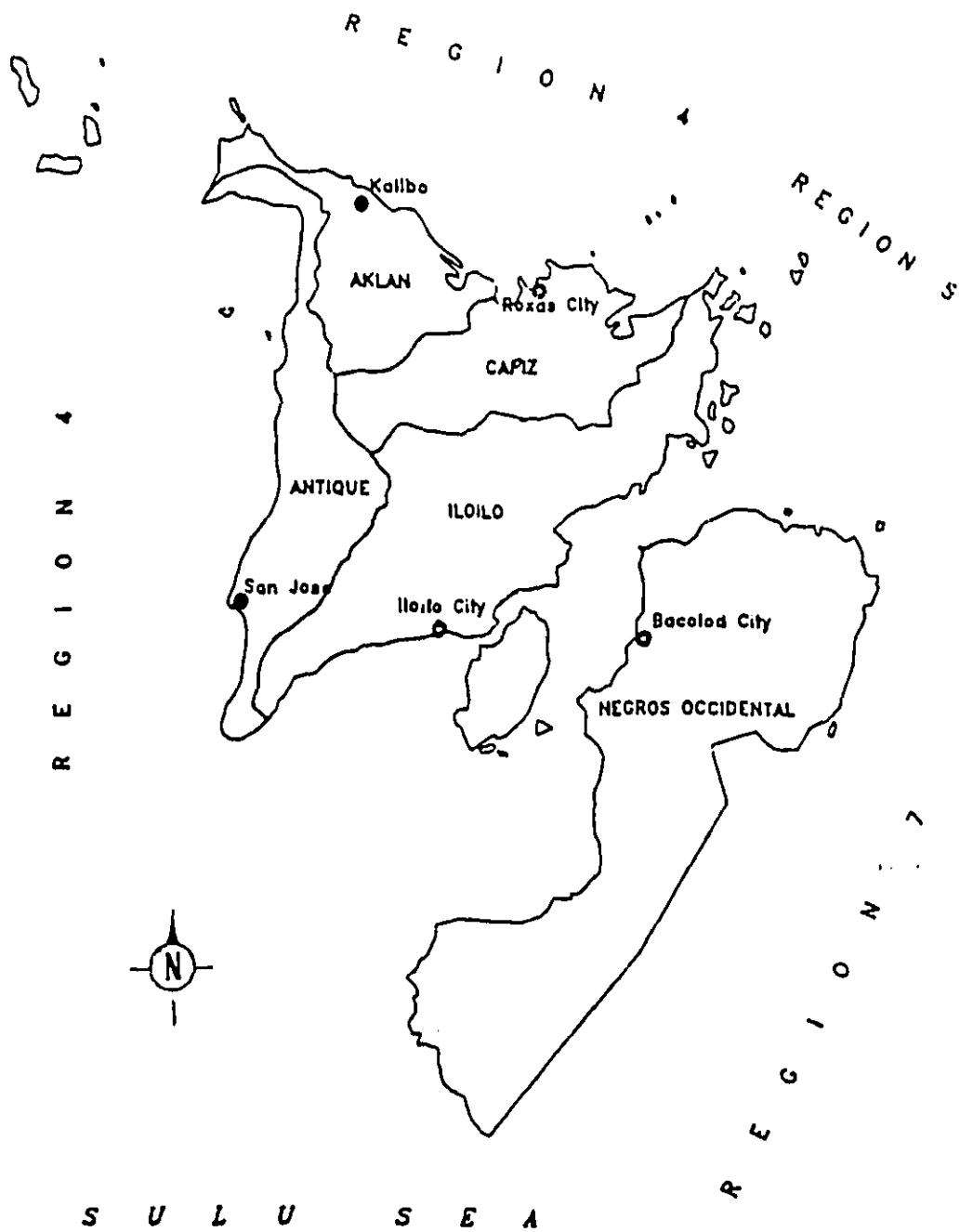


Figure 3. Aklan in the Western Visayas Region, Philippines

Source: Census Facts and Figures, 1993.

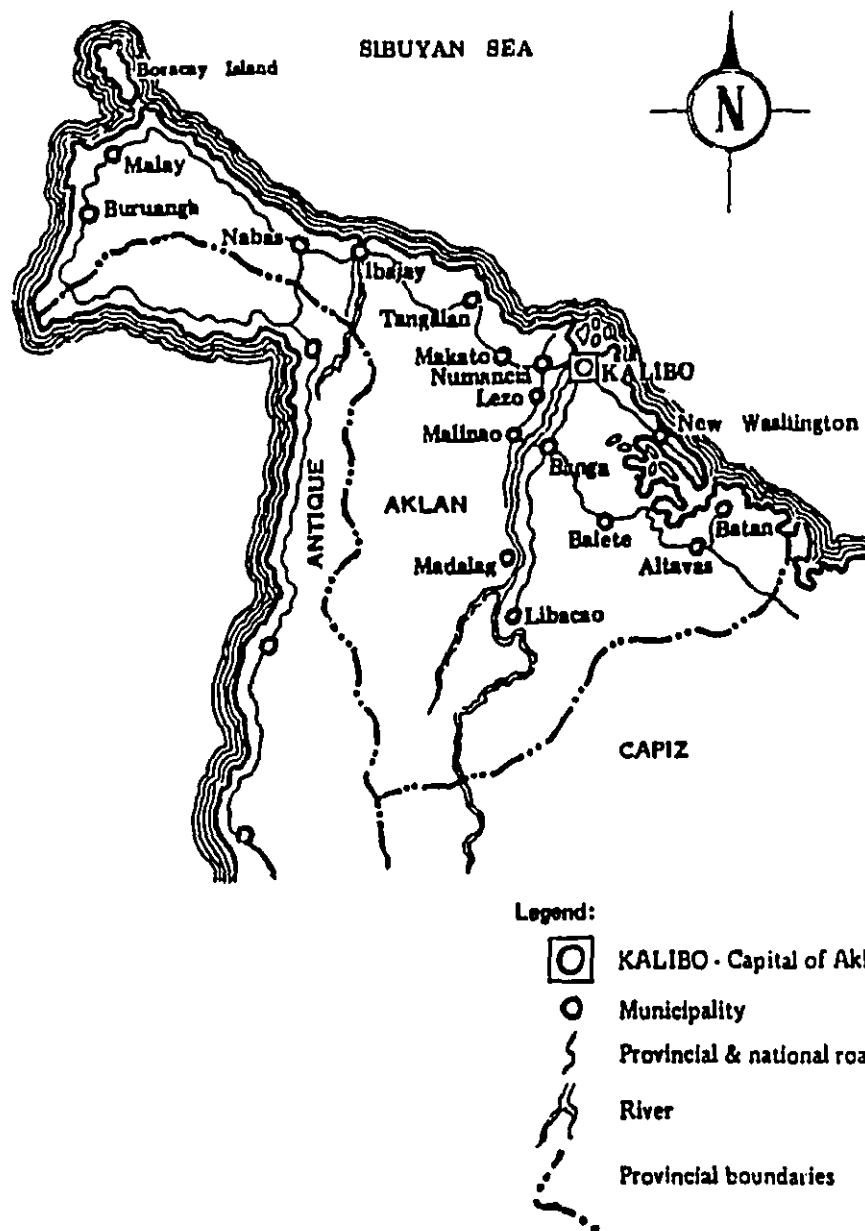


Figure 4. Towns of the Province of Aklan, Philippines

Source: de la Cruz, Town of a Thousand, 1993.

Table 4. Aklan Population Enumerated by Municipality
in Selected Censuses: 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990

PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITY	1960	1970	1980	1990
AKLAN	226,232	263,358	324,563	380,497
1. Altavas	13,325	14,519	17,443	20,531
2. Balete	12,677	14,310	17,300	19,842
3. Banga	18,582	21,560	25,034	28,651
4. Batan	17,466	20,025	23,393	25,710
5. Buruanga	8,393	9,291	10,764	12,653
6. Ibayay	25,086	27,129	30,343	35,640
7. Kalibo	21,303	30,247	39,894	51,387
8. Lezo	5,942	6,890	9,625	10,343
9. Libacao	14,913	15,837	21,683	21,429
10. Madalag	10,883	12,440	14,128	15,166
11. Makato	11,951	13,287	16,732	19,230
12. Malay	6,816	7,623	9,120	14,398
13. Malinao	12,987	14,947	18,117	20,180
14. Nabas	11,879	13,850	16,607	20,538
15. New Washington	15,966	19,131	26,119	30,147
16. Numancia	10,194	12,285	16,216	19,899
17. Tangalan	7,650	9,987	11,174	14,773

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

Table 5. Population by Sex, Urban-Rural: Aklan and Batan, 1990

CATEGORY	AKLAN		BATAN	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL POPULATION	380,028	100.00	25,698	100.00
Both Sexes	380,028	100.00	25,698	100.00
Males	190,573	50.15	12,974	50.49
Females	189,455	49.85	12,724	49.51
URBAN POPULATION	92,293	100.00	1,543	100.00
Both Sexes	92,293	100.00	1,543	100.00
Males	45,000	48.76	737	47.76
Females	47,273	51.22	806	52.23
RURAL POPULATION	287,755	100.00	24,155	93.99
Both Sexes	287,755	100.00	24,155	100.00
Males	145,573	50.59	12,237	50.66
Females	142,182	49.41	11,918	49.34

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

Table 6. Population 15 Years Old and Over by Occupation Group Akran, 1990

MAJOR & MINOR OCCUPATION GROUP	TOTAL	URBAN	RURAL
TOTAL	230,136	57,829	172,307
OFFICIALS/ADMINISTRATORS/ MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS	3,076	1,770	1,306
PROFESSIONALS/TECHNICIANS & ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONALS	7,447	3,697	3,750
CLERKS/SERVICE/SHOP/MARKET SALES	9,712	4,341	5,371
FARMERS, FORESTRY WORKERS & FISHERMEN	45,694	5,452	40,242
Crop Farmers	34,532	3,606	30,926
Orchard Farmers	1,640	189	1,451
Ornamental/Other Plant Growers	53	10	43
Livestock & Dairy Farmers	65	10	55
Poultry Farmers	113	42	71
Loggers	10	-	10
Forest Products Gatherers	1,326	363	963
Aqua-Farm Cultivators	869	151	718
Inland/Costal Water Fishermen	3,258	502	2,756
Deep-Sea Fishermen	3,156	510	2,646
Other Fishermen, Hunters & Trappers	672	69	603
CRAFT & RELATED WORKERS/PLANT & MACHINE OPERATORS & ASSEMBLERS	18,503	5,781	12,722
ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONS	28,535	7,238	21,297
Market/Street Vendors	4,748	2,187	2,561
Shoe Cleaning/Other Street Services	20	10	10
Domestic Helpers & Cleaners	5,361	1,813	3,548
Caretakers/Messengers/Watchers	957	318	639
Agri./Forestry/Fishery Laborers	12,362	948	11,416
Manufacturing & Transport Laborers	4,988	1,905	3,083
NON-GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS	111,964	27,327	84,637
Housekeepers, own home	62,560	12,632	49,928
Pensioners	4,007	1,872	2,135
Students	45,397	12,823	32,574
OTHERS	5,655	2,223	3,432

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

Table 7. Population of 7 Years Old and Over
by Highest Educational Attainment:
Aklan and Batan, 1990

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	AKLAN		BATAN	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL POPULATION	308,897	100.00	20,842	100.00
No Grade Completed	18,541	6.00	1,109	5.32
Pre-school	2,634	0.08	219	0.10
ELEMENTARY	162,871	52.73	11,361	54.51
1st-4th Grade	91,640	29.67	6,341	3.04
5th-7th Grade	71,231	23.06	5,020	2.41
HIGH SCHOOL	76,984	24.92	5,643	27.08
Undergraduate	43,396	14.05	3,048	14.62
Graduate	33,588	10.87	2,595	12.45
POST- SECONDARY	9,182	2.97	685	3.29
Undergraduate	1,422	0.05	223	1.07
Graduate	7,760	2.51	462	2.22
College Undergraduate	17,834	5.77	961	4.61
Academic Degree Holder	20,057	6.49	820	3.93
Not Stated	794	0.03	44	0.02

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

Table 8. Population and Households of Batan, Aklan: 1990

PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITY / BARANGAY	Total Population	Number of Households
AKLAN	380,497	71,010
BATAN	25,710	4,972
1. Ambulong	1,674	347
2. Angas	1,215	245
3. Bay-ang	1,691	314
4. Cabugao	1,761	312
5. Caiyang	694	146
6. Camaligan	2,019	382
7. Camanci	2,341	438
8. Ipil	456	81
9. Lalab	2,101	410
10. Lupit	1,469	265
11. Magpag-ong	1,056	213
12. Magubahay	256	59
13. Mambuquiao	1,223	243
14. Man-up	972	188
15. Mandong	1,366	252
16. Napti	871	167
17. Palay	1,225	264
18. Poblacion	1,547	323
19. Songcolan	896	180
20. Tabon	838	143

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

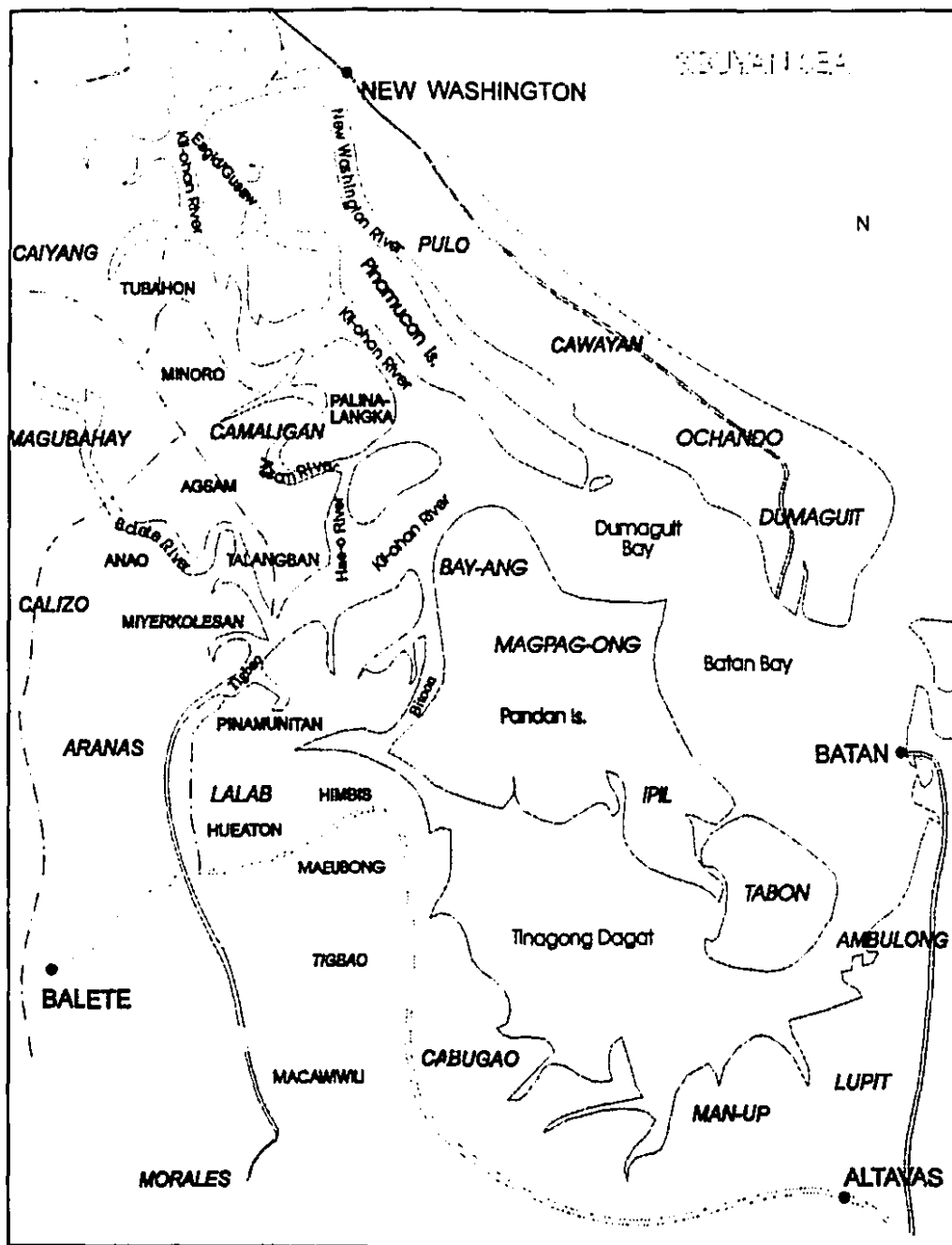


Figure 5. The Research Environment in Northeastern Aklan

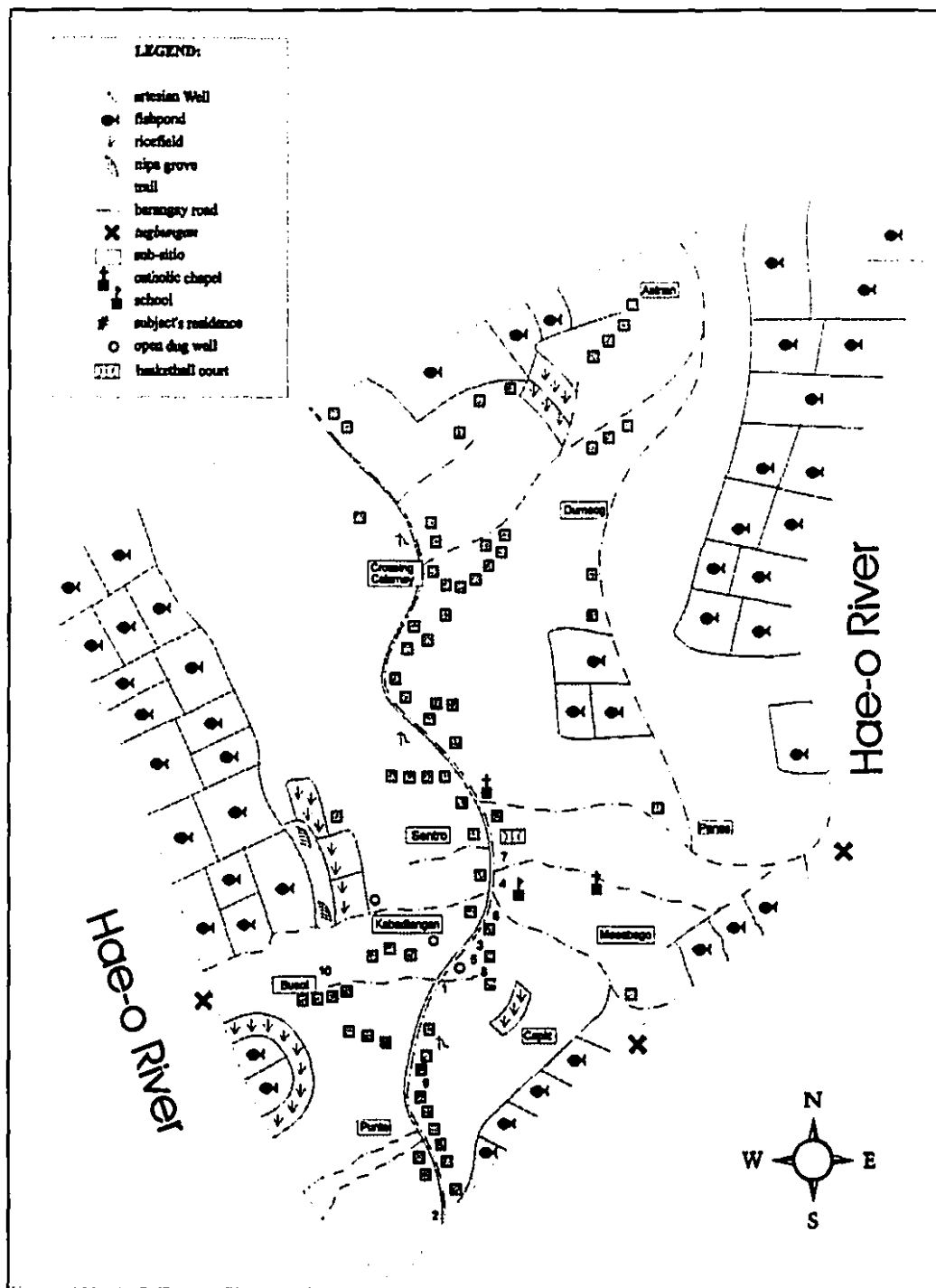


Figure 7. Spot Map of Sitio Talangban, Barangay Camaligan

4.2. Everyday Life at Barangay Camaligan and Sitio Talangban

4.2.1. *The Environment of the Research Setting*

Barangay Camaligan is one of the 20 villages of the municipality of Batan. The designation 'CAMACA' for the northwestern villages of Batan descends from its name and that of the neighboring villages -- Camaligan, Magubahay, and Caiyang.⁵⁰ Camaligan is the largest and most populous of the adjacent Batan villages.⁵¹ With a total land area of 89.20 square kilometers, it has five sub-units called sitios (village subdivisions signified by housing clusters), namely: Agsam, Palina-Langka, Minoro, Talangban, and Tubahon.⁵² These sitios reflect immediate communal activities and are marked by a school, church, market, basketball court, health and/or day-care center.

Rolling hills gradually rise from marshlands to Balete and the central uplands. The slope of the land at Camaligan ranges from level to very gently sloping (0-3%) and gently sloping to undulating. The higher elevation is on the west (at Tubahon) where several hills as high as 100 meters are found. On the east, along the Kil-ohan river, are tidal flatlands, and in between are gently rolling hills and flat alluvial plains.⁵³ Regardless, Camaligan has no pronounced wet and dry seasons.⁵⁴ Around 85 percent of the village land area represents agricultural land.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ This practice was apparently started by a now defunct farmers' association with members from the three villages. Its use is reinforced by Pilo's cultural-religious efforts to involve residents of the CAMACA areas with an inter-village Theater Arts Club.

⁵¹ Magubahay is the smallest with only 281 hectares; Caiyang on the extreme west has 367 hectares.

⁵² See figure 6 on page 194.

⁵³ Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

⁵⁴ The mean annual temperature in the area from a 34-year observation period is 27.7°C; the coolest months are January and February; May registers the highest temperature. June through November are usually the best months for growing crops while February through April are considered the less economically productive months. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

⁵⁵ Padojinog *et. al.*, "Socio-economic Conditions," 1988, 17-22.

Significantly, the village is 30 kilometers by road from town center of Batan and 18 kilometers from Kalibo. Overland access is through Balete, via feeder roads into the villages of Calizo or Feliciano; the latter route traverses Caiyang and Magubahay. The rivers are waterways of the village and constitute a catchment area of the surrounding uplands and drains towards Batan Bay and into the Sibuyan sea.⁵⁶ Water-borne routes connect coastal areas of Camaligan with New Washington further north and with other villages of Balete and Batan.

In 1988, Camaligan was chosen as one of three villages covered by FSDP, and the project's training center was constructed at Minoro. The village-wide household enumeration in 1991 covered 374 households and accounts for a population of 1,949.⁵⁷ Of this total, there were 967 males (49.62 percent) and 982 females (50.38 percent); the mean age was 18 years.⁵⁸ Specific to Talangban, the survey reached 116 households and recorded 607 persons or over 31 percent of the village population.

Sitio Talangban resembles an islet, almost entirely bounded by a winding river system. Directly north is a land link with Agsam and a river crossing to Palina-Langka; crossings to the southeast lead to the village of Lalab (of Batan); to the southwest are the villages of Aranas and Calizo (of Balete). The highest elevation is only about 80 meters above sea level; the feeder road is flanked by mudflats, much of which have been developed into sangha or tangke (fishponds or fishfarms).⁵⁹ There are several informal place names for traditional sub-areas of the sitio, especially meaningful when there was no road traffic: Asinan, Bueot, Capiz, Dumeog, Maeabago, Panas, Punta, Sentro, and Kabadiangan. While the name of Moto does not really

⁵⁶ Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 60.

⁵⁷ The census figures for 1990 reveal a close parallel, 382 households and a total population of 2,019 for Camaligan. For comparative census figures with other Batan barangays, see table 8 on page 192.

⁵⁸ Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

⁵⁹ These Aklanon terms are equivalent to punong in Ilonggo, or pala-isdaan in Filipino.

signify what it was before, the appellation of 'Crossing Calamay' in Dumeog has a personal meaning attached to a prominent personality in the area.⁶⁰

Besides homelots and gardens, there are small fields planted with rice, coconuts, nipa, fishponds, as well as patches of banana and bamboo groves at Talangban. More so than with land, the physical and social environment is intimately tied up with the riverine setting that surrounds most of the village. Similarly, more than the rhythms of rainfed rice cultivation, tidal flows and lunar successions regulate life and livelihood in this area. Most proximate is the Hae-o (Jal-o) river, an essentially brackishwater body (where marine and fresh waters mix), the salinity of which increases towards the mouth of the bay.⁶¹ The Hae-o's deepest channel passes Panas and Capiz as it bends westwards towards Bueot and moves inland. The northwestern fork is called the Magubahay river (where it leads); the westerly course moves into Calizo from whence it is called the Balete river. The Agsam and Gigi tributaries wind between Talangban and Agsam and Palina-Langka; the Kil-ohan (Quilohan) river is the waterway to points of Banga and New Washington. There are only muddy bottoms throughout this river system; there is no grassy vegetation nor any coral reefs, though some banks still abound with the favored oysters at Talangban.

4.2.2. Locally Significant Events and Impressions

Before the war, Caiyang and Magubahay were more advanced than Camaligan. Magubahay had the first informal literacy school for both boys and girls dating back to the Spanish era conducted at homes of volunteer teachers.⁶² Caiyang had the first sound system and chapel with galvanized

⁶⁰ This area became known so because of the location of the home of Simplicio Alba who was nicknamed 'Calamay' for his love of sweet foodstuffs. This marks a curve (rather than a real crossing) along the road recently built into Talangban. The significance of Moto is explained on page 323. See figure 7 on page 195.

⁶¹ In published maps, the Hae-o appears to adjoin that labeled as the Tinago river.

⁶² The informal schools or kartilya were set up by individuals who aimed to help others learn to read and write. Learning materials usually consisted of banana leaves on which letters were sketched with sticks. The kartilya system was formalized and strengthened under the Americans.

iron sheet roofing. The first school at Camaligan was that which transferred from Caiyang around 1938.⁶³ Until the mid-1980s, Agsam was the activity center at Camaligan, especially where the twin road access and jeepney transport intersect at an approximate center.⁶⁴ This area is associated with the multi-term village leader, Coret.⁶⁵ CAMACA area residents called upon on the health center at Agsam.⁶⁶ This is also where the mangrove areas donated to the state university are located.⁶⁷

At present, Pilo claims the primary significance of Camaligan among the CAMACA villages.⁶⁸ Both Caiyang and Magubahay depend on the school and church facilities which have grown at Minoro which has similarly eclipsed Agsam. The original building of the CAMACA farmers' association was converted to use by the CAMACA cooperative established in 1990.⁶⁹

Kitoy and Pilo recall the 'corrupted' reference in Spanish the Division of Private Schools ['bison sa rivada] when people spoke of the schools at Magubahay and Caiyang. Pilo recalls some teachers at Magubahay, Gustin Rola and Tating Ruiz, since his older sister had studied there.

⁶³ These conditions probably explain the absence of any reference to Camaligan in older maps of the area where 'Caiyan' is clearly marked. See, for example, Commonwealth of the Philippines, Census Atlas of the Philippines, Vol. V, (Manila: Commission of the Census, 1935). Himself a native of Caiyang, Kitoy relates attending two years at the private school in Camaligan located at a house where the cooperative building now stands.

⁶⁴ The barangay feeder road project was completed in 1980-1981. The project mainly widened and strengthened existing footpaths with stone, sand, and gravel. It curves along hill and valley areas into up to the river at Talangban.

⁶⁵ Coret's father was a former barangay captain and he himself has held this position for about 24 years to the present time (since 1969). Apart from his nipa plantation and fishfarms, he also runs the local jeepney service from Agsam.

⁶⁶ Coret donated the land on which the village health center was constructed in 1976.

⁶⁷ The entire property donated (by the Altavas family of Roxas City, Capiz) to the UP during the 1960s measures 106 hectares. The College of Fisheries was still at the Diliman campus at Quezon City and eventually became part of, and transferred to the autonomous campus of UPV at Iloilo. Active pursuit of the preservation of the mangrove reserve began only in the early 1980s, coinciding with the availability of road access into Camaligan. By then, about 76 hectares of these mudflat and mangrove areas had been converted and operated as extensive fishponds by villagers and others who are now considered UPV's lessees.

⁶⁸ Pilo asserts that when people refer to the western sector of Batan, they simply speak of Camaligan. Similarly, especially since the mid-1980s, residents of other sitios of Camaligan as well as neighboring villages refer to the central area of the barangay (more accurately recognized as Minoro, northwest of Agsam) as Camaligan.

⁶⁹ See discussion on the cooperative in section 4.4.1. The defunct farmers' association was established through a the Philippine-German Crop Protection program in the early 1980s.

The weekly local market, basketball games, as well as village meetings, school programs and other social events take place at the stage and multi-purpose pavement also built that year. In 1991, the local government opened a 'satellite' office with radio communication to Batan. With the road and a regular transport system, residents get together to shop, sell, and socialize at the Sunday morning market for the CAMACA villages as a whole. Postal services at Camaligan started in 1983 with Pilo serving as postmaster.⁷⁰ Electrical service from the provincial cooperative, the Aklan Electric Cooperative, opened in 1984, though not every household within the village affords this facility.⁷¹ Though radio and television transmissions from within Western Visayas and from the national capital region reach these energized areas, print media is not a regular feature in Camaligan.

Landowning and political prominence are linked throughout the village. From the 1920s to the 1940s, Candido del Rosario, Mamasay Suggang and Apolinario Vidal reputedly owned almost all of the land in Camaligan, presumably around the center at Minoro. These were the earliest families, along with the Benignos, Dionisios, Custodios, Tolentinos and Vicentes.⁷² For Talangban, Aurea (Aure) Refindor identifies the families of Susing Montes (Sela's father), Hector Lopez (Star's maternal grandfather), and Simplicio Alba (Sela's father-in-law) as the landed elite.⁷³ Sela elaborates that her natal home between Punta and Bueot used to be among only three large wooden houses within the area. Another was that of her parents-in-law (the Jayme-Albas at Dumeog) and that of her maternal kin (the Ingalla-Samonte family at Sentro).

⁷⁰ Pilo intimates that such an office was created at the village as a political favor from the Tumbokon-Legaspi clan of Aklan with whom he had long connections, particularly with Rafael S. Tumbokon, grandfather of the current governor, Corazon L. Cabagnot. Nearing retirement, his post was transferred to Malay since the service was reorganized in 1993.

⁷¹ Other parts of Batan began to be serviced by the cooperative since 1977 from its facilities in Lezo. Prior to this, kerosene and petromax lamps provided lighting for homes; generators were used for social activities such as school programs and dances.

⁷² Rodriguez & Hondrade, *Food System in Batan*, 1994.

⁷³ Sela is one of the subjects, Josela Montes Alba. Similarly, Star is Estrella Mendoza Ingalla.

At present, large estates have been divided into small plots among descendants.⁷⁴ Most homelots at Talangban stand on commonly-held lands from ancestors. Properties tend to be held in common due to difficulties in obtaining legal services for extrajudicial partitions, a practice which is also often a cause for family feuds.⁷⁵ Only a few non-residents have access to lands here, notably only those who had earlier developed or presently lease fishponds. An antecedent exists in the past; Aure recalls that the already landed Blas Feliciano from Balete literally "borrowed" large tracts of the land in which he had the cows that he raised pasture at Talangban.

Natural forces have periodically tested the resiliency of life at Camaligan. Before the war, locusts devoured fronds of the few coconut trees and all of the standing rice crop. Notably, Sela observes that locusts did not attack the katunggan (mangrove areas). However, people did not suffer much since they relied on the yet plentiful fish and shell products. In fact, people caught them with fiber nettings and roasted them for food; Aure recalls people using their hands and other objects to hit hard into the swarms. A major earthquake in 1947 produced recurring minor shocks for over three months; the earth opened up and many houses at Talangban were virtually turned over and around.⁷⁶ Another significant earthquake was experienced in 1991. Many residents associate the drying up of certain wells to this occurrence.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Many of these have been mortgaged for lump sums which were quickly exhausted; and, borrowers have difficulties in recovering the mortgage. An example that Kitoy elaborates is the case of Pilo's family (his brother-in-law). Pilo's father used parcels of his own father's estate as collateral to build a house at Batan and to send five children to school in Manila (four girls, and one boy, Pilo); lands were not recovered because the children were not able to earn well. Pilo hopes to get back mortgaged lands with his pension as postmaster, though there is some dissension as to how the accountabilities were to be eventually settled among his siblings.

⁷⁵ Interwoven cases involving the Lopez, Alba, Montes, and Ingalla families are connected with the stories of the women, e.g., Sela as well as Lerma's mother Eva.

⁷⁶ Sela does not mention any deaths or injuries but notes that their wooden house withstood this catastrophe; but fear for the family's safety in the face of persistent tremors caused their mother to have a small bamboo hut built. This same earthquake destroyed the massive bell tower facing the Catholic cathedral in Jaro, Iloilo City.

⁷⁷ Sela mentions that this affected the fishpond operated by her eldest son. The earth's opening was wider than a dupa (the span of outstretched arms) and ran for about 250 meters.

More frequently, village activities are adversely affected by seasonal typhoons. Most remembered by older residents is the devastating 'Ugis' sometime in the mid-1930s; more recently, the most destructive have been 'Undang' in 1984 and 'Ruping' in 1990.⁷⁸ The vulnerability of the CAMACA area is revealed by severe instances of floods in recent years. Kitoy recalls that at Caiyang, the riverbank near the bridge was never covered by high flood waters; if it flooded at all, it could still be crossed on foot. As a young boy, older women asked him to accompany them to cross whenever the water rose to the knee-level. In 1993, the water rose above one's waist. Raging waters, with accompanying debris, are destructive of fishing gears on the rivers; they also cause the overflow of fishponds with whatever stocks therein. The sheer volume of rains ravage rice and other crops. They also worsen travel conditions on the dirt road and flimsy boats for villagers who have become increasingly dependent upon outside links for livelihoods and existence.

Personal experiences relevant to the war are vivid markers in the villagers' lives.⁷⁹ Even the earliest circumstances of external influences into Camaligan are associated with the Japanese occupation period. Soon after the invasion of Panay in 1942, outsiders evacuated into the village, especially from Batan. Pilo and Kitoy recount that these included families of local rich folks and their friends (e.g., the Fulgencios and the Laurentes). Other people also came in by payao (small sail boat) from places as far as eastern Capiz and Masbate. Guerrilla forces based at the town of Banga were raided by the

⁷⁸ Sela vividly relates conditions at Talangban at the time of 'Ugis' when she was in Grade I at Balete. Strong winds and rains went on all day and most of the night, uprooting many of the large trees that used to abound at Talangban. Typhoon 'Undang' destroyed many pilapil (dikes) of fishponds and fishing gears at Talangban and caused one fatality. Sela's relative was inside when the concrete walls of his house collapsed; his wife was able to escape.

⁷⁹ A constant frame of reference among the older subjects and informants was whether a phenomena being discussed occurred before or after the war, i.e., circumscribed by the timing of presence of Japanese occupation forces.

Japanese;⁸⁰ similarly, Balete, New Washington, and Batan were occupied. But none of those forces pursued operations into Camaligan. Kitoy and Pilo attest that they approached the village only once, in 1943, to confiscate a banned radio without harming nor killing anyone; nor did they destroy any properties in the area. Effectively holding Japanese forces at bay was a camp of about a hundred guerrilla soldiers at the mangrove areas in Katabawan (part of Agsam).

The presence of the evacuees made Sitio Minoro an especially lively place. Incongruously, for almost two years, life was happy; Camaligan was like a town, with cockfights at times thrice daily.⁸¹ The school teacher, Guillermo Delfin, developed a local currency intended to encourage exchange specific to the locality. Distinct from that issued by the guerrilla movement, it was made of colored carton strips representing different denominations in centavos. The army organized occasional dances; there was even priest and a doctor among the evacuees, so people were able to have baptisms and celebrate fiestas. Japanese soldiers patrolled the fringes of their festivities; but then so did the guerrillas. Farming went on and there was no problem regarding food supply.⁸² There were local salt, soap, and pop rice factories. People from nearby mountain villages brought cassava to exchange for different types of dried fish, some of which were brought in by evacuees.

Kitoy relates the circumstances that led to a more hostile Japanese entry into Minoro and Caiyang. At one point, the leader of the guerrillas at the camp believed that there were Japanese soldiers quartered at New Washington and

⁸⁰ A resident of Sentro Talangban caught at Banga, Maria Marquez, came to be known as Maria banhaw (literally, 'to come alive') for having survived this event; she was buried as dead with others but was able to crawl out on her own.

⁸¹ There was even a restaurant run by Pilo's father, serving chicken and pork dishes. Due to the large number of people around, drinking water obtained from distant wells was sold.

⁸² As one of a group of farm laborers for a rice harvest near the boundary of Banga and New Washington, Kitoy attests that they used a bamboo pole with a white piece of cloth as a signal for possible danger from the Japanese. If the pole was put down by their sentry, this meant that Japanese soldiers were nearing and that they should flee. At Camaligan, Pilo's family maintained many carabaos.

planned to attack them there.⁸³ A poorly implemented scheme drew the ire of the Japanese and brought their revenge on the area: the compound at Aksam was raided and nearby houses were burned. At Minoro, about 85 percent of the homes were destroyed, including that which housed the school; at Caiyang, Kitoy specifically accounts that sixteen homes at Caiyang were destroyed. But no local resident was killed during this attack.⁸⁴

Perspectives of the war experience at Talangban show quite a different picture. Sela says that no farming was done throughout the occupation. For her family, there was plenty of rice in stock; but many others depended on hiligutmon (food items associated with lean seasons). Livestock was scarce, since they were killed for food. Just across the Hae-o river was a Japanese camp at Anao, Aranas which often fired mortar shells and frightened Talangban residents. Moreover, the locals were fearful of bandits among the guerrillas who reputedly roamed around and killed just about anyone. Further, Japanese soldiers entered Talangban twice on their way to engagements elsewhere. At the first instance, they came from Balete, cutting across Lalab; the second time, they were on their way to Banga, crossing over from Lalab and Balete. Once, they stopped at Punta where some guerrillas temporarily occupied Sela's natal home while her own family hid in the hut that her mother had built in the mangrove areas. She recalls that the Japanese killed a lot of chickens. There was only one available rifle among the locals with which they sought to defend themselves; thus, whenever soldiers entered, residents got muddy and wet from hiding for long hours within the thick mangrove areas.

⁸³ In the morning, Captain Roxas led a group on two large boats to cut down the bridge at Tambak, so the Japanese could not get reinforcements from Kalibo; a larger group of about 300 positioned themselves at Dumaguit to cut off any reinforcements from Batan. Late that afternoon, Roxas' main group crossed over to the island of Pinamuc-an and set fire to a house facing New Washington to draw the attention of the Japanese. He had arranged for other soldiers at the town near the pier to attack the Japanese whom they expected to come from the municipal building which they occupied. But there were only eight Japanese in town; they had been misinformed.

⁸⁴ Kitoy mentions someone killed at Palina-Langka, but he was not really from the Camaligan; the only other casualty he was aware of was that within the vicinity was that at the village of Morton (now Fulgencio of Balete).

Aure and her family also hid in huts among the mangroves. Her husband's brother was guerrilla soldier captured by the Japanese and was forced to be their guide; however, he effectively warned the people of their coming as he did so. No homes were burned by the Japanese at Talangban. Ramona Montes Dalida cites that her elementary schooling was interrupted by the war. Despite the dangers and disturbances, however, life went on. Her older sister Saning, who is also Linda Lopez Liao's mother, was married at an evacuation camp in the hills of Balete where other civilians had gone into hiding in anticipation of the Japanese movements into Aklan.

However, many villagers recall the carnage at the nearby Balete. Civilians from Balete were meeting the incoming Japanese to surrender, along with a large group from Banga; but they were massacred at the Balete bridge. Some were shot, others beheaded; still others were tied together and thrown into the river. The dead were left on the road or also thrown over the bridge, some floating down the river as far as Bay-ang. With her brother (on a visit from Palawan), Sela relates that for over a year people at Talangban did not eat any produce from the river. Still, Pilo admits that after three months he could not stand having only chicken and pork and started to eat fish.

Especially referring to the 1950s, Romeo (Dodoy) Refindor substantiates Talangban's distinction as a disreputable area within Camaligan. This was a time when frequent troubles beset the community, with about two or three murders annually resulting from the use of large knives. People ordinarily chased one another at any time of the day and night. All these, Dodoy attributes to the people's lack of a more peaceful type of recreation. Men (and women) usually gathered around and drank tuba (a locally-produced intoxicant gathered from coconut sap), occasions from which troubles arise. Numerous ambiguous remarks on the abundance of taeaba (oysters), and their

aphrodisiac qualities, are also associated with Talangban's renown for producing children.⁸⁵

Dodoy's mother Aure refutes this notoriety, attesting that Talangban is in fact a peaceful place where people strive to find a means to live from the river. There are those who gather shells, particularly clams, and those who use various traps and nets. People are happy here and do not have a lot of hardships; if some troubles do happen, these are but normal in any community. Most people at Talangban, Dodoy agrees, derive their pangabuhi from the river. Indeed, Roquita (Okit) Beltran adds, people of Talangban pursue fishing as a pangabuhi-an so that they have food and send their children to school; but she gently asserts that some men are preoccupied with gambling. The devout duo of Kitoy and Pilo also comment on gambling, but concede that the Talangban faithful have been attending church services more regularly of late. Hence, they gather that Talangban now appears to be awakening.

Regardless, there are indeed many local disturbances involving inebriation, petty theft (e.g., chickens, pigs, laundry), family feuds, and assault. Among the more recent cases of violence involved the fatal shooting of Josie's father Munding in 1978. This was a result of a family feud that developed after one of his sons had hurt someone in a fight; the victim's family took revenge on the Ingallas through Munding. One of Sela's sons also died of stab wounds from a fight as a teenager.

On other recent developments, local residents claim that before the feeder road was built, all of Camaligan was isolated from major developments in Aklan. Pilo points out positive results from this situation: the villagers have been relatively shielded from clashes involving the insurgent NPA.⁸⁶ As

⁸⁵ The Aklanon taeaba for oysters is talaba in Filipino; the species found in Talangban is Crassostrea iradelei.

⁸⁶ Isolated instances were alluded to by the subjects and key informants, although no details are offered since these often involved their own relatives from nearby villages.

well, the local culture is better preserved from inroads of urban life and new lifestyles for the younger generation. Dodoy avers that the road and jeepney transport system effectively shifted the people's orientation from New Washington to Kalibo. For many, access and links with the traditional center still exist; but the area's significance as a major take-off and landing point to and from the world beyond Camaligan has been greatly diminished. Located on the extreme south of the village, Talangban is where the road ends and where involvements with the river are most prominent among the villagers.

Landmarks pivotal to the water-borne contacts and access of the village are represented by several tugbungan (boat landing areas). These linked the villagers bound for New Washington's weekly markets and religious services as well as the earliest inter-island port facility. Many people from the village have reached Manila or Mindanao without ever visiting the town of Batan. Some tugbungan remain in use, where fisherfolk take off, with passengers and cargo enroute to towns, villages, and waters beyond.

Interestingly, the younger subjects had not much to comment on features that have recently emerged in village life. They take the presence of the road, electricity, television, the jeepney and pumpboat rides as a matter of course in their daily lives. It was only Sela and Ramona, and at times, Linda, who seem to speak as members of a generation ahead of the rest. With electricity, for example, Sela remarks that people do more work at night; and, apart from being a convenience, one could now sell some ice. On the other hand, Ramona laments that, with the frequent brown-outs, the only impact this has for her lies in the additional bills that she has to pay.

4.3. Community Services and Facilities

4.3.1. Village Politics and Administration

Villages in the Philippines used to be known as barrios, modeled after the Spanish pattern of administration in Mexico. Camaligan was formalized as a village in 1939 with Sabas Bonifacio as the first capitan del barrio (village captain). However, this lowest unit of the government's bureaucracy was re-named barangay in the early 1970s with the reorganization of the 'New Society' of the martial law regime of President Marcos.⁸⁷ Barangays, as basic units of the political system, consist of not less than a thousand inhabitants residing within the territorial limit of a city or municipality.

Each village is administered by a set of elective officials headed by a punong barangay (village leader).⁸⁸ However, this change in official title is not widely used among the villagers. At Camaligan, most still speak of the kapitan, and more personally of 'Tay Coret.' He is assisted by a secretary, treasurer, and six konsehal (councillor); at present, there is only one female among these officials.⁸⁹ The implementation of the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160) in 1992 devolves more powers and responsibilities to provincial, city, and municipal officials and will ultimately create changes even at the village level.⁹⁰ The participation of NGOs and peoples' organizations is prescribed for decision-making at each of these local government units.

⁸⁷ The link with pre-colonial roots is implied in the shift and allusions to the Malay fluvial movements into the island during the thirteenth century on their vessels called barangays, balangay or biniray in the other vernaculars.

⁸⁸ Philippine Yearbook, 1992, 71.

⁸⁹ Officially, the Filipino term for the councilors is kagawad. Besides Coret as chairman, the other village officials are Salcedo Trance (Minor), secretary, Jose Rentillo (Agsam), treasurer, and the council members: Nicolas Lucas (Minor), Rolly Sugang (Minor), Modesto Alba (Talangban), Lydia Relator (Tubahon), Macario de la Cruz (Palina-Langka), and Antonieco David (Talangban).

⁹⁰ The code provides greater autonomy over public works, maintenance of health systems, education, agricultural support services and social welfare. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994. An underlying philosophy of this legislation is a shift in the perception of local officials: they are no longer to act primarily as brokers for the delivery of services from national government agency resources for their constituents; rather, they should become actual managers of local, including human, resources.

Among former village heads were Emilio Andrade, Emeterio Vicente (Pilo's father), and Juan Bautista (Coret's father). But village politics has always been entangled with personality cults and dynastic connections.⁹¹ Nevertheless, Pilo says that elections are "enjoyable" periods; alluding to practices, including vote-buying, this a period of "retelling of lies." Further, having been twice elected to the village council himself, Kitoy refers to lively controversies surrounding election victories, specifically under Graciano Laurente and later under Marianito Pador as Batan mayors. As a matter of course, he also mentions that when he left his post for Manila in 1975, his wife was appointed in his place until the next elections.

Since the elections of the commonwealth period, there has been an electoral precinct at Batan for Camaligan. At that time, Pilo and Kitoy attest that this served the combined voting population of the CAMACA villages of about 200. At present, Camaligan voters number over a thousand;⁹² at Magubahay, about 300, and, at Caiyang, about 500. There are two precincts at the primary school at Talangban which also serves as the poll center.⁹³ The selected women's understanding of, and involvements, in local politics are discussed further below.⁹⁴

4.3.2. *Public Services and Facilities*

Most immediate to life is the need for safe drinking water. Potable water in Camaligan is largely obtained from bubon (open shallow wells) or

⁹¹ Pilo confides that Coret (in his 70s) says that he will not run in 1995; and, if Pilo was interested, Coret would support him, since Pilo was a sponsor or godfather at Coret's second marriage. Pilo does not take Coret's suggestion seriously; nor is he really interested. He has other undertakings which he feels also serve the community. Besides, he knows of others interested in the post (e.g., Coret's own younger brother, his son-in-law, present barangay councilors Rolly Sugang and Macario de la Cruz, Berting Dionisio). Also, he notes that mayor Bodong has many in-laws among the Bautistas in Camaligan.

⁹² Based on the 1991 FSDP survey, this number would be more than half of the total population of Camaligan.

⁹³ Dodoy qualifies that these precincts also serve some voters from nearby Aksam.

⁹⁴ See section 4.5.

pumped from humba (public artesian wells).⁹⁵ Within Talangban, there are now five artesian wells installed by the Department of Public Works and Highways: the earliest one was built around 1987 at Crossing Calamay. In all, there are two of the public units at Crossing Calamay and two at Sentro and one in Punta. As well, water is essential to a host of activities in daily living. Washing dishes, utensils and other wares, including laundry, is done by women and girls almost exclusively. During rainy seasons, they do so at the nearest bubon used in common because water from the humba becomes colored and rusty. The same is true with Ramona's tasok (tubed shallow well), used mainly for washing and and bathing. Most families try to save rain water for use at this time. But day-to-day needs rely on other, often multiple, freshwater sources.

During the dry season, people need to wait for the water to rise at the 30-year old bubon in Kabadiangan which is regarded as a good source for drinking/cooking purposes. Lolit and Virgo use this source for washing/bathing/laundry needs.⁹⁶ Josie only stopped using this source when a well was built on her husband Teban parents' lot at in Bueot this year.⁹⁷ Another well called dalipe (with reference to the coarse rocky material surrounding the well dug around 1975) is not used for drinking purposes. Lolit, Virgo, Star, Linda do their laundry and bathe here during the rainy season. A third well is called naga, where a naga (narra) tree stands, and is used for laundry, washing, and bathing. Ramona and Ling do most of their laundry here, but get cooking/drinking water from the artesian well at the primary school or the new one at Sentro.⁹⁸ The two other dug wells at the Capiz area, are

⁹⁵ FSDP-sponsored tests in 1992 showed that only six of thirteen sources tested throughout the village are bacteriologically satisfactory for drinking. Among the six are two of the artesian wells at Talangban. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994. The FSDP training center at Minoro had the only electric water pump throughout Camaligan.

⁹⁶ Lolit is Lolita Castro de Leon and Virgo is Liwayway Sison Castro.

⁹⁷ Josie is Josefina Ingalla Deocampo.

⁹⁸ Ling is Ramona's married daughter, Delilah David Junsay.

separately used by the neighborhood, including Ruth and Sela, for drinking/cooking and for washing/laundry/bathing.⁹⁹ For Lerma's household, drinking water is obtained (mainly by her husband Natan) from across the river at Pinamunitan, Lalab.¹⁰⁰

Prior to the extension of government health services into Camaligan, local health needs were served by spiritual healers¹⁰¹, local palteras (precursors of trained midwives), and the therapeutic energies of the hilot.¹⁰² All the subjects and their spouses were born at their respective parents' homes with the assistance of at least one hilot or paltera. In some cases, these birth attendants were men, though most of the subjects were served by women. The birth of Star's husband Berto at Talangban in 1954 was assisted by male hilot named Teryo; and, as recent as 1990, Ling's second son was born at her mother Ramona's house at Sentro with the help of a male hilot named Tony from Bay-ang. Only a few have experienced hospital deliveries: Josie had her fourth child at the government hospital in Kalibo; Linda delivered her third in Manila; and Virgo had her twins in Quezon City.

Prior to the opening of the health center at Aksam in 1982, there were infrequent services from midwives, supervised by the Batan Rural Health Unit of the Department of Health (RHU-DOH), from their assignment in other areas nearby. At present, the midwife at the village health center in Aksam services all three of the CAMACA villages; since 1980, Marqueza (Mar) Dionisio has

⁹⁹ Ruth Isidro Montes is married to Sela's nephew.

¹⁰⁰ Lerma's full name is Lerma Samonte Bello.

¹⁰¹ Various called medico, siruhano, manug-botbot, arbulario, or manugbueong (folk healers), they are reminiscent of the bangutbanwa of ancient Panay, and more widely known as babaylan. For certain illnesses, Ramona, her daughter Ling, and niece Linda are especially dependent on these healers.

¹⁰² During the 1970s, the term hilot was used to distinguish the Department of Health-trained volunteer-midwives from the untrained paltera. Hitherto, a hilot was a masseur or masseuse consulted for sprains, bone displacements, and muscle pains, especially for children, as well as childbirth. Evidently, this was a health program that took off from an occupation already, by tradition, associated with women.

been assigned to this post.¹⁰³ Most of those who come to the health center for consultations are women who undergo check-ups according to the maternal and child care program, particularly for pre-natal purposes.¹⁰⁴

In about a month, Mar serves around 15 pregnant women from all parts of the CAMACA barangays. Among others, she has assisted births for Lerma, Ling, Lolit, Virgo, and Josie. Most of the women bring along their children who suffer from colds and cough or diarrhea; but the only relief locally available these days is Oresol for dehydration. Mar mentions that during the Marcos regime, the health centers were supplied with vitamins and medicines, like Polymagma; some vitamins were also available under Cory Aquino. Ling expressed her angst at the lack of medicines at the local health center compared to facilities she was able to avail of for her son when they were still living at Balete; there was only paracetamol at Camaligan. Fortunately, there has been enough supply of vaccines for pregnant women and for children's immunization purposes.¹⁰⁵ There has never been a government-assigned or other resident doctor based any of the CAMACA villages; whenever necessary, referrals are made to the provincial hospital at Kalibo, for example, for prolonged colds or breach pregnancies.¹⁰⁶

At the same time, the health center also promotes family planning practice.¹⁰⁷ However, Mar notes a strong fear on the part of some women for "artificial" methods of contraception, particularly with the pill. Only Josie

¹⁰³ Others who served at Camaligan include Vilma Perucho, Luzviminda Patricio (of Barangay Bay-ang), and Molyn Gomez from Banga who married a Camaligan resident.

¹⁰⁴ Usually, Mar advises women on the need for regular check ups within the first trimester of their pregnancies and immunization against tetanus (tetanus toxoid). Mar also gives some do's and don't's, i.e., what vitamins they should take and that they should avoid heavy work.

¹⁰⁵ These are: BCG (anti-TB), DPT (anti-diphtheria and tetanus), oral polio vaccine, and since September 1993, against hepatitis B. During the current drive spearheaded by DOH Secretary Juan Flavio, Mar claims that children throughout the CAMACA areas are 100 percent immunized.

¹⁰⁶ Sela's traumatic experience with her first child during the Japanese occupation, however, was assisted by her own mother and three palteras.

¹⁰⁷ Compared with other sitios of Camaligan, Mar confirms the high birth rate of Talangban, attributing this to the relatively large population base, and jokingly, also the taaba.

among the subjects have undergone ligation, though Star recently had a hysterectomy. Josie estimates, however, that five to ten percent of the women within Talangban have been ligated. Linda knows of four specific cases. As Ruth observes, if there was any effort at contraception, it was usually from the women. No men are known to have had a vasectomy; the predominant belief is that a man's health is endangered, particularly if he continued to do the strenuous work that fishing requires. The question that arises is "Who will then pangita for the family?" Ruth says that "It's much better for women to have a tubal ligation because their work is not physically strenuous compared with the heavy work of men."

On the whole, the perception at Talangban is that there is no family planning; instead, there is family planting! More seriously, Star calls attention to the fact that matters affecting women's health, or spacing of children, do not generally register as part of family planning. As a health volunteer, she helps explain birth spacing and natural methods of contraception. Yet, people tend to argue with her that it is an advantage to have (many) children since they are a help to the family's pangabuhi. Ling adds that there is a tendency of people to insist on being able to afford to feed their children. Moreover, the Catholic church actively contradicts state policy on this matter.

For a few years until 1989, there used to be a supplementary nutritional feeding program of the Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD) carried out through day-care centers throughout Aklan. This was targetted for pre-schoolers reported as malnourished. At Camaligan, Clara Vidal of Minoro was in charge. Among recipients at Talangban was one of Ruth's children classified as second-degree malnourished and received a (daily) ration of peas and corn-soya blend. However, funds for this purpose were cut off based on the observation that pre-schoolers throughout Aklan were assessed to be either normal or only first-degree malnourished.

Education is deemed to have a levelling influence on a number of social disparities. Before the war, the mothers of Linda and Ruth as well as Sela, attended the privately-run school at Minoro. Sela attests that her older sister taught there; at that time, primary school graduates were already considered qualified to teach and those who reached Grade VII were considered the best teachers. Nevertheless, most other parents of the subjects obtained whatever grade or year levels at schools in Lalab, Balete, and even Batan.

The gradual expansion of the public school system into Camaligan really started after the war. At Minoro, the elementary school was established in 1949 with Mansueto del Rosario as the first principal. In 1992-1993, it had over 300 pupils.¹⁰⁸ The high school opened in 1973 with its initial buildings constructed on land donated for an elementary school. Okit was the first principal, and she is soon to retire from the same position. When a primary school at Talangban was opened in 1960, it offered the first four years of formal schooling with two classrooms and two teachers; there were joint classes for Grades I and II and so with Grades III and IV. Today, there are three classrooms and three teachers: Grade I and Grade II now have separate classes, even if Grades III and IV are still combined, with pupils numbering over a hundred.¹⁰⁹ Except for the three oldest subjects (Sela, Ramona, and Linda), all attended their first classes here.

Virgo, Ramona, and Linda stopped after the elementary level; Lolit, Ruth, and Josie reached some years of high school and Lerma and Star finished high school and began some college-level training. However, Lerma left the secretarial course she started at Cabanatuan City when she decided to return to Talangban. Star did not pursue her agriculture degree in Banga after eloping with Berto. Only Ling finished her secretarial course in Kalibo. Among their

¹⁰⁸ The main buildings of the elementary are on lands donated by the Vidal, Apolinario, Bonifacio, and Sabas families, close to the Minoro border with Aksam. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

¹⁰⁹ An additional classroom space, connecting the two other classrooms, was started in December 1993 at the private expense of one of the schoolteachers.

spouses, Roming and Panong did not go beyond the primary grades; Ponso, Natan, Berto, and Teban reached or graduated from elementary school and Gardo, Dado, and Toto had some years of high school. Only Garing finished a post-secondary course in criminology and Virgo's husband Carlos took a marine engineering course. Some had pursued studies beyond the village or prior to settlement in the area.¹¹⁰

The local Parent-Teachers' Association raised funds to augment the Batan government's support for the village high school. Active fund-raising generated resources for the purchase of a hectare on which the structures started in 1992 stand.¹¹¹ Recently, the school has gained national government, and even international, funding. It received national government assistance in 1992; within the same year, the "nationalized" institution received substantial support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for new buildings and equipment.¹¹²

In 1992-1993, total enrollment at the high school was 341 and with a graduating class of more than 80. Okit estimates that, for all the CAMACA villages, more than ten percent of those who finish high school proceed to and finish collegiate or vocational courses. By 1991, the FSDP survey reveals that over 20 percent of Camaligan's population 19 years and above had some post-secondary schooling. Over 27 percent had some high school education, and over 35 percent reached elementary level (Grades IV to VI). These figures also indicate that more females undertook secondary and tertiary education than males.¹¹³ All classes at the high school are co-educational and both girls and

¹¹⁰ Natan finished his elementary at Zarraga in Iloilo before coming to Aklan; Gardo is from Lalab and had started first year high school in Quezon City; Dado reached third year high school in Samar. Carlos finished his engineering course in Iloilo City.

¹¹¹ The lot was bought from the Trance siblings: Salcedo Trance, and his sister, Illuminada married to Nicolas Lucas, and Sergio Trance (represented by his son Napier).

¹¹² JICA has provided five classrooms and one laboratory (science) room, along with equipment for science, industrial arts, and home economics classes, and a large water tank.

¹¹³ Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

boys are taught sewing and carpentry. As Okit argues, girls can do carpentry work around the house just as boys can sew on buttons and the like.

Further, Okit observes a recent favorable trend at Talangban: more students from the area finish high school compared with other parts of Camaligan. She attributes this development to the fact that many Talangban parents, especially those who engage in fish marketing, are able to support their children's schooling, even through college.¹¹⁴ Dodoy comments on these parents as having developed a higher priority for their children's education. Children used to start school at Talangban and ended with Grade VI in Minoro since it was expensive to send children to high school at Kalibo; nowadays, high school is more attainable, more ordinary. However, Okit cites instances when students still interrupt their schooling, mainly when there are three or more siblings involved. The pattern has been for the eldest one to finish high school, while the younger one(s) help their parents earn [pangita]. After the eldest graduates, then the younger one(s) proceed with high school; but if there are only two children involved, they usually go on together.

Dodoy grants that there are now many high school and college graduates from Talangban; but those who are able to obtain an education tend to leave the area. Regardless, he adds that changes in the area are created when those children send home some of their earnings [kinita-an] that ultimately help to "improve the place." For him, some of the educated folk simply lack persistence and, hence, have remained in their same poor situations. He has strong feelings for women to obtain a college degree in order to be able to find good employment, and especially before starting a family.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Though no tuition fees are required in the state-run schools, there are expenses for school uniforms and projects (especially for home economics, science and mathematics).

¹¹⁵ In particular, Dodoy refers to the case of his wife's relative, Elnora (Nora) and her husband Noel from Minoro. Nora was only employed recently for over two years. She did not finish her fisheries course before having her family. Had she done so, she could have found employment immediately. "If you had education, you had a chance," Dodoy insists; "when opportunities

4.3.3. *Voluntary Activities and Other Services*

Before the 1950s, Pilo recalls that the usual form of overland transport within the CAMACA area were animal-drawn sleds on the then footpath into Camaligan, i.e., the carosa, kangga, and yogo pulled by carabaos or horses. Priests and civil officials were usually carried on talabon or kayang (a covered carriage borne by four people); sometimes they also rode horses or came on the kangga. But until the 1980s, the village's main thoroughfare was the river system leading to New Washington, Balete, and even Kalibo. The balsa (bamboo raft) was a common form of transport; on special occasions, like town fiestas, people travelled on boats taking off from tugbungan such as those at Talangban.¹¹⁶

There are still some family-owned baroto that ply the area and carry passengers for a fee to or from Talangban, especially on market days nearby.¹¹⁷ There are also the bangkero or motor (large motorized crafts). Ruth's father had one which took in passengers and cargo to New Washington or Dumaguit, and less often to Batan.¹¹⁸ Despite recent administrative and communication facilities with Batan available at Minoro, direct contact is still necessary for certain purposes (e.g., court hearings). Not surprisingly, Talangban folk still prefer to take the water route to Batan.¹¹⁹

come, you may be taken in." As an example of those who strive, Dodoy speaks of Noel, skilled in carpentry and with no problem finding work. But even if he is always busy, he does not earn large amounts, only about ₱ 100 - ₱ 120 pesos a day.

¹¹⁶ Dodoy recalls a personal experience during the 1960s: it took two hours on cascos (large barotos that could carry about ten people) to reach Batan for the town fiesta celebrations (December 8th). The crossing was rough, and they were all wet upon arrival.

¹¹⁷ Many of those who take the boat ride try to do so with relatives (or borrow their boat) who do not normally charge a fee to access Pinamunitan in Lalab or Miyerkolesan in Aranas. Today, the one-way fee per person between Talangban and Pinamunitan or Miyerkolesan is ₱ 5.

¹¹⁸ Ruth also recalls that as high school students, she and her cousin were in charge of food purchases for their school intramurals, and that they usually went to New Washington or Miyerkolesan on motorboats. The common brands for motors used were Briggs & Stratton, Isuzu, Fuzo, etc., ranging from 8-16 hp. Most units they ply today are owned by people from town of Balete, or from the villages of Bay-ang, Calizo, Aranas, and Lalab.

¹¹⁹ Sela and some members of her family had a trying experience in June 1993. There were nine people on a new (yet unregistered) motorboat (with 16 hp. engine) which they borrowed for a trip to Batan to pay their land taxes (soon after her brother Pedro arrived from Palawan); she

It was only in 1972 when the first public jeepney service became available carrying passengers to and from Camaligan and Kaliibo.¹²⁰ However, changes accelerated by the end of the decade; the village feeder road and an expanded jeepney service reached Talangban by the start of the 1980s.¹²¹ With more or less a regular daily schedule, the 'first trip' of the local jeepney service leaves Coret's garage at Aksam at 6:15, picking up passengers at Talangban at 6:30. While stopping to load/unload passengers and cargo (including fish, shrimps and livestock) at various points, it reaches Kaliibo usually within an hour. Passengers returning meet the service at the designated paradahan (loading/unloading area) which leaves Kaliibo around 10:00 am. The 'second trip' leaves Talangban at 7:00 am and returns from Kaliibo around 11:30 am.¹²² For medical emergencies, locals often hire Coret's jeepney for special trips to Kaliibo. Josie recalls that they used to pay only ₱ 150; since 1990, the rate has been ₱ 300, mainly for the cost of fuel. This may be paid for on credit and payable in installments. More recently, vehicles of the local cooperative, and those conveyances of FSDP and UPV, occasionally give lifts to commuters from Minoro.¹²³ Alternatively for Talangban residents, Dodoy shares rides whenever he visits.

To expand and upgrade local health services during the 1980s, the government instituted the Barangay Health Workers program which recruited and trained community volunteers, most of whom were already practicing hilots. From Talangban, Star and Virgo were among those trained as health

preferred to do it there. Their boat overturned and they were afloat clinging to the boat for about an hour before they were rescued.

¹²⁰ A certain Rizaldo is identified with this development. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994. But it is unclear what part(s) of Camaligan had access to this service.

¹²¹ The highways department started improvements on the barangay feeder road into Camaligan in 1974-1975; by 1978-1979, the road via Feliciano reached only up to crossing into Caiyang.

¹²² These schedules are, however, subject to road conditions, the readiness of the already decrepit vehicles, the convenience of their owner, and the idiosyncrasies of their drivers.

¹²³ In addition to its pick-up and cargo trucks, the CMPCI also bought one of the old jeepneys of Coret in June 1993. Apart from two motorbikes, the FSDP had two pick-ups and a van to service various activities across the three villages covered, Batan and Kaliibo as well as commuting staff from the Iloilo City and Miag-ao campuses.

worker throughout Camaligan. Since then, they are relied upon to deliver babies under Mar's supervision. She personally provides some of the required paraphernalia, with occasional supplies from Mar.¹²⁴ Star has been the more active as hilot and provides insights into her work; Virgo admits that she helps out mainly when Star is away from Talangban. Hence, Star is called upon at home at any time of the day or night when the woman is starting to labor.¹²⁵

Star explains some difficulties encountered with this activity. There is the actual delicate work at birthing (sometimes with the assistance of the women's spouses) and having to clean up blood, feces, and vomit afterwards, registering the births at Batan, often ending up paying for the required fee, and low remuneration, if any. She has been voluntarily compensated by clients ranging from ₱ 10 up to ₱ 200, though the latter has happened only three times. Most important to Star is the fact that, as health volunteer, she always gets the blame if anything goes wrong.¹²⁶ Significantly, Star highlights the benefits that she personally derives from this volunteer work; besides being able to help others, she has the privilege of free hospitalization, whenever necessary. The volunteers are also automatically members of Aklan's Federation of Barangay Health Workers.

Among other village facilities are day-care centers now supervised by the DSWD;¹²⁷ those operating at Camaligan were started upon the local initiative of two women. The center for the Aksam-Minoro areas was organized by Leticia (Ticy) Aguirre in 1985. The one at Talangban, started in June 1986, was a product of the efforts of Star.¹²⁸ Here, classes for pre-

¹²⁴ These include a kidney basin, scissors, alcohol, another basin for the placenta, gauze, Betadine, reusable sterilized gloves and cord clamp.

¹²⁵ Star could not estimate how many times she has performed deliveries within Talangban since practicing in 1985.

¹²⁶ She has been accused by one as causing unnecessary pain and hardship. However, Star explains that the woman's bag of water broke, and despite Star's instructions, she did not know how to push with her mouth shut, and thus, suffered a prolonged dry labor.

¹²⁷ DSWD's support for village daycare centers comes in the form of a ₱ 500 a month stipend for the daycare workers who work for four hours a day, five days a week.

¹²⁸ Both Star and Ticy are affiliated with the provincial Federation of Day Care Workers.

schoolers were started in a bamboo-and-nipa structure at the primary school site, with permission from the head teacher. Later, classes were moved to Star's home at Maeabago, and, more recently, to Sentro. In both instances, promises of support from village authorities only remained so.¹²⁹ If not for her employment with FSDP, Star would not have been able to rebuild as she did at the present site. The Talangban day-care center was certified, and thus, partly supported by the DSWD only in 1991.

At present, Star attributes the high degree of absenteeism from the pre-school classes that she conducts to the cessation of the separate feeding program. Officially, morning sessions are for pre-schoolers ages three to four years; those in the afternoons are for five to six year-olds. Star decided to collapse the sessions since afternoon attendance tended to be low. There are 37 children enrolled but only 8 regularly come to the class. Star tried to provide some food on her own; but she indicates that there has been widespread destruction of bananas during recent typhoons. With the help of Virgo, she continues to assist any children who come in at any time, coordinating with parents (usually mothers) who attend to their needs.

Until the mid-1980s, Catholics at Camaligan did not have regular local church services.¹³⁰ Necessary ceremonies (e.g., weddings and funerals) took place at the parish of New Washington; or, at Balete, Banga, Batan, and Kalibo.¹³¹ A Catholic cemetery opened at Minoro in 1986 serves many but not everyone in the village.¹³² Since 1986, there was a regular monthly

¹²⁹ Star avers that neither Ticy or herself got any support from barangay officials.

¹³⁰ However, Pilo refers to local records that show that the earliest visita (ecclesiastical visits) into the chapel at Minoro, then called Sta. Cruz (Holy Cross), dates back to 1917.

¹³¹ In the process, drownings have transpired at these crossings of large parties on small boats; Pilo and Kitoy relate that at one burial party to Batan, two more deaths occurred and one person was lost when boats overturned on rough waters.

¹³² On his own, Pilo negotiated for establishing the cemetery in 1983 with Monsignor Juan Nilmar, bishop of Kalibo. His donation of 0.5 hectare lot for this purpose contributed to the creation of the village parish. As Star notes, however, Clara Vidal's husband was not allowed to be buried at Minoro since he was a Baptist; he was then buried at New Washington.

service at chapel at Minoro which became the center of a quasi-parish.¹³³ By 1987, it became the center of the new parish at Camaligan. Construction of what is now the CAMACA Parish Church started in 1986 on the land donated by the del Rosario family.¹³⁴ With a resident parish priest, there are two services on Sundays and a mass every first Friday. The priest also serves the rest of the village areas and other nearby chapels on a monthly basis.¹³⁵

There are two Catholic chapels at Talangban. Linda explains that the proprietary assertions by those who managed the first one prompted others to have another built. The original at Maeabago is dedicated to the Sacred Heart with its fiesta every third Sunday of June; the newer one by the roadside at Sentro is dedicated to San Isidro Labrador. It is the latter's feast on May 15th which most of the residents celebrate. Nevertheless, there is only a service here every third Friday of the month; the more devout commute or walk to attend regular Sunday service at Minoro, sometimes including Ling, Linda and Lerma and their children. Okit observes that Talangban has the lowest percentage of attendance at Sunday mass at Minoro among other parts of the Camaligan since the residents there are too engrossed in making a pangabuhì.

Other religious groups also established themselves in the village soon after the war, started by the Baptists and the Jehovah Witnesses. Today, the Seventh-Day Adventists and the INK also have their respective centers for the village as a whole at Punta and Bueot in Talangban. Virgo and Roming, among other INK followers, attend the services on Thursdays and

¹³³ Pilo maintains that their ermita was the first throughout the surrounding municipalities. Previously, the Minoro chapel was like other newer ones put up by residents at each of the other sitios. A priest from New Washington came to these kapiya, usually to celebrate their respective fiestas during which baptisms are also held.

¹³⁴ Fr. Arnold Crisostomo was assigned the first resident cura (parish priest), and the parish was formally established in September 30, 1987. The original chapel, dedicated to Sta. Cruz was rededicated to San Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint. Fr. Crisostomo has since been followed by Fr. Jess Pandongon, and more recently, by Fr. Alan Gonzales Samonte.

¹³⁵ The priest's schedule of services follows like this: every first Saturday at Caiyang; on the second Friday, at Bactason; on the second Saturday, at Magubahay; and so on to other sitios.

Sundays.¹³⁶ Besides a center for Baptists at Aksam, the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses is also located there, to which Ruth regularly goes for their services on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Josie and Teban are among converts from Catholicism to the Jehovah's Witnesses.

A highlight of community life is the fiesta (feast of the local patron saint). In this village, the annual celebration is by each sitio. Though there is only one parish, each sitio has its own chapel and patron; in fact, at Talangban, there are two. Regardless, the activities have become quite secularized. The largely nominal Catholics celebrate along with others who share in the tradition of the majority. Apart from the special church service and baptisms that follow, the households' priority for the celebration may be judged by the fare that is set for their guests at lunch, often from what they had raised for months. Swimming or other contests, basketball games, cockfights, and/or dances complete the occasion which ends almost at dawn, when drunkenness leading to fights. Yet it seems that all these appear to be taken in stride.

Another celebrated village event that Pilo is particularly proud of is the senakulo (ritual commemorating Holy Week) usually held within the church premises on Good Friday. In the name of the CAMACA Theater Arts group, he has undertaken to organize an outdoor and ecumenical version at Camaligan since 1985.¹³⁷ A related recent development appears in the form of prayer meetings of the Couples for Christ at Minuro since late in 1993.¹³⁸ With the

¹³⁶ The minister is Roger Dumale, from Linayasan, Altavas, who only comes to Talangban for these services.

¹³⁷ Pilo started what became an (almost) annual event as an act of thanksgiving for relief from the devastation of typhoon Undang (November 5, 1984) following a long drought. He has been able to organize these events almost single-handedly, with the cooperation of other religious groups at Camaligan, even including the Aglipay church group based at New Washington. As representing the FSDP, Warwick Armstrong was invited to a reading in 1990; but conflicting schedules required him to have his words read by a proxy. By far, his readers have predominantly been males.

¹³⁸ Okit appears to be an ardent supporter of this organization which is expected to develop leaders at the village-level. For several Saturday afternoons, there were recruitment assemblies at the high school premises, with lay leaders from Kalibo.

backing of such personalities as Coret and Okit, this "grassroots" religious approach of the Catholic faith will eventually enter people's lives at Talangban. Nevertheless, folk practices persist. Sela, for example, maintains kiyaw-kiyaw (food offerings) following her mother's practice at least once a year.¹³⁹

Interestingly, Star related what she recently witnessed one Sunday at Kalibo. There was a mass christening at the Catholic church that she attended, and the priest was quite adamant in calling the attention of everyone to the presence (more appropriately, the absence) of fathers for the event. He stressed that the fathers should be present also, not just attending to the cooking at home for the feast that is to follow. Since both parents were party to creating the children, they should both face the altar together.

On the whole, Dodoy remarks that community activities at Talangban just consist of the fiesta celebration and basketball tournaments, with the latter involving only a few people. "People here are individualistic." He relates this lack of community involvement to the failures of the cooperative that he now heads: "Only a few shoulder the burden of the problems, while the others only watch." Though there are no organized helping groups at Talangban, Okit notes that when they are called upon by "someone who is looked up (to) in the community," the people are also quick to respond. She admits that the people of Talangban are "really different" from the rest of the village, i.e., that they are still quite a problem. She calls attention to a high incidence of crime which drags down Camaligan's reputation as a whole. Whenever there is trouble at dances around, the people involved are usually from there.

There had been a marked tendency, especially for females around the age of 15, to become domestic helpers in Metro Manila. Presently, however, Dodoy notes that despite the absence of local opportunities for employment, it

¹³⁹ Foodstuffs are prepared and placed on a tray in the middle of the house while praying for the repose of the souls of ancestors. This usually includes a pair of crabs, a pair of chickens, and various others of a specified number.

is difficult to recruit household helpers from Talangban. During the early 1950s, Ramona (at about age 20) left for Manila with some friends and became a live-in househelp for three years without her parents' prior knowledge. At age 18 in 1965, Linda's initial employment was as a domestic helper found through a friend of her father's. For about a year and a half, she had two employers, with wages ranging from ₱ 15 - ₱ 30/month.¹⁴⁰ Linda later shifted to working as a waitress while staying with a maternal uncle in Marikina. As a teenager, Virgo also left her family in Kalibo and worked as a maid in Quezon City for two years during the early 1970s.

During the 1950's, a moviehouse was opened by Juan Celerio at Camaligan. Local entertainment became more varied with the advent of television and video machines, especially during the 1980s. Talangban can receive five television channels all broadcasting direct from Metro Manila; but the quality of the reception is not very good because of the type of antennas the residents used. Minoro's councilman, Rolly Sugang, started the practice of showing rented movies for a fee, though only on weekends. At Talangban, the earliest to adopt this business (on a daily basis) was Virgilio Castillo of Crossing Calamay.¹⁴¹ Dodoy estimates that 10 households have television sets at Talangban.¹⁴² At least three of these households had video-players. Dodoy, however, expressed reservations about the increasing popularity of television; even with its potential as an information channel, this has also raised people's standards and expectations.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ After a brief vacation at Talangban, Linda returned with a friend Myrna who joined her without the knowledge of her own parents.

¹⁴¹ In 1991, Virgilio charged P 1 per person per movie; there were two showings daily. Many others have since acquired video-players and followed his practice. Also notable is the fact that violent and X-rated movies are those that attract viewers of all ages.

¹⁴² With Star's help, I accounted for nine: at the homes of Ling and Garing, Josie and Teban, Ramona, Virgo and Roming, Josie's sister, the brothers of Linda, and Ruth, Lerma's uncle, and Castillo's.

¹⁴³ When people get to watch television, they also strive to be able to acquire a set of their own and tend to develop a consumer habit. Dodoy strongly argues that the visual experience of television, compared with radio, is a more important outlet for the promotion of government programs.

More active recreational activities at Talangban and throughout the village are observed as changing but nevertheless gender-segregated. Comparing their own childhood games with those of their younger generation, the subjects point out that they played on the river as they went boating, caught fish, and gathered shells. They also had mostly mixed outdoor group games with family and kin and with schoolmates.¹⁴⁴ Pointedly, Ramona mentions that she avoided playing with boys as a child was because they often got into fights. Star was stopped by a teacher from playing with a 'top,' since this was only for boys. Josie recalls being scolded by her grandmother for playing sipa (kick) with boys, since this game required her to spread her legs and expose her private parts. Moreover, Sela recollects that games designated for boys (e.g., paya, palmo and tambaw) all involved betting with money. Meanwhile, Virgo observes that children today prefer more sedentary gadgets like the 'chinese garter' which they can play on their own.

When the women were a bit older (though usually as young as 12 years old), they attended parties at individual homes of kin and friends in contrast to the public discos and dance events today (with entrance fees and for various fund-raising purposes). Ramona reminisces that men used to harana (serenade) the women they courted at their homes, a custom that is rapidly disappearing. In her youth, Josie observes that there used to be many community groups that enjoyed the daigon (Christmas carolling) and that children willingly joined the "Flores de Mayo" and their parents in religious activities such as novenas. At present, her own sons are only interested in what she considers as vices (gambling), if they were not watching or playing basketball with older children and men. The ever-present basketball paved or unpaved court has become the center for intra- and inter-village tournaments during the school breaks, and is

¹⁴⁴ They recall group games such as patintero, linagsan or tatsing, and panaguan which involve running, searching and catching; others just needed at least one other participant, e.g., pitiw, bota-bota, and 'jump-the-spine'. At school, they learned and participated in ball games, especially softball.

an area where males predominate. Women of all ages are mainly spectators or vendors of various drinks and snacks.

Similarly, participation at cockfights mainly involves the men, though a few women watch and also bet.¹⁴⁵ This dibersyon (pastime) is a some form of work and play for some in the women's households. Unfortunately for Star, the rooster that she was raising to sell was allegedly stolen by a neighbor. Lerma points out that Natan raises his own, too. Virgo refers to Roming's love for the sport and the earnings he gets for the service he provides at this events.¹⁴⁶ But while the men are busy with cockfights, behind a nearby bush are women engrossed with playing cards for money, mainly pusoy (a variant of poker) or a game called "41," sometimes, even with children suckling at their breasts. Among avid players are Sela's daughters; but there are many others who just watch. Most of the subjects themselves, however, speak of their leisure and entertainment as listening to the radio or walking around and chatting with friends, watching over their children, and even gardening.

Nevertheless, sugae (gambling) and too much tuba drinking, are considered major social problems at Talangban.¹⁴⁷ Often, the men who congregate to drink at sundown at the homes of their close friends or barkada or at a convenient store become abusive when they have had too much beer or tuba. Any woman passing them in the dark is the object of suggestive comments and looks, if not humiliated. Many among the subjects imply a tacit

¹⁴⁵ Though cockfighting is formally frowned upon for moral reasons, I had no sense that there were any legal or moral restraints on its almost weekly practice at Talangban. In fact, Tay Coret was often participant in these events. I personally observed some women at these events, and a few of the subjects admit to occasionally placing bets.

¹⁴⁶ Roming has a knack for attaching the bueang (the blade on the gamecock, after which the local name for the popular betting sport is called) for which he gets a percentage of the owner's winnings. He does this regularly for Garing's father who is an aficionado.

¹⁴⁷ It was mainly older women, like Ramona and Josie's mother Auring and Lerma's mother Eva, who drank tuba at home or with the men at popular "watering holes" at Talangban; when they did the latter, usually at dusk, they did not stay on as long as the men did.

"off-limit" prescription when their husbands get together with their friends for this purpose.

4.4. Organizational Activities and Resources

4.4.1. *The CAMACA Multi-purpose Cooperative, Inc. (CMPCI)*

Cooperatives development was one of the strategies used by the FSDP to build on the resources of the community. Hence, since 1988, efforts were made with other active government agencies, notably the Department of Agriculture, to encourage the CAMACA Farmers' Association to become the core of a cooperative within the area. By 1990, the CAMACA Multipurpose Cooperative, Inc. (CMPCI) was organized with an initial membership of 27, which, by 1992 grew to 215, including residents of neighboring non-CAMACA barangays and towns. The AGMRFI of Kalibo assisted with several batches of the three-day pre-membership education seminars (PMES) sponsored by FSDP; the Batan Development Foundation (BDF) also lent some financial assistance; and, the Kalibo branch of the Visayas Cooperative Development Center, Inc. (VICTO) provided some technical assistance for management of inventories and CMPCI's increasing financial assets as well as liabilities. As a certified cooperative with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) in 1991, this social organization has evolved as an autonomous legal entity with its own officials, by-laws, and procedures.

At the initial stages of its development, besides the thrust for membership expansion, the most visible undertaking of the cooperative was its consumer store opened in August 1991. But beyond this service for the community at large, the cooperative undertook the role of an intermediary for production loans, first for rice farmers, and soon after, also for fishpond operators, provided by the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP). Within that year, the cooperative engaged in trading of rice and aquamarine (milkfish and shrimp) products; moreover, feeds, fertilizers, and pesticides were also included in their inventories, eventually requiring them to build a larger store, office, and warehouse and acquire vehicles. For these reasons, along with its

attempts to create local industry as local IGP -- e.g., in soap making, the production of raffia fiber or textile, and ampaw -- the CMPCI was awarded model LBP cooperative for Region VI in November 1991 with ceremonies at Malacañang Palace with then President Aquino.

On the basis of paid-up capital build-up (₱ 500 per member), the level of participation of members is not high.¹⁴⁸ Organizational growth and strength of the cooperative through leadership development, sharing of risks and responsibility, and maximum involvement of members in planning and implementation of CMPCI projects have not been given as much attention; leaders have been preoccupied with collections to repay the readily extended LBP loans. Among matters which have animated the interest of its board of directors, has been the village council's petition, which it endorsed, for the extension of irrigation facilities into Camaligan. Thus, the characteristic origins of the cooperative and the dominance of rice farming and fish-farming interests do not augur a priority for interests of Talangban fishers. The extent of the overall isolation of Talangban from CMPCI involvements is further indicated by an attempt of a New Washington-based diocesan cooperative to attract membership in this area in 1991.

Of its total membership of 215 as of 1992, females make up 62 percent against males who constitute 38 percent. But the board is male-dominated (one female out of seven males) while the majority of committee, office, and sales functions are assigned to women members; moreover, rather than the general assembly, it has been the cooperative's effective decision-making body. Its members are also predominantly from the central sitios of Minoro and Tubahon. Only 123 (57 percent) of CMPCI members come from Camaligan; of this sub-total, 58 (47 percent) are from Minoro, 31 (25 percent) from

¹⁴⁸ The 1991 equity figure was ₱ 45,832.32; as of the end of 1991, additional payments amounted to ₱ 19,042, creating a total of ₱ 64,874.39.

Tubahon, 12 (less than 10 percent) from Palina-Langka, and 11 (less than 9 percent) from the more distant sitios of both Aksam and Talangban.

Included with the nine members from Aksam and Talangban are Sela, Virgo and Star among the subjects. Sela joined the second batch of PMES trainees in 1989; this was her first experience in any group activity. Since then, she regularly attends CMPCI meetings whenever she was free from work. At the last meeting she attended, in January 1994, she just sat and listened, even if she felt a need to complain, for fear of calling attention to her overdue payments. Virgo also underwent PMES but acknowledges not having paid the ₱ 10 membership fee nor the required paid-up capital stock subscription. Hence, she has virtually lost contact with the group. It appears that Star, who once was an active committee member of the CMPCI's election committee, has become disillusioned with the directions taken by CMPCI. When attending any of the general assemblies, she remains silent nowadays since she feels that earlier comments and suggestions she made were not given a fair hearing. Cynically, she notes that whenever there were decisions to be made, the officials decided matters by themselves anyway.

4.4.2. *The Katibyugan it Mangigisda sa Talangban (KMT)*

The peripheral involvement of Talangban residents in the CMPCI was a cause for the move to promote a local fisherfolk association. Moreover, outputs of related FSDP research work on Batan Bay and tributary river systems clearly document their dwindling capacity as sources of aquatic resources due to pollution, siltation and proliferation of harmful fishing gears.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, emerging links with the Community-Based Coastal Resource Management (CB-CRM), a joint undertaking of UPV, the Aklan Provincial Government and the municipalities of Altavas, Batan and New

¹⁴⁹ See Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991.

Washington, projected the prospect of continuing institutional involvements despite the expected termination of the FSDP.¹³⁰

Initial efforts to form a fisherfolk organization started in 1991; only in March 1993 did the idea take root after several dialogues with fisherfolk of Talangban among other project areas. Evidently, a concrete and feasible action program was crucial to the idea of the formation of a working organization. Talangban fisherfolk were encouraged to organize and venture into an enterprise based on Professor Lourdes Dureza's experience with cage culture of a hybrid species of tilapia (Tilapia nilotica) in freshwater areas. This undertaking was backed by a loan from FSDP payable approximately after six three-month cropping seasons. The crossbreed tilapia is posed as a more attractive substitute or alternate to the smaller-sized, less fleshy, and darker species, the tilapia (Tilapia mossambica), common throughout the country since the 1950s though originally from Africa.

Meanwhile, meetings, training programs, and group dynamics sessions with FSDP and other resource persons increase the Talangban fishers' social awareness and personal growth. The formation of the Katibyugan it Mangingisda sa Talangban (KMT) is guided by the following principles: participatory, educative, action-oriented, integrated, gender-sensitive, sustainable, with balanced growth and equity, the use of appropriate technology, site-specific alternatives, priority of food production for domestic use, control and access to the resource, and a vision for structural transformation. This organization combines politicization and the introduction of an IGP as a way of recruiting and consolidating the group. Organizers conscientize and help develop the members' capabilities for empowerment while the IGP sustains the organization as members struggle to develop their individual, household, and community potentials.

¹³⁰ Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

The group of 12 households that initially formed the KMT identified the protection and appropriate management of the fishery resources of the community. By July, bamboo frames and nets were set up and stocked with 3,000 tilapia fry on August 1993. By October, with an expanded membership of 20, they ratified the constitution and by-laws that they formulated, worked to register with the Bureau of Rural Workers of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE); agreements with FSDP that entitled them an interest-free loan worth ₱ 67,000.00 were also formalized.

Most of the KMT households are directly engaged in fishing activities at least with one type of fishing gear. Five are households of laborers (carpenters and boat-builders) while four have members in fish and other forms of trading. All, except one, owns a fishing vessel, though only one is motorized. The exception rents a boat from Calizo. Three of the subjects (Virgo, Star, and Ruth) are associated with the KMT.

With Toto as president of this association, Ruth says that before arriving at any decision on KMT matters, Toto consistently consults her. On her part, Virgo expresses that they, the Castros as a couple, have been drawn into a new fellowship with neighbors, with objectives that aim to respond to their group as well as individual household needs. For Star, while she and Berto had been involved with the strengthening of the group as well as in learning the ropes of the technology, they have had to resign primarily because of Berto's difficulties in meeting his responsibilities as member. Josie and Teban were among those who joined the group in October 1993, though their membership is still under observation. Linda appears interested and attends meetings of the whenever she had time away from her selling activities; as a non-member, she just listens to the discussions. Lolit once attended a meeting preparatory to the setting up of the KMT.

By the time I ended my field work, the group had harvested three times. Female members of the association have been enthusiastic in the receipts from the sale of tilapia that they introduced of at the Kalibo market. All

possible venues to promote their product are being explored, including promotion samples to Aklan's legislative representative, Allen Quimpo. For practical reasons, the group decided that, should no members come to sell stocks from their harvest in February 1994, they were to be disposed of to a non-member wholesaler. Vendors among them were aware that at this particular time, local produce suffers from competition posed by commercial fishing outfits (referred to as mansurya) from Roxas and Iloilo cities that flood the Kalibo market.¹⁵¹ The latter's catch is differentiated from eab-as (fresh) harvests and are distinguished as ilada (iced or frozen). However, the consequences of reliance on others for the distribution of their stocks need to be clearly assessed by the group.

The prospect for expansion of the association is great, particularly as they are preparing to learn how to develop the fry themselves (i.e., including the crucial technology involving tilapia sex reversal), with the unstinting sharing of technology of UPV staff, led by Professor Dureza.¹⁵² In this way, they can become an even much more reliant and sustainable community-based organization who can take the lead in this alternative to a declining fishery. Their plans also include the prospect of the culture of bulgan (sea bass). Considering themselves stewards of the remaining mangrove areas around adjacent river systems, they are making strides in their campaign against the encroachment of mangrove areas by fishpond owners.¹⁵³

4.4.3. *The Food Systems Development Project (FSDP)*

Apart from all that has been mentioned, services offered by FSDP to drum up community organizing and mobilization activities included various training programs in self-awareness, gender sensitivity, feasibility study-

¹⁵¹ This common term refers to offshore fishing methods allegedly introduced by pre-war Japanese immigrants from Manchuria.

¹⁵² The technology to efficiently produce marketable-sized male tilapia is based on the hormonal changes brought about by specific feeding practices.

¹⁵³ See Regional Media Task Force on the Environment, "Aklan Mangroves in Danger," Panay News, April 11, 1994, 2.

making, herbal medicines and backyard gardening, basic leadership training, dressmaking and tailoring, rural savings, soap production, para-legal training, and the distribution of seeds/seedlings. A large majority of the participants throughout Camaligan were primarily women. As I was ending my field work, various core groups in Camaligan (with membership mainly from Minoro) were organizing into a more consolidated Progressive Women's Association.

Among the subjects, Star as one of the project's COs, was most involved, even obtaining training in community organizing and participatory research as prerequisite to carrying out activities for the project. As cited above, Star, Virgo, and Sela underwent the required membership training for the CMPCI. Of their spouses, Berto joined the nito-weaving workshop at Lalab; with their respective partners, Berto, Toto, and Roming are involved with the on-site training for the tilapia cage culture project.

4.5. Leadership and Women's Political Participation

4.5.1. *The Women's Understanding of Power*

Guided by a prior appreciation of gender as signifying a relationship involving power, I explored the women's understanding of poder (authority) and gahum (power). There are many expressions for 'power' in Hiligaynon; however, they mainly suggest 'authority' for which I chose to use poder. Similar notions of uluyatan, palangako-an, pahanugot singly and collectively hinge upon the ideas of position, rule, governance, administration, and control; these are extremely vivid with the use of aggressive force associated with kusog or pwersa.

I chose the enigmatic gahum to suggest a more "unassigned" characteristic of power. Paradoxically, of all the abstractions that I used to explore the women's views, 'power' as gahum appears to have been the least appreciated. From the root word gahum are notions of kagamhanan and igalahum, which are open to the idea of influence which can be nurtured and cultivated. Other translations suggest proficient capabilities, e.g., abilidad,

kasarang, and kasangkol. Only kaako is suggestive of taking responsibility.¹³⁴ Gahum was a concept that I deliberately placed on my agenda which did not feature prominently in any exchanges with the women. There may well be a parallel concept specific to Aklanon with which they could have related but which I was unable to detect.

I aimed to draw out any symbolic and material indicators for 'power' from the women's perceptions. So I asked whom they thought possessed either attribute and the reasons why they regarded them as possessing such. In this way, I gained insights into their notions of political power or agency and guides to assess their actual behavior within the larger community. By their identification of specific personalities, some insights are gained about the structured contexts of their gendered and class-ordered society. Various implications of power as related to their participation at elections as well as in their involvements with community activities and organizations were also explored. For this reason, I took off from discussions on electoral politics as a primary vehicle for public endorsement of leadership and authority, significant to democratic processes of decision-making of active pumueoyo (citizens).¹³⁵ Here, I focus on these aspects of women's politics for indicators of interests that affect their pangabuhì taken from the individual women's narratives. In this manner, the particular ways by which the subjects responded to my queries on power and leadership as well as the exercise of electoral politics are more clearly appreciated.

Sela considers the kapitan as a person with poder because he leads the community; people depend on him to settle local disputes. She only recalls that she first voted probably when Magsaysay became president and when she

¹³⁴ The Mill Hill missionaries have been most assiduous in producing these translations which I have arranged and evaluated here. See Rev. William Maierhofer, ed., English-Visayan Dictionary. Compiled by Rev. Hubert Jonkergouw. (San Jose, Antique [Philippines]: Bishop's House, [1971]), 288.

¹³⁵ However, Virgo and Ramona did not explicitly comment on community structures of power and authority.

already had three children; but she has voted at every election since then. Sela listens to what others say about the candidates and checks her observations against her standards, e.g., if they are peace-loving. At the village, she votes for persons who could extend financial assistance, not necessarily for herself. But she implies no full trust for local officials and expresses doubts about them. "If they gave me money (for my vote), well and good; if not, it's okay." Though already her choice, Sela specifically mentions voting for one who gave her a ride when he was at Talangban.

Lerma says it is the men, i.e., the kapitan and the councilmen, who have poder; they govern the citizens. She admits voting when she was only 15, at a village election when she joined her uncle's family in Nueva Ecija where she had to re-register. Her choices were then influenced by her uncle as she did really know anyone there. Since returning, she has voted thrice; she voted for Cory but was unable to vote in the last presidential elections because she gave birth. Lerma chooses candidates whom she expects will help the country or community. She associates help from village officials in terms of the local basketball court and their Catholic chapel and only assumes that consultations were made about the construction of the artesian well's in Talangban.

Virgo first voted in Kalibo when she turned 21 in 1979 but could not recall what type of election it was. Since then, she has voted in every election at Camaligan. Her choice of a candidate depends on whether she sees the candidate as capable and worthy of the position and can be trusted. Virgo expects local officials to facilitate the construction of an additional and accessible artesian well; she also anticipates that they have repairs done on the rugged road to ease people's commuting. However, Virgo realizes that this assistance cannot be relied upon because, as she says, these officials are capable only of making promises.

Ramona did not respond to the issue of who had poder or gahum in the community. However, she talks about voting, though she could not remember

when she first voted, but recalls that she was 20. Since that time, she has never missed an election. She chooses candidates of a favored political party since she believes that they could be helpful; or, if they conducted a house to house campaign and personally talked with people. So far, her choices have always won; but she does not expect much from local officials beyond more artesian wells.

Lolit says the kapitan and the konsehal have the poder since they are the leaders; interestingly, she adds that they are "stewards of the place." Lolit first voted at Camaligan but could not recall whether it was a for local or a national contest. She voted throughout the 13 years that she stayed in Metro Manila; but she did not vote in the last election since she has not registered locally. She chooses her candidates on the basis of whether s/he had a good relationship with people, i.e., if the candidate treated people equally and in a nice way. Beyond asking for contributions for Christmas giveaways and signatures for petitions for artesian wells, Lolit sees no initiative of the leaders to involve the community. Hence, she is unconcerned with community meetings and does not really expect much from village officials.

For Star, a person who has either gahum or poder has the ability to "control" other people. She cites Condrado (Condring) Alba as one with such attributes because he is a fishpond owner on whom many folk depend on for their pangabuhi-an; she also mentions that he has money. Star first voted at Lalab in 1976 and never missed voting since then. She had her registration transferred to Camaligan only in 1987. She jokingly adds that she could have made money from vote-buying (as a 'flying voter'); at Lalab, she remarks that the kapitan there kept the candidates' money for himself and that she did not receive any. But she declares that, even if she got some, she would not have been selling her vote since she always voted for her own candidates. In making this choice, what is important is how the candidate regards and treats people; s/he should not be looking down on the already downtrodden, and s/he should be helpful to people. Regretfully, her choices do not always win.

On her rights as citizen, Star observes that the people have rights only in name; despite the implementation of various laws, the people are not heeded. Government officials just follow what they want to do for their advantage and neglect the people's interests and welfare. Star does not expect local officials to work for the development of Talangban since they are only good at making promises; they receive their salaries without doing anything for the community. She cites the fruitlessness of the kapitan's promise of assistance to her own efforts for the construction of a day-care center in Talangban. Hence, the only time that she approaches him today is for his signature on her daily time record as a day-care worker. Star also notes that the village government does not reach out to the population. When any group organizes something, the officials come around since they are invited as guests; but they do not invite nor involve the people in their undertakings. Local assemblies have no significance for her since she sees no visible results in terms of community projects.

Ling says that the kapitan is respected and has poder over the people in Camaligan; he is obeyed when he settles disputes because he is leader of the community. She first voted during the 1986 snap presidential elections and continued to do so since then. She chooses those candidates whom she feels could help her community; but she admits that her choices who won have not really done anything. During his earlier terms of office, Tay Coret really took action when people approached him for help; but lately, he has been not been effective. She herself no longer expects any help from village officials. When there was a break in electrical service due to trouble on the lines, the officials do not even bother to take action, i.e., report to the power company.

Linda stresses the role of the kapitan as peacemaker. In this way, he has poder as he helps reconciles disputing parties, citing instances wherein Coret settled disagreements among relatives. She sees the village officials are approachable and accessible and could extend help if asked. Yet she was frustrated herself when approaching Coret for help when urgently needing

money to send a son bitten by a rabid dog for medical attention in Manila. She was already married when she voted for the first time and could not recall how many times she has voted since.

Ruth says that the kapitan, konsehals have poder because they lead. They are the ones who follow up and expedite projects intended for the community, e.g., the feeder road. She remembers voting at 18 soon after she married; but since then, she has not voted again. According to her religious principles, she shows her love for her fellow-beings by not taking sides. As a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses, she does not to choose any candidate so that she could not be accused of being biased or unfair. Ruth recalls that her father (Carding) was once called to Batan and asked to explain why he did not vote; and he gave this explanation.¹⁵⁶ There are church members who go to the precinct to show that they are participants in the exercise. But they invalidate their ballots by writing the word "neutral," as she herself did. Various candidates promised to provide more artesian wells for Talangban and new ones were indeed constructed. However, there were no consultations as to where the wells were to be located and were actually constructed near homes of their political allies. Ruth adds that candidates for village positions promised to have the road repaired but have not done anything about this.

Commenting on national leadership, Josie regards whoever is president as having a poder because s/he is the one who leads and governs the whole country. S/he also "dictates" what things are to be done for the welfare of the people. Josie recalls that she first voted during Marcos's time as well as in the past presidential contests in which Aquino and Ramos won. But she purposely did not vote during the last local elections; referring to the upsurge of patronage politics throughout Aklan, she believed that her vote did not have any significance. Further, village candidates are only good at making empty

¹⁵⁶ Carding became a serious follower of the religion he adopted from the family of his in-laws when he married Basyon.

promises, e.g., action on road repairs, since they have been in office. They also show favor for persons who belong to the same political party, e.g., when new artesian wells were constructed. Hence, she expects no assistance whatsoever from barangay officials.

4.5.2. *Discussion: The Women's Political Sphere*

The opening of the road and transport system marks not only a new orientation towards Kalibo but also more widespread changes in the lives of the people of Talangban. As the political, social and economic center develops at Minoro throughout the 1980s, so does Talangban become peripheral to village activities as a whole. Local leaders, however, are prone to court the important votes of this populous area of the village. However, it is clear that an almost exclusive male club of political elites dominate interests and decisions in the community. Authoritative paternalistic and feudal relationships sway electoral and other decisions, often subject to external influences, particularly from the town center.

Yet the women also appear to be uninvolved towards realizing a more democratic character in the political life in the village. They are cynical of what their officials can do and just as negative towards the practice of elections. In fulfilling their basic right to vote, they had no qualms admitting having flaunted electoral laws and do not critique the misbehavior of voters as well as candidates, e.g., vote-buying.

The women's status as well as participation in the 'public' sphere of community life appears dynamic and yet repressed, often not only by their gender roles but also by their poverty. They are prominent in voluntary and social activities, with no opportunities nor initiatives to take a leading role in any undertaking apart from the concerns of their families and households. Organizations associated with church, school, and government health programs are the ones that normally involve them. Nevertheless, their activities are sporadic and their purposes limited. The fate of women's groups facilitated by the FSDP have yet to show stability and the sustainability of the projects

undertaken. It is only in these groups that women appear to have transcended positions as secretaries, treasurers, or "muses."

An understanding of the women's confinement, reinforced by their understanding of their place in the community, rests on what is revealed in the subjects' conceptions of power in their community. The women see power as authority emanating from a hierarchical structure. Formal leaders were immediately acknowledged as possessing both poder and gahum treated synonymously. There are also intimations of the influence and assistance from certain individuals with landed properties and employment opportunities, and hence, wield some control over individual and collective lives. I contextually take their reference to these persons as poderoso or gamhanan as descriptions of 'powerful' or 'influential' individuals. Nevertheless, they perceive poder as inextricably entwined with personalities who are legitimately in positions to lead and govern. The only route they are acquainted with is through elections. Further, Ruth's case illustrates extraneous factors that encroach on voting behavior as influenced by religious affiliation.

The women regard the formally-elected leaders as responsible for facilitating solutions to community problems for which they evidently have not shown much skill or imagination. Their values center on the need to survive in a peaceful environment; hence, they admire the peacemaker role that they see in the kapitan. The support they expect from the government's representatives to deliver expected services is largely inadequate, if not inappropriate; yet they appear to be appeased by promises of road repair and provision of wells, since these are about all that they can expect from their leaders. Their passivity is evident in the expectation and/or reliance on these leaders to act on their needs, even just for troubles on the electrical lines or for filling up large potholes on the road which has increasingly become important to their work and lives.

Further, the women raise no observations pertinent to the predominance of male leaders, reflecting an acceptance of a norm in which no change is

necessary. That they themselves can make decisions that can affect their lives beyond the sphere of electoral politics is not manifest in their views. Only by sheer tenacity was Star able to establish and obtain accreditation of the day-care center that she initiated for the community, even as such concern did not merit attention from the local authorities. Clearly, there are no outstanding interests on which the women and the local leadership appear to stand parallel. However, like the officials, the women perceive only personal and local community problems and seldom indicate that they see how more systemic structures contribute to specific situations. An issue that stands out, as an expectation as well as a disappointment for the women, is the matter of the location of good water sources. They associate their location as a function of the social power of well-to-do and well-placed families.

Though some of the subjects have been part of the experiment of the local cooperative, they have not significantly contributed materially nor socially to its development. Needless to say, whatever benefits there have been for them are largely ephemeral. Because of an emphasis on the predominantly male farming members' availing of immediate credit and income-generating projects, the broad base of education and mobilization to obtain lasting strength and support was neglected. For the Talangban-based KMT, the obvious lessons of the cooperative may be helpful for its development as a "window of opportunity" not only for an economically-viable undertaking but also as a consolidated people's organization. Starting small and going slow might redound to a better fate for this organization where women hopefully have a greater voice and more direct benefits, serving both their immediate practical and strategic interests.

The following chapter 5 brings forth significant local conceptions which prompted the development of the study's conceptual framework. It centers on the women and their references to what I construe as vernacular equivalents to notions of 'life' [pangabuhi] and 'livelihood' [pangita] and respectively signifying the overlapping concerns of reproduction and production. Their

associated usages form the basis of my comprehension and analysis of their gendered existence and behavior.

CHAPTER 5

GETTING TO KNOW THE WOMEN OF TALANGBAN

5.1. Local Concepts, Definitions, and Contexts

5.1.1. *An Introduction to Pangabuhi and Pangita*

There are many ways by which to investigate gender and the range of relations that it implies. Though concerned with the gender implications of the interactions of the selected women and the differences that situate their specific experiences, I first deal with intangibles. I focus on a set of perceptions that signify discourses emerging from the women's own words. I came upon these expressions throughout my immersion in the village. With a growing familiarity with the vernacular and lifestyles in the area, I grew certain of their significance. I drew substantiations from the women and eventually devised my conceptual framework from what they shared.¹

The women's use and implied valuing of the local terms ground my cognizance of processes that portray diverse aspects of production (work/livelihood/pangita) and reproduction (life/sexuality/pangabuhi), thereby also reflecting the dominant theme of the gender divide. This understanding surfaced in association with notions on pamilya (family) or panimaeay (household) as well as poder and gahum. These interrelated idioms are my markers for understanding not only the women's ways of life but also their specific needs and interests.²

Most of these Hiligaynon terms are commonly used throughout Aklan. The word pangabuhi stems from the root buhi (literally, "life," "to live," or "being alive"); figuratively, it also means to survive, and is often used in very general and ambiguous ways. It is descriptive of multifarious aspects of 'life' as "the course of existence or sum of experiences and actions that constitute a person's existence."³ Similarly, the word pangita comes from the root kita

¹ I also paid close attention to the way the key informants used the same.

² Though there is some reliance on local dictionaries for these purposes, much more emphasis is given to the women's contextual usage of all the terms used.

³ Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Portland House, 1989), 827.

(literally, "to see" or "a find"); in the contexts in which it is used, it insinuates a form of gain, as reward or profit (in psychic, money or other material terms). Colloquially, it alludes to what you get for doing something. Significantly, kita is closely associated with a source or ginabuoan (literally, "where one gets something"), which may be a resource or capital for some other purpose/s. The reference is often for a specific expense item and indicates a monetization of the kita.

Juxtaposed with pangabuhi, pangita reflects the narrower and conventional conception of production for a 'livelihood,' as "a means of maintaining life, maintenance, living" and synonymous with sustenance or subsistence.⁴ With the suffix "-an," both pangitan-an and pangabuhi-an intimate where and/or how whatever a desired objective is obtained and/or pursued. In combination, as gapangita it pangabuhi-an, the terms denote an active pursuit of ways and means by which to live. Succintly, the best translation for the idea implied appears to be "working for life." Thus, it is useful to conscious that the women's work or livelihood is one aspect of their living to maintain the interconnectedness that the women imply. The practice helps break the dichotomy in my own inherited mental set as I document and examine the implications of their perspectives and experiences.

5.1.2. Related Concepts and Local Implications

There are close parallels to these expressions in the most dominant of the Filipino languages. Some studies refer to the compound term hanapbuhay (from hanap or "to search" and buhay or "life") in Tagalog which is analogous to pangita in Hiligaynon.⁵ In a treatise on household survival strategies in the coastal setting, Anita Kendrick uses hanapbuhay to refer to resource-poor

⁴ Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary, 1989, 838.

⁵ The Tagalog term pamumuhay parallels the Hiligaynon pangabuhi. It is worthwhile to mention that vernacular references to uri (as 'sex') or kasari-an (as 'gender') have limited circulation at the present time.

households' strategies for survival.⁶ In an agrarian setting, Fegan refers to non-agricultural options as "livings" or hanapbuhay for children of peasant households that are not able to adequately capitalize their reproduction as peasant farmers with access to land.⁷ In the manner of speaking in urban areas, especially on local radio and national television, refers to commercial breaks. The oft-repeated phrase "maghanapbuhay tayo" reflects the dissemination of a consumerist culture in a market-orientated economy.

The selected women's use of both pangabuhì and pangita is inextricably tied up with what amounts to 'work' in its broadest sense. In Hiligaynon, 'work' is commonly expressed in terms of Spanish-descended notions of obra and trabaho as well as some form of negosyo (commercial enterprise). But each of these latter terms has a narrow scope; they interchangeably refer to one's job or employment, self-assigned occupation, or a specific task or responsibility. Alternatively, the Aklanon root usoy (meaning, 'to do,' 'solve,' or 'resolve some problem') is vague but apt; further, the root word bueo (literally, 'the whole' and figuratively, 'origin or source') is often mixed up in their narrations. I used any and all of these related terms to prod the subjects to contemplate on the significances and implications of pangabuhì and pangita.

Initially, I asked the women which matters constituted their pangabuhì-an and pangitan-an. At the same time, I inquired whether they saw any particular ways by which the application of the terms may be distinguished. Most were startled by these questions, obviously never having had thought seriously about the terms they used daily. On hindsight, their reaction appears

⁶ The use of open-access resources of the coastal zone is argued as an alternative route to access to means of production for people forced out of agriculture. (p. 44) In the study area of Bel-is, Masbate, fishing was a new adaptation and viewed as an "occupation of last resort" for marginalized households. (p. 47) Other strategies discussed involve migration, occupational change or diversification, social relationships, responses to opportunities, and reactions to crisis. Kendrick, "Hanap Buhay," 1988, 109-143 passim.

⁷ The study on Central Luzon peasants indicates that they become teachers or civil servants, with parental investment in their education. Fegan, "Establishment Fund," 1983, 39-42.

to have been a rejection of a codifying of processes they deemed indivisible and essentially a unity. I also prompted the women to describe and assess ideal standards and values as well as actual behavioral manifestations that distinguished the work and other activities, as pangabuhì or pangita, that baye or babaye (women) and eaki (men) do. Whenever non-earning or unemployed women are alluded to, their occupation is described as sa sueod baeay (literally, "within the house") or 'housekeeper,' 'homemaker,' or 'housewife.' Housework, thus, is obra or trabaho sa sueod baeay. Further, women's work inside is delineated from men's work sa liwan (outside or beyond the home).

As I explored the manner by which the women implicitly or explicitly expressed the purposes of their work as pangabuhì or pangita, what emerges are immediate and long-term requirements for their respective pamilya (family) or panimaeay (household), especially their unga (children). Pamilya as 'family' is commonly used throughout the Philippines. The Aklanon term for 'household' derives from the root word baeay (literally, the physical structure of the house).⁸

To validate the women's notions of the specific membership and other features of their reference group, I sought their stipulations. The subjects' statements generally reflect the concreteness of the idea of panimaeay and the immediacy of everyday life and pangita that converge on the home. However, they recognize and give evidence of strong bonds that link them with blood and affinal pariente (relatives) whom they distinguish and yet also regard more abstractly as pamilya, i.e., as an extensive kin group.

Further, related to the attempt to elicit the women's perceptions of gahum and poder at more inclusive social levels, I inquired into their perceptions of power within their pamilya or panimaeay. Above, I have called

⁸ In Hiligaynon, the root is balay (thus, panimalay); in Tagalog, it is bahay (thus, pamamahay). References to the idea of 'home' may be explored in these and related notions, such as tahanan, especially as women have often been referred to as the reyna ng tahanan (queen of the home). In this study, I use it in association with panimaeay of the Hiligaynons.

attention to dilemmas in defining the idea of 'household head.'⁹ Accordingly, I did not predetermine the identity of the head of family or household. It was through these notions of power and authority that household headship was explored. As in the larger society, the women's conceptions of power within the pamilya or panimaeay converge on a person's ability to lead others by virtue of associated roles or positions at home, i.e., in terms of poder. The women all acknowledged, even if reluctantly, the padre de pamilya ideal, even if some notions of shared authority were expressed in some areas of decision-making.

In addition, as I probed into other ways by which they also expressed poder, I ascertain both negative and positive implications. There are intimations of kasarang in Hiligaynon (kaya in Filipino) as physical strength and endurance in men's carrying out heavy work entailed in capture fishing and on the fishponds. As well, the women refer to bearing their pains of childbirth and battering from husbands. There are more isolated references to the ability to control and manage one's affairs and the freedom or autonomy to be able to do so.

Whenever the subjects used pangabuhi or pangita or associated variants, they primarily refer to purpose of whatever activity for the fulfillment of food requirements. They use the term suea (as viand, nourishment or victuals) which they and/or other household members produce on their own, exchange, or purchase. The specific items denoted by this Aklanon term include fish, shrimps, shellfish, and meats.¹⁰ Vegetables are distinguished as tinuean-on, and snack items are known as kaean-onon. There are also distinct Aklanon references to the rice staple consumed with suea. Most common are paey (unmilled rice grain), bugas (cleaned rice), and humay (cooked rice).

⁹ See chapter 1, page 59.

¹⁰ In the study at Bel-is, Masbate, the term sura refers to dishes that accompany cooked grain, preferably fish. Vegetables are a low-level substitute while meat is reserved for special occasions. Kendrick, "Hanap Buhay," 1988, 28.

Hiligutmon such as maize and various root crops such as sweet potato and cassava was also frequently mentioned.

Most significant was the fact that the women refer to resources [kita] in the river and produce that they sell as suea. Hence, suea is implicated not only with self-provisioning, use values, and konsumo (consumption) but also in the realm of circulation through petty trade. However, there are nuances in local understandings of konsumo. This was most clearly brought out at a discussion of the preliminary results of the FSDP's community survey at the adjacent sitio of Agsam in 1990 in which I was a participant. The exchange highlighted a dichotomy propelled by questions which explicitly distinguished produce for sale or consumption, thus, alluding to an unequivocal distinction between use and exchange values. Nevertheless, the villagers saw no importance in the intermediary process of market exchange or selling item A (in this case, the pigs they raised) so that they could purchase item B for konsumo. In their terms, they simply sold item A to buy item B which they then actually used. The dialogue suggests how conventional surveys as a whole, insensitive to these subtleties, may significantly overestimate the degree of self-provisioning in rural communities.

Interestingly, there are various ways by which the women referred to their spouses as well as themselves in relation to them. In Hiligaynon, the male spouse is distinctly known as the hana (husband); the woman is usually called the asawa (wife). However, asawa in Tagalog refers to either spouse. Together, they comprise the mag-asawa (the conjugal pair). In Aklanon, one who was a-courting (expectedly the male) was gapangasawa. Apart from these common usages, some of the subjects also allude to themselves or their husbands as kaibahan or kaupod (companion) or katimbang (partner). Besides husbands, children are often also regarded as kabulig (helper) in the women's pangabuhi, especially important for those whose husbands have died or are away from the panimaeay.

Further, though normally reticent about discussing their sexual relations at individual interviews, it was enlightening to witness the women open up on these matters when we were in a group. At the initial interviews, the most common ways by which these matters were alluded to was in terms of sleeping with one's spouse (humorously described as having the luxury of someone else's leg to rest one's own) or one's "sexperience". On occasion, I used a play of words that led up to aspects of a woman's sexuality, adapted as "biatayagon."¹¹

At the first FGD, we called attention to the idiomatic expressions to refer to women's sexuality through the words gamit (use) and namit (pleasure). Significantly, even medical practitioners normally use gamit when discussing women's problems.¹² I was interested to know if the term was really reflective of the women's experiences. All present spoke of having experienced both, amid the food sharing (with innuendos of namit) and a lot of shrieks, earthy remarks, and laughter. Here, Sela admits that even if she did not want to to be "used" she also came to "enjoy the pleasure" it brought. Further, Ruth astutely observes that these matters are not discussed openly since couples even try to hide themselves when they do it.

When discussing local incidents involving relations between women and men, Ling came up with a colorful phrase literally referring to "a struggle over a vagina" to describe men's competition for favors from a woman. She also referred to an instance wherein two women violently fought over one man; this time her idiom referred to women's "quarrels over an eggplant." Josie

¹¹ This is reference to an FSDP discussion among women's groups in Camaligan in 1991 in which the women concluded that their life is surrounded with a lot of "B's," namely, bana (husband), bata (children), baboy (pig), bebe (ducks), baka (cow), batya (laundry basin), baraka (store), baroto (boat), etc. Then, they also spoke of their biatayagon (feelings or emotions) as well as their sexuality with reference to the vernacular term for the female genitalia (biat). On the other hand, the male organ is known as boto.

¹² For this insight, I acknowledge the discussions with Prof. Grace Dalisay of the Philippine Psychological Association of the Philippines and Jikolohiyang Pilipino and other resource persons at a meeting on the preliminary results of a study on Filipino sexuality at UPV on July 31, 1993.

also made the graphic observation which evokes the relationship between sex and the pains of childbirth: something white enters (your body) and what comes out is the red foot (of a breach-born child). On a separate occasion during an interview, Josie greeted Linda's father who was passing with the usual query "Where are you going?" He replied that he was looking for someone who could take care of his "mushroom." From this encounter, Josie divulged that there used to be a local fourteen-year old girl who sold sexual services. She has since moved to Manila.

Despite the apparent disregard that the women had for distinctions between pangabuhì and pangita, their clarifications and other narrations lead me to construe an implicit association of pangita as diverse systems of production predominantly associated with men's activities outside the home for immediate or short-term requirements of the household. Further, I take pangabuhì to imply the more complex idea of reproduction, including social reproduction, primarily as homelife concerns of women and for long-term prospects of the family as a whole, especially the children.

The meanings and connotations discussed above substantiate the diverse contexts which frame my rendition of the women's work and lives below. In each case, I discuss the women's individual responses to my queries on the three related sets of concepts. I use a combination of relevant vignettes, descriptions, and assessments of their life and work situations to capture the meanings they ascribe to the local concepts. Translated verbatim statements and phrases are inserted to portray their everyday use as indications of their normative views and gendered experiences. Most importantly, the women are depicted as live, thinking, and feeling individuals, even if yet unaware of their capacity for making choices for their interests.

It is evident that only glimpses of each of the actual women's lives can be portrayed in this narrative. I characterize five themes, with their inevitable variations and overlaps, as I formulate and interpret their life-situations and other stories. These are: 'starting anew,' 'for the children,' 'going it alone,'

'forging a partnership?' and 'for love of one's spouse.' In so doing, various personal narratives are made relevant to the broader issues raised in the earlier chapters. These are brought together in the summary discussions in chapter 7.

5.2. The Women's Views, Work, and Lives

5.2.1. *Starting Anew*

5.2.1.1 Josela (Sela) Montes Alba

Sela is 65 years old, born seventh among nine siblings, and has had 10 children though only nine survive. Despite her advanced age, she is actively engaged in vending apart from other subsistence activities. Sela regards her pangabuhi-an to be the process of obtaining what one lacks at the panimaeay, e.g., rice, coffee, milk. Her pangitan-an is the source from which she obtains subsistence, i.e., suea for konsumo. Regardless, her use of either or both terms on various occasions refer to fish or other food vending from which she procures her simple needs.

Sela regards people as wealthy on the basis of his/her pangitan-an. She cites examples of those with plenty of paeay, those who make salt, and those who wove cases for rice. She ascribes her late father-in-law as having a good life [mayad nga pangabuhi] based on the volume of his usual rice harvest. In comparison, she describes the circumstances of her natal household as comfortable. Her mother's fish, crab, and shell gathering, poultry and livestock raising, and the rice farm that her father cultivated provided enough suea for their large pamilya.

Panimaeay for Sela refers to sub-units of a pamilya who live on their own resources, though these separate dwellings may include non-kin members. Pamilya for Sela did include her grandparents, as she characterizes an earlier time in her life. Both sets of her grandparents' extended families lived close to each other at Talangban.¹³ Further, at one point or another when they

¹³ Sela fondly recalls her widowed maternal grandmother as a practitioner of many folk and religious rituals; her paternal grandfather smoked tobacco, drank tuba, but often wove ropes into a hammock. Her maternal grandfather was a prodigious womanizer and allegedly had about 60

married, each of her children had lived with her (and Ponso). From these experiences, pamilya for Sela also refers to persons who farm and garden together and pool their resources.

Sela decided to marry for love at a very young age in 1941.¹⁴ She and Ponso were dependent on his parents with whom they stayed until they had three children, following Ponso's wishes. Throughout their stay, Sela resented her mother-in-law's tolerance of her son's irresponsible behavior as a husband; among other things, she gave him money whenever Sela refused to give him any for his vices.¹⁵ Sela's mother-in-law told her that she should not quarrel with Ponso since, even if he was not working, they were sharing their food and were not starving. Sela restrained herself from protesting against this situation, so as not to embarrass her in-laws. When they argued, Sela told Ponso that it might be better if he returned to his parents and relieve her of the responsibility that she took seriously upon their marriage.

Sela considers the eaki in the pamilya to have the poder. The father has both gahum and poder; thus, he is 'number one,' and, after him, the eldest son is 'next in command.' This, despite her experiences. Apart from their frequent quarrels over her husband's deficiencies as a provider, Sela resented his sexual aggressions. Sela remarks that it would have been all right, if only he helped her take care of their children. The trouble was that he did seem not to care to attend to these matters. And, no matter how much she avoided contact, he always got her.

Upon finally establishing their own panimaeay, Ponso was not an assiduous provider. He only went fishing and worked on the fishpond gifted them by his parents whenever he was in the mood. Hence, for Sela, her now estranged husband Ponso was without a pangitan-an because he had no trabaho.

children by 40 different women (i.e., forty were eldest children of their mothers).

¹⁴ At that time, Sela was 13 to Ponso's 17 years. Legally underaged, five years were "adjusted" to her age and two years were added to Ponso's.

¹⁵ Ponso went out with his barkada to attend dances and serenade girls, despite the fact that he was already had his own family.

Almost all household decisions rested on her since he could not be relied upon; he did not even care to decide on anything by himself. Through their life together, he just sat around and relied on others to wait on him. Sela did all of the housework, later with the older children. For sometime, they hired relatives to help take care of the younger children and carpenters to repair the house when necessary. No matter how Sela encouraged Ponso to do things on his own, he asked their helper. It is the men who are supposed to do the pangita, Sela says, to spend for their family's needs; they are not supposed to do women's work. She clearly identifies trabaho with negosyo. She admits that what she does at home is also trabaho, but only because she has no choice since she no longer has any muchacha (maid).

On her part, Sela's pangitan-an had always been produce from the riverbanks. Sela claims that it was her negosyo of pawod (thatch roof shingles from nipa palm leaves) that supported their children's schooling; for most, this was until college.¹⁶ She obtained raw materials for this business from her father's nipa lands which she holds in common with siblings.¹⁷ When pressed, she transacted loans from rural banks, and still makes periodic payments for an outstanding one until the present time. Sela gathers shells and catches some fish for sale and konsumo. Outside of market days at Banga, she peddles oyster and small quantities of fish, normally, making a ₱ 50 - ₱ 100 net profit a day. In the past, she used to row a small boat by herself to New Washington everyday to sell her produce, with a chain and padlock to secure it on the docks. Later, she and Ponso also acquired a motor. Besides, she occasionally engages in the sale of not more than 30 kilos of milkfish on alsada (buy-and-sell) basis. She also raises pigs, chickens, and ducks.

¹⁶ She made 1,000 pieces a week, with the help of the older daughters, whom she required them to sew the nipa leaves with her every night. Every Sunday, they delivered these to a suki, at New Washington, selling at 50 - 60 centavos each, and garnering at least ₱ 500 per thousand pieces.

¹⁷ Sela claims that the nipa area includes about four hectares, apart from other coconut and rice land. Based on a 1944 map that she holds, she declares that areas converted into fishponds at Bueot by Condring Alba in the 1960s are really part of her Montes inheritance.

Sela comments on a difference between women and men: "As long as they are alive, they continue to enjoy sex. But for many women, sex is difficult to enjoy because they become tired; and, when there are children, it is the babaye who bears the burden." Sela tried to have avoid sexual contact especially after a traumatic experience of the breach birth of her first child. However, Ponso often used force and kicked her. On these occasions, she remembers her grandmother's objections to her marrying Ponso, saying that he was like a dog. Ponso argued that, after all, he had sought her out and married her so that he had someone whom he did not have to woo, so she should not refuse him. Whenever she refused because of exhaustion from work or other reasons, he accused her of having another man. Hence, she gave in, rationalizing that he was her husband. "If you do not accept (sex), you only expose yourself to a fight. Why should you not enjoy this with him just as you do the hardships and sufferings you struggle through?" They became experts, she says, referring to their many children in the absence of any family planning.

Nevertheless, Sela decided to separate in the early 1980s to avoid their frequent verbal and physically violent tussles over Ponso's failure to be a provider and his neglect of responsibilities toward his children. By that time, most of the children had finished their schooling and Ponso had developed a kidney ailment. Since his operation in 1980, he lives under the care of another daughter on his parents' land and near his brother and his family at Crossing Calamay, about a kilometer away from Sela. Since 1988, their youngest, now 31 years, has lived with Sela along with her own two small children in the house Sela had built on her natal family's land at Punta. Nowadays, besides the fish and shells she gathers, Sela's kita from sales is only enough for the suea of their small panimaeay. In addition to a few orders for pawod, she also maintains a variety of vegetables and other crops on an extensive garden from which sitiq folk occasionally buy.

Sela prefers to support herself through her own labors; she does not feel comfortable if she has to ask for help, even from her own children. For Sela, being a babaye is being a mother to one's unga, i.e., advising them so that they can avoid the conditions that brought sufferings in her own experience. She is enthused with the idea of having more grandchildren, even as she already has about 30 of them. She often sees them at home or visits their own homes within Talangban. However, Sela continually worries about her only unattached daughter, wishing her to find a husband; she sees her often as she attends to the material needs of her estranged husband. She comments that one of her sons-in-law is presently making a pangabuhi in Mindanao. Yet she is the only one among her siblings who never ventured to live outside of Talangban. She feels very attached to the place and would miss it and her pamilya.

Yet for herself and in her new life apart from Ponso, Sela wishes to be able to visit Palawan and see her brothers who have migrated there. Moreover, she still wants to improve her skills in running a small business, perhaps to retail rice or some snack foods. She wishes to get to know more helpful and entertaining people and also aspires to acquire items like a television set, refrigerator, and a radio-cassette-recorder.

5.2.1.2 Liwayway (Virgo) Sison Castro

Of the subjects, Virgo alone is not a native of Talangban; nor has she any ties of descent with community members. Presently 35 years old, her youth was spent in such areas as Libacao, Murcia (in Negros Occidental), and Kalibo. However, she has strong attachments with a prominent local clan through complex conjugal relationships. She married Carlos Alba at 18 and had a son with him. Soon after, she arranged a separation with the approval of her father-in-law, Condring, while her husband was away at sea. She has since been cohabiting with Carlos's nephew (by a first cousin), Roming, after

having borne the latter's twin sons while not yet separated from Carlos.¹⁸ In both of her relationships, Virgo was older than the men.

Virgo explicitly delineates the extent of blood relationships that define a family; yet pamilya may also include persons not living within the same baeay. Further, panimaeay alludes to an implicit set of interrelationships which includes arrangements for the performance of housework by members. The panimaeay is the more inclusive term for Virgo; it refers to more than just the persons and incorporates elements of "love, consideration, and understanding" among its members.

When a couple gets married and begets unga, then they are a pamilya. You ought not to include your grandparents or other relatives in it because we understand that we are related to them. But you now have a pamilya of your own. We get married, have unga. That is our pamilya now. But we still can not compare a pamilya to a panimaeay because a pamilya is composed of people while panimaeay refers to our manner or ways sa sueod baeay. Our treatment of each other, our interrelationships, the way we discipline our unga. Panimaeay does not only refer to people; there is more to it than just the people that compose a pamilya. That is how I understand it.¹⁹

She evinces an ideal in a song in Hiligaynon that she shares with pre-schoolers: "We were happy at home, our panimaeay is calm and peaceful."

During the early years of their marriage, Virgo and Carlos were both dependent on Papa Condring; the latter subsidized a baraka (home-based variety or convenience retail store) for Virgo to run at New Washington, and later at Talangban, when Carlos continued his studies in Iloilo. But when the latter went looking for a trabaho in Manila, Condring objected to his wish for Virgo and their son to move with him since he would have had to support their

¹⁸ Roming is Carlos's nephew through the latter's first cousin, Roming's mother.

¹⁹ As with other quotations made in this report, this is as close to a direct translation of verbatim statements. These passages demonstrate a manner of phrasing often used by the women. There are mixed references to a first, second, or third persons; the ideas expressed may be the speaker's or anyone else's, which have to be taken in context. The common plural, yet incorporating, "you," "we," and "they" are notable as references to implied similarly-situated collectivities.

expenses. But when Carlos got his overseas assignment, infidelities on both sides ultimately resulted into their separation.

The problem with my former asawa (Carlos) was his jealousy and his being a playboy. He would not leave (other) women alone. Even in the early days of our marriage, when we did not yet have a child, he had a date with someone at a moviehouse. I hired someone to drive our tricycle when I learned that he had a date in Kalibo and went after them. I caught them at the theater and I banged (their heads together). When we reached New Washington, I continued to pound my fists on him. He went off to the seashore, appearing suicidal. I left him alone. He came back to our house. Maybe he had thought things over, because he had plenty of aches and bruises. He was like a child, he was really childish. I packed my things and went to my older cousin in Kalibo. Later, he followed to fetch me there and he and my mother begged on their knees (that I go home to New Washington). So we went back there. But the situation did not change. For him, women were playthings. Of course it hurts a woman when her husband is like that. I confronted him that if he wanted us to separate, but he did not want to do so. He said that he would not do it again, that he would change. Even Papa Condring would not allow us to separate. It is really like that especially because (our marriage) was sudden and we did not really know each other. He was really possessive and jealous. But he puts all the blame on you. It would not have mattered if he was jealous if only he did not fool around. It was he who was playing around, and it was he who was very strict. It was as though he wanted to put me inside his pocket. I could not look around or else he would ask "Who are you looking at, your boyfriend?" (Once) we were strolling at the park, we were happy going in, but coming out, we were already fighting. We walked home fast without speaking to each other; he walked on one side, I walked on the other. Then we fought when we arrived home, it was exasperating. To him, his attitude showed that he loved me, or that he loved me so much. For me, it was an unreasonable kind of love. It was like being held too tightly, it was suffocating. Thus I cannot say that I regret our separation, because what's the use of money or a nice house if my mind is not at peace? I do not like being put under suspicion. He was a womanizer and that's an insult to me. Of course, even though I love him I lost my respect for him and found it dirty to be close to him. Because you knew that he had another woman. He never told me. It was noticed (by others) and you hear about it.

Even before (we met and married), [Carlos] really liked (women); he was not contented with one. That was really his style until now. Even now that he has another wife, he is still like that. That is his weakness.

They have no children; he has had three operations related to hernia, and I do not know if he has become sterile since that is most sensitive. He was unreasonably jealous though he fooled around. You could not look at other men; you could not talk to them. But the opposite worked for him. Even when he was on vacation here, some letters arrived that showed that he was living-in or marrying other women at other ports. Of course, this hurts you as a woman who is his wife. I also learned from his cousins that he denied being married. That was not good to hear. I did not discuss with him what I had learned from others. Whenever I mentioned it, he denied the stories saying that they are just inventions of his companions to make me jealous. But I did not really believe him because I saw the letters. When I learn of his communicating with others when he had not yet written to me, I feel insulted.

He (Carlos) suspected that I had an illicit relationship because (Roming) was always around (at our baraka), without saying anything. But my relationship (with Roming) happened suddenly. We always relied on his help to carry heavy things that we could not handle. And whatever food they had, he shared with us. He also come along during our (INK) mission work. And he always stayed around our store. Then, we 'tripped' into something that was like a storm. Nothing was said, we were just following our mutual feelings. It was like being caught up in a typhoon. His parents told him to stay away from me as (Carlos's family) might kill him. But he told them that even if he got killed, he was decided on having me. Later, his parents gave up trying to convince him. You see, it was they who were looking after the farm of Papang (Condring). They were warned that if anything happened (between Roming and myself), this was to be taken from them; and so, it happened, and it was taken away from them. But even when something had developed between Roming and myself, they did not turn us away. In fact, Papa Condring offered to help us with anything that we needed. My husband did not know what had happened. However, they (his family) were are not ignorant nor blind not to realize that we had a relationship.

Virgo left Talangban when she became pregnant by Roming, seeking help from a former employer, Roming's elder sister (Lolit) in Quezon City as well as a maternal cousin and the pamilya of her own brothers at Kalibo. Despite a threatened abortion, she delivered the twins safely. One of the latter informally adopted the twins in view of unsettled matters at that time. Soon after, the matter of Virgo's separation from Carlos was concluded by Condring

and sealed when Carlos arrived. They signed an agreement which acknowledged Carlos's responsibility for his son by Virgo and hitherto guaranteed non-interference with each other's pangabuhì.

I had no choice but to sign the papers; after all, I had first gotten involved with someone else before I got separated from him, with the children as evidence. So i signed. What was left unsaid was that I had no more rights (on Carlos). Of course, this paper was a kind of proof if he remarried. He would show it to the woman so that she could be sure that she would not be troubled. Here is an agreement that says that there will be no trouble if he married (again). But the rights of our son are declared there. And, for example, if I ever got sick, he (Carlos) told me not to be embarrassed to ask for help because he would help. And he also supports (our son).²⁰

As pamilya, Condring helped both Roming and Virgo with their new life. Conscious of public comment and condemnation upon returning to Talangban, Virgo wanted their home built at a secluded place where they could be free from gossips and that they could hide. Roming raised some cash from the sale of his mother's fishing gear. However, Condring intervened, requiring that they should have an accessible house for him to continue to entrust Virgo with his businesses in the area. Condring provided the bamboo and roof shingles for the house that the couple built on Alba lands.²¹ He continues to provide Virgo with opportunities to sell with his fish/shrimp produce and entrust her with his local rice business since his home was at Kalibo. Virgo's panimaeay with Roming today includes her widowed mother Iska. Ironically, Virgo now regards Carlos as her brother and that they get along better than when they were husband and wife. Whenever Carlos had leave and came to Kalibo, Virgo responds to his request to see her. They talk

²⁰ For this reason Virgo is puzzled that when Carlos and his new spouse vacationed at Kalibo, the woman refused to meet her. She implies that, as far as she was concerned, that woman now had the poder in her relationship with Carlos and had nothing to fear from her.

²¹ Even then, Virgo mentions that she and Roming gradually spent more than ₱ 5,000 for materials and labor.

about their own child, and also Roming's and Virgo's children, "only the children," she emphasizes, three of whom are at Talangban.²²

In an economic sense, life for Virgo has been harder with Roming. Upon settling with Virgo back in Talangban, he (again) took up fishing, gradually diversifying his use of gears.²³ On the average, Roming gets about three or four caltex of mainly shrimp catch.²⁴ If they got more, then she sells selected catch in combination with her alsada ventures of other fish/shrimps at Kalibo or New Washington. After segregating what could be sold separately, Virgo mixes the smaller shrimps with the masi-masi.²⁵ On good fishing days, Virgo apportioned about a caltex of masi-masi as their suea and turns the rest to their suki. For six to ten kilos of shrimps, on the average, she gets ₱ 200 five days from delivery. Virgo started her snack food sale upon the advice and a ₱ 200 loan from her cousin in Kalibo.

Whenever he left the house, Roming consults me: 'Should I go to the river or not?' Of course, I tell him: 'It all depends on you because you are the one who makes the effort (fishing).' I leave matters regarding trabaho on the river to him. About fishing gears, he also makes decisions on these. Of course, since he does the work. I only sort of follow him up. For example, what he asks me to buy. We agree on it but it is really he who decides. If there are repairs to be done, I also help him sew the nets. But he could not force me to do this when I do not feel well. He also listens to me. He respects my decision. He could really do the work himself.

There are matters in which my decision is followed, and there are also instances in which his decision stands. It depends on your agreement

²² Carlos' and Virgo's son attends high school at Iloilo City. Virgo's brother and his wife had taken in the twins as their own, though one died.

²³ To date, he alternately uses a kitang, saeoran, and timing. See discussions in chapter 6 on fishing gears in section 6.1.1.

²⁴ The reference to a caltex actually refers to liter can of motor oil, commonly used as a measure for volume in these areas.

²⁵ Masi-masi is a collective term for any mixture of small fish and shrimps; in the market, it is usually called "trash fish." If there was about three kilos altogether (about 10 caltex) of masi-masi, she could sell a caltex at ₱ 2 - ₱ 5 each, depending on their look and size and the availability of other fish/shrimp products at Kalibo. Virgo adds that the price is better if there are lots of ibis-ibis which people eat (usually during summer); otherwise, the masi-masi is only good as animal feed.

on which matters. For example, in my fish/shrimp vending, if he allows me to go, then I will go; but if not, then I do not go. We cannot know what goes in the mind of my kaibahan, if I insisted on this matter which is not really very important.

Virgo also raises chickens and pigs and makes a distinction of their purposes: the chickens were for day-to-day konsumo; the pigs are a kind of "savings" for projected expenditures. Besides, she notes that whatever food is leftover would be wasted if there is no pig to eat it.

Virgo indicates that pangabuhian refers to what sustains life. Fishing is not necessarily for vending. It is also a source of suea for her pamilya, just as growing vegetables, root crops and fruits. She associates pangita with both subsistence and cash incomes from whatever kita Roming obtains from his gear on the river. "We can rely on his pangitan-an more than in my own negosyo." Even as she claims that her own kita contributes to their household needs, as a babaye, she acknowledges that the trabaho at home is her obligation because he does the pangita. Unlike her, a widow has to strive at making a pangabuhian because she is all alone. Further, it is the father who has the poder to make decisions for the pamilya; he is the head and is respected as such. In addition, she observes:

The traditional roles of fathers and mothers that I first learned is that it is the father who sought pangita and the mother stays sa sued it baeay. At present, things have changed; the woman has a right to also participate in activities sa liwan.

Nevertheless, she indicates some negotiated arrangements for the disposition of the proceeds of her spouse's catch. As well, she associates pangita with earning money even as she does not regard herself as producing much.

As soon as (Roming) comes home (from fishing), I immediately decide where I will sell (his catch). I let him know how much kita I get, but I handle the money myself. Of course, so that he knows how much I was able to make. I also give him an amount we agree upon. For instance, from one week's kita of ₱ 500, I give him ₱ 200 or ₱ 300.

My food sales (of pork barbecue and juices) could not be relied upon. It only clicks during summer. Right now, it is a lean season (July and August). Even the children in school have no money to buy. And if you try to sell, there is no one to buy. Furthermore, the people are scattered. Unlike during summer, when the people are all here at home taking their vacation. And every afternoon they are there at the basketball court, or they are gathered around it. When school is open, the food sales do not click at all.

If I could manage to [sell] without disturbing things, for example, if there is someone who could watch over the children, he agrees to my doing so. But if this is not possible, then he passes on his catch to another local seller. But if conditions are right, he has no objections to my business efforts. What he traps on his net and other catch on the river are really our pangitan-an. In my case, I am only able to make something sometimes if there are any harvests. He did not even like this (at first) because there was no one to mind the children. So I could not really say that I have a pangita of my own. Only that from the river.

In my pangabuhi, I want things to be fair. Whatever men do, I also do if I can. I do not excuse myself because I am a babaye. I fetch water when he is at the river. When he was around, he did it. He also cooks when he is here. I do not like having to depend on others. If possible, what I can do, I do. To my mind, even if you were a woman and you can do it, that is pangabuhi. I do not want to be idle. I do not want to have to wait for him. He does not also expect to have to tell me what to do. The same was also true with my first husband. In his family, everyone industriously did all the obra at home even if they could afford (hired help). That is their characteristic, probably because they had poor origins, and had been used to obra for themselves. I did not need to adjust even when we had money then and I still have the same attitude. I really want to trabaho. It does not mean to say that when you have lots of money you will just ask others.

However, Virgo qualifies that obra or trabaho is not only that which earns a salary but also the work on the river and housework which recurs daily and never ends. It is true that men's work outside is not everyday, but she says that women cannot (physically) undertake to do this [indi kaya]. Nevertheless, "all that we sweat for or spend our energies on is trabaho." Implicitly, Virgo also indicates some "work" required to maintain a relationship.

You are loved by your husband as a babaye. And of course, you have children. Your husband loves you because you have children. Because you are a woman, he treats you differently. He values your being a woman, he respects you. He looks after you even when you are working, he reminds you that it is not good for you to be overworked. In effect, you feel you are a woman by the way he treats you. Even if you can really do the work, he is careful over what might happen to you because you are a woman. And also, because you are a woman, you are really the one who takes care of things sa sued baeay. And men's and women's workstyle in the house is really different -- in how the house is arranged and how childcare is done. And decisions within the house are women's roles. If I can not manage them, I ask for his help. Of course, he also strives to find the solutions.

Of course, as husband and wife, we explain things to each other and come to an understanding whenever problems come our way. You have to look after his needs, the clothes he wears, and all that he needs in the house. He also looks after my food (eating). If I had to do something heavy, he would also do it for me. He also looks after my welfare. He gets angry with me when I neglect to eat; he prepares my food so that I could eat. If I could not wash his clothes, he does not get mad. He does not force me to do it because he knows that I am sometimes lazy when it comes to washing clothes. He has no cause to complain because things are always in order in the house. Physically, I cannot tackle the laundry, though I wish I could really do it. I do the household chores because I want to do them. This has nothing to do with whatever other people say.

Among household chores, (Roming) helps in fetching water and cutting up firewood. He also cooks when he is free from trabaho (fishing). He cooks if he is not doing anything important. But my mother does most of the cooking. Of course, I also cook. When I have time, I also do the laundry. If my mother was away, he also does it. He also watches over the children.

I am always busy with my trabaho so I seldom have time for myself. I do not even buy food for myself. Besides, I do not really eat that much; I am not fond of it. I always make work my priority. I want to finish it all first but everything does not seem to get done. I seem to overwork, abuse myself but I like working/doing things. I get exasperated when I am sick and I can not do anything and because I get to think of my discomforts.

We talk about pangabuhi, our unga, and our future. We also discuss our pangabuhi-an. He also makes plans about these matters but I am

the one who really leads. It is he who makes the effort, because it is he who does the pangita.

When someone has fever or is sick, (Roming) suggests that I bring (myself or other person) to a hilot or a doctor. When it comes to looking for money (to borrow for the visit), I make the decisions. He also helps towards the repayment, but it is I who really finds [ga-usoy] the ways and means to get money.

Virgo describes Roming as sexually aggressive and herself sexually passive. She prefers to show her affection in other ways, e.g., surprise him with gifts. When in the mood, Roming winks at her while eating; or, on the pretext that he was sleepy, he retires early into their room. Knowing these signals, Virgo keeps herself busy outside.

I am not pretending when I say, frankly speaking, that I am not like women who are really hot. I only have natural feelings, I just give in. It is not correct to say that I really want it. It does not matter that I am not satisfied so long as I have given in to him. Of course, it hurts when you are not in the mood; I just pretend to be in the mood. He could not really tell that I am not in the mood because when we do it I tell him to hurry up because the children might awake (we are sharing the room with the children). I want him to hurry, but he prefers many styles. This is understandable because he is younger. I do not want to do (his different styles) because we have to hurry so that the children would not catch us. Also, if it is too elaborate, I become uninterested in it.

Virgo shows a tendency for self-improvement though she has not applied what she trained for. She is interested in learning more of dressmaking skills that she started so that she can sew for her family's needs and others. Though a trained local health volunteer, she has been largely inactive, though assists Star's classes for pre-schoolers. She also joined one of the FSDP's gender-sensitivity session in 1992 and is curious about government programs which could assist women. Looking beyond Talangban, she wishes to visit her helpful cousin now in Samar and also other relatives in Manila where she could also transact some business with milkfish on the side. She aspires to own a small but orderly house, with living room furniture and a refrigerator. When

she plans to purchase something for the pamilya, she does so to surprise Roming.

Recently, Virgo and Roming joined the KMT. In theory, they are meant to learn the technical and practical aspects of this tilapia culture process. In practice, however, Virgo has not involved herself much with the production system. While Roming has not been consistent in fulfilling his assigned tasks, she occasionally assists in the periodic feeding. She acknowledges that her poor health and other activities hamper her participation and confesses that her real interest and propensity lies in the marketing of the produce. Despite lack of sleep and carrying heavy loads, she sold periodic harvests of the hybrid crop, considered a novelty in Kalibo. Once, at four o'clock in the morning, she got about 30 kilos of tilapia, valued by the group at ₱ 45 a kilo, and sold them for at least ₱ 50 per kilo. By two o'clock that afternoon, she was back with net earnings of at least ₱ 150; but she had not yet had any lunch.

5.2.2. *For the Sake of the Children*

5.2.2.1 Lerma (Lerma) Samonte Bello

Lerma is 33 and lives with her husband and four young children close to her parents. In the past three years she has been operating a baraka. For Lerma, one's pangabuhi-an are the different ways by which one gets suea for konsumo (e.g., from agricultural produce, raising a hog or chickens), including her husband's fishing activities. She acknowledges that Natan's fishing is not only a pangabuhi-an; it is also a pangitan-an since it earns money for them during favorable periods of each month.

Lerma concedes the obra that women do is part of pangabuhi-an; but she distinguishes between their obra within the panimaeay and obra that men do sa liwan. Anent Natan's work as a fishpond laborer, she explains that men's pangabuhi-an is difficult; it requires "heavy work outdoors because one is paid wages." She implies that her own obra at her baraka at home "does not involve wages because you are able to manage your own work." Lerma considers men to have poder because they are the padre de pamilya. They are

not only physically stronger but they also do the pangita for the pamilya. She admits that women also have some poder, but not as prominently as men do; there are those who are poderoso because they are strong and aggressive.

As a child, Lerma recalls that these various earnings were not enough for the suea of their family of (eventually) 12 siblings. During lean periods before the first rice crop harvest (June to August), their situation was difficult. The family's breakfast and dinner consisted only of hiligotmon and they were able to eat rice only with lunch. Her parents seem to be better off now that they have a more regular business with pawod.

Lerma left her family at Talangban at age 15 to live with her maternal uncle's family who supported her schooling in Cabanatuan in Nueva Ecija province. Interestingly, Lerma relates that when she decided to proceed to a secretarial course after high school, she decided on her own; after all, she was not within the poder of her parents, but her uncle at that time. She had suitors and boyfriends there, but decided to marry only when she met and fell in love with Natan soon after she returned to her parents at Talangban.

Lerma admits immediately accepting Natan as her boyfriend and that they were married within a week of his family's initiation of rites commonly-known as pamaeayi.²⁶ Then, Natan was a migrant salaried fishpond caretaker in nearby Pinamunitan, Lalab where they lived for about seven years.²⁷ He started fishing when he quit his job as caretaker and moved near Lerma's parents home at Talangban. He also found part-time work on fishponds nearby. Whenever Natan's catch is more than what they could immediately use, he transacts the excess fish/shrimps with Lerma's mother who disposes them with her other usual stocks. From occasional surpluses on good fishing days, he gets about ₱ 50. Natan also lends money as alili (loan arrangement

²⁶ An alternate Ilonggo term for the practice is kagon. In Aklanon, this formal marriage arrangements and negotiations between the couple's parents is also called paghati. In Filipino, this is known as pamanhikan.

²⁷ In 1983, Natan was receiving a monthly salary of ₱ 850; by 1990, his monthly compensation was ₱ 2,000.

for cash paid back in kind upon rice harvests).²⁸ Lerma explains that he started this only when mountainfolk from Balete approached him for their needs; he chooses who to lend to, but it is Lerma who goes after the collection.

On her part, Lerma occasionally gathers taeaba for konsumo and always tries to have a pig to raise at home. Lerma soon discarded the idea of having a garden because their area was too close to the river; besides, their homelot is not their own.²⁹ In 1990, Lerma got Natan to agree to her starting a baraka, aiming for the requirements of fishpond laborers who frequent the river; thus, her store sells mostly beer and cigarettes. She manages the baraka and its proceeds which support their requirements that needed to be purchased (coffee, milk, sugar, and bread for the children). She reserves some money for the children who go to school, pointing out that sometimes they do not attend if they did not get a peso from her. She acknowledges that her baraka sales produce an income that covers the cost of Natan's own consumption of beer and cigarettes. Their combined earnings have been sufficient to sustain their daily needs, including a few clothes. For purposes of her budgeting, Lerma has opened a savings account with the Rural Bank of Balete.

Lerma normally allocates Natan's income as a fishpond worker for a sack of rice for their monthly consumption. When Natan has no work and no fish/shrimp catch (and could then stay and watch the kids at home), she gets some money from her baraka sales to buy their suea for the week. There have been times when Lerma considered buying herself some clothes or panties; but she decides against this so that she has enough money for her children's clothes

²⁸ Specific arrangements for Natan's alili arrangement works this way: Every ₱ 130 that Natan lends is repaid with one sack (cavan) of paey; hence, ₱ 500 (3.85 of ₱ 130), for example, is equivalent to four sacks of palay. If not paid on time, the debtor 'voluntarily' pays interest of half a cavan for every sack due.

²⁹ They occupy the spot at the edge of the river which is part of Montes property, specifically the brother of Ruth's husband Toto who is also a nephew of Sela. They offered to buy, but were refused sale; regardless, they are allowed to stay without compensation.

and underwear for school, medical check up, and others. Anyway, she told herself, she still had some usable clothes. Both Lerma and Natan decide what to do on occasions when, in an emergency, they are in dire need of help from others. They seek credit from someone within easy reach and whom they know have available resources, i.e., her mother, though it is Natan who actually goes out of the house to see Eva for some small loan, e.g., some rice for immediate consumption.

Thus, Lerma appears to find contentment in a housebound role with a business on the side. She expresses having found greater autonomy and freedom from her parents now that she has her own pamilya, unlike when she was still single and often reprimanded. She also resents other types of interference evident in an incident when she went looking for Natan for something that she needed. He had gone out to drink tuba at a friend's house, and one of his companions commented that she had come after her husband because she could no longer control (her passion for him). Lerma countered that he should mind his own business, noting that he had no right whatsoever to interfere with matters privy to herself and Natan. Nevertheless, she regards Natan's good friend, the father of Ling's husband Garing, as a member of their pamilya since he advises Natan when the latter was confronted with problems with work on the fishponds.

Lerma and Natan have separate preferences for "leisure" or forms of recreation and make arrangements when this meant their leaving the household and the children. Lerma generally prefers to stay at home (and her store), listening to radio soap operas to pass the time while also enjoying her youngest child. Natan enjoys watching and betting at cockfights and even raises his own gamecock. The couple seldom attend Sunday mass at Minoro; neither do they celebrate religious holidays.

Most importantly for Lerma, being a woman means being a mother to one's unga and wife to one's spouse. "The wife should love and care for her husband so that he does not leave her; she should not be neglectful or quarrel

with him so that he worked hard and is inspired by his pamilya." As mother, a woman teaches her children how to keep themselves clean as well as the rudiments of housework. Budgetting and childcare matters are her most important concerns because, as Lerma says, these are her obligations as wife and mother of the household. She considers herself lucky to be Natan's wife because he is kind and responsible and also a good provider.³⁰ The fact that he is considerably older than her appears to be a stabilizing factor to their relationship. With him, she feels secure and without worries.

Even if Lerma has enough resources to do something that she wants to do, however, she does not dare do so without her husband's consent because this becomes the source of marital conflict which she wants to avoid. A good relationship between spouses for her means that both of them attend to the basic needs of the family, i.e., seeing to it that they had rice for their daily consumption. She admits that their different attitudes towards sex was sometimes a cause of some dissension between them. Natan becomes resentful when she does not give in to his "need". She avoids sex as much as possible since she fears getting pregnant again because of her difficulties in delivery. Nonetheless, she has always given in to him.

Lerma remarks that it is really the unga that men want.

If a wife could not bear a child, the husband finds a way to have a child 'outside.' Moreover, people are wont to say that the pangabuhi of a well-earning couple is useless if they are childless; they have no one on whom to spend their kita. But it really all depends on what they can agree upon; there are those who also adopt their nephews or nieces.

Apropos this, Lerma relates a common belief in a cause of amueopo (barrenness among women). A woman should not pick a ripe banana fruit while the bundle is not yet removed from the trunk; if she does, she will be unable to bear and give birth. If she does not become barren herself, this condition will be passed on to her daughters, though this may be corrected by

³⁰ Lerma alludes to the fact that Natan is an Ilonggo, and that the Ilonggos are reputed as "good" husband material.

a medico. Further, among widowed women, Lerma observes that there are those who do not wait for their children to mature before remarrying because they want a katimbang in making a pangabuh.

The most common comment people have for unmarried women is that when they grow old, there would be no one to take care of them. It is really different if you are married; you do not need to depend on your nephews and nieces or your siblings since you have your children. When you grow old, you would not have someone to wash your behind.

Men say, women became old maids because they are grouchy or that they are of strong and strict character such that no one approaches them. Hence, no man approached them. There are women who are very choosy with men; hence, they choose to remain unmarried. I was like this; I was very choosy with my suitors that I almost ended up being a eaon (an old maid), marrying late at age 24.

Lerma married because she wanted to; so that she may have someone to support and assist her. Moreover, she wanted to see "her products" [ro produkto]. The couple discussed plans about having children and proposed intervals; however, Lerma points out that Natan was already mature when they wed and wanted to have children immediately. In nine years, they now have four. Lerma always had difficulties in giving birth, with severe pains and requiring about a week's bedrest every time.³¹ Lerma relies on Mar, the midwife, for childbirth; but she has also called upon Star and another person to be her hilot. On these occasions, Natan takes care of her needs and the other children. He does the laundry, cleans and washes her and all other household chores. The only thing he balks at is cradling the infant; even then, he hesitatingly does so when it could not be avoided at times.

The work that preoccupies Lerma most is preparing and cooking food, over which her kaibahan Natan always has some comment which cause their

³¹ She had the greatest difficulty with the second child in 1987, when her labor lasted for more than a day and felt that she was dying. She refers to something unusual: there was a man just outside their house who was supposed to be fishing (from Anao, Aranas) but was watching out all the time that she was in labor. He even gave some bananas for her. She later learned that the man approached Natan that he wanted (the baby) in exchange for something and Natan refused.

petty spats. They jointly decide on the timing of the children's schooling, generally considering their age. It is Natan who mainly disciplines them all; Lerma concedes that when she does so, they usually do not listen to her.

My sons are mostly occupied with playing/fishing in the river; my daughters stay mainly in the house and help in the household work. As it is, my (elder) daughter is industrious and follows my instructions, e.g., on cleaning the house after school. The boys, however, are lazy.

Natan complains about the way she disciplines them, regarding her as too lenient. When Lerma intervenes when Natan whips their particularly naughty son out of pity for the child, Natan gets mad and gives her the silent treatment. She tells him that if he stayed at home, then he could discipline them himself; in return, he tells her, go ahead, and be the one to obra. She challenges him, saying that he would find out that things are more difficult at the panimaeay. She comments on his smoking and drinking, saying that the money was better spent to raise chickens or roosters or to buy medicines for the children. But Lerma admits that his drinking is not serious and he does not abuse or spend too much on this vice.

Further, Lerma says that "it would be a great joy to see (our children) graduate from their chosen course." But it would be up to them to decide what they want to do, even if they decide to go abroad, though this is still very far off in the future. However, Natan is already conditioning their sons to join the army (and hold guns) and their elder daughter to become a teacher. Lerma says she would also allow her children to choose their life partners.

No one could determine their fate for them. What is important is that their chosen partner be good enough for them, i.e., that they should be of good character. What is important is that my grandchildren should have a father because a family without a father would have great difficulties, unlike those whose fathers died because they know they recognize that they have a father. My future sons- and daughters-in-law should have finished schooling and already have a job so that they could also return the help given them by their parents.

Lerma expresses that she would like to learn how to sew dresses for her children. She also wishes that they had a strongly built house of their own so

that she need not fear its collapse as she does in their present dwelling during typhoons and floods. Most important among things that she would like to acquire is a refrigerator. She also wants to be able to go to Cabanatuan to visit her uncle's grave since she has often been dreaming of him lately.

5.2.2.2 Estrella (Star) Mendoza Ingalla

Star is presently 35 years old yet has lived quite a tumultuous life which she herself characterizes as that of "a loser who refuses to lose". Born in Lalab, Star spent much of her childhood with a maternal aunt at Talangban, away from her once relatively prosperous natal family. With some irony, Star relates that her father Dadoy earned well [*kita*] from dynamite fishing activities as well as rice farming. But he had vices which she calls his 'alternative livelihood' from card games and cockfights. Thus, unlike her own and other siblings' circumstances, Star observes that her paternal uncles were able to help their children finish school and improve their *pangabuhì*.

A maternal aunt raised Star at Talangban from the time she was three years old until she finished elementary education. Her aunt had no children of her own and wanted to adopt her but Dadoy had refused. Star continued with high school and had a chance for a college education when she returned to her parents at Lalab. However, she gave up her prospects for a degree in agriculture when she decided to elope with her boyfriend Berto, admittedly quite rashly. It was brought on by suspicions bruited about by her own relatives that she and Berto were not "behaving properly" and her action was a case of fulfilling a prophecy.

Berto's intentions were "honorable" and had fulfilled the traditional *pamaeayi*. Dadoy was not so happy with his daughter's choice and made excuses to delay their marriage. Star pre-empted this when she decided to live with Berto anyway.³² Both of her parents disapproved of Berto saying that he

³² The flimsy excuse her father gave to Berto's parents and kin who came was that they first needed to get the porch of their house fixed before the marriage could take place.

was lazy and a drunkard. On the other hand, his parents approved of her because they regarded her as belonging to a wealthy family. Eventually, Dadoy came to like Berto, especially when he had his grandchildren. Star spent the early years of her life with Berto with their respective families as well as with her maternal aunt. Star fondly mentions that her auntie, to this day, continues to provide her with some suea even when she already had her own pangabuhi.

Star describes Berto's occupation as fishing and hesitantly admits that he does not actually often do the work himself. Though with some difficulties in learning how to use their gear, Star has had a much greater participation in their fishing activity than she cares to openly acknowledge: she made the decision on which type of gear to construct and use, where to set it, and when to operate it. She also decides what portions of fish and shrimp produce are kept for their food, retailed to neighbors, or sold to any of her preferred buyers among the local fish traders, even if the task involved is actually carried out by Berto, their son or daughter. Apart from whatever catch, Star intermittently sells milkfish as alsada. In fact, she has accessed most other incomes and benefits for their household, beginning with the hospitalization benefits as a volunteer health worker and simple tokens shared by clients; more recently, her salary from FSDP, the allowance for day-care workers that she shares with Virgo, and commissions from her sale of beauty products. The couple have also operated a small fishpond from Star's mother's rights to an inheritance held commonly by the Lopez family.³³ There are also some small shares that she gets from the labor she puts in on a family rice farm at Lalab shared with her mother and elder brother, apart from a share from copra sales from produce of what remains of her father's estate.

³³ The practice of rotation of use is common when the inherited property is too small for meaningful distribution.

An ideal spouse for Star was one who looked after his pangabuhi, capable of providing necessities, and a model for his unga. By his title, a father has both gahum and poder because he is the padre de familia. However, she assesses Berto's approach to problem-solving is through aggression, when he is drunk; he does not speak up when he is sober. With capture fishing and fish vending in mind, Star explains that pangabuhi and pangita mean the same, since both refer to activities done outside of the home. As pangabuhi-an, one can get suea from fish/shrimp catch; it is pangitan-an if these items were sold and converted into cash. Often, however, the value of the household catch is only good for a day's konsumo.

Once, in 1982, Star left the drudgery of her life Talangban for a five-month vacation with an older sister in Metro Manila, taking off from her family duties. She only returned when she received a serious telegram from her aunt notifying her that their older daughter had been bitten by a rabid dog. Then, she describes her intermittent affair with Ruben for about three years as a manifestation of her search for someone who could help in a more substantial way; most people, she says, now see it that way too. Even with already four children, her family was still dependent on her auntie.

Ruben was a much older and gentler person than Berto, but they were also friends, drinking buddies as well as compadres or kumpares (spiritual kin as godfathers or co-sponsors). They had all known each other and their respective families in the community, but Star had come to know Ruben better during the long periods that they spent working on their respective gears on a remote part of the river towards Lalab. Star saw him as a very helpful person, assisting her not only in working the nets and the catch, but also supportive of her efforts to set up and maintain her day-care project. From shared confidences, they developed a physical relationship. Star was fearful that Berto should learn about their relationship; they might try kill each other, especially since both had guns.

We used to make love at our house, whenever the other one was not around and when the children were at school. Only the little one was there. I was also afraid (of being caught). So it happened, something happened between us because I got carried away by our feelings, and maybe I really wanted it. There was a time when Berto's (lovemaking) was like rape. When I made excuses, he would always find a way. He would hit me (with various objects) until I could not move. He was always demanding, almost everyday. I get tired. Ruben was different, because when I would let him know (that I did not want to have sex) he did not insist. Others judge him as sex maniac. I really do not know how many women he had before me as his mistress. He used to have (another) woman. I asked him about it. He told me that the woman was asking for it and had asked him to provide for her basic needs. He used to be in the buy-and-sell business of aquamarine products because they had a fishpond which he himself managed.

Star defends herself against Berto's reminders of her wrongdoing; she counters that he should consider himself lucky because he has (materially) benefitted from what she had "prostituted" herself to do, i.e., much of the food they ate and even the bamboo and some lumber used for the day-care center in which they also live were provided by Ruben. In the first place, she only did so because he did not have a pangita and was unable to regularly provide suea. Nor does he adequately exert effort to obtain what he can, even from just the resources of his own natal family. Besides, Star had enough of the beatings brought on by his sexual aggressiveness when he was (often) drunk.

I do not know how Berto knew about our relationship. He wanted to have sex, but I was not in the mood. I told him that I was tired. He forced me. But it is really different when you are not in the mood. He asked me: 'Why are you like a corpse?' In my mind, I suspected that he knew, but I just said, 'I'm tired.' Then he said to me, 'Maybe you have another man.' 'No,' I said. 'Tell me,' he said. Maybe he already knew about it and he was testing if I was going to admit it. I could not escape. He got a large knife. It was a good thing that I was able to take it away from him. I threw it outside. Out of fear, I admitted it. Then he really hurt me badly. With his fists and kicks. The following morning, I wanted to go out but he would not allow it. We were living at Macabago at this time; the fishpond was at Panas. The children were present that night when he was beating me, but they could not do anything. They did not also confront me. They knew (about my relationship with Ruben) because I had previously told them

that, as they knew, their father was irresponsible; that we had no food to eat. They also cried.

Despite going away twice and actually living with Ruben who also left his wife for a few months at a time, Star returned to Berto, with his promises to reform, for the sake of their unga. Her nagging concern was that if she really left him, she was sure that he could not support the children on his own. If she stayed, there was hope that he would change his bad habits. Besides, she believes that her children need their father. The first time Star left, Berto had come after her and their younger daughter whom she brought with her and pleaded for her return; the second time, Star made her decision on her own terms and volition. About a month after this, Ruben died; and painfully soon after, in 1988, two younger children of Star and Berto died in a swimming accident at the fishpond they had use of at that time. As a marker of their making a new life together, the couple formalized their consensual union of 17 years and got married at Batan in 1990. For a while, Berto's participation with the KMT at Star's instigation was positive sign of some effort to change. This signified yet another instance of Star's initiative to obtain some employment or other new involvements for their pangabuhi-an. However, he often lapsed in his group work obligations, forcing Star to give up their membership in fairness to other members. Berto is preoccupied with fishpond work since it is their turn to work on it this year; he forgets or is unable to keep his scheduled feeding day. Star also mentions that because he has enemies whom he fears might sneak up on him, he refuses the nightwatch assignment by the cages on the river.³⁴

In her (re)newed life with Berto, Star has had brushes of sexual harassment from her male in-laws. Once, one peeped in while she was taking a bath inside their house. In this case, she found a way to retaliate and scare him by relating the story to the man's wife, without revealing his identity,

³⁴ When I ended my field work, the couple had "officially" quit the group, though the group was still operating with Star as their link with FSDP.

when she knew that he was within hearing distance. Cleverly, she disclosed to her sister-in-law that she was thinking of selling her sex because there seemed to be parties interested, a ruse which got her message across. Another time, she was fondled by another relation; in this case, whenever that man came to their house, Star simply gets out for fear of what might happen. Though she did not personally make the connection, it appears that Star has been marked as a "loose" woman and prey for any man.

In a more public context, she has also been confronted about this affair. When the day-care center at Talangban which she had nurtured was certified by the DSWD, there were challenges to her fitness as the person to carry out the work and the office had actually decided to replace her. Her lover's widow apparently made a letter of complaint, prompted by another woman interested in the post. But the community, and especially Star's own relatives and the councilman for Talangban then, appealed on her behalf, arguing that as Christ even forgives us our sins, why could we not forgive Star's mistake. After a trial period, she was reinstated.

Despite all these, it appears that the couple have resolved their differences on their own and have established a modus vivendi, even if still rocky at times. Interestingly, the rumors of Berto's having had a child by another does not seem to bother Star. What is more notable for her was that because of the high blood pressure that he has developed, he does not drink as much as before. Further, one of Berto's young nephews has, of late, stayed at with them and shares with household tasks. Their present home with the day-care center by the road, however, is convenient for relatives, neighbors, and friends to drop in and out at anytime such that she feels a lack of privacy for her new family life. While Star finds solace in her socializing with close friends like Virgo, she faces the loss of significant employment in the near future which will further test the basis her new life with Berto till now. More practically, Star wishes to learn to make nata de coco (a processed food item based on coconut juice fermented by a mother liquor), a skill that may lead to

some kita as well as suea. However, Star admits her penchant for travel, and aspires to see places where she has not been before. Jocularly, the thing that she wishes most, she says, are shoes with wheels.

The fact that Star tends to overlook housework as work until probed stresses her orientation and experiences with activities beyond the household unlike most of the other subjects. But she concedes that obra or trabaho includes everything that one does, regardless of whether the activity has kita. Each one of the four of them now contribute to various tasks at home. But they have an arrangement for meals: whoever came home first towards lunch (usually Berto or either of the children) prepared and cooked food for all; usually, Star cooks dinner while Berto does breakfast. The children do the dishes and clean the house, though they often have to be reminded to do these.

Presently, Star clearly prioritizes her son over her husband (and other daughter). "There are other men," she says, "but your son is really your own. Even if I could still bear another child, I could not replace him if he died." Star had a hysterectomy due to an ovarian tumor in 1993. Star refers to other people's remarks on the advantage of having (many) unga because they are kabulig in one's pangabuhi-an. Implicating barren women, people also say that the pangabuhi of the men married to them are meaningless because they could not have their unga. Further, whatever she decides to do, she just informs Berto; no matter what he has to say, she does what she wants.

Both parents provide discipline, on the grounds that the children would not fear/respect the other if only one parent did so. What the children take up as a career, if any, does not appear to matter so much to Star, as long as she and Berto can afford the tuition. She herself has no particular priority for them; she wishes them to be frank about whether they are serious or not since it is difficult to find the means to support their studies. Their son who is graduating from high school wishes to take up nautical engineering. Star counters that he consider marine engineering instead which only requires two years and urges him to request for help from an aunt in Manila. He tends to

be neglectful of his studies, preferring to enjoy himself elsewhere; thus, Star presses him apply himself for a better pangabuhi than what they have now. Their daughter who is more diligent has expressed a wish to become a teacher.

On her prospective son/daughter-in-law, Star wishes them to responsible and trustworthy, not neglectful of work, and able to provide for food and schooling of his/her family and a good model of good behavior; hopefully, she adds, s/he is romantic not only in one sense. She frankly reminds her children not to follow her example.

5.2.3. *Going It Alone*

5.2.3.1 Ramona (Ramona) Montes David

The long widowed Ramona, now 63, was born in Magubahay but has many paternal relations in Talangban where she basically lives alone nowadays. For her, whatsoever the way one does pangita is one's pangabuhi. Presently, she maintains herself without what she regards as a "proper" pangita. She compares the inadequacy and irregularity of her kita from banana-based food sales with an employment situation where there is monthly compensation and some security of tenure. Nevertheless, she has had comparably more assets than the other subjects.

Ramona's mother Norma was widowed when she herself was only 10 years old; as the youngest child, Ramona produced pawod for her expenses at school and even went away to Manila where she worked as a househelper. She was back minding her mother's baraka at Talangban when her romance with Panong started early in the 1950s. In passing, Ramona notes that her mother did not yet want her to marry at this time, probably because Norma wanted her to be at home to take care of her needs in her old age. Regardless, Norma did stay with Ramona and Panong until she died in 1984.

Her practical bent was evident in that she asked her prospective in-laws not to spend so much for their wedding so that she and Panong could have the money instead to start a business. They gave her money for her wedding gown but she decided to keep the money for later. Anyway, Ramona

reasoned, her sister's gown was quite new since she had used it for her own wedding a year before. Upon their marriage, the couple lived for 10 years at Ramona's natal home in Sentro, setting up their own household ten years later where she still lives today. She started a baraka of her own upon marriage. It was from this negosyo that she obtained their pangabuhi at home; also, this was a source from which she and Panong drew expenses for the schooling of their six children and for operating the fishfarms that they had developed. All of them have gone beyond high school; her youngest (son) is now on an engineering course in Metro Manila.

Until the mid-1970s, apart from spear fishing for their konsumo, Panong worked on the largest parcel of their fishponds near Aksam with the help of their sons. With the older children, Ramona used their pumpboat to sell their produce at Hueaton, New Washington, or Kalibo. The couple also relied on the produce of rice farms of Ramona's maternal family at Magubahay as well as other farms they leased at Balete, selling some of their rice produce at the store. Whenever there was any special occasion within Talangban, her daughter Ling says that Ramona always seemed to be selling something, e.g., cigarettes, candies, home-made matches, and apog (lime made from crushed shells used when chewing betel leaves). Ramona acknowledges that working for long hours at the farm, under the heat of the sun despite the fact that she was pregnant, caused her three miscarriages; but she continued to do so because "there was just so much to be done." Ramona also mentions her husband's uncontrolled drinking and smoking as a usual cause of their disagreements. Interestingly, she mentions that Panong eventually died of a cancer of the liver. Star, however, relates that he died as a result of a fight while defending a brother-in-law.

Ramona believes that a person who has poder has the ability to manage his/her pangabuhi. Thus, parents have poder because they administer the family. When Panong died in 1980, Ramona and her older sons took over the management of their fishfarms; parcels were eventually sold and leased out for

their various expenses. Implicitly, however, she now heeds her eldest son's wishes. She still manages her maternal family's rice farm and occasionally sells snack foods from her home.³⁵ From her yard, she also sell "indian mango" fruits to children on their way to the primary school.

But Ramona has stopped selling fishpond produce in the past three years upon his and the other children's advice. They argued that if she continued to go out to sell, she was endangering her health, especially because of her advanced age; besides, there would be no one sa baeay. The little amount that she gets from selling cannot compensate the losses of their appliances (television, video machine, radio-cassette deck) should their house be robbed while she is out. When she had assigned portions of the ponds to a caretaker, her friends told her that he was stealing from their produce. Most parcels have been sold to support the children's schooling; but she receives an annual rental of ₱ 17,000 their remaining fishpond until 1994.

Ramona has been to Manila several times apart from her stint as househelp when she was younger: once, to look for her nephew (Linda's brother) and to get back money he owed her. She needed pay a ₱ 5,000 loan at the Rural Bank of Kalibo so that her residential lot would not be foreclosed. In 1990, Ramona also went with her elder daughter to attend a brother's funeral; again in 1992, to attend the wedding of her son. Only recently with her daughter Ling has Ramona been to Iloilo; in April 1992, they went to Leganes to see a famous local healer for Ramona's varicose veins. She also occasionally visits her other daughter and her family in Numancia, and her

³⁵ The family farm used to be farmed on a rotation basis among Ramona's siblings. By 1993, she considers the lot hers. She paid the amount of ₱ 2,500 to each of her siblings (except for an older sister who is assists her) for her taking over their use rights. Ramona mentions that while the farm was under another sibling's care, taxes for 1991-1993 were unpaid. Taking over the small farm, she paid for accumulated taxes and now largely supervises hired labor. She harvested six sacks of paay in September 1993; late in 1993 and early 1994, rains adversely affected her produce since seedlings planted around October and again in December were flooded.

siblings in Morales, Balete. She also frequently goes to Magubahay to attend to her rice farm.

On her children's married lives, Ramona avers that she gives them the freedom to choose their respective partners since they are the ones to lead their own pangabuhì. Only two sons remain unmarried and occasionally stay with her at Talangban; however, her married daughter Ling lives next door and they keep each other company most of the time. Ramona appears to live day-to-day, already having lived a full life.

5.2.3.2 Linda (Linda) Lopez Liao

Linda, now 46, was widowed in December 1993.³⁶ Her alsada business of fishery products is her pangitan-an and what she lives on, all the more important for the family since her husband's illness earlier in the year. Significantly, she mentions that they do not have a farm from which they could have rice for their consumption; nor do they have coconut trees to get copra to sell, or a fishing gear on which they could depend on so that they could obtain earnings to buy rice for daily consumption. If not for her diligent budgeting, Linda says that her pangitan-an from regular sales activity could not have supported even just the family's daily food needs.

Though Linda sees most women as having some form or other pangita in Talangban, she says that the 'father' and/or 'husband' has poder in the panimaeay. As eaki, he is physically stronger. With the recent circumstances within her own household, she reveals contradictions reflected in what she describes as men's and women's work.

(Men) can climb coconut trees and carry heavy loads. But fishing and farming are also done by women. Further, the obra at home and outside are the same, obra. Indeed, there are men who are reasonable and who also do housework; but there are some tasks that they do not do since these are really trabaho't baye.

³⁶ Incongruously, the more substantial interviews with Linda occurred soon after, when she was usually available at home. Previously, it was difficult to have opportune times.

Linda remarks on the difficult pangabuhi she had with her parents: "Even if there was plenty of catch, the price for them was also cheap." Things have not changed much for her as an adult: a week or so after every childbirth, she already went out to sell. She is motivated to do this because of the poor situation of their pangabuhi. Linda returned to Talangban after having virtually lived and worked at different places in Metro Manila since she was 12 years old. Her initial move to stay with relatives in Quezon City was precipitated by what her father considered to have been an unwanted admirer. Though her father later asked if she wanted to proceed to high school, Linda chose to find work as a househelper.

Linda met Dado while she was working as a waitress at a restaurant in Divisoria. At that time, Linda speaks of her co-workers and neighbors as her pamilya, characterized by their having shared suea with each other. When she married Dado in 1969 after his determined courtship, Linda was unaware that he had changed his name and that he was avoiding detection by a prior wife and child.³⁷ His first wife found them and started to disturb their life together. Moreover, there were other indications of Dado's unfaithfulness which she refused to confront. Her way of coping was to come home to Talangban. "At your own place, you can bear with the adversities of pangabuhi."

I find it hard to find the courage to become a fighter. I am not a strong-willed person. There was a time when my companion was misbehaving when we were still in Manila. Some people advised me to follow him and catch him in the act. However, I could not make myself do it. I was afraid. I just felt jealous. But I was afraid to make a scandal. I am not used to scandals. I just stayed at home. Besides I am not the type to fight with my husband. When we do fight, I could not speak. When he was talking to me, my lips would become lopsided. Lately, I have learned to answer back. Unlike before, when I just had two children, I would just cry. But I became more courageous when I already had many children.

³⁷ Legally, therefore, all seven of Dado's children by Linda are illegitimate.

We do not observe family planning; we just do it, and if I get pregnant, that's it. Even if I try to refuse when he initiates, you sometimes get caught (in timing). I do not initiate. It is always he who does. Whether he initiates or not, it is up to him when I am tired. Even when I am tired, I allow him (sex) or else he might think that I am reserving myself for someone else.

Dado convinced Linda that they should stay together in Manila where he continued with his buy-and-sell business of vegetables at the bustling Divisoria market. Linda stayed with Dado for two to five months at a time while she gradually developed her own negosyo at Talangban. In 1984, Linda decided to settle more permanently; she made all decisions towards establishing their new home that took about a year to complete on her maternal grandparent's lot. Though a stranger to the place, Dado joined her and their children two years later and contributed to their pangita by learning to fish with a gear that they bought from Linda's younger brother. When Dado was weakened by his illness, he attended to raising their chickens and pigs.³⁸ Linda sold their gear and used the money for Dado's medical consultations. He had a blockage in his heart which caused severe chest pains; however, he refused to take medication, leaving it all to God. Hence, Linda became the sole provider for their panimaeay. Nevertheless, when Dado was alive, Linda never attempted to do anything new without his knowledge, for fear of being suspected of "misbehavior."

My late husband did not ask me how much kita I made (from selling). What was important for him was that I brought food, and he did not ask about money that I kept. Even when we were still in Manila, he just gave me money and never asked me how was left. When he gave me money, it was not the whole amount (of his earnings). He kept some amount for his daily consumption of drinks and cigarettes. He could not stop his smoking habit.

Though I was the one who sought the pangita, I never blamed him for not being able to trabaho. I am not like other women who look for

³⁸ Dado's death occurred as a result of falling off a coconut tree that he was climbing to obtain fruits that he was to grind as feed for their pig. They had two pigs at that time, one of which just had piglets.

(other men). Even if your husband has no trabaho, it does not follow that you can do whatever you want (because you are the one who does the pangita.)

On her solo venture, Linda is usually out of the house very early in the morning to pick up her fish/shrimp stock and travel to Kalibo, Libacao, and other markets to sell what she had contracted for that day. When there are fishpond harvests, she is up at around 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. No matter what the weather conditions are, to compete with other alsada traders, she goes into the water and meets the nets, sometimes even gropes into the mud to capture the milkfish or shrimps herself. When Dado was still fishing, Linda also helped him sort the fish/shrimps for sale and their own use, ignoring the pain when her fingers get pricked. After a quick breakfast and change of clothes, she takes the jeepney's first trip. Upon her return, she has a late lunch and rests for a while. Late in the afternoon, she goes around Talangban to arrange (with fishpond owners and operators as well as with fishers) for products to sell again the next morning.

When I return home from Libacao and I bring some meat for our suea, my kaibahan washes and prepares our food. He does nothing complicated; he only boils this to make soup and puts in some vegetables. The same thing is true when I bring fish. I just leave it to him to take charge of the cooking. Then I leave the house to get some fish in the fishpond for sale in the market the following day. Before, he used to fetch me from Nay Aure's fishpond to help me carry the baskets of fish. However, now that he has a heart failure, I just carry the 25-kilo basket of fish on my head. I pity him because he suffers (once in a while) with difficulty in breathing. I don't care about what people say about us -- about my husband who just stays at home while I do the working.

You seldom saw my late husband angry. But he really was too much when he was angry. Whenever I come home late in the afternoon from the market (because I could not immediately get a ride), he gets angry with me. He says that I seem to feel free to come and go as I pleased. "Yes," I answer, "because you have your own jeepney." I also get mad. I tell him that he should buy me my own vehicle so that I could be home immediately. "Yes," I say, "I just just distribute my stock for free." I already have a hard time shouting at people so that they buy

from me, and then he gets mad at me. He sulks; then he did not eat. He did not eat with us. He ate alone.

If Linda does not sell for more than two days in succession, they have scarcely any food nor expenses for those in school, especially those children who board in Kalibo. When obtaining bangeos from fishpond harvests, she sets aside two pieces for their day's konsumo as supplement their usual hiligutmon. She makes an average of ₱ 150 a day from her business, and usually buys a ganta and a half of rice, ₱ 20 worth of fish or ₱ 20 worth of meat; sometimes, she adds ₱ 3 worth of vegetables. She also spends about ₱ 20 for fare, and some amount for her lunch/snacks while selling. To save on fares, her children in school meet her at the jeepney stop or at the market for their needs. When pressed at times, Linda goes to a kumpane for assistance; if needed, she borrows with interest or sells/pawns her pigs. But she expresses an embarrassment for having to ask others to help her fulfill her and her family's needs. Despite these hardships, Linda takes pride that three of her daughters have completed their courses and that two have already found jobs at Metro Manila.

In Talangban, I observe that many baye have pangita. The eaki just hang around or stay at home. There are also men who do some household chores. However, what they do at home is not as complete nor nitty-gritty as compared with that done by women. The women still do most of the work like washing dishes after meals, cleaning the house and others. In my case, for example, I usually go out early in the morning, and some dishes are left unwashed by the children who go to school. My husband would take over washing the dishes. When I arrive at noontime, I also do the dishwashing after eating our lunch. In the evening, I do the cooking for our dinner. In our house, there is no definite assignment or schedule as to who should do this task. As long as anybody is available he or she will do the work. However, as a woman, I really do most of the work specially in the kitchen. I take care of these things myself. Early in the morning, I wake up early to cook rice; if I don't do this, my school children would be late. I only go out when I have already cooked the rice.

Once, one of their sons needed attention for a dog bite. He had 14 anti-rabies injections with Mar at the health center; but he needed a booster

shot that cost ₱ 3,000 at in Kalibo, or else the earlier shots would be ineffective. Linda tried to get local assistance, asking Tay Coret who could provide only ₱ 1,000. So she advised Dado to bring their son to Manila and get help from her siblings there. When they were leaving, Coret tried to give her the money though he was angry that they intended to go to Manila; Linda refused to take his money. In Manila, Dado's mother brought them to the Philippine General Hospital. She requested that a sample of the injections previously taken by her grandson was examined; the ampule was expired. Luckily, he survived.

Apart from health concerns for her children and husband, Linda herself has been hospitalized three times: about 10 years ago, when she fell from an overloaded mini-bus on which she was standing while on her way to Kalibo while pregnant with her sixth child; when she fell ill at the Banga market while waiting for her ride home to Talangban (she was later found anemic and needing corrective eyeglasses); and, when she had her third child while in Manila. At another time, however, Linda declined to be brought to the hospital when she had high fever and chills at home (she suspects it was typhus). She is grateful to her neighbors and friends, attributing their helpfulness to the fact that they had a good regard for her, since she is a person who minded her own business. They massaged her with alcohol, someone bought medicine for her, and someone called for the jeepney to take her to Kalibo. She refused, fearing of the costs that such measures entailed which she could ill afford.

More recently as a widow, Linda braved the tacaba-covered riverbanks and crossed towards Pinamunitan, Lalab before dawn to be in time for what was supposedly a tilapia harvest; she and her companions were misinformed since the harvest was of prawns which were too expensive for her to sell. However, she consoles herself by observing that she obtained and sold a lot of shrimp stocks on New Year's eve; hence, her pamilya had some kind of media noche.

With Dado's death, Linda asked her then unemployed son who had joined his sisters in Manila to stay with her, so that she and his younger siblings have an adult male companion at home. Linda's cousin (Ramona's son) assures her that he will also try to get him a job where he works at Kaliho. Thus, Linda continues with her buy-and-sell business of fishery products. Meanwhile, she wishes to learn how to go about retailing textiles on installment basis, even if this meant going to Antique where a brother now lives. Having had exposure to places beyond Talangban, Linda wishes to learn more about other lifestyles to draw lessons from them. Having a television set will also provide her entertainment.

Linda strives to support her children's continued schooling since, without material wealth, education is the only wealth that she could give them. Linda wants all her children to finish college so that when they graduate, they could find a trabaho and thus could alleviate their suffering. Her second child wanted to take up nursing, but Linda raised her objections, explaining that she could not afford the costs. She suggested education; eventually, her daughter chose commerce.³⁹ Though Linda does not insist, she hopes that the older children could help her with the younger ones. "If they send me some money, well and good; if not, it is still all right, so that they could buy what they want that I cannot buy for them here." She wishes that they be able to avoid her own experiences, to choose well when they marry, not to follow her example of having to carry a basket on her head until late in life.

5.2.4. *Forging a Partnership?*

5.2.4.1 Ruth (Ruth) Isidro Montes

Ruth is 29 years old and with a relatively comfortable home life situation. Essentially, Ruth says that both pangabuhi-an and pangitan-an mean the same, since both refer to sources for household expenditures. She specifies

³⁹ She is now a salesperson at Shoemart, a nation-wide chain of department stores, in Metro Manila.

that pangitan-an generates the money for these expenses as well as the allowance for the unga in school. Whatever goes over is kept as savings or used to buy household equipment. Ruth concedes that whether or not there is kita from any activity, it is still trabaho. This work includes chores sa sued baeay and those related to fishing on the river. Fishing, as trabaho't eaki, is difficult; nevertheless, there is also so much of trabaho't baye. Besides household and childcare tasks, women help the men by mending nets, classifying the catch, and selling them; men's work, in fact, only concentrates on fishing.

Toto's prolonged wooing of Ruth was aided by his friendship with her brother who was among his barkada. When Ruth wanted to break off from an commitment she made but reconsidered as premature, Toto asked her uncles to intercede for him.⁴⁰ Yet Toto had always impressed her by directly verbalized his love for her; her other suitors expressed their sentiments through letters. Moreover, he had courage and persistence.

I got married so that I would have help with problems, someone I could consult, someone who would wash your clothes, so that I would have help. I wanted to get married so that I could I could see my 'project' (i.e., to have children). Children are necessary in life. When you have children, they are there to greet you when you come home. It is sad not to have any unga of your own. For example, it would be nice to earn a lot, but it would be of no use if you have no unga to spend the money on.

It was Toto's widowed mother who came to the Isidro household for the pamaeayi. She did not want Toto to spend a lot for their wedding feast; what was important to her was that they were married. Hence, their preparations were kept simple and frugal. The pig that the Montes's intended for their wedding celebration was given to them to raise instead. In addition, they also received a fishing gear from her father as their pangabuhi-an. Now,

⁴⁰ Because of Ruth's continued rejection, Toto transferred school to Batan and left to find work in Manila, vowing that if she was still single when he returned, he would court her again.

Ruth speaks of the 13 years that they have made a pangabuhi together, along with (thus far) six children.

When I married Toto, there was a real change in my situation. It was really different from when I was still a single girl. For example, it did not really matter if I did not clean up (before) because my mother was there. However, when I married, I could not leave all these for my husband to do. He would already be tired from pangita, and then, you leave the fixing up of the house -- the washing up for him to do! You would only get into arguments about this. You have to attend to the needs of your husband so that when he comes home (from wherever) he would find (things) ready for him.

More fortunate than others, Ruth and Toto have access to land, for their homelot as well as a commonly-held fishfarm of Toto's family. In 1981, they built a bamboo and nipa house on Montes' land next to his parents' house. They intended to build more permanently further away in Punta, closer to the end of the road leading to the river; they gradually started building the walls with concrete hollow-blocks. But typhoon "Undang" had destroyed the house which they occupier which had to be repaired immediately. Hence, they put off finishing their concrete house for a while and maintain what they have for now.

Early in their marriage, Ruth used to sell about 20 kilos of shrimps from their catch to a buy-and-sell station in Kalibo. When she started to have children, she stresses that her helping out (e.g., sorting the fish catch) was her own idea. For five years, the couple had an arrangement with a suki from Cabugao and acted as wholesale shrimp/crab/prawn dealer in Talangban, with Toto making regular deliveries. But after typhoon Undang, the river conditions slowed down their business. Moreover, they lost their capital they invested on Toto's family's fishpond. Hence, Toto left for a construction job in Manila for some time.

More recently, Toto contracted a credit arrangement for concrete hollow blocks and other building materials with CMPCI against deliveries of shrimp and prawn catch. Ruth personally saw to these deliveries since they

once lost a container mistakenly unloaded by the jeepney conductor at Banga with cargo of other negosyantes. Though Ruth no longer actively sells, her mother included whatever catch Toto got if the catch was not of the "first class" type preferred by CMPCI. They have since repaid their obligations.

Ruth claims to help and contribute, and is thus a partner, to the kita which she perceives to be held by Toto and herself jointly. "I consider the kita of Toto as ours because I also assist him. I mend fishing nets and I also let down the nets in the river to catch fish. If there is someone left with the children, both of us go on the boat. He attends to the saeoran, I do the selling." Being pregnant has not stopped her from outside activities. In fact, a few days before she expected to give birth, she fell into the river from their boat while helping Toto fix the nets on their gear. Luckily, she and the baby did not appear to have suffered from this.

Ruth handles the family finances and has an account in her own name at the Philippine National Bank at Kalibo. She sees to it that they are first able to pay their suki; only if she made some profit does she allocate for various needs of the household. When the shrimp catch is good, she sets aside a caltex for their konsumo for a day or two. She reserves some amount for emergencies, highlighting the inconstant character of the fisheries. She saves about one-fourth of the kita from sales for the duration when there is no good fishing. However, even when there is some extra money, she does not feel free to decide on priorities, largely inhibited by a fear of being scolded.

It is hard to decide on things even if you have money. If you bought something without letting him know, somehow you feel guilty about it. He knows that you have the money, and he has plans for that money that you keep. Instead, for example, I bought a karaoke, that is why I do not (decide). If it were up to me, I do not decide on my own. Toto should know. I fear being reprimanded. I will be blamed for having decided on something without informing him. But, of course, it is okay if you know that what you are doing is for a good cause. But if something goes wrong, you will be blamed because you did not ask, when you decided on something without notice. There was an instance when I used (a piece of wood) he needed for his boat; there was no

firewood and I chopped it with an axe. He scolded me. It was just lying around. He said, "You should have asked me if I needed it or not; but you just chopped and used it."

Connecting poder and the division of work, Ruth states:

Fishing is Toto's responsibility while mine pertain to the work at home, taking care of the children and the housework. But if I have some free time and if I could (physically) do so, I also help him in his work. That is why he brings over the nets so that I could mend (sew) them here, so that I do not need to leave the children behind (if I had to go to the river). If he is also available, he also helps me wash our clothes. Speaking of the pamilya or panimaeay, the husband really has the poder. In my opinion, both should have (equal poder); as a wife, you should learn what are supposed to do. Whenever there are matters to be done, you need to consult your spouse; each should consult the other. You should ask if he agrees that this is the way to do something. If you decide alone and things do not turn out fine, you might be blamed. It is best to check with each other. You should let each other know about your plans. You let him know (what you intend to do) and ask if he agrees with you. And if it was okay with him, then it would be all right for you. But there are times when you could not do anything any more because by the time he asks you, he has actually decided on it. So how can you say no?

I am not bragging or something when I say that we do not lack for anything among our necessities so that I need not do wage work on the farms. There is enough kita even if I did not engage in this work on the farm. Thus, I just attend to the children. He says, "Just look after the children and I will find the ways and means." But if misfortune comes and the man could not work any longer, or if he got sick, that will probably be when I will find obra. But we do not wish this.

Ruth stresses that it is the eaki who went out at night for the pangita which is sold by the baye. When the eaki are left at home during the day to look after the children, they also sleep. Hence, men could not really be trusted to look after the children. She considers herself fortunate that Toto's mother stays with them and helps out with the children. Ruth's concerns as woman focus on the care for the children and managing the panimaeay, both of which she sees as women's obligations. Hence, one thing that she wishes to learn is to cook different things, like spaghetti. Further, she takes on the work sa

sueod baeay as a matter of course considering the trabaho that Toto does outside.

Whatever Toto does (or does not do) at home also critically matters to Ruth.

The asawa shows his love and caring for his kaibahan by giving priority to his responsibilities within the house. There are husbands who, even when there is no food for his family, they have money for gambling, drink, and cigarettes. If I happen to be the wife of such a person, I will pour insecticide into his ears. He cannot provide food of his family but has money to gamble!

You love and care for your husband so that he will not leave you. In most cases, the husband feels offended when he does not get what he asks for (sex). I am just kidding. It depends on the husband. There are really aggressive husbands. If that is the basis of being together, it is selfish. As a woman, you are already tired (of the housework, childcare, etc.), while the man has only one thing to do (fishing). When he arrives and is in the mood for making love, he sulks if you refused. He considers it unreasonable. But there are also husbands who help their wives with the household chores during their free time. Because of this, their wives do not say no to their wishes.

There are times when your husband wants to have sex, and, that even if you do not want it, you cannot avoid it. You just have to give in to them so that there are no arguments. Of course, it is your duty. After all, you accepted him as a husband, so you are supposed to be ready to accept this (situation), though not all the time. There are husbands who have more consideration; they do not insist if the wife does not want to do it. They want to see to it that you are also in the mood and that you are feeling well. Of course, if you are not really tired, you have to cooperate or else you get into a fight. And even when you are not really in good physical condition and in the right mood, just give in. There are husbands who are very aggressive especially when drunk. Regarding my husband, I am happy to say without bragging that even when he just drinks a bit, he just goes to sleep. He has always been like this. However, when he feels like doing it and I am not in the mood, he respect my wishes when I refuse. It seems that I can not do it right (and control myself) when I am not in condition, when I submit to his insistence. As the woman, you are the one who suffers.

Sometimes I sulk at Toto over his neglect to fetch water from the well. But only for a few minutes. When he comes back after fetching water and I do not respond when he talks to me, the misunderstanding becomes worst. So it is better for me to respond. Besides, I am not

that kind of person who is fond of arguing loudly with my husband. Truly, I am really embarrassed if my husband raised his voice to me. Even with a few words, I cry. My tears also fall when he utters obscene or curse words while talking to me. But he explains some things to make me understand why it is not necessary for me to sulk. When we do have a little fight, you could not really tell since you hear no words. I really am ashamed to have someone raise his voice at me in an argument. I just cry and you could see my wrinkled eyes; but I am angry.

However, Ruth also implies that there are situations where there "just cause" for troubles originates from the woman.

A woman should exercise restraint over what she does to her husband. He might say that you were trying to put him under your control. For instance, when he has finished a long day's work to earn he drinks a little tuba and you nag him in front of his buddies; he might hit you right there.

Toto participates (actually leads since he was elected as the president of the group) in the tilapia cage culture effort of KMT. Until joining recently, Ruth herself had never joined any group processes. While she has been very active and responsible for recording, feeding, and monitoring their stock and sales, she has not participated in the selling aspect of their enterprise.⁴¹ Apart from this, Ruth has never attended any community meeting and remarks that only her husband is interested in these matters and attends most of them. She however attends to meetings called for by the primary school where as all parents (though usually mothers come) are automatically members of the PTA. The usual agenda pertains to contributions for repairs and maintenance of the roof, classroom, school fence, etc. She has spoken up at these meetings, making suggestions and when in disagreement with some suggestions from other parents.

In future, Ruth prefers that her children marry someone from within Talangban. In this way, they would not be living afar, in which case it might

⁴¹ All in all, they must be doing well; when I finished my field work, Ruth asked if I really wanted to bring back my portable gas stove as she was interested in obtaining it on reasonable terms. We agreed on some cash and a lot of tilapia on a staggered basis.

take years before they saw each other. She would like her prospective son-in-law to be a responsible person, i.e., one who is capable of running a good pangabuhi. Her prospective daughter-in-law should be someone who can be relied upon for taking care of things sa sued baeay; she should also know how to help her asawa.

5.2.4.2 Delilah (Ling) David Junsay

Among the subjects, Ling is the youngest (at 25) and has had a relative advantage of secretarial training after high school. But she gave up her employment in sales when she married Garing with whom she now has two young sons. At that time, he was a local photographer at Talangban before being recruited as a security guard by his father's employer. Since 1988, Garing has undertaken the work on his father's leased land where his own natal family lives nearby; and with his father, he also occasionally works as a fishpond laborer.

Yet Ling ascribes Garing's fishing as their household's pangitan-an, as an example of an activity that earns money for everyday needs, including suea. She admits that Garing's catch was never very substantial and used mainly for konsumo. When probed on the significance of the chickens that she raised, Ling admits that one could pangabuhi without pangita. She facetiously argues, however, that having the chickens is not enough; one needed more things to cook it with for which one needed money. One does pangita in order to pangabuhi. She recalls that her mother's (Ramona's) vending activities as significant because it was the pangabuhi-an of their pamilya.

Ling professes no misgivings for having been born a babaye; had she been a eaki, she would have to do a lot of heavy work (e.g., fishing on the river). Admitting that some women do heavy work (e.g., operate fishing gears or fetch water in large containers), she is unsure if a woman can do fishing alone; she does not believe that she can do so herself. Because she is a woman, Ling stays home and implies that housework is easier compared with what the men have to do for pangita. Regardless, she admits that the idea of

trabaho includes housework as well as work with pay since work is anything that a person does.

Yet being a woman meant that Ling was subject to some hazards before she wed. These incidents were incentive to her agreeing to marry Garing earlier than she planned, believing that he could protect her from a third instance.

I was in my first year in college when my addicted neighbor attempted to rape me. My mother had asked me to buy dayok at the store since we had no suea. It was early evening and dark on the road; I was already returning home when he suddenly grabbed me. He had a small knife pointed at my side. He drew me under the mango tree. It was a good thing that I did not lose my senses. When he was about to take off his pants, I hit him and quickly ran away. When he fell, I ran hard, calling out for help. He continued to pursue me until I reached our front yard. It was a good thing that he was not able to reach me. I was really trembling with fear. A second instance was when I was at my sister's house. I was at my first year in college and I was living with them. I caught my brother-in-law peeping in on me twice. The first was when I was taking a bath in the bathroom; he was tiptoeing around. And whenever I was changing my clothes (when I arrived from school) and he was below (my room); one could see from there since my sister's house was only made of bamboo. I told my sister about it, but she would not believe me since her husband would not admit it. I would not have mentioned this to her, but it was my brother-in-law who asked my sister why I was not speaking to him. I was not speaking to him precisely because I was mad at what he was doing. Even my brother caught him peeping; he watched our brother-in-law since I had told him about the incidents.

Even then, it was not all smooth-sailing, and both Ling and Garing made certain compromises. While Garing gave up his wish to join the army, Ling has voluntarily given up, at least for the moment, involvements in paid work. So has she given in to his wish that she give up her chances of going back to school.

When (Garing) graduated from college, his cousin wanted him to join the army. His cousin was a sergeant in charge of recruitment and training. Garing was interested. I told him: "Garing, I am afraid because being in the army means being assigned to different places. If you wanted to join, it would be better that we will end our relationship.

It scares me. You may come home dead, a cadaver; I do not want that to happen. So if that's you want we will go our separate ways. I will not allow you to do this. It is better that we break up." In return, he argued: "If I was in the army when we married, then I would have a job." I responded: "It does not matter how poor we are as long as I do not always have nervous tensions. I am even scared whenever I hear an explosion. I get nervous. How much more if we were married and you were away somewhere in the mountains? I will probably become thin thinking about your situation in the camp. If this is going to be the case, I do not like it and I do not want you." His father really wanted him to join the army. So he had to choose whose wishes he would follow. He said, "I will follow your wishes," and he did. He did not push through with that even when his papers were already prepared for the army.

My father-in-law felt bad that Garing decided not to join the army, but he did not know that I was the reason that Garing did not go ahead. When he was drunk, he scolded Garing; he lay the blame on him saying "your pamilya will not suffer as they do if you had that job." Later, when Garing and I were already married, I explained things to my father-in-law. I told him "Tay, I had Garing choose between staying with me or leaving (for the army); he chose to follow me, rather than (your wishes). So I ask for your pardon." Further, I said, "Even if we endured (sufferings) in our life together, it did not matter so long as I had no fears. But in that case," I said, "I would be afraid for him all the time. How it would be when I would become sick of worrying and nervousness even when he provided money for me. Of what use would this be?" In the end, his father came to understand us and he even helps us in our pangabuhì. But at first, he really felt bad.

He (Garing) does not allow me to trabaho so that there is someone to look after the kids. He says: 'If you work in the farm what will happen to the unga. Even when we did not yet have unga, he did not allow me to work. But sometimes I just try to ignore (what he said); when we have no suea, I leave the house without his knowledge and go to the river to catch fish or gather taeaba. One time I asked him why he did not want me to work or to go to the river. He replied: 'Anything can happen to you there; it is muddy out and there are plenty of shells.' He also said that I always find some excuse when he asked me to do something. When he says, 'Cook the rice, Ling,' I complain of aching cuts on my feet. That is what he does not like. He pointed out that I have no problem with food since we have paeay; I should just have it milled and eat. I said, 'This is true but what do we have for suea?' He answered: 'What about the money that you have. Of what use is the money if you kept it and just ate rice?'

I did not get a job because Garing would not permit me to do so. I wanted to work but he would not agree. Like in the case of the CMPCI branch office at Batan; they wanted to hire me to work there. But I followed what he wanted. What could I really do since our kids are still very small; when they are older, I also want to work. I really want to have a job of my own.

When my eldest brother was about to leave for a job on a ship, he asked me: "Ling, do you want to go to school (again)?" But when he said this, I was already married. Garing would not permit me, and within the year I was already pregnant. He said: "Don't go to school anymore, Ling." His father also wanted to support my going to school and wished me to become a teacher. But Garing would still not allow me, so I did not insist. He argued: "Who will take care of the children? Will you just leave them alone here?" I answered: "How about you?" And he said, "Oh, Ling, if you depend on me for this, don't. If you go to school, you should bring the kids along." And I said, "How can I concentrate in school if our kids are with me?" My father-in-law told me: "Garing is a very jealous guy." He asked Garing: "Why do you not allow your wife to go to school, are you afraid that she will leave you?" He said, "It is not that, Tay, but who will take care of the children?" His father added: "What kind of pangabuhi would you have if Ling is just sa sueod baeay and taking care of the animals (chickens and pigs)?" Garing answered, "That is the way it is. We will manage our hardships."

The Junsays did not spend most of their first month as a married couple together. Garing returned to his job at Boracay while Ling remained with her mother at Talangban. But they soon moved to a place near the town center of Balete where they stayed for almost two years. They accepted an offer of the use of an unoccupied house free of rental from Garing's employer and their wedding sponsor. They put up a baraka while Garing also worked as caretaker at fishponds. Ling's mother Ramona mentions that she had suggested to Garing's father that they each give the couple ₱ 3,000 as wedding gift; it was this amount that the couple used as capital. Their moving back into Talangban was primarily according to Ling's wish. Garing wanted them to build their house close to his own parents' place in Aranas; but he gave in to her preference of Talangban so that they could be close to her mother Ramona who was living alone most of the time. Mysterious illnesses which struck both

Garing and Ling and their first son led them to return to Talangban from Balete. Ling attributes these, as does her mother, to the location of their house, as on the path of underworld spirits right next to a cemetery.

It was both our decision to reside in Balete. It was also both our decision to return to Talangban. But I was the one who really convinced him to come back here. I told him that we would have no savings if we stayed there; we had spent all our money, including that from our sales from the baraka. True, we were making good kita but the house where we were staying was inhabited (by evil spirits).

From their experiences at Balete, Ling stresses her belief in the existence of spirits and her respect for their powers. Hence, she relates that when they started to construct their house at Talangban, she followed what the old people used to do: she offered paay for the earth spirits [taglugar]. She comments that most of the new households do not follow these procedures, but even some rich folks believe in this too.

For a few months when they were back at Talangban, Ling sold Garing's fish catch at Kalibo. But she was soon pregnant with their second son, and Garing decided that she stop doing so since she had problems with pregnancy. For about six months, she could not eat anything except fresh bananas of the particular variety, and thus, became very thin because of this peculiar type of infanticipating; if she ate anything else, she got a stomach ache.⁴² Besides, Garing's catch was never very substantial and used mainly for konsumo. Garing does not stay long with the laborious work when the catch level is low and quits when he gets about a kilo. Even with three kilos, it was not worth selling outside. So instead, Garing sells his catch to local negosyantes or Ling delivered them to a local suki at Crossing Calamay. For the most part, therefore, Ling has kept house while attending to their children. Occasionally, she engages in buy-and-sell of tilapia or milkfish along with other mostly women vendors. In reality, thus, Ling has variously contributed

⁴² For Ling this is especially significant because, as she describes herself with humor, she is a big or fat woman.

kita to their household: through the management of their baraka at Balete, her occasionally forays on alsada, sale of snack food and drinks, and foraging at Talangban. Ling seems content with what she is able to do at the present time, occupied with budgeting their pooled resources. However, Ling says that the father, as padre de pamilya has more poder at home and belies any significance of her own irregular kita.

Both mother and father have gahum as well as poder because they both make the pangabuhi. But the father has reason to have more authority because it is he who does the pangita and somehow manages to find (whatever means necessary). The mother only manages everything inside the house. The father is more poderoso. The mother simply manages and allocates the money that is given to her charge.

Nevertheless, the affection between the couple is evident.

How do I know that he loves me? Well, he follows what I ask him to do; and that's enough for me. Like, when he was given a shirt by my brother for Christmas. My brother did not give me any present; instead, he sent presents for my kids. He felt bad for me and gave me the T-shirt that he received. When (my brother) got his bonus, he gave Garing another one. Anyway, he had two new shirts and I had none. He gave his gift to me. When a little bit drunk, he becomes amorous and caresses me; he even lifts me on his arms no matter how big I am. I get irritated when he does this in front of the children. I try to push him away. When our younger son sees his father put his arms around my shoulder, he gets a piece of firewood and hits him. He misinterprets what his father was doing, thinking that we were fighting. He protests: "Stop fighting; don't fight with my mother."

Ling has no intention of doing anything that she might want to do without Garing's consent. For example, she has been ruminating on setting up a retail business dealing with textiles and ready-to-wear clothes, through connections with her brothers in Manila. Further, she also wishes to see more of Aklan, and perhaps visit Manila herself. Ling is apprehensive that if she made any decisions on these matters on her own and Garing found out, they would fight. It is better, she says, to ask for permission first to avoid misunderstandings. Besides, "he usually allows me when I ask." She admits, however, that she is sometimes the aggressor when they fight.

When he was drunk, I scold him. I have a terrible mouth, uncontrollable. My mother says, "Ling, you are lucky to have married your husband unlike those who have husbands, who, when their wives open their mouths would hit them." Garing does not hurt or harm me; in fact, I was the one who has hurt him. It happened in Balete, when I was in the early stages of my (first) pregnancy. I was preparing to make ice candy and did not have anyone to help me. So I said, "Garing, let us make ice candy." Then we mixed a lot. Then we had to wait since we had to cool the boiled water in the pail covered with a basin. But his friend came over and asked him to drink over at their house. He came home at midnight. I was so mad at him; I did not open the door. As he kept on knocking, I did not answer; I just kept quiet inside. What he did was to climb over the tall fence and entered by the back door. When he was already inside our house, I beat him many times with a large piece of firewood. It was not just one strike but I struck him several times. But he was drunk and just pleaded, "Stop hitting me, Ling." But I complained to him: "You left me all alone here; if you did not want to work earlier, I should not have made the mixture. So, I have not finished." Actually I had asked our neighbor to help me so that I could finish. I really hit him hard, he had many bruises on his back. I let go of the firewood as he bit me. When I dropped it, he held me tight and started to apologize. But when morning came, I packed my clothes and went home to Talangban; I did not return to Balete. He was crying there and did not open the store that day. He was ashamed to go out because he had many bruises. His brother told their father about our quarrel. So, my father-in-law summoned Ely and also myself. He was the one who settled it. He scolded Ely and nearly hit him with a fist. My father-in-law was really on my side, even up to now. My mother-in-law was also watching. His father asked him: "What did you do to your wife, hurt her?" He answered, "No, Father, I never hit her." Then his father queried: "So, will you do this again?" "No," replied Garing. That was it. For over a year after this, we never had a fight.

On the surface, there are no serious discords in Ling and Garing's relationship. Their ties are based on trust and openness and their interactions playful and loud. The absence of disagreements on her management of their monies suggest a working partnership.

5.2.5. *For Love of One's Spouse*

5.2.5.1 Josefina (Josie) Ingalla Deocampo

For Josie (42), fishing is a pangitan-an because it produces money, initially referring to Teban's earnings from the fisheries. After some thought, she declares pangabuhi-an as other means of obtaining suea and other needs of the panimaeay (clothing, fishing nets, bamboos for construction of fishing gears). Her deliveries of Teban's catch to their suki as well as her own sale of some portions along with milkfish contribute to ease their pagpangabuhi.

When using the term panimaeay, what Josie alludes to is the trabaho required for upkeep of the pamilya within the house. Hence, she regards Teban's associates in his alsada business of bangeos at Kalibo to be members of their panimaeay. In addition, what they have in common is their hobby -- drinking tuba. Regardless, Teban's friends usually send them some foodstuffs like rice and fruits as well as cooked foods during special occasions; in exchange, Josie and Teban give them shrimps.

Josie regards the hana as possessing poder because he is the one who strives so that the pamilya survives. Further, he has poder because he is the padre de familia. Interestingly, Josie implies an awareness of a power relationship between spouses. As an asawa, the woman is a loser from the start; because of her physique, she is not able to handle her husband's strength when they get into a forceful fight. Thus, she regards a widow as "free to pangabuhi on her own; she is no longer under the control of her asawa."

Josie (Berto's sister) refers to her natal family's transfer into Talangban from Lalab in the 1950s: her father inherited land at Bueot from which they could obtain a pangabuhi. However, they relied on foraging and fishing for their suea. She recalls being asked by her father to help her mother catch piyagot at Panas. When it was still dark early in the morning, she caught fish and hurriedly came home to wash and prepare for school at eight o'clock at Minoro. Happily, she recounts that she then had some money for school; and, when she came home for lunch, they had suea. "That was the system,"

she says. Their large family only had rice for lunch and had cassava and bananas for breakfast and at night.

Teban used to come to the Ingalla household almost every afternoon and became friendly with Josie through her younger brother Berto (Star's husband) who was his barkada. Josie admits having had other boyfriends before accepting Teban: one was from New Washington; another was from Makato. But Teban started a year-long courtship, fetching and bringing Josie to various places while she was at high school in Kalibo. Going further than any of the other spouses, Teban undertook the paninilbihan (bride-service) when he asked for Josie's hand in marriage. They lived together with her parents for a month before formalizing their marriage in 1975.

For more than two years, they alternately lived with Josie's parents (at Sentro) or Teban's parents (at Bueot). It was she who was making the decisions when they should move. But after her father's death in 1978, Teban decided that they should have their own home. Since his kita was derived from the bounty of the river, he asserted that they should build their home on the land of his pamilya.

Teban consults Josie whenever he intends to construct a new net or needed bamboo for a fishing gear since she keeps the money for the household. He alone, however, decides where and when to set the fishing gears and has recruited their older sons to assist him with fishing tasks. Josie participates in periodically repairing the nets. In combination, they use a variety of gears through their kita, a loan from Josie's sister, as well as credit from their wholesaler suki in Kalibo.⁴³ Josie sells Teban's catch depending on the volume, usually between January and May. She delivers the shrimps to their suki and retails crabs and various fish, including masi-masi. When out of cash in Kalibo, Josie borrows (in cash and in kind) from various suki of her products at the fish and meat stalls, some of whom she do not really know by

⁴³ These are: bunit, bintoe, panggae, sacoran, sagpang, and pante.

name (only by face). These people, she says, are a more reliable source for their konsumo than anyone else within Talanghan. She pays back whenever there is abundant catch from Teban, usually within the week.

However, Teban does not encourage her to sell because of the cheapness of other available food; it is better for her, he says, to stay home. Besides she always complains of the weight that she has to carry when she came home. She argues that the little profit that she makes buys their coffee and sugar. Only occasionally does Josie engage in alsada of fishpond produce. She reserves three pieces of milkfish for the family; and from her profits, she buys some pork as suea. Food supplements come from Josie's care of chickens and hogs, and vegetables and fruits grown in the yard. Usually, Teban simply eats whatever food they have, though at times he specifically asks her to buy some meat. Hence, she expresses a wish to learn how to cook more fancy dishes. Once, Josie cared for a pig specifically to raise money for their daughter's college tuition. She also speculates on doing a retail business with textiles and ready-to-wear clothes. In the last year, Teban accessed the use of his parent's rice farm, sharing half of the produce with them; Josie contributes by transplanting rice seedlings.

While both Josie and Teban were raised as Catholics, as a couple, they joined the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Of the six children they have, Josie was hospitalized upon delivering the fourth; she claims not being able to avail of medical help before this time because she did not have enough money. The eldest, a daughter, is already taking up commerce at the Aklan College in Kalibo; but the youngest (female) died at nine months due to dehydration. Significantly, when Josie had her last child at age 32, she had arranged without Teban's prior knowledge to have herself ligated. She had previously spoken to him about it and he did not agree; but it was his female cousin who signed the consent form required for the husband. Then, he could not do anything since it was done, but "he was also thankful that we do not have too much difficulties with too many children."

Josie says she married for love of the person who is now her husband, though she cannot explain why she loves him. He just makes her heart beat faster and notes that he is kind and helpful. Josie argues that one married the person one loved. However, she adds that "you stay in love because you are married and have children; even if you are no longer in love, you have naturally to stay by him, if only for the sake of the children. That is the situation you are in and you cannot change this."

Josie acknowledges playing the traditional wife's role and does most of the household's maintenance activities. She serves Teban's needs when he is at home because he does hard work, fishing for long periods. But she also expresses her wish that he did some more of obra sa baeay. Men, like her husband, just come in and go out of the house: "They do not worry if there is any suea; they only ask for clean clothes. They expect women to clean and arrange the house, from scrubbing floors and putting up the mosquito net."

As a demonstration of affection and caring, Teban usually puts his arm across Josie's shoulders; but she gets irritated when he does this and throws him off. She mentions that when her youngest son embraces and tickles her even when she's tired, she never grumbles. Asked of her different reaction, Josie says that her husband is different from her son in the sense that her son is her own flesh and blood while her husband is not. She is not a demonstrative person herself and does not wish her husband to be so. However, she implies that she was not always this way, when she attributes her present attitude to the fact that they are already old; such behavior is only for the young, she says, but unbecoming for people their age. Since Teban is aware of her outlook, he teases her some more. When Star's sister from Hongkong gave Josie a bottle of body lotion as a homecoming gift, Lado fondly rubbed some on her hands and forehead, but she stopped him by complaining that he was hurting her.

Teban usually initiates their sexual activities; but nowadays, Josie often makes excuses, telling him that she will let him know when she is in the mood since they no longer sleep side by side, since her operation. She has lost much

interest in sex when their children came one after another; fortunately, Teban is considerate on this point. Josie's being five years older than Teban may help explain the different attitudes they have about having sexual relations. Further, however, associating sex with having children, Josie points out that men look at unga as entertainment; for women, having unga implies trabaho. Regardless, a woman is complete only if she has a child/children. Thus, for Josie, "a childless woman's pangabuhi is useless; her situation is pitiful because when she grows old, there will be no one to take care of her."

Besides describing a woman as mother, Josie says that a woman also cleans the house, cooks, sews/repairs/washes clothes, gathers firewood, and feeds the pigs. One piece of local folklore about women that Josie relates with gusto comments on women's good hygiene. It was men who used to have menstruation; but it was transferred to women because men do not know how to take care of themselves, to clean themselves (unlike women). Further, there are certain requirements for womanly behavior. Women should be refined or 'feminine' and should not wander around outside their homes beyond 5:00 p.m. Unlike them, men may go anywhere anytime. Josie also observes:

It is normal for men to have more than one woman. If they can support more than one, then it is not very obvious. Women, on the other hand, are dependent; they are especially vulnerable if they are left in shame with extra-marital child(ren).

But she reveals an ambivalence when she comments that just because she was married does not mean that she could no longer go where she wanted to go, e.g., be with her own barkada just as married men also do. Her barkada are married women like herself. She argues they are not doing anything wrong when they get together, so she gladly goes with them. Thus, whenever she was free from whatever work, she is found chatting and making pawod at her mother's front yard on the roadside at Sentro.

Different preferences cause arguments between husband and wife. Earlier in her married life, Josie often wanted to watch dance events even if she had to go out alone. Teban did not want her to do this as he considered it

unseemly for a married woman to be out at night; if she wanted to do so, then she should not have married. Later on, whenever Teban asked her to join him at parties (birthdays or fiestas), Josie is no longer interested in these get-togethers. She tells him to go by himself, but that he should bring back some food from the party for her. Josie also dislikes Teban's drinking habit, as he becomes noisy with or without his friends and in-laws. When she is able to control her temper, she keeps quiet when he comes home, so as to keep the peace in the house. When pressed, Josie admits that she becomes physical and hits him. Then, Teban recovers his senses; he cries when she threatens to separate from him and regrets what he says when drunk after he sobers up in the morning. Whenever they fight about his being drunk, the children are caught in between, although the eldest daughter tries to act as referee; she tells off her father on his behavior, and asks her mother to leave him because of his being a drunkard.⁴⁴ Once, Teban solicited their opinion: since their mother wanted him dead, did they agree that this should happen so that Josie could find them another father? The children would/could not agree.

Money matters sometimes causes some arguments. The budget is Josie's most important household concern. He knows how many kilos were brought to the market and is generally aware of the amount she usually gets: about ₱ 200 for shrimps, and for bangeos, around ₱ 150 profit. On such days, Josie spends ₱ 150 worth for foodstuffs, including rice for two days, some other fish or meats, coffee, milk, sugar and so on. When there was money over their needs for konsumo, Teban uses it for his drinking sessions. He also complains when she has no money to give him and asks where the money went. Irritated by his redundant questions, Josie rebuts him saying that he try selling and allocating the kita himself and see how it is to satisfactorily provide for their needs. Nevertheless, Josie hesitates to do the things she

⁴⁴ Their daughter had become especially critical of Teban's drinking since she joined the Jehovah Witnesses.

wants to do because she expects Teban to get angry if she spent money without his knowledge. When she plans to spend on something, she lets him know about it in advance. Even if she sets priorities for the day-to-day budget, she only makes suggestions when it comes to acquisition of assets, such as appliances. It is Teban who makes the final decision. Regardless, she has opened an account at the Philippine National Bank.

Josie has realized that it is better if they bought some things so that they could see where their money went. She observes that Teban easily makes money and she is not able to refuse him when he asks for it and spends it uselessly. Hence, she recommended that they buy was a cow about five years ago which they eventually bought from his uncle for ₱ 4,000 and it had to be transported on a raft. They have since asked Garing to have their cow mate with the cows of his father at Aranas. Further, Josie also suggested that they buy a radio-cassette recorder and together went to Kalibo with ₱ 3,000. But at the store, Teban decided to get a component system; they arranged to get the unit with a three-month credit period, with the ₱ 3,000 as deposit. Though she objected, she found it embarrassing for them to fight there in town. But with her careful budgeting, they were able to pay the balance within the said period. Once, Teban also consented to her vacationing in Manila for a month and visit her sisters. Finally, Josie adds: "There are advantages and disadvantages to having a husband. But if you were married, you had someone to communicate your thoughts with."

5.2.5.2 Lolita (Lolit) Castro de Leon

Speaking at a time when her husband had just left to return to work abroad (i.e., when their cash reserves were very low), Lolit (now 34) remarks that without her milkfish sales as a source [*ginabuocan*], she had no other means to procure *suea* for herself and their *unga*. She thus indicates that one had no source to draw expenditures from if one had no *pangitan-an*. In her case, she relies mainly on remittances of her husband.

Lolit implies a distinction between the obra at home and one's trabaho outside. She adds that housework is difficult because it entails multiple and simultaneous concerns, especially if there was no one to assist with housework; by comparison, outside work is less stressful. But while men's work involves physical strength, it does not mean that women can not do work like men; there are many women who also work on fishponds. Further, Lolit notes that the pangabuhi of her natal pamilya was easier when they still had their fishpond: they had enough to live on. Nowadays, the situation requires her to stretch and augment the often-delayed and inadequate allotments they receive from Gardo. Like herself, Lolit observes that her neighbors survive on a day-to-day basis. She refers to times when she expected to be able to tap into either of the families of Virgo and of her brother; but neither had any pangita then. Hence, she strives to find ways and means to provide for needs of her pamilya, even to the extent of borrowing at a 100 percent interest just so to fulfill whatever is urgently needed. She started to raise a pig purposely as savings; a pig was recently slaughtered for the feast accompanying her youngest daughter's baptism. She also bought two more piglets to raise and eventually to sell.

Lolit and Gardo were introduced by common friends at a local dance at Talangban in 1974. Josie claims that she was involved in the development of the relationship between Lolit and Gardo. Lolit used to ask her to cover for her when Lolit went to meet Gardo and cut high school classes. Lolit's parents did not quite approve of their relationship on the grounds that she was yet too young to marry. They argued that she might still change her mind, or that her feelings for Gardo might change; further, that she might regret joining him at that early stage of her life. Gardo's parents did not raise serious objections, in fact, favoring her over another girl for him since she was a Catholic.

Thus, Lolit began to live with Gardo, initially with her parents. Soon, Gardo left his job as a cook in Banga to find work in Metro Manila where he became a bus driver, frequently returning to Lolit and his growing family in

Talangban. Eventually, Lolit and their children joined him there. Their union was formalized at Quezon City in 1979. Lolit sold various concoctions of vegetable soups with fish or meats from their rented home in Quezon City. However, Lolit became depressed and returned with the other children to her parents at Talangban after a child died in 1987. For almost two years hence, Gardo came to see his wife and family almost every month and continued to support them while working in Manila. Eventually, he found employment in Saudi Arabia.

For a while since he left, Lolit has operated a baraka at home, with commodities like bread, candies, salt, soy sauce, cooking oil, dried fish, coffee, sugar, cigarettes, envelopes, and playing cards for children. However, this venture helped maintain their family's needs only for a few months and she was forced to close down the business. When she left for Manila to meet (and send off) her husband, she had left her young children in charge; too many people obtained goods on credit.

Even as their eldest son does some fishing, Lolit also forages for oysters as she did as a child for their konsumo; but the alsada sale of milkfish is a relatively new venture for her to supplement her husband's earnings now that their son has entered college. Whenever his catch is more than their daily needs, Lolit sells them either at Kalibo (with other alsada items) or peddles them within Talangban. If there was something that he urgently needed for school, he sold his catch himself.

Among the women, Lolit recalls some harassment she experienced, as a woman separated by circumstances from her husband, attending to the needs of six children. She met a fellow-resident who stared at her intently on the road while walking home to Talangban. Meaningfully, he commented that she may be suffering because of her husband's absence and that perhaps he could help her to ease "her pain." Offended, Lolit sent him on his way to his wife so that he could have what she was not willing to share with him. Angrily, she said that she could bear "her pain" and could wait for her husband. When the same

person passed her house another day when he was sober, Lolit confronted him saying that if he did this foolishness to other women, he should not do it to her because she was different. She also threatened to tell his wife to teach him a lesson. Only then did he apologize, and she kept her peace.

Due to her circumstances for the past two years, Lolit avers that both mother and father have poder over their unga. Moreover, because the children are still very young, it is she (in the absence of Gardo) who has poder over them. Thus, they should follow/obey her since she is acting for their benefit. Lolit has a very dependent and deferential attitude towards her husband. When she was younger, she regarded some very good friends as part of her pamilya. Nowadays, she says, her bana is her pamilya. More than this, Lolit says that Gardo is her "everything." Thus, she has no interest in knowing other people or aspiring for anything for herself, except perhaps having a vacation in Metro Manila. There are things she would like to acquire but does not have the wherewithal to acquire them. She would not make major decisions without Gardo's knowledge as her actions may cause a quarrel when he found out.

Apart from admitting a case of love at first sight for Gardo, she wanted to marry so as to have a kabulig in her pangabuhì. She cites Gardo's reasoning that household chores are less burdensome if both men and women helped out each other. When living at Quezon City, even though Gardo was tired from work, he took turns with Lolit to care for the children, go to market, cook, wash clothes, and other household chores. Hence, she disagrees with the idea that the gaki who do the housework of the baye are hen-pecked [under de saya]. With Gardo away, Lolit and the older children take turns. On school days, Lolit does most of the laundry, food preparation, cooking, feeding the younger children and domesticated animals. Her daughters, especially the eldest at 13, tries to keeps things tidy sa sueod baeay.

As a mother, Lolit sees it as her responsibility to "take care of the children's needs, teach them well, and feed them." She also disciplines them ("with the rod") if they do anything wrong. She declares that it hurts her to

hurt them, but there are times when they do not heed her statements. She has had to whip them whenever they are hardheaded, and then cries. When Gardo was home, he also looked after the children's behavior. Because they have no wealth for their children to inherit, Lolit reflects on what her husband always tells their children: "The only lasting wealth he could give them is (a college) education. So, they should study hard and not neglect their studies." He says that when they finished their chosen courses, they should be able to have better jobs and not end up being just a fishpond worker or fishing. Lolit expects that they will find trabaho and financially help their parents in the future.

Throughout their narratives and in their observed behaviors, the women reveal truisms that govern their own interactions with men at home and in the larger community. In many other anecdotes and adages, self-images, and personal experiences, there is much equivocation and an ambiguity in what they say women should think, feel, say, and do. They tend to speak of the ideal or the generally accepted norm; then, they qualify with the oft-repeated refrain, "it depends." It is clear that they themselves did not always conform to what they declare as their own standards. They were unaware of expressing tacit rules that govern thought and behavior, agreeing or qualifying whenever I remarked about their statements.

From this depiction of the individual women's life situations and the exploration of ideological and cultural scripts that shape their gendered behavior and relations, the following chapter 6 specifies some changing material circumstances and practices in the larger immediate community. At the same time, the presentation synthesizes the women's own past and present involvements and assessments of the impact on their work and lives of changing conditions in the Talangban, particularly from various aspects of the fisheries. The overall implications of the gender divide on various aspects of the women's pangita and pangabuhì are summarized in chapter 7.

CHAPTER 6

THE TALANGBAN PEASANT ECONOMY

6.1. Fisheries and Aquaculture

6.1.1. *Capture Fisheries*

Capture fishing in Talangban has been the primary form of people's livelihoods for several generations. It is clearly most immediate to the lives of the selected women, posing as the primary source of direct and indirect incomes for subsistence and survival in this peasant community. Nevertheless, the traditional or artisanal methods employed are usually combined with some other farm or fishpond activity. The very existence and reproduction of Talangban households is increasingly tied up with market exchange activities, through commitments of men's wage labor on fishfarms and women's petty market ventures of aquaculture products. The following discussions specify the social technology of the complex food production and distribution system, central to the sources of the pangabuhi and pangita of Talangban households.

Before the war, fish capture in the area was done by hand or with simple implements.¹ The techniques were easily adapted by women as well as men among the locals and even those newly settled in the area. Ramona's father used a sueo (torch) made of tighaw grass during dark nights to attract and catch alimango with a balisasa (a bamboo trap for crabs). He also used a sandoko (a large knife) to hit the heads of big fish right on the riverbank, and trapped fishes like ibis, with pieces of bamboo strips. At times, Ramona's mother accompanied his night-time fishing trips and assisted in handling the boat; when their catch was more than they needed, she sold the crabs at the market in Banga. Settling into inherited property in the 1950s, Josie's father caught fish for suea using a woven basket; similarly, his wife used a sibot (hand-held net) and a basket-like device called panungya.

¹ Most common were the pana (spear), aeat or panungya (basket), and rigid bamboo strips tied together with vines that served as a taba (fish corral), and various other traps.

Throughout the post-war decades in the Philippines, there have been tremendous changes in municipal fisheries: in the nature of the technology employed, the rise of required capital investments, and, in some instances, complexities in the social organization of labor.² Since the 1970s, the availability of commercially produced nylon fibers and nets have made fish capture more efficient. Innovations on the bunit (simple hook-and-line) replaced natural fibers like abaca, and led to the development of the kitang (long line). Other gears with nylon nets of variable mesh sizes were also designed, e.g., the sagudsod (skimming net) and those attached to variously designed bamboo structures stationed along increasingly congested waters of the Batan bay and tributaries. These not only obstruct service craft, i.e., the banca which is locally called baroto, needed to operate them;³ they are also navigational barriers for travellers and fishers using lines. The congestion explains the local adaptation of baroto with no or only one katig (outrigger) in the area which are more difficult to operate.⁴

Indicative of a time of resource abundance, the common fishing grounds used to be confined to riverbanks. Local terms for fish capture referred to the location of the species sought or the specific method used. Gathering shells is to pangatungan or to search for various types of shells underneath the katungan along river banks; catching crabs is pamanggae, referring to the panggae (crab pot) as trap; to fish with a saliwsiw meant to catch a particular type of mullet described as masaliwsiw; and to fish with a hook and line is pamunit, after the name for the gear. It appears that it was the less initiated who started to refer to the isda (a generic term for fish and

² See Jocano, The Hiligaynons, 1983, 75-100.

³ These boats are either made of dug-outs (usually of santol tree trunks or other thick wood) or lumber glued together. They are also used to carry out direct capture activities with hook and lines. Most of those used in Talangban are ordered from Calizo, Balete. Ruth's spouse is one of the local builders in the area.

⁴ Whatever outriggers there are, are also observed to be shorter than most elsewhere. Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 18.

other aquatic species) as prey; hence, capture fishing became pangisda. An alternative source of reference lies in the more common use of the baroto contributed to expansion of activities into the rivers and towards the bay.⁵ Appropriately, fish capture came to reflect panagat (literally, "going out toward the sea").⁶

Unlike other communities, municipal fishing in Talangban remains primarily an individualized activity. The setting up of stationary devices and the licensing of gears is indicative of individually-oriented TURF claims on the river.⁷ The cost of materials and the labor required for these intricate gears normally run as higher than ₱ 5,000. These are operated by a fisher, normally a man, on his own or with another member of his household.⁸ But as in most other tropical multi-species fisheries, fishing as an occupation involves the use of a combination of "active" and "passive" gears ranging from scoop nets, hook and lines, to the more complex traps and nets and elaborate bamboo structures on the Hae-o and smaller waterways.

Some monitoring and regulation is implied by the requirement of annual fishing licenses. These depend on the type of gears used and required both by the municipal government of Batan and the specific villages.⁹ Star shares the information that there are three types of mayor's permit: Type A, deep water, e.g., for barrier nets, ₱ 200/year; Type B, medium, ₱ 150/year; Type C, shallow, e.g., for filter nets, ₱ 75/year. In addition, there is a required

⁵ Dodoy shares the information that the wood for the construction of barotos were built from locally available sources. But the materials for larger boats come mainly from as far as Balete and Libacao.

⁶ Grounds frequented by Talangban fishers now range from the katunggan, kanipa-an, the suba (river), and the cawod or dagat (the bay area and beyond).

⁷ In recommending zoning and limitation of gears in the management of the Batan Bay fishery, territorial 'respect' is cited in cases of conflicts among fishers from adjacent villages sharing the same resource pool. Lao, *et al.*, Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 26.

⁸ Even if Ruth's father served as fishing boat crew while in Palawan, at Talangban, he only did so with his sons.

⁹ Star admits that they have not been faithfully paying their dues for 1992-1993; their own saoron is set in an area that is considered part of Lalab rather than Camaligan. Lolit also admits not having registered her son's kitang.

village clearance, costing ₱ 5. Most gears at Talanghan are Type C varieties, costing their users ₱ 80/year. Specific restrictions have been prescribed for their location. Nevertheless, even my untrained eye sees too many gears too close to each other on the rivers. Further, even as municipal fishers obtain their licenses from their respective town authorities, there are no clear boundaries on the waters for fishers from nearby areas of New Washington, Balete, and other areas of Batan.¹⁰

Among popular gears currently in use are: saeoran or tangab (filter nets), sagpang or sira-sira (barrier nets or barricades), pante (gill nets), bentahan or bintoe (lift nets), tulis, taba or batak-batak (fish corrals), and the timing (modified trap for shrimps). The filter net, fish corral, gill net, and lift net were the most commonly used gears throughout Camaligan in 1991.¹¹ The timing was introduced only in 1990, by Ling's husband who observed its use among his relatives in Leganes, Iloilo. This trap combines features of the kitang and the panggae, specifically adapted to catch shrimps, using locally-produced dayok (shrimp sauce) as bait. Similar adaptations have been recorded elsewhere, and its recent entry appears to indicate a slower pace of exploitation of the fisheries in this particular locality.¹² Most commonly used by the women's households is the filter net, alternatively called saeoran or tangab. I suspect that the saeoran is an older reference to the gear, referring to the fabric used as net; among the locally-produced nineteenth-century textiles in Iloilo recorded by British traders was the saguran.¹³

¹⁰ This situation makes it difficult to isolate the sources of human pressure on the resource. Occasionally, a "Bantay Dagat" (literally, guarding of the seas) program was pursued by the Batan municipal officials; but these sporadic efforts do not really curtail encroachments among municipal fishers.

¹¹ Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 68. For a comprehensive list of gears and species in and around the research area, see Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991.

¹² Describing fishing gears throughout the Western Visayas region, Jocano mentions a variation of the panggal or crab pot as the timing, used both in inland and sea fishing. Dead fish, roasted copra, or stale meat are used as bait. Jocano, The Hiligaynons, 1983, 89.

¹³ Much of this coarse fabric was produced by the women weavers in Iloilo and was largely used to pack leaf tobacco shipped by government factories to Spain. See Funtecha, "Weaving — Iloilo's Pride," 1981, 708.

Characteristically, gears on the river are mainly "passive" in nature, especially the tulis. Their nets are stationary for extended periods and trap the finfish, shrimps, crabs, and other aquatic organisms. Others, like the saeoran, require that nets are periodically emptied and adjusted. There are portable varieties of "active" gears (bunit, kitang, and timing); but they require more investments of time and effort from their users. Virgo explains that since fish/shrimps swim against the movement of the water, the timing needs to be adjusted to the movement of rising or receding waters.

Though located in a relatively sheltered area within the bay, the Talangban fishery is still subject to the vagaries of seasonal changes. In this sense, the fishers' and their families are sensitive to specific aspects of nature's regenerative cyclical processes. Local lore signifies that within a sikla (lunar cycle), the eatl (new moon) and the ugsad (full moon) bring tidal fluctuations. Frequent and exaggerated movements of spring tides, with ta-ob (high tide) occurring two or three times a day, favor harvests in both capture and culture fisheries. Dark nights of the otro buean (first and last quarters) are associated with neap tides, characterized by still and shallow waters, and generally, poor fishing for about two weeks. The oeoy-oeoy (periods with no marked tidal movements) are associated with poor fishing for certain gears. Periods of hunas or hugot (low tide), especially during the spring tides, are most favorable for gathering taeaba and a variety of other shell products and the finfishes like piyagot (young goby) from wide stretches of muddy river bottoms.

On the whole, therefore, there are at most only two weeks in a month which are periods favorable for fishing, i.e., for relatively large volumes of catch. There are more frequent intervals of what fishers' consider as relatively productive and "lean" periods. Spring tides are fortuitous since inward currents carry more fish and shrimps upstream. Moreover, strong outward or downstream flows enable the gears to capture more fish. Flood currents that stir the river (but not enough to destroy stationary gears and organisms) are

also useful; but flooding from higher grounds carry debris that are destructive to fishing gears.

To a lesser extent, Talangban fishers also observe the rhythms of wind movements associated with monsoon seasons as affecting the level of their catch. Wind flows during the amihan (season normally between September and December) characteristically come from the ilawod (wind direction from the sea) into Camaligan; at this time, there are more days during which the ta-oh occurs at night. During the habagat (season normally between January and August), the currents come from the ilaya (wind direction from land areas); during these periods, the late afternoon hunas is conducive for women's shell-gathering and other fishing activity. Intervals called salin-agaw (characteristic winds around February-March and August-September) are associated with winds alternately moving around but without a marked impact on the fisheries. All of these rhythms regulate capture activity, a condition which favors a conservation of the renewable resources in the area if the level of exploitation is not radically intensified.¹⁴

The schedule of fishing activity depends on the particular type and combination of gears that the fishers (mainly men) used. Spear fishing relies on conditions of water transparency and velocity and is, thus, limited to the tagsilalak (the dry season during the months of March to May). The best times for the harvest of saeoran operators is two days before and after the strong currents of the spring tides. Most operators of the sagpang and bentahan limit their activities at the start of neap tides. However, the saeoran and tulis operators tend to continue to fish even during the otro bucan.

The production cycle which occupies the time of the menfolk lasts for two weeks. Subsequently, women and men are occupied with cleaning and repairing gears and nets. Virgo explains that they need to clean, repair tears, and sun-dry the bamboo traps. "You cannot just leave the nets in water; you

¹⁴ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 21.

have to brush them clean of algae or they will easily rot." Furthermore, right after a flood, most users clean and repair their nets rather than waste their time trying to catch suea. Whenever the fishing is not good, the nets have also to be removed lest they be destroyed by any floating debris. Where applicable, other fishers tend farms, housework, or other activities. And, as Lerma's eight-year daughter added when I was asking her mother what else her father did, "he also sleeps." Many women also refer to the fact that fishers who, for whatever reasons, do not operate their gears for a considerable period, are apt to find that others have usurped their use without notice. There have also been occasions when users are more considerate, and approach the owners with some share of the catch.

While technical differences exist between capture fishing and foraging, both significantly provide subsistence needs for Talangban households. Shell gathering is commonly identified with women, often accompanied by children.¹⁵ This is usually done with catching piyagot. These fish are small and are caught by hand under water from exposed muddy banks during hunus. Both speed and coordination are needed as a hand (or stick) feels inside holes in which the hide and the other scoops them out when they try to escape. An adept like Sela catches up to three caltex in two hours; nowadays, however, she sells by the hundred, between ₱ 10 - ₱ 20.

For about three hours most afternoons and early in the morning, women work along the shores during the hunus since most local shell species are not significantly affected by seasonality. However, the popular hunkay-hunkay (gaudy sand clam) only start to appear during the tagsililak. Ruth clarifies that there are always some, if one was assiduous, but they are really abundant starting March. These are retrieved underwater using bare hands and feet that feel for and pick up the shells. Sela describes the bodily movements involved as dancing the "cha-cha." Aure recalls that Sela's mother Poten gathered

¹⁵ A parallel is indicated by the study in Indonesia cited above, see page 142.

hunkay-hunkay "by the boatloads" and that they sold very cheaply at about five or ten centavos for more than two kilos. Certain species, like the kapis, are no longer to be found on riverbanks like the still abundant taeaba as recently as about a year ago, says Ruth; one had to collect them from near the river's center. Other species (abahong, litob) underwater, are usually gathered by males who dive for them. Yet Sela professes to dive for shells to this day.

The predominance of stationary gears has been argued as a reason for the relatively more visible participation of women, children, and elderly persons in the Batan Bay area and tributaries.¹⁶ Women not only accompany and navigate for their husbands or sons; they also catch fish with hook and line, set and haul nets, or direct the fishing operation. I personally observed women navigating baroto, hauling and laying down nets on their own on the tulis and saeoran. Most often, they assist in retrieving and sorting the catch as well as repairing nets. However, fishing operations at night are exclusively done by men. A related study on the area presumes that women "have to take care of the children"; thus, they are left at home for security reasons or so that someone was prepared the meals and attended to other household chores during the day.¹⁷ Most of the women's stories substantiate these views.

All of the subjects have had direct participation in capture fishing and/or shell gathering along the Hae-o river. Since childhood, Sela, Lolit, Lerma, Ramona, Ling, Linda, and Ruth gathered taeaba and other types of shells, caught piyagot and other fish species for recreation and consumption as well as for sale. Even those who presently have the least involvement with capture fisheries as a source of cash income, like Lerma, Lolit and Ling, admit to foraging; they also assist other household members and neighboring relations in sorting and weighing fish and shrimps as well as cleaning and repairing nets. Most learned the ropes of fish marketing that they do now from their own

¹⁶ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 23-24.

¹⁷ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 23.

parents. At least one has learned to actually fish and sell along with her husband and son.

Most of women also have a good comprehension of the requirements for specific gears, even beyond what their respective families have used at any one time. Josie distinguishes between the types of pante that are specifically designed to trap mullets. There are those that catch the small ones called gusaw and those that catch the larger ones called banak (flathead gray mullet) and balanak (bully mullet). There are certain months favorable for using the kitang which is designed to hook several finfish at one time. Ruth points out that there are different types of bamboo traps for crabs: the more common panggae is small and used close to the riverbank; the larger bobo is placed in deeper waters near the center of the river. For this purpose, frogs are sometimes used as bait.

The women's observations emphasize that capture fishing entails hard labor and, hence, is appropriately men's work. Virgo stresses that Roming tires because he has no rest while operating the saeoran; if he fell asleep while waiting to raise the net, the net was easily displaced, thereby losing whatever catch. Also, the saeoran is constantly in need of repairs and adjustments. Josie adds that this was true with the sagpang. In comparison, Josie and Virgo indicate that the tulis could be left alone; you just needed to raise the net in the morning. The nets of the tulis are laid down just before the high tide, left alone, and raised any time during the low tide. But saeoran operators need spend the time while the tide is rising to occasionally haul in their catch.

Further, Ruth and Sela indicate that the fisher using the timing cannot remain idle on the boat. Ling mentions that there are also women who operate this gear. The back-breaking work entails that the catch in each of the traps need to be periodically withdrawn lest they escape when the dayok laid within has been consumed. Virgo adds that if the bait is unchanged for long in the water, it will lose its smell and flavor, and the gear will fail to trap its catch.

Further, if the catch was left for long, whatever crabs therein destroy not only the net or trap but also shrimps which are highly prized.

The women did not normally volunteer information on how they came to share in strenuous fishing activities; they implicitly take it in stride for survival purposes. In at least two instances, however, the women's direct involvement were brought in by default. Lerma's mother Eva took over her husband's work with the sagpang and the tulis because he was frequently drunk. Star first learned to operate the saeoran while assisting her spouse; now, she usually operates the gear herself with her son since Berto was often unavailable or incapable of doing so because of too much tuba. The tasks of capture fishing, vital for everyday pangabuhi and pangita, urge them to ignore the predominantly prescribed roles for women and men in the larger society.

6.1.2. *Aquaculture*

The widespread entry of aquaculture ventures into Camaligan came along the expansion of these interests throughout the province of Aklan, largely initiated by investors from Capiz and Iloilo.¹⁸ Culture practices of, initially, bangeos, and, soon after, lukon reached Camaligan by the 1950s. Kitoy remarks that he personally saw a milkfish only after the war brought around by traders; at that time, they did not buy because there were plenty of other fish caught locally. On the other hand, Sela dates fishpond development in Talangban to 1944.¹⁹

At present, capital-intensive culture technologies for the controlled spawning of prawns are commercially feasible ventures for large entrepreneurs with available technical know-how. Incidental adult prawns are also captured by various gears of small fishers at Talangban. These are normally sold separately or with common shrimps, the batod (shrimps with darker and harder

¹⁸ Prominent among them are the Altavas family from Capiz, after whom the nearby municipality was named. At Lalab and near New Washington, Aguedo del Rosario is the largest fishpond operator. Among areas that the latter acquired at Lalab were those of the paternal grandfather of Star.

¹⁹ This is perhaps in association with a map of Montes properties that Sela possesses.

shells) and pasayan (shrimps with whiter and softer shells). More relevant to the needs of most local growers are sources of semilya (fry and fingerlings) of milkfish to be raised. These are mostly found in Iloilo, Capiz, and other parts of Aklan. The technology for artificial spawning of the milkfish and the concomitant hatcheries was developed at the Aquaculture Department of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) at Tigbauan, Iloilo. For lack of access to hatcheries and the high costs of fry, some fishfarmers prefer semilya caught in the wild.²⁰ However, small fishers do not have adequate equipment nor organizational capacity for accumulating them in large amounts as growers require. Nor are the coastal waters here conducive to the development of individual or cooperative fry gathering concessions such as in other areas in Panay, particularly Antique.²¹

The largest fishponds in the village have been those operated by non-residents, notably, the Lazarraga brothers of Iloilo City. The holdings of Ireneo (Irin) alone are approximately 50 hectares, converted from mudflats that formed an islet across the Hae-o river adjacent to Pinamunitan, Lalab.²² Presently, there are about 300 hectares of fishponds throughout Camaligan divided approximately among 30 operators.²³

The extent of the expansion of fishponds within Talangban is indicated by the anachronism of the term motu, though often still used as a place name by the locals. Dodoy explains that the term referred to an islet surrounded by water. There were two such areas in Talangban, both of which are now connected by dikes to nearby land areas. The larger one was at the Capiz area and the smaller one within Bueot. Water was impounded, effectively building

²⁰ Prof. Pepito Fernandez facilitated the local growers' access to these fry through the demonstration farm facility of FSDP at Sitio Agsam.

²¹ See Gono & Wylie, "A Glimpse into the Marketing System of Milkfish Fry," 1987, 8-11.

²² Irin's preserves may actually be the 60 hectares of fishponds reported in Batan municipal sources in the mid-1970s as partly located in Lalab. See Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 126.

²³ Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 126.

fishponds. Their operations require periodic chemical 'cleaning,' a process which contributes to pollution on the rivers.

Star relates that the earliest fishponds owned and built by local residents were those of Condring Alba, Jaime Alba and Aure Refindor. By present standards, Dodoy reckons that a large fishpond has at least 10 hectares. Aure's fishfarm measures 7.5 hectares; Dodoy's own ponds are all located at Balete (Anao in Aranas and in Calizo). Condring is known to be the largest fishfarmer, though different pond parcels are registered in his children's names. Star adds that Condring is reputed to be a 'secret millionaire.' The largest portion of his ponds is at the area of the tugbungan near Panas. Star also relates that Jaime Alba's fishfarm at Dumeog was mortgaged to finance his children's education. Meanwhile, his wife alone does the actual planting and spraying (of insecticides and pesticides) on their rice farm nearby, without any hired labor.

Other prominent owner-operators of Talangban fishfarms include Aure's brother. Other producers across the river at Aranas and Pinamunitan include Roque (Melde) Oquendo, Dodoy, and Irin. But as previously mentioned, there are small units within family estates that are rotated among kin. Dodoy observes, moreover, that most other fishponds at Talangban have been bought up by outsiders, notably Melde; a few other ponds of locals have been sold or are under lease. In the case of Lolit's father Lito, the usual and costly requirement of proper maintenance of unstable dikes, susceptible to strong flood waters, over and above production costs of at least the fry, led him to decide to sell their small fishpond. Ramona's remaining parcel is leased by someone from Numancia who also leases other areas within Talangban. Star identifies another lessee as someone from Roxas City; still others include a widow from Lalab, now resident of Kalibo, and a couple from Calizo, Balete.

The traditional fishponds provide an alternative source of fish supply, employment, and incomes for people hired as pond caretakers and laborers.²⁴ Hired labor was initially brought in by owners and operators from Capiz and Iloilo. Much of the labor required on fishponds is employed in the construction and periodic repair of the pilapil (mud dikes) and normally wooden bukilyahan (fishpond gates). In addition, there are the cleaning, feeding, water management tasks, and the coordinated work required during bueos (harvest). Among the households studied, the influx of workers is represented by the family of Ling's father-in-law, and Lerma's husband, who were employed in nearby fishfarms and other enterprises of Irin and Melde. Garing's grandfather and father came to work for "Balbal" (father of Melde) during the 1960s. In the early 1980s, Melde took over the management of the Oquendo farms; and when Garing's grandfather died, his father took over the position of caretaker and married locally. On the other hand, Natan himself came seeking employment, until recently with Irin, and presently on a part-time basis, with Melde.

Large tracts of Lazarraga lands in Camaligan/Lalab have reputedly been sold off. Irin's influence is no longer as prominent in interpersonal as well as structural relations of Talangban residents, except with Lerma's natal family. Apart from his arrangements with the latter regarding his nipa business, Lerma's father is still a contractual laborer on his ponds. He is paid on a daily basis, commensurate with the length of the pilapil constructed or repaired. It is common knowledge that when Irin had differences with the kapitan of Lalab, the taxes and voters within his fishpond areas were transferred to Camaligan. However, since a vehicular accident involving Irin driving his own pick-up and one of the jeepneys of Coret, he began to pay his taxes again to Lalab. During

²⁴ Traditional fishfarms are characterized as utilizing relatively simple technologies. Intensive culture on ponds elsewhere are characterized by a high degree of artificial feeding of fish/prawn stocks, widespread use of pesticides, use of aerators, shorter harvest intervals, and large-sized ponds of over a hectare each. The more sophisticated ones have concrete dikes and gates, sometimes with access for heavy transport vehicles.

the last elections, his employees and their families (totalling around twenty voters) were again counted among the electorate of Pinamunitan.

On the other hand, Melde's enterprises and influence appears to be growing. Ramona mentions that, unlike most fishers, he uses electricity to operate with hired labor the three bentahan that he has on the river. His networks involve the (actual and potential) employment of many members of the subjects' households (within Talangban, Balete, Kalibo, and elsewhere in Aklan), especially those of Ramona, Ling, and Linda. Lerma's husband has also recently shifted employment from Irin to Melde.

The physical demands of fishpond labor lends a bias for the employment of males. Further, the more permanent and salaried mode of employment, distinguished from casual wage work, usually includes the entire household. Individuals hired as encargado (caretaker) live on site with their families to guard the premises against predators (often of the human kind); they are normally provided some dwelling by the owners, or at least a place where they could build one. This condition places them at significant distances from other dwellings, usually without easy access to basic necessities such as drinking water and fuelwood for cooking. Lerma spent the early years of her married life under these circumstances while Natan was employed by Irin.

The distribution of high-value products from fishfarms is determined by the high demand for the food products in urban centers, as far as Metro Manila, and, in the case of prawns, mainly for export. With milkfish as the main crop of the traditional fishfarms in Talangban, incidental catches of other shrimps, shells and crabs are also utilized by the owners, operators, laborers and their families. Species called bagongon (fishpond snails or Telescopium telescopium) are deemed pests by fishfarmers but are collected and sold, like the masi-masi, as suea by some local families. They consume the algae cultivated as natural feeds for the species under culture. The intensified use of chemical fertilizers on nearby farms and pesticides on ponds endanger the

health of those who continue to partake of this food source. Among many others, Ramona did so at her own family's and other's fishponds.

Only a few of the women and their immediate families have any direct involvement in aquaculture production, a function of access to suitable land or the capacity to convert and capitalize such use. Ramona marks the time when she was pregnant with her third child (in 1961) when she and Panong applied for a permit to convert some mangrove areas of Ramona's natal family's lands into fishponds. Their fishfarm which was approximately three hectares in total area was actually made up of scattered parcels throughout Bueot, Capiz and near Aksam boundary. Panong directly worked on the largest pond near Aksam with the older sons (when they were free from school). When their oldest son finished college, he took over Panong's management of the Aksam parcels for three years, with the help of another sibling; other portions were assigned to a caretaker.

Until Lolit's natal family's fishpond near Panas was sold in 1976, they raised milkfish and prawns, with her mother, herself and other children assisting as family laborers. Her mother also sold milkfish and incidental shrimps from their pond with other fishery products. Josie's father leased a fishpond at Panas owned by a family from Balete during the mid-1970s. Sela's oldest son operates a fishpond at the moto in Capiz which Ponso used to work on; one of her daughters operates another.²⁵ At present, only Star has access to the use of the communally-held property of her maternal grandfather, through her mother's claim on the land. It is from the produce of this half-a-hectare farm that Star's family will greatly depend upon in the next two years. In all instances, unpaid work contributions of women and children on the fishfarms tend to be understated; they appear to come as a matter of course

²⁵ Some controversy underlies the issue of actual ownership of this and other fishpond properties claimed by Sela for her herself and her children, involving counter-claims of maternal relatives as well as the family of her in-laws. Star mentions that Sela has brought a case against a former Talangban resident, now a pensioned retiree from the United States residing in Kalibo over coconut land at Macabago.

and is taken for granted. Hence the information is seldom volunteered, obtained only with direct questioning.

Until 1993, the only type of fish culture practice at Camaligan involved the extensive and semi-intensive use of fishponds. Other mariculture practices in the Batan Bay area include the use of bamboo stakes as artificial substrates for oyster and mussel culture. There is some seaweed gathering at deeper portions of the bay much closer to the Batan town proper. There is an estimated 0.5 million oyster and mussel stakes throughout the Batan Bay area.²⁶

An alternative mariculture technology is being tested on the brackishwater of the Hae-o river off Talangban through the KMT. Tilapia, whose growth is stimulated by a sex-reversal process, is being cultured in floating cages. Incidentally, the sex-reversal process favor males which grow faster without any females. This meaty hybrid is offered as a relatively cheap alternative to the ubiquitous milkfish, often beyond the reach of poor households in Talangban. It is also more attractive looking than the darker and smaller common species. The method of introduction of this new technology provides an opening for a positive participation of women in aquaculture. The women and men of the KMT households learn and perform various tasks in the production and distribution of their own outputs and provide a model of cooperative work for others nearby.

Regardless of the produce distributed by fishpond operators to wholesale markets, most significant for the women is that the produce that they make available to locals, especially on a credit basis through buy-and-sell arrangements, is becoming a source of entrepreneurial activities. The availability of local fishfarm products and by-products supply forms of subsistence and income for the women and their households, especially during

²⁶ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 17, 24.

periods when the moon is bright and when the tidal conditions do not lead to fruitful efforts in capture fisheries.

Strictly speaking, however, the practice on the part of the individual entrepreneurs in aquaculture, is often motivated by "good neighbor" rather than "good business" sense. Thus, in whatever limited ways, fishpond harvests are occasions for redistribution; they open opportunities for local vendors to gain a few pesos for the day, and, in some instances, share a few free pieces. Ling's father-in-law usually gave her five to eight kilos of bangeos and tilapia whenever there were harvests from Melde's farms where he is employed. Linda mentions that her suki from whom she obtains her stocks for sale sometimes gifted her with some extra bangeos. Nevertheless, they signify greatly for the requirements of poor households, whose participation with the market is not simply dictated by whims but the need for day-to-day survival.

6.1.3. *Fisheries Marketing*

Vending of fishery products in Talangban, as in most other areas in rural Philippines, is dominated by women. But the scale of their marketing ventures is necessarily small for already obvious reasons. Throughout Camaligan, Talangban is known as the area with the most negosyantes. Overall, there are 20 - 25 persons from Talangban, predominantly women, who regularly travel as far inland as Libacao and Makato on scheduled market days as itinerant vendors.²⁷

Parenthetically, this local term by which these vendors of fishery products and by-products (fish, shrimps, crabs, shells) are commonly known not only projects an entrepreneurial characteristic; it is also generic to both sexes, unlike its common translation as "businessmen" or "middlemen" to

²⁷ For Mondays, the market is at Banga and New Washington; on Tuesdays, Altavas; on Thursdays, Libacao; on Fridays, Numancia, New Washington, and particular villages of Banga; on Saturdays, Makato, Baleta, and Batan; on Sundays, Sitio Minoro in Camaligan. Wednesdays and Sundays are market days at Kalibo; but one could normally sell there at any other day of the week.

represent commercial intermediaries in the English language.²⁸ That it is primarily women who engage in these entrepreneurial ventures has its advantages. Okit comments that when the women are done selling and have accounted for their profits, this income is immediately spent on things needed at home. In this way, the money earned is not diverted into wasteful activities (i.e., drinking or gambling).

At one time or another, the subjects and/or members of their households have engaged in some type of vending of freshly-harvested yields of capture and culture fisheries. The only home-processed product that any of them sold is dayok, by Linda who is the most active among them. For most, earnings are now dependent on their access to fishfarm harvests, including the KMT's tilapia. However, Aure mentions that among those who obtain the produce from her fishponds, those from Talangban are outnumbered by sellers from the neighboring villages of Aranas and Calizo of Balete.

Some of the women (Sela, Lolit, Star, Ruth, Linda) followed in the trade of their mothers, some of whom are still active. Though her own mother did not vend fishery products, Josie started her own limited operations when her Teban's catch garnered household surpluses. Lerma deviates from the pattern and opened a home-based business, though her mother includes Natan's catch as she continues to pursue this activity. On the other hand, Ling's initiatives were largely curtailed by her husband's wishes. Initially an outsider, even Virgo adapted to these local practices, especially when she began to live with Roming.

Significantly, market sales from capture fisheries products of Talangban households are increasingly becoming dependent on shrimps rather than fish. Star's observations make this change explicit. About five years ago, when prices of common shrimps were lower, their saeoran could get about eight

²⁸ As itinerant merchants, they are among traders also called bolanteros throughout the Western Visayas region. Szanton, A Right to Survive, 1972, vii.

kilos of shrimps which she sold for ₱ 200. In addition, there was a wider variety and larger species of finfish some of which were sun-dried; thus, they did not usually need to buy suea. Nowadays, their household gets about three to four kilos per harvest, mostly shrimps and small amounts of masi-masi. There is yet a market for the latter which impoverished people do not regard as "trash" but suea.

Most revealing of the circumstances that surround the women's fish marketing activities, including personal hazards, hardships, even humiliations that they experience, are revealed in exchanges that took place during the second FGD.²⁹ These centered on a confrontation-like encounter between Lerma's mother (Eva) and Virgo, after they had both been at the Kalibo market that morning, and the comments made by the other subjects.³⁰ While we were waiting to complete our group that afternoon at Star's home-cum-day-care center, Eva started to relate her story to Star who had greeted her as she passed on her way home; and, every time someone else came in, she started to retell her tale of woe all over again.

Eva and Virgo were selling side-by-side along with other retailers from Talangban at the makeshift tables at the wet-market. Virgo brought some of the KMT's hybrid tilapia while Eva brought some of the more common variety. Eva sold some of her stock and pocketed her earnings; but she had to leave her place to attend to something and asked Virgo to briefly take over. While attending to her own fish sales, Virgo sold some pieces for Eva on the basis of the price that the latter had informed her.³¹ She turned over the amount she handled when Eva returned and both continued to dispose of their

²⁹ This narration is drawn from a process documentation I made of what happened on January 26, 1994. It is worth presenting as fully as possible for methodological as well as substantive purposes.

³⁰ Lerma herself was unable to join the group that afternoon; interestingly, until then, I had not interacted extensively with Eva, but became privy to all that she wanted to express at this time.

³¹ The pile of smaller fish that she estimates to have been about 30 kilos, at ₱ 10 pesos a kilo; and the pile of larger fish, which she estimates to have been sixteen kilos, at ₱ 20 a kilo. This would have yielded her ₱ 770.

stock. Upon summing up her earnings on her way home to Talanghan, Eva claimed that she did not make enough from the amount of fish that she had brought. While not directly accusing Virgo of cutting into her earnings, she was complaining to all and sundry about her loss. Now that she was about to pay off the source of her alsada venture, she had less than the amount they had agreed upon in the morning.

The other women present (as well as other passers-by attracted by her loud voice, including Star's brother Jec who was sleeping but awakened by the commotion) were also experienced in such buy-and-sell endeavors. They tried to convince her that the situation of earning less than one expects does happen, and that she should just accept that fact. For one, she might not have obtained the right number of kilos from her source to start with (was she sure she had x number of kilos?).

Ramona and Linda passed on their own experiences at Miyerkolesan, Kalibo, or other markets. They attribute their own losses to the fact that there is resiko (water retention) on newly harvested fish which is lost by the time they weigh the fish for their customers. And, as Eva admitted, her basket spilled on the jeepney ride; so she should not be surprised at the outcome. The vehicle got stuck on the muddy road near Balete, causing spillage while Eva was riding on the roof of the usually overloaded jeepney. Eva protested that the amount of fish she lost was meagre and could not account for how much she really lost. She declared that had she sold all of her fish at a lower price per kilo, she would have made more money than what she actually had and have some profit.

Virgo was philosophical over what Eva was continuing to relate as she came into the room after having a late lunch at home. But she eventually challenged Eva to come out and say that she was to blame, saying in effect, "What's the point of bringing all of this up if you are not blaming me?" Eva countered that she was not blaming Virgo; that she was only relating the sad results of her sales that day. Virgo expressed her feeling hurt for having done

a friend a favor but being blamed for that friend's losses; and Eva admitted that Virgo indeed helped her out.³² Virgo explained that as sellers, there are often situations wherein they give in to customers insistent on getting something over what they pay for, thereby reducing the total amount that they can sell.

Further, when there is a crush of people around and you have to hurry, it is difficult to get the exact amount for the exact weight for fish products. There are those who buy only one-fourth or one-half of a kilo and haggle for paaman (extra grams) that a good seller ought to give their customers. Ling confirmed this based on her own experiences in selling bangeos. Ramona also called attention to the fact that Eva herself may have been too busy and failed to collect money or give the correct change to her customers. Another suggested that someone may have stealthily taken some of her cash when she was not looking. Still, Eva did not accept any of the possible explanations, insisting that she did not make any of these mistakes.

Jec tried to lighten Eva's mood by asking her to bring out all her money as she may just have counted wrong. With the others, he reminded her that she may have paid for something out of her receipts.³³ She did have the amount she claimed (separating the money she was supposed to use to buy something but which she decided against due to her low receipts); she also denied having removed any significant amount from the pile that Jec had laid

³² Most of the time after this, they were no longer addressing each other directly but were talking to anyone else they faced, though they saw to it that the other party could very well hear them. After Virgo's challenge, Eva seemed to tone down her accusatory comments. Throughout this time, I was just a listener.

³³ When she had not yet eaten at home before leaving for the Libacao market, for example, Linda spends about ₱ 20 for a meal and snacks; she also spends for her fare (at least ₱ 20), the market ticket or arkabala (₱ 2), a separate fee for her puwesto (₱ 5) at the stall, and the use of a stool and makeshift table (₱ 10). There are also the baggage fee for the jeepney/bus; at Kalibo, there is an additional cost for a porter should one be required.

on the ground in front of everyone, just over ₱ 500. Someone else mentioned that the weighing gadget that she was using may have been defective.³⁴

Eva finally left when she realized that we had business to attend to, with her issues aired though unresolved.³⁵ Instead of pursuing questions on their narratives, I found it useful to guide their comments to a review of what had just happened.³⁶ To present her side, Virgo argued that she has similarly helped others who did not suffer the fate of Eva. Others agreed with her when she observed that they had heard this kind of story from Eva before, even when there was really no one else on whom she could lay the blame, i.e., that she was not able to meet her capital from her sales.

Ramona reiterated that this situation has happened to herself several times, even saying to the effect that there is always about 50-50 risk for one to incur a loss. She attributed this circumstance to the inexact weight measurements for whole pieces of fish and the fact that she tended to succumb to her customers' pleas for extras (e.g., they do not pay for an extra measure beyond the kilo). Virgo added (obviously preferring not to speak of this matter in front of Eva) that when Eva spoke to her about having lost some fish on the jeepney when she first arrived at the market, she mentioned having lost a lot. Before the others later, she said that she lost only a few pieces. Also, one has to account for what they spend throughout the process, often obtained from what they receive. Whatever really happened, the incident showed how the vendors helped each other in many unaccounted ways. In practice, they agreed that they could draw a number of lessons from this experience, e.g.,

³⁴ On my part, I told her to have something to eat with us, as we passed around some banana cue sticks and fruit juice, as this might help relieve her disappointing experience.

³⁵ She politely excused herself and went home to have lunch.

³⁶ It seemed to me as though everyone listening to Eva's tale of woe was hearing her out as part of the normal therapy they provide for each other when any of them faced such ordeals. And while they had been speaking purely in Aklanon until then, when I was asking them questions here and there after this point, they all unconsciously shifted to speaking mostly in Ilonggo as they tried to help me understand their points.

they should be more careful and lower their expectations when they engage in this kind of business, considering the extras they give their suki.

We also discussed other aspects of customer relations. Virgo remarked that there are good customers (once you mention your price, they immediately complete the transaction) and bad ones (who seem to be asking you to give them your goods for free). The latter cause the fish sellers to feel humiliated as they drive hard bargains. Star added that there are buyers who begin to bargain for extra grams when fish/shrimps are already wrapped; and when you do not give in, they return the products. Interestingly, all present agreed with Linda's comment that the more wealthy the customer, the more prone he/she is to bargain for a lower price. As well, they concurred that they have no choice but to give in to the bargaining, particularly when conditions are pigado (contextually, a situation when selling was difficult, i.e., when there are plenty of fish and other alternative foodstuffs available in the particular market where they sell).

In their own ways, the women clearly demonstrated their awareness of the workings of the laws of supply and demand. Obviously, though unacknowledged, they also refer to economies of scale affecting prices. The group acknowledged that there are people whom they consider their suki. These include the people from whom they obtain the stock to retail (pond owners or operators) and also individual wholesale or retail buyers at the market. When pigado, Virgo observed that there is no significant difference in the returns they make whether they sell wholesale to a buyer at the market or they retail their fish themselves. Linda and Star added that you only have to retail when there are no wholesalers around interested with what you have.

However, there are good conditions for their retail sales when food stocks are few; then, there is high competition among buyers (wholesalers and retailers alike). Linda explained that there have been times when, at Talangban, common shrimps sold at ₱ 15 - ₱ 20 a caltex unit (the lowest price being ₱ 10 or ₱ 12); if sold elsewhere where the prevailing price was

₱ 10, they automatically lose. On this point, Star related the case of a neighbor who had returned to Talangban with the shrimps she brought to sell at Kaliho just the other day because of depressed prices. Besides shrimps, other suea are usually more expensive locally than at the town.

As a result, we concluded that the enterprise that most of them undertake is a very risky one. Virgo embellished this remark by saying that they are never sure what they get out of it. When they are on the road to the market, their heads whirl in anticipation of circumstances that affect their sales. While travelling, they are engrossed with planning (how they should spend their earnings), often only to find that there are large quantities of other available stocks. Then, they try to manage somehow to counter these disadvantageous conditions. They resort to retailing the products themselves, thus, assuming the risks of being able to make some profits.

At times, Virgo found it expedient to barter her masi-masi with other sellers at the market, in exchange for fruits (guavas, santol, cassava, sweet potato) or any other foodstuffs. She then chopped some of the cassava and sweet potato to feed their pig; in this way, the pig (like themselves) had a different type of food. When caught in emergencies and in need of cash, Ramona's experience demonstrates the practice of rolling around multiple sources. She specifies maintaining at least three suki. If she had not yet repaid what she borrowed from one or two, she still a third source for badly needed cash. However, by paying back in terms of deliveries of produce (usually prawns or other shrimps), she, like many others, have no say on setting prices.

Among more explicit risks, including that entailed in Linda's vehicular accident, was Ramona's experience of threat and bodily harm at Miyerkolesan by persons whom she still regards as goons.³⁷ They were after her purse and probably thought that this elderly woman was forgetful and easily fooled.

³⁷ Allegedly, then recently released from the national penitentiary in Metro Manila.

They bought a two-peso worth bundle of fish with a five-peso bill and went on to drink nearby; after about an hour, they came back to Ramona, claiming that she owed them change for their ₱ 50 bill, a charge which she vigorously denied. They declared that she had put the bill into her purse and insisted that she open it for them to prove their point that she got their money. Ramona saw danger in revealing the money she did have to buy rice that day and refused. By hindsight, they probably observed how tightly she was holding her purse. When they left following a heated exchange, a friend warned Ramona that he saw the men obtain a talibong (large knife). In fear for her life, Ramona found an alternate route home, crawling on rough ground to avoid them.

Ironically, however, what the women who sell their household's catch regard as a favorable time for profits does not necessarily coincide with the intervals for large volumes of catch. When the weather and the timing was "good" for capture fishing as a whole, there was more available stock and, hence, lower prices. Inversely, when it is a "poor" period for small fishers' catch, there are high prices for fishery products. However, shrimp prices do not go up as much accordingly since there is a buyers' market for this commodity, especially for the highly-value prawns. Metro Manila and export prices tend to depress prices for the marginal producers and sellers of Talangban.

Aquaculture produce tends to flood the markets since harvests are in bulk and come from various sources, often from produce of Capiz and Iloilo. Hence, even the price for the milkfish that the women sell at Kalibo is highly variable. Vendors at Talangban obtain price information at the farmgate, i.e., the owner/operator of the fishpond from whom they obtain their stock.³⁸ Their losses happen at least once a month; and, even when selling for three

³⁸ Virgo remarks that, as vendors, they cannot blame the supplier(s) if they incurred losses because they already got the goods; the suppliers tell the vendors that they can only try to make better turnout the next time.

days in succession, one tends to lose at least once. But at the fishpond sources, the presence of many buy-and-sell competitors also affect farmgate prices and credit privileges. Kin and neighborly relations do signify in these processes.

The necessity of timing in the handling of fresh produce, highly susceptible to spoilage, entails a lot of preparatory work starting before dawn. Generally, home refrigerators notwithstanding, ice is not available in great quantities in Talangban. Star narrates that when there are fishpond harvests, those who seek to be able to sell produce have to watch (or even join) the operator's harvest from around two o'clock in the morning.

If you are not there, you may not be able to get a share of the stock because of the competition. There are usually be 5-15 (mostly women) buyers-and-sellers present. The owners' laborers drive the fish into the nets; portions are placed on bancas and brought to the side of the ponds, transferred into baskets, and weighed. But what you can get is what you can sell; hence, some vendors do not wait on land, and get waist-deep into the water to approach the net or meet the bancas. Sometimes, what you have in your own basket is even taken over by others. Then, you have to go home and change from wet clothes, have something to eat, and proceed to the markets. But there are times when, at Tay Condring's fishponds, his daughter monopolizes or contracts the sale of the produce which she sends to Metro Manila.³⁹

In comparison, the initial sales carried out by KMT members manifest an emerging marketing structure over which the producers themselves have more control, even in the timing of sale of their product. They can stagger the schedule of their harvests for retail or wholesale purposes and according to the size of their produce (segregated in cages); they set their own prices, carry out their own sales, and reap proportional shares in profits. Their initial ventures indicate a ready acceptance of their product which they first sold at the Sunday market at Minoro to advertise their organization, activity as well as their

³⁹ She undertakes deliveries for Condring and is a schoolteacher at the primary school in Talangban. When there are harvests, she does not hold classes, or comes to school late. She provided expenses for the construction of the additional 'classroom' at the primary school.

product. They have also ventured into the Kalibo market, with the FSDP and other UPV staff as ready "trial" customers for their products.

Nevertheless, heavy rains and flash floods adversely affect the cultured species in ponds and cages which are sensitive to changes in the level of acidity. High flood waters also cause an overflow from fishponds and release the relatively high-value cultured species to the wild. This may cause a temporary bounty for those who can retrieve the whatever-sized fishfarm overflows; but the ramifications of the loss of the harvests adversely affect those who rely on selling their produce. Transport conditions on the poorly maintained village road hamper the residents' procurement of basic necessities; the alternate route via the river crossing into Pinamunitan in Lalab, is not that easy (or a quick one) if one was carrying some 30 kilos or so of produce which should reach the market at the earliest possible time.

6.2. Other Complementary Activities

6.2.1. *Rice and Other Farming Activities*

On the whole, the rolling topography of Camaligan confines the cultivation of rice and other lowland crops. Moreover, soil type and fertility as well as the lack of an irrigation system also inhibit the variety and productivity of crops.⁴⁰ Also, saline waters often overflow from adjacent fishponds into ricelands, particularly at Agsam.

The family farms relied on family labor and sagibin (exchange labor), an example of mutual aid in communal exchange widely-known in the Philippines as bayanihan, especially for rice planting and harvest.⁴¹ Locally, this practice is known as sagibin and also applies to group effort in the construction of homes or fishing gears. However, Ruth observes that at present this practice relating to the construction of houses often involves some

⁴⁰ Three soil types are found in Camaligan: hydrosol is found along rivers and creeks of Tubahon, Langka, Agsam and Talangban; and both Bantog clay and Sara clay loam are found inland. Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

⁴¹ Miralao, "Time Allocation Studies," 1992, 31.

'token' cash payment, implying that one's availability to provide assist is more critical. Similarly, Linda explains in the practice in the group work for the construction of fishing gears normally involves payment, about ₱ 50/day. While no payments are expected among relatives who assist each other, though food is provided for all. These observations indicate a commercialization of the vaunted bayanihan in rural Philippines.

As a whole, rice farms in the CAMACA area may be characterized by features of their cultivation: bat-oe (upland), eanas (lowland) and kaingin (slash-and-burn). Unlike the first two types of farms which are plowed with the use of the water buffalo as draft animal, work on kaingin farms is done by hand with digging implements.⁴² The term bisaya refers to indigenous rice varieties widely grown on most of early rice farms developed, even on Camaligan's hilly areas.⁴³ Characteristically, these species grow up to the waist level and take about five months to harvest; further, they are described as resistant to various pests and diseases.⁴⁴ Notwithstanding the official adoption of the international metric system, traditional units of dry measure still prevail in accounting for paeay or bugas.⁴⁵

Since the 1960s, the national government has promoted the cultivation of high-yielding varieties (HYVs) which take only three months to mature. The more rapid intervals are dependent on timely and adequate water, chemical fertilizers and pesticides as well as the use of machinery (handtractors and threshers). Interestingly, Sela remarks that she would be embarrassed if she

⁴² Kitoy and Pilo recall kaingin practices which have largely disappeared even from the higher grounds of Caiyang and Magubahay: seeds were directly planted into holes made on the ground and tracts were periodically left fallow as new areas were cleared for use.

⁴³ Bisaya is used to distinguish native species (e.g., rice, chickens, etc.) from hybrid varieties.

⁴⁴ Some popular varieties were the amarilyo, kinaw-itan, and sulig. Ramona's father's bat-oe used five gantas of paeay as seeds of varieties such as kapurnas, kasuba, magkarotot, and kapor. Josie's father used similar varieties on a one-hectare eanas; the more extensive bat-oe of Sela's father required two cavans.

⁴⁵ A ganta is equivalent to more than two kilos; a cavan (a large sack containing about 25 gantas). Star explains that the weight of the rice produced from one cavan of paeay is variable, depending on the way the paeay is cleaned. At the most, one cavan of paeay produces 43.5 kilos of rice.

participated in contemporary harvests. She cannot do it well since she does not know how to handle the gaeab (sickle), having been accustomed to the shorter kayog or ani (harvest knife) commonly used during her more active days.⁴⁶

The large-scale shift to the use of the HYVs that signalled the "Green Revolution" increased harvests and allowed widespread double cropping. However, it also increased production costs for optimal harvests.⁴⁷ In the essentially rain-fed systems at Camaligan, farmers are sometimes able to double their cropping within a calendar year. With only one crop, the season covers the month of June to September. With adequate rain, the first cropping period called amihan covers March through May; the second cropping period called dinag-on spans September through November.⁴⁸ Whenever weather conditions allowed a double crop, there was continuous work among farmers, mainly men; but the poor rate of production stems from inappropriate application of the requirements of the HYVs. These include not only the timely and adequate amounts of water but also the timely weeding and application of expensive fertilizers.

In terms of size, rice farms throughout Camaligan are not substantial nor economically viable. There are only three cases where total holdings of rice lands by any single person measures more than four hectares. Normally, moreover, the plots are not contiguous with each other. At Talangban, the largest piece of rice land measures less than 700 square meters (0.07 hectare). Much of the entire area is either rocky or marshy and too saline for cultivation.

Moreover, both Kitoy and Pilo attest that only about one-third of those who farm throughout Camaligan work on lands which are not their own, i.e., most farmers own their own plots. There are few opportunities for pamugon

⁴⁶ The term ani in Filipino is more widely used.

⁴⁷ Star explains that with HYVs, one hectare of rice land normally requires three sacks or cavans of rice seedlings. In irrigated areas elsewhere in Panay, there is some practice of triple cropping with HYVs.

⁴⁸ Dag-on literally means 'year' apparently referring to the second crop's year-end schedule.

(wage labor on farms); and whenever there are occasions, workers earn between ₱ 30 and ₱ 50 daily, far below the prescribed minimum farm wage in 1993 of ₱ 64.35.⁴⁹ No matter if one was a landowner, share tenant, or leaseholder, one still needed to have other sources of food and/or income because of insecure harvests. When the weather is too wet or too dry, the produce is inadequate; hence, farmers are often not able to repay what they usually have to borrow to reproduce the production cycle.

This situation in Camaligan is borne out by findings in the province of Bulacan. Where rice lands are exceedingly small, even in the best seasons, the HYV technology does not produce enough for both household subsistence and the reproduction of the farm, exacerbating the farmers' heavy indebtedness which eats into whatever future incomes. It is often the wives who feel the responsibility to reconcile budgets in households which could barely meet their needs.⁵⁰

Before the local cooperative began its rice trading business, there were few local rice traders at Camaligan; nor did outsiders come in. The producers sold their paeay themselves to the National Food Authority warehouse at Kalibo. Until today, those who have a kiskisan (small rice mills) do not buy the paeay of other producers. Kitoy explains that owners use them for their own produce and only service small amounts for others at a time, for a fee in cash or in kind. Unlike the larger establishments in Luzon and Mindanao, these local entrepreneurs do not have capital nor transport facilities to purchase in bulk. Further, there are millers in nearby villages who are able to buy paeay. As an alternative livelihood, therefore, small-scale farming is no real prospect in Camaligan, not least in Talangban.

Only a few of the subjects and members of their natal families had access to rice farms or experiences with farm labor. Mainly in the past, the

⁴⁹ Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

⁵⁰ Bautista & Dungo, "Differential Impact of Farm Technology," 1987, 308-309.

families of Sela, Lerma, Ramona, Star, Ling, Linda, and Josie relied on family labor for planting, weeding, and harvesting tasks on various small farms. Except for Ramona, these women have not depended on rice farming to sustain themselves and their families; to this day, she oversees the work at a farm in Magubahay. Her work with Panong at Morales, Balete also indicates the practice of sharecropping or lease of farms beyond the homeplace.

There were more opportunities for farm work when direct seeding had not yet replaced the common practice which required transplanting; also, when the harvest technology yielded some usable amounts from gleaning. As a young teenager, Lerma and her sisters hired out their labor along with other young girls in the village. Ling hired out her labor only once in recent times to raise cash for Garing's expenses on his father's leased farm at Aranas. The only other instance of farm labor among the women and their families involved Virgo's mother as a sakada (seasonal plantation worker) along with her father in Negros when they fled from Libacao during the war.

6.2.2. *Other Plant and Animal Husbandry*

Although rice, coconut, and banana are grown throughout Camaligan, grasses are the dominant species.⁵¹ Further, the prevalence of thin secondary growths in the surrounding uplands, mostly planted with coconuts, do not guarantee a secure watershed nor the prevention of rapid erosion into the rivers. Trees such as anonang, dita and alagaw indicate that there are only secondary growth forests in the area.⁵²

Many witnesses recall, however, that there used to be large natural forests in the CAMACA area. Various types of wood, used as house posts and beams had a yellowish core which indicated their maturity. Among common species named were kubi, hamugni, santol, langka, narra, madre de cacao, tabaw, pagatpat, and ngaray. Branches were also harvested and bound as

⁵¹ Amor seco and cogon are predominant, indicative that the soil is acidic. Other flora with medicinal value still exist (e.g., bunlaw, madre de cacao, palochina and manunggal).

⁵² Rodriguez & Hondrade, Food System in Batan, 1994.

rahetas (bundles of cut pieces of fuelwood) for home use and/or sale purposes. Ramona also recalls that forest and mangrove areas at Talangban had trees as tall as coconuts and with trunks as thick as mangoes. Sela's father's estate had species called obhayan and yango that he sold as firewood to buyers from New Washington and Bay-ang. Dodoy also recalls that there used to be so many star apple and guava trees at Talangban such that, as a youth, he could fill a sack with fruits within an hour.

Existing patches of mangroves along intertidal zones of Talangban are but remnants of once verdant forests.³³ Dodoy remarks that mangroves are not a versatile type of wood, particularly as housing material. They cracked when sawed into wooden planks, hence, whole pieces had to be used. Moreover, these are not suitable for outdoors because they weakened when wet; thus, they are mainly used as posts and beams within homes. Many residents comment that, even before fishpond construction, pieces sold nearby or sent in boat-loads to Manila as firewood exacerbated the dissipation of this resource in the area. Further, certain types were also used to produce salt (see below). Dodoy attests that when fishponds began to be developed at Talangban, there was already not much left of the mangrove forests.³⁴ Kitoy specifies that twenty-one bundles of about fifty sticks, totalling about a thousand pieces, was valued at two pesos; these were transported by concessionaires to New Washington for transshipment to Manila.

There has been intensive use of a few species which are not systematically cultivated. Leaves of buri (Raphia pedunculata) trees are processed as daet or buntal (raffia fiber) or woven into mats, bags, and sacks for household use or sale. More recently, nito (an uncultivated forest vine) is

³³ Common species of mangroves are called bakhaw in Aklanon and Ilonggo and bakawan in Filipino.

³⁴ Dodoy himself is reforesting them around his fishponds at Aranas, Balete. Recent efforts to reforest bakhaw along Talangban's fishpond boundaries are noted in Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 84-88.

used to make baskets, trays, and other handicrafts.⁵⁵ Then and now, locally grown bamboo is used as primary housing material, fishing gears, and a wide variety of everyday implements; hence, the local stock is rapidly being exhausted. There are indications of deliberate efforts to maintain and propagate this resource in the surrounding upland areas.⁵⁶ Most of the homes of the subjects (except for Ramona and Lolit) are mainly built of this material. Star's husband Berto and other KMT members had to obtain bamboo for the floating cages from Tigbaw in Lalab, demonstrating how distant from the coasts the available sources of this formerly omnipresent material are.

In addition, as in most Philippine rural areas, the foliage of palm species called nipa (*Nipa fruticans*) is used, mainly by women, to make pawod as roofing material. Throughout Batan, Camaligan is the village most associated with its production. The wide tracts of nipa groves which are somewhat cultivated are owned by prominent individuals, including Coret, Aure, and Irin. They abound close to rivers and fishponds; and, despite the ingress of saline waters, small rice fields are cultivated interspersed between nipa and coconut areas.

However, vast village areas are also underutilized because of a once popular practice of coconut monocropping. The drop of copra's feasibility as a cash crop has made led to a more versatile use of the coconut tree as a whole. There are a multitude of everyday uses for coconut fruits (as food and as animal feed, at various stages of ripeness) as well as their husks, leaves, and branches. The fathers of Ramona and Josie were among those who collected tuba for sale and for their own use. Josie's mother sold whatever was in excess of what her husband usually drank; her sons or sons-in-law obtain what she regularly consumes nowadays. Garing also collects a glass or two every

⁵⁵ The more skilled group whose training was facilitated by FSDP was that from Lalab. There is not much nito at Camaligan in the absence of wooded areas; Lalab has relatively more forest cover left compared with Camaligan. Star's husband Berto has not used his learned skills for commercial purposes.

⁵⁶ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 24-25.

evening for his mother-in-law Ramona. Apart from the common use of tuba, midribs of coconut leaves are used to produce various types of furniture and handicrafts.³⁷ With the decrease of timber from forests, however, mature trunks of coconuts are increasingly used as alternative sources of lumber. Josie's husband Teban is among those who saw coconut trunks into lumber. A municipal ordinance attempts to regulate the indiscriminate cutting down of coconuts by banning their transport beyond the area.

Apart from coconuts, the common fruit trees cultivated within homelots at Talangban are jackfruit, mangoes, papaya, and bananas. Newer shade and fruit tree species are also being introduced (e.g., mahogany, gmelina, and rambutan). Only a few of Talangban households maintain fruit trees as food supplement or other uses.³⁸ Neither are there many households that maintain vegetable plots; but Sela has the most extensive garden at Talangban.³⁹ The oft-cited excuse is that the pigs that they or their neighbors raise destroy whatever they try to grow; they cannot afford to buy bamboo to fence in their gardens. Yet among the few assiduous growers is Leticia Solis at Maeabago who sells from her home or peddles seasonal and other vegetables throughout the village.

Like most other women in the community, the subjects raise a few livestock and poultry. A common reason for raising pigs is that these domesticated animals are a form of savings or investment; chickens and, occasionally ducks, are mainly for household use. Ramona specifies that she raises pigs for several purposes: for the sitio fiesta, for sale for cash requirements of family members, and for pugo arrangements to replenish her

³⁷ Skills training for this purpose was also sponsored by FSDP.

³⁸ Only the households of Sela, Lerma, Ramona, Star, Ling, and Josie grow some fruit.

³⁹ Sela's produce is mainly for konsumo. Star comments that Sela usually sells only to those who have cash or to people from whom she can expect something in return; when Star tries to buy from her, she refuses payment.

stock.⁶⁰ Like a few others, Ling cares for carabaos used as draft animals for the farms operated by her mother Ramona and her husband Garing; at various times, Ramona and Josie also raise cows.

6.2.3. *Small-Scale Industry and Petty Commerce*

Apart from trade of fishery products, the earliest indications of commerce and trade in Camaligan are generally recognized as those brought in by Tagalog-speaking traders from Batangas during the Japanese occupation. Pilo recalls that their stocks were carried on sail boats from New Washington and peddled throughout the CAMACA villages. Ironically, until the end of the 1970s, relative difficulties in reaching the area, by boat or on foot are regarded as factors against the rapid entry of commerce. However, it was this isolation that featured a variety of forms of self-provisioning and also manifested home-based local industries and petty trading.

The predominance of nipa around Talangban has been a traditional resource for women, for household use and for sale. To this day, some women have working arrangements with the owners of nipa lands who also handle the bulk sale of the pawod they produce. When her mother was widowed, Ramona made pawod from leaves obtained from lands owned by the Ingallas in her youth to support herself in school. With the help of her daughter, Sela still fulfills orders today. Josie occasionally helps her widowed mother Auring who tries to support her own needs from pawod production.

Notably, Lerma's parents, Maning and Eva, cultivate, manage and have access to the nipa plantation of Irin. They moved with their children into Sentro in the early 1980s due to the difficulties that her mother Eva found with the nipa business in Lalab. They entered into an arrangement with Irin which obtained them a dwelling formerly a shed used as a garage. In the past, Eva

⁶⁰ Pugo refers to an arrangement wherein her pig mates with that owned by another person; the resulting piglets are then shared. Throughout the months when we stayed with her, there was usually a pig running around the kitchen-cum-dining area since to leave it outside would attract thieves.

paid others, like Ruth's mother, ₱ 10 per hundred for sewing to fulfill orders. Nowadays, she pays ₱ 30 per hundred pieces; when sold from Talangban, a hundred finished pieces costs ₱ 250. Until today, Maning cuts and gather the leaves which Eva sews into thatches. Even without direct buyers, Eva continues to produce thatches which are then passed on to Irin.⁶¹

Similarly, but on a lesser scale, buri leaves are woven as sacks and bags for storage of paey and a variety of other uses; some are also used to make banig (sleeping mat). Ramona's mother Norma used to weave buri mats for sale; her older sister who is also Linda's mother still weaves buri sacks today. Ramona remembers that her mother could weave two family-sized mats in a week and sold them at ₱ 2.50 each at the Banga market. However, Ramona notes that Norma's mat-making was not a regular activity; she made mats only when she had "nothing else to do." Presently, young buri leaves are processed into daet fibers by women of Minoro and Tubahon and passed on to the cooperative for sale as materials for handicrafts production (e.g., bags, hats, table linen, wall hangings) elsewhere. The common problem of scarce raw materials hampers this income-generating ventures by women.⁶²

Appropriately, the name of Asinan in Talangban derives from the fact that this was where a particular type of asin (salt) was made; in fact, people refer to the existence of a pabrika (factory) in this area.⁶³ But the practice of making doedoe (blocks of salt manufactured from sea water) has virtually disappeared, along with the type of mangrove known as piyapi (Avicennia officinalis or alba),⁶⁴ large pieces of which are burned to make the ash

⁶¹ It is probable that Eva also has an arrangement with nipa from Coret's lands, since she recommended that I spoke to Coret first when I negotiated to buy some from her.

⁶² None of the selected women do any work with raffia.

⁶³ The fact that salt preserves as well as improves the palatability of a variety of foodstuffs establishes the significance of this commodity. Vinegar serves the same purpose, and is obtainable from both coconut and nipa. However, there has been no significant production of vinegar in the locality. When I once casually asked around why this was so, various comments referred to the fact that tuba was consumed long before it had the chance to become vinegar.

⁶⁴ Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 158.

ingredient of this product.⁶⁵ Sela's mother sold doedoe that she herself produced. Sela and Dodoy testify that other types of mangroves can also be used, but piyapi was the best. Its wood was hard and the leaves were salty; it was not very useful for carpentry because it had very crooked branches.

A few women (like Ramona and her mother) produced apog for the popular chewing habit, especially among older women. This white substance, lime or calcium oxide made from ground tuway shells, is wrapped with a nut in leaves of buyo (betel pepper plant) and chewed as mama.⁶⁶ Among others, Lolit's father still collects and sells tuba, his main income source since he gave up their fishpond in the 1970s. But unlike other rural communities, where food items based on rice are frequently available at local markets, sweets like the suman and jbus are only available in Talangban soon after harvests. The sticky variety of rice needed is rarely grown nowadays; and if some people do so, they mostly deliver the produce to Kalibo.⁶⁷ The only commercially-produced item based on rice is pop-rice, a snack food produced and sold by the local cooperative at its consumer store in Minoro. Moreover, the occasional sale by women of various kaean-onon and cool drinks (e.g., the enterprises of Virgo, Ramona, and Ling) are viable only for a few months of the year. Ling even admits that she prepares her banana cue and juice sales only when she is in the mood or in particular need of cash.

There are several baraka all over Talangban, mainly operated by women at their homes.⁶⁸ Indeed, one of the reasons for resistance to the idea

⁶⁵ Pilo, Dodoy and Sela combined to provide a description of the laborious process. The ash is placed into a bekid (a container made from particular type of nipa called tiklis) into which sea water was then poured. The mixture of sea water and ash that drops is saved in metal containers which are heated until the blend hardens. This process requires about five transfers of the hardened mixture into separate metal containers until it is ready for sale or use.

⁶⁶ When her mother produced apog, Ramona remembers that she also sold it at for five centavos per measure.

⁶⁷ The women themselves admit occasionally prepare these types of food for special occasions like Christmas, birthdays, fiestas, wakes, and especially on All Soul's Day (November 2). The sticky rice variety is locally known as pilit; in Filipino, it is called malagkit.

⁶⁸ Throughout the Philippines, these are known as sari-sari stores.

of putting up the cooperative at Talangban was the perceived loss of business that its consumer store was going to bring to these small store operators. Ramona, Virgo, and until recently, Lolit operated stores from their respective homes. At Punta, Lerma still has one today, along with another ran by Aure;⁶⁹ still another operated by Mitos Morales is at Sentro. A common problem identified by the women, however, was collection from creditors whom they could ill afford to displease. However, Ramona cites a favorable arrangement for collection that she had with Simplicio Alba during the 1950s: he was having a fishpond constructed at that time, and directed the people that he hired to obtain whatever they needed from Ramona's baraka. Upon payday, their credit was deducted from what Simplicio owed them.

Prominent among the local entrepreneurs, with evidently more operating capital, is the self-made Virgilio Castillo at Crossing Calamay. His wife actually minds their large store with their eldest daughter from their home.⁷⁰ He also operates a relatively large-scale alsada business of aqua-marine products (milkfish, prawns, shrimps, crabs), with Virgo among his suki. As a local fish/shrimp dealer, he extends credit to those who regularly make wholesale deliveries. The scope of his operation is suggested by the fact that his suki include persons from other parts of Camaligan and Lalab. There is yet another smaller baraka run by a woman at Crossing Calamay.

In addition to these local businesses are itinerant traders from other places who sell various fresh, cooked, or preserved food products at the weekly market of Minoro. There are also occasional fish vendors with

⁶⁹ Aure's store has batteries, rice, sugar, milk, salt, coffee, bread, candies, noodles, sardines, Pepsi-cola drinks delivered by the company.

⁷⁰ He is a civil engineering graduate turned local entrepreneur. Apart from the film showings, the store sells onions, tomatoes, toothpaste, salt, milk, coffee, cooking oil, condiments (ketchup, soy sauce, monosodium glutamate, pepper), rice, rice bran, gas, noodle packs, candies, bread and biscuits, a variety of canned goods (including tomato sauce), soap, flashlight bulbs, batteries, rum, beer, soft drinks, cigarettes, etc.

products from commercial fishing outfits, who travel on motorbikes throughout the village with boxes loaded with frozen fish.

Himself an example of a local boy who made good with relatively fair opportunities, Dodoy identifies Condring, Virgo's father-in-law, as an exception among people who have opted to remain in Talangban. With imagination and initiative, he was able to improve his lot [pangabuhi]. Initially, Condring did not have large assets. Whatever advantage he had over others was minimal. He started with small copra and nipa businesses and only later bought and operated fishponds. Ramona's father also used to sell copra, spending long hours in galingkad (copra-making) after harvesting thrice a year. Despite its decline as a profitable industry, some small-scale copra farming persists. This is attested by experiences of Star and Lolit, through their connections through kin and in-laws at Lalab where more vast coconut farms are found.

Outside of the above-mentioned local efforts by which households obtain revenues is also through gifts and remittances. The most obvious case of the latter is Lolit's, whose husband is employed abroad. There are other isolated instances among the subjects, as in the case of Ramona (and Ling), whose son (and brother) occasionally sends dollars from overseas. Further, there are the usual cash and other gifts from siblings and other relations who occasionally come back to visit their family and homeplace. On occasion, the presents also come in the form of dry goods (usually clothes) which the recipients can trade and gain profits.

6.3. Changing Conditions of the Talangban Fishery

The dominant influence of the fishery on the lives of the women and their households is undeniable. Hence, it is significant to understand their comprehension of changes that have affected their pangabuhi-an and pangitan-an. The following discussion focuses on their own and other local accounts of the changing conditions of the fishery at Talangban.

When fish and shrimps were really abundant, shrimp processing was done for sale purposes, the products consisting of the still common dayok, ginamos (shrimp paste) and dang-dang (dried shrimps skewered on bamboo sticks). However, most fish processing was only for home consumption, usually the gusaw (juvenile mullet) which is sun-dried. Not surprisingly, all of the women declared that the fishery has not been as productive as it was even just a few years ago; Star marks the changes as occurring since 1988. Most of the women attribute this situation to there being more people now in Talangban using new and different types of gears (Sela, Ramona, Star, Ling, Linda, Ruth, and Josie). Ling indicates that the fishery itself has deteriorated, even if the methods of fish capture have improved; those who used the saeoran before were able to fill small boats with their catch. Ruth calls attention to the improved capacity of multiple devices used by individual fishers and Josie comments on the closeness of the gears to each other. Now that almost every household has its own fishing gear, the catch is limited, even if the conditions are right "according to the calendar".⁷¹

Virgo remarks that one cannot really tell anymore even if it is supposed to be a good fishing period. Nowadays, fishing is really by luck. She and Roming had counted on making good during the last amihan; but they had very low catch on their saeoran. She attributes the situation to the fact that, other gears almost surround their saeoran, many of which are tulis. The flow of potential catch is barred by their nets which remain lowered for longer periods. Their bamboo enclosures also block the flow of water and catch.

Linda, Virgo and Star remark on the relative shallowness of the river which limits catches upon which they rely. Virgo adds that there is some discussion in New Washington towards a ban on the tulis since they contribute to the rapid shallowing of the rivers. Previously, Ruth stresses, even when

⁷¹ Calendars with clear and accurate lunar and tidal information are among the most useful presents one can favor people in these fishing communities.

only a few pieces were caught, the fishes were large. Ling bewails the low produce; she mentions that when Garing first used the timing, they had abundant catches and were able to buy the things that they wanted, e.g., refrigerator and television set.

Similarly, Sela and Ruth comment on the inadequate returns to fishing effort of the limited catch. Lolit, Star, and Josie remark on the low amounts of catch which signify food deficiencies for their families. Evidently, however, shell resources appear not to have declined as much the fish populations. To this day, most of the subjects, often with children, gather shells for konsumo. Perhaps because Lerma lives right on the river's edge, she associates the decline in productivity to recent strong typhoons and the subsequent floods. Linda adds that when floods come their way, they cause suea (i.e., fish and shrimps) to move toward the sea.

Interestingly, some of the women's comments refer to changes in the amount of time the men spent in fishing. For Lerma, poor fishing conditions and Natan's part-time status with fishpond work nowadays, make him spend more time at home. Similarly, Star observes that when fishing effort was more productive, the men spent less time at home because they were busy on the river. This changed situation results in the men spending more time at home because they realize that prolonged efforts will not likely be useful. She wishes that they could be somehow assisting more in housework; but she notes that they prefer to spend time finding recreation outside! Virgo also remarks that the situation has not changed the amount of time spent by the men outside the home; the men in the community go about their usual "business", i.e., staying out of the house and leaving the women to do all household chores and care for the children.

When I raised the matter of the state of the local fishery during an FGD, Linda observed that not only did the previous generation have plenty of catch, by the boatload, but fishery products were also very cheap. Ramona declared that they only cost a peso a kilo. Linda also recalled that shrimps

used to be twisted on sticks and dried, since there was no ice to preserve them; with five shrimps on each stick, ten sticks sold for a peso. As well, she remembers as a child that a large piece of tinapa (smoked fish) sold only for twenty-five centavos. When she told these facts to her children, they did not believe her. One even commented that if they were that cheap, why didn't she buy a lot for them! Star reacted that she bought some small fish with a bakud (a five-centavo coin); Ramona countered that she got the same at two centavos, and that, at present, it sells for ₱ 45 a hundred in Altavas.

The women's observations are supported by observations made by others. Dodoy speaks of a time when there was no real monetary value for the shrimp caught in the area. Shrimp cost only between ₱ 10 and ₱ 15 a kilo; nowadays, they sell between ₱ 60 and ₱ 80. This explains why people are now after the cash value of this product rather than suea. They buy ice, put their night's catch into a thermochest and bring it to the Kalibo market in the morning. Besides, he knowingly observes, people of Talangban are tired of eating shrimps; hence, they sell them and buy meat. Pilo attributes the virtual absence of processing to local tastes; people in the village do not care to eat processed fish or shrimps; they prefer fresh fishery products.

Other remarks refer to the shallowing of nearby waters, evidenced by the fact that several haliwhagan (water channels) across mudflats have become impassable. Pilo attributes the depletion of fish resources primarily to the development of fishponds, a process which has brought wealth only to a few people. In addition, the creation of fishponds represents a breach of nature and adds to the uneven distribution of the wealth. Politicians have maladministered the use of these resources.⁷² Even if poisonous pesticides are not flushed out from ponds, the mere impounding of the water aggravates siltation problems. When the depth of the water is low, the fish can not thrive. These conditions

⁷² Whereas alternatives are being considered, Pilo offers an admittedly radical solution: "to (destroy) empty the ponds so as to restore the natural bounty of the river."

project long-term effects not only for the villagers' livelihoods but also on the transport, trade and shipping arteries in the bay area.

These circumstances have been brought about by human intervention and appropriation. Pilo and Kitoy relate that the Gigi river at Aksam was a useful waterway but was ordered closed by the kapitan; one could approach the tugbungan at Asinan only on a small pumpboat. Similarly, the Aksam river at Minoro was closed off by a konsehal and is now a fishpond. Dodoy confirms that parts of the Aksam river had been converted into fishponds; it can not be entirely closed off because even fishponds need an outlet into the river. Further, there are rampant violations of fishery laws. These occur when fishpond operators release toxic substances into the river; as well when there no longer exist strips of mangrove or swamplands at least 20 meters wide along the shoreline. On the part of small fishers, their use of fine mesh nets contribute to the rapid depletion of the resources.

Recent technical studies on Batan Bay and its tributaries do substantiate that the bay itself is becoming more shallow while the depth of the eastern portion of Tinagong Dagat is increasing. The phenomenon is attributed to siltation caused by upland and mangrove deforestation as well as the proliferation of fishing gears and mussel farms on the bay. The loss of navigational spaces for fishers is not only a result of environmental changes but also deliberate appropriations by fishpond developers. The need to dredge the New Washington river in 1989 was a clear indication of this problem.⁷³

If the present rate of sedimentation continues, the entire bay area can be reclaimed land within the next 10 years. The most appropriate long-term solution lies in the reduction of the rate of silt build-up, initially through restoring the mangrove and nipa forests and those of the immediate upland. Moreover, a more immediate measure recommended is the reduction and

⁷³ See Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 1-5. See also Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 68-72.

proper zoning of sediment-aggregating structures of fishing gears that impede the natural flow of the waters.⁷⁴

As a whole, declining catches for Camaligan fisherfolk are a consequence of a number of technical factors: siltation or shallowing of local water bodies, release of pesticides from the ponds, removal of mangrove cover, as well as the proliferation of fishers operating multiple gears on the same resource. With decreasing diversity, the extent of the decline is estimated from catches two to ten times higher than current levels.⁷⁵ The advantage of stationary gears that act as fish shelters is offset by the use of fine-mesh nets which deplete renewable stocks.⁷⁶ Existing biodiversities and productivity in the upper reaches of estuarine areas are affected by all of these changes on the surrounding coastal ecology.⁷⁷

Nevertheless, Dodoy's observation captures a more positive and dynamic picture of the prospects for life at Talangban, provided some social problems are overcome:

If [people] go to the river and catch two kilos of shrimps, they could make over a hundred pesos from the sale; if they are lucky enough to catch about five kilos, then they would have some reserve. If we average their catch, they are much better off than those who are farming. But the mistake of people here is that they lack continuity in their efforts to make an income, they do not strive enough. If they happen to make money, say, about three thousand pesos, they tend to say that they now have money, so they will rest a bit, do some drinking and gambling for a while. They do earn, but they do not aim high; they do not have persistence towards a certain goal or target. Persistence may not enable all who strive to reach their goals, but at least they work at it.

For this reason, Dodoy is exerting whatever influence to allow the people in his homeplace reasonable opportunities to improve their pangabuhì. He shares

⁷⁴ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 3-7.

⁷⁵ Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993, 108-124.

⁷⁶ Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 17-20.

⁷⁷ See Lao, et al., Food Base of Batan Bay, 1991, 9-13. See also appendix E in Kelly, Development as Degradation, 1993.

the information, for example, that there have been interested parties elsewhere in Camaligan who have been curious about the technology and venture of the KMT. However, he advised them to keep away and give the small fishers a chance to develop something of their own, since the interested parties already had their own fishponds.

6.4. Discussion: Peasant Fisheries as Pangabuhi-an and Pangitan-an

This chapter specifically argues that changing environmental and social conditions affecting the local fishery activities and resources contribute to the shaping of the women's work and lives at Talangban. From their individual and combined experiences, changing circumstances have evidently pushed women into situations which open new avenues and opportunities. Most of their undertakings indicate deliberate efforts on their part to contribute more actively to their households' pangabuhi and pangita.

Until the 1980s, the natural abundance in the local fishery supported the self-sufficiency and autonomy of Talangban households. The increasing pressure of extraction activities to which they contribute has not only degraded the environment but has also affected the volume of their individualized production. More recently, the significant enclosures by fishponds and the depletion of "open-access" fishery resources have led households to rely more heavily, but less directly, on aquaculture. This trend, accelerated by infrastructure and transport developments, is most evident in the relationship which emerges between fish vendors engaging in the sale of aquaculture products which has become more pronounced within the past decade.

Despite infrastructure improvements, the structures of daily life and work processes at Talangban appear to be far removed from the village center at Minoro. What appears to signify is only the fact that the new road and transport systems effectively link them to the thriving markets of Kalibo. As provincial center, there is a daily open market, unlike in other areas commonly accessed by the women vendors at New Washington, Libacao, and Banga, and the even smaller ones in nearby villages of Lalab and Aranas.

Compared with the generation of their parents, the subjects show fewer evidences of self-provisioning and income-substitution endeavors. Only shell-gathering and hog-raising are the most common subsistence activities. Pawod production for cash is an activity only among a few; nevertheless, the women's work is poorly compensated in terms of prices that obtain from intermediaries.⁷⁸ Whatever other handicraft or other petty sales venture that exist are regarded as "side-line" activities without the prospect of developing into any specialized local enterprise or industry. Moreover, exchange labor systems appear to be increasingly eroded by commercial contracts signified by direct cash payments; as well, in even more explicitly inequitably but tied relationships with suki among their buyers and sellers who also become their capitalists and/or inevitable sources of credit.

Where capture fishing ventures of household members produce surpluses (or at least what are defined as surpluses), the women have a ready product to convert into cash. This is not possible on a daily basis; hence the recourse to the sale of other fishery products. However, an exclusion point for participation in petty commerce involving fishpond products is found at the dawn harvests. Though the existing buy-and-sell practice with local producers allows a kind of "open-access," the graphic descriptions of the women's struggle to obtain stocks are depressing and degrading. So are the women's efforts to apportion whatever profits, particularly for the day's suea. The social network support from family, kin and neighbors is not always readily available, largely subject to the same forces. Nor have entitlements from social welfare programs of the state adequately reached (if at all addressed) the health and child care supports to relieve pressures on women.

Moreover, the significance of influential personalities probably explains the women's attitudes and assessments of the barangay leadership and their

⁷⁸ At the time of my field work, ₱ 20 from the sale price of a hundred pieces of nipa produced by the women goes to their usual outlet or suki, even if the sale is transacted directly with them.

perceptions of the village's political dynamics. Through personal holdings, business, and employment connections with Talangban residents, Irin (of Lalab) and Melde (of Aranas) appear to be the more significant links of locals with the world outside. Most recently, Dodoy's frequent presence and philanthropic involvement with the CMPCI is perhaps leading Talangban into more than just a formal relationship with the rest of the village of Camaligan. Definitely, the successes of the KMT, will be at the forefront.

As a whole, rice farming and fishing have always provided food and the principal opportunities for wage and non-wage work for the villagers at Camaligan. Apart from the limited prospects of ~~pawod~~ production and contractual labor on fishponds, however, there is no local enterprise that generates employment nor significant resources. Because of meager incomes from local types of employment and the seasonality of work opportunities, most households tend to have more than one member engaged in one or more types of subsistence and self-employment in petty commercial activities. These circumstances engender a drudgery; viewed more positively, they also release creative energies and induce the development of multi-talents for various activities (e.g., devising nets and traps, construction of boats and gear, as well as learning to ride on jeepney rooftops). As well, learning to cooperatively work with others, in the light of the predominantly individualized fishing effort currently in practice, is an adaptation that some of the fisherfolk are attempting today.

For survival and sustenance at Talangban, there is a much dependence on what goes on in the peasant fishery. Most of their food-production and distribution endeavors have been described as deriving from a diminishing "informal welfare system based on the natural environment."⁷⁹ For a community which has long relied in many ways on produce from capture fishing, however, the women and their households now manifest a strong

⁷⁹ Kelly, Degradation as Development, 1993, 104-105.

reliance on their obtaining a livelihood from fishpond harvests to supplement local capture produce for exchange often, beyond their immediate community.

The above discussions specify the conditions that situate the women's material struggles. The following chapter 7 links the overall empirical conditions with theoretical issues and other similar situations.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENDER DIVIDE

7.1. Issues Raised by Pangabuhi and Pangita

7.1.1. *In Intrahousehold Relations*

Several specific insights reiterate aspects of the gender divide emerging from the way the women came to distinguish the concepts of pangabuhi and pangita: first, they identify the locale of whatever type of activity they refer to within reference to the home; second, they indicate delineations of what are appropriately women's and men's work; third, they associate the locale of their pangabuhi-an or pangitan-an with the proper type of work for women and men; and, fourth, they detect whether or not the activity produced some monetary compensation.

These discourses from the women shape specific divisions of domains or spheres of their interests. They not only signify the ideological restrictions that influence how they create or react to situations; they also materially restrict the scope of alternatives that they can hope to successfully initiate, especially as individuals. In general terms, I focus on the first three overlapping points that the women raised in their stories. Specific illustrations from the women's own words in chapter 5 are self-evident.

The women's usual reply to my query "What do you do?" was the phrase "I only stay at home." This was normally accompanied by remarks which effectively state that "It is my husband who earns a living." I take this type of response as a double entendre which signifies the women's ambivalence from the narrow focus of interpersonal relations. It is as much a socially acceptable response as it is a devaluation of a woman's confinement to the concerns of home and childcare. Though there has been no attempt in this study to measure the degree to which women's time (rather than men's) is absorbed in tasks of home life, it is apt to say that women are 'the first to wake up and the last to lie down.' The subjects' experiences reveal the parallel disadvantage of women in the formal labor force; compared with men, they tend to be 'the last hired and the first fired.'

The panimaeay is understood by the women's as the domestic group which encompasses family and non-family members with whom they live. Their statements suggest a particular historical circumstance for that entity. In comparison, there is more vagueness in the women's understanding of pamilya which tends to include, yet also excludes, associated persons within or outside of their present panimaeay. The women use pamilya to refer to present as well other life stages (i.e., when they lived with natal kin and others from whom they have since formed separate conjugal homes or have produced children). As well, they allude to actual and prospective pamilya of their unga in terms of the latter's having their own pangabuhi.

Further, there is no clear-cut autonomous nuclear family/household system that comes across in the women's experiences. Yet their work, whether as pangabuhi or pangita towards obtaining material bases of their living, is expressed not only for themselves but also for both pamilya and panimaeay. Remarkably, however, the women use pangabuhi to imply efforts strategically intended for the pamilya. It is surmised that panimaeay, like pangita, project more tangible and practical connotations and more immediate meanings for these women. However limited, the panimaeay and the negotiated arrangements among its constituents indicate the ways by which the women mediate specific living and working arrangements.

Briefly, I review the themes used to frame my portrayal of the women's stories. Sela has apparently gained a new lease in her pangabuhi, free from the strains of her relationship with Ponso. It appears that the critical issue for the break between them stemmed from his inability and unwillingness to pangita and neglect of his expected role as padre de pamilya. Nowadays, she appears content even if she has had to pangita for herself in her new pangabuhi; she largely did so for him and their children in the past. Fortunately, in her case, she has access to land and other resources that enabled her to set up her own panimaeay and has a wide network of social support among her pamilya.

Virgo's break-up, basically deriving from an injured sense of fair play, was triggered by developments compounded by prolonged absences of her husband. Though materially well-supported in her married life with Carlos, she followed through the consequences of her actions which now require her to engage in more arduous means of pangita outside of the panimaeay. Yet she negates the notion that she significantly contributes to her pamilya's well-being, regarding her work beyond the home as simply an extension of Roming's pangita. She denigrates the importance of her selling snack foods but highlights her inclination to indefatigably attend to household obligations, even at the risk of her own health. Her new life with Roming has opened new doors for her but also manifests a high degree of self-exploitation. Having missed an opportunity, it appears that her core interest now is to live up to the expectation of a proper housewife.

Lerma's desire to fulfill both wife and mother roles has seen fruition, and her pangabuhì is governed by requirements towards maintaining and reproducing this goal. Beyond the usual concerns of housework and the necessities of keeping up her baraka at home, Lerma's world revolves around her unga on whom she expects to depend in the future. Since Natan has shown himself to be a considerate and relatively adequate provider, Lerma strives not to disturb this situation. In a more complex way, Star's pangabuhì these days is similarly focused on her irreplaceable son, though she also has a surviving daughter. Despite her troubles with Berto's deficiencies in providing a regular pangitan-an which impelled her to become another man's mistress, she has returned for the sake of the children. Her experiences also reveal a relentless self-exploitation that led her to seek various undertakings, including struggling for government support for her community contribution, the local day-care center. It appears that she asserts herself more clearly nowadays, gaining resolve from a desire to overcome past difficulties and ensuring that her children can avoid the travails that she has had.

The two widows among the subjects have quite distinct circumstances. The more senior Ramona is 'semi-retired' and lives out her pangabuh on a day-to-day basis. She seems complacent now that her children have established their respective careers and their own pamilya, through difficult years of their pangabuh initially with Panong. Apart from supervising her rice farm and occasional food sales, Ramona is presently homebound. Linda, on the other hand, is still driven by a need to support the younger children in school so that they might rise above what she perceives as a difficult pangabuh. Hence, her ongoing forays for vending fishery products find her in public arenas almost everyday. Her priority to overcome their harsh and impoverished situation for her unga thrusts her to downplay the trials of her relationship with the late Dado, and move on. Just as Ramona has come to rely on the poder of her absent eldest son, Linda evinces the tendency to rely on her own son's presence at their panimaeay.

Ruth is one who clearly claims that relationship with Toto appears to be one of a partnership in terms of contributing to the generation of their household's income. Nevertheless, she also explicitly reveals how their situation is "equal but unequal" since it is Toto who sets the norm. Further, Ruth is inhibited in making decisions on her own even if she handles the pooled monies, having learned the role of a dutiful wife. Like Ruth with Toto, Ling's situation with Garing is relatively comfortable, circumstances that serve to inhibit their own initiatives to participate more fully with their households' pangitan-an. But Ling and Garing's relationship is more clearly a case of "give and take." Ling has given up a number of opportunities to obtain employment or study further. Both women reveal an acceptance of the expectations of homebound mothers and wives, though Ling expresses herself more forcefully than Ruth. Yet both also admit that perhaps this situation may change at some point in their pangabuh.

Josie clearly expresses having married for love of Teban. However, she explicitly grants a lot of concessions to him as padre de pamilya. Though

verbally critical of his drunkenness at times, she acquiesces to the way things are, regarding marital commitments as immutable. Hence, she plays a secondary role in their pangabuhi together, amenable to being only a treasurer of the finances generated by his pangita. She largely submits to his wishes but has acted on her own in the matter of her obtaining a tubal ligation. Lolit, being solely responsible for the unga and the panimaay in Gardo's absence, has been pushed to undertake various pangita to supplement Gardo's role as primary provider. Her experiences clearly speak of a woman's life which centers on her love for one man, apparently according him greater significance over and above their unga.

On a whole, the empirical evidence from the subjects fails to substantiate notions of women's shared authority in Philippine rural households.¹ More clearly, they uphold the view that Filipino women are constrained by an uncritical acknowledgment of the cultural and social scripts of tradition, no matter how enmeshed their lives have become with material indices of modern living. In fact, the latter even serve to exacerbate conditions of their subordination at structural and interpersonal levels of interactions and transactions. Subjectively, the women's gender identity and consciousness generally make them tolerant of confining, repressive, and even violent homelife situations, if only for the sake of the deemed wholeness of the ideal family. Even among those who, at bursts of rejection of these stances at certain points of their life histories, do not consistently reject established discourses of male dominance and superiority. These instances emerge as temporary aberrations rather than as manifestations of a deep understanding and sustained efforts to transform comprehensively oppressive conditions for themselves and other women. Implicitly, the women acquiesce to a gendered status that represents them and the work that they do as largely invisible and

¹ See discussion on page 59.

insignificant, insubstantially but popularly supported by myths that assuage inherent human desires for recognition and empathy.

Various normative and descriptive statements in the women's narratives suggest an underlying gendered vision of life and livelihood, involving more than just the drudgery of the pursuit of sustenance and profit. Even their recreational preferences and friendships reveal segregations between women and men more than among age groups. Also notable is the low incidence of work groups, but the prevalence of gender-segregated peer groups. Other paradoxes are similarly seen surrounding the presumed divide between home and the workplace. Both realities exist within the frame of women's social networks in the broader community and their natural resources. At Talangban, there are (at least) no restrictions on the 'incorporeal' property and social space for women.² But many stories of ghosts and other nocturnal creatures like the aswang (witches) abound.³ From what the women indicate, however, a most effective sanction on their autonomous decisions and actions is fear of expected scoldings from and/or quarrels with their spouses.

Throughout their stories, there were notable allusions by the women to the physical aspect of men's work, often with reference to assorted involvements with the local fisheries. However, the emphasis on physical differences and capacities denies the contradictions that the women's words, activities, and their whole lives depict. The following discussion includes these dimensions of the women's situation at Talangban.

7.1.2. In a Third World Peasant Society

Mindful of the particularity of the women's work and lives within the context of a peasant economy and society, the following discussion centers on their work and that of other members of their households as units of production, exchange, and consumption. More specifically, the women are

² See discussion on page 104.

³ See discussion on page 60.

analyzed in their roles are primary food producers as well as active participants in commercial endeavors in a community where there are only minimum of opportunities and prospects for wage work.

Subsistence and survival needs and gross inequalities in these rural areas compel these peasants to persevere in marginal ecosystems and impel opportunities for both women and men. However, recognizing women's initiatives in particular as modes of resistance to layers of oppression leads to an understanding of power dynamic inherent in gender relations. This community of small fishers not only has little access to land but also suffers the degradation of resources which they desperately need and utilize. Isolation from state and market support services intensify their subjugation and lack of entitlements. Within the broad processes of differentiation to which peasants are subject, women are handicapped even more than men. Further differentiated by class, privilege, and gender, they also have different resources, ambitions, and prospects.

It is important to realize that the fishers in this community do not have many alternative options to simultaneously or sequentially combine with their normal capture activities. For all intents and purposes, while fishing is usually perceived as a seasonal occupation, their commitment to this livelihood cannot just be regarded as "part-time." As it is, they even attempt to fish even when they are aware that tidal and lunar conditions as they know them do not indicate that they can obtain worthwhile catches. The fact that they do not normally have access to any land-based resources draws them more closely into the tentacles of competitive markets already skewed against their interests.

Further, there has been not an influx of new participants from outside of the community. The pressure on the common-pool resource and the resulting "zero-sum" game has been brought about by local circumstances: natural population increase, expansion of fishpond boundaries into traditional fishing areas, the destruction of fish population habitats (loss of mangroves as well as siltation), and excessive fishing effort signified by the congestion of

capture devices. There have been relatively low-level improvements in their relatively individualized catch technology, largely in the form of larger and sturdier nylon nets. Fortunately, I should think, the narrow confines and crowding of the river systems also discourage the use of motorized crafts.

The women acknowledge that various conditions bind their marginal livelihoods to systems beyond their individual control. Whether for their direct use or for profits from sales, the schedule of their procurement activities is inherently tied up with the cycle of capture harvests. Milkfish sales are also dependent on the schedule of other people's produce. They have developed a dependence not only with suppliers but also with buyers as their suki with whom they make inequitable arrangements for advances or delayed payments of credit. Paraphrasing Wolf, much of the women's efforts bring them into domain relations with those with capital resources for which they produce a 'rent' paid for in labor, produce, or cash.⁴

Whenever the women speak of pangabuhi or pangita for their pamilya or panimaeay as efforts to generate cash incomes, a priority that features prominently in their stories, these pointed references to pangita as earnings are indicators of the extent to which their households are integrated into the larger capitalist system.

The most obvious strategy which the women have adapted to cope with the specific material requirements for survival and sustenance of their households converge on their individualized participation in the 'public' sphere of petty commerce. Their contributions to largely pooled household incomes are aimed to maintain and enhance their present well-being and the futures of their children. Apart from the implicit usurious rates on loans to which they are subject from credit facilities and other accommodations extended them by their suki, these involvements of the women are indicative of their increased dependence on a productivist and commodity-driven lifestyle.

⁴ Wolf, Peasants, 1966, 9-10.

In this local setting, their presence in such marketing ventures has been historically established.³ In the past decade, their involvement has also significantly increased. New Washington was reached on their own small paddle boats in three to four hours, or about one and half hours by pumpboat. With the radical shift of their community's orientation towards Kalibo, they are now able to reach their market within an hour. Yet certain inhibitions to their main strategy for income-generation come not only from the physico-biological characteristics of the fishery; inclement weather conditions also make movement, transport, and business transactions difficult, if not impossible. The women's marketing, however, brings them into entanglements with broader markets, notably at Kalibo. Competition from produce from other sources is critical to their ability to be able to generate profits.

From their perceptions on the adequacy or inadequacy of spouses' supposed pangita, and based on their overall practice of handling and management of the household's cash resources, the women actively seek to augment these household resources. In the process, they tend to passively submit to demands on their time and persons as they suppress their needs and desires for the overriding determination to enhance the lives of their children (their projects).

The women have definitely adapted to more avenues for market-oriented transactions to contribute to their households' pangabuhi-an and pangitan-an. However, not in all instances have they been free to do so on their own terms. The fish vending efforts of Ling and Ruth, have been curbed since they are perceived to take them away from child rearing activities. Further, their efforts are not perceived as separate or autonomous enterprises from their husband's or son's activities. Nor are the outcomes of such undertakings regarded solely as their own to allocate and dispose of as they

³ This is unlike the situation described in relatively more urbanized and modern setting of Estancia described by Stanton. See discussion on page 168.

will. Hence, they are not as concerned with the compensation of the value of time, energy, even rest and leisure and risks to their health as they are with being able to use whatever profits for immediate needs of their households. Despite some expressed fears, they generally admit the utility of some form of family planning from concerns of their own health and from their perceived capabilities to invest on their children.

In addition, their relative isolation from wage work (except as contract laborers on fishfarms or seasonal rice farm workers) indicates that they are not well-integrated into a labor market. However, more contractual and commercial relations are affecting their exchange labor system or *sagibin*. Among the fishers, there are differential forms of access (to material resources/ social power/entitlements) which results from discriminating and disempowering gender constructions. Beyond a reliance on bonds of traditional social networks, some of the women are attempting to overcome these boundaries through collective efforts, jointly with their spouses and other members of their households. This experiment of the KMT experience holds practical prospects for easing the women's participation not only in distributional but also production processes in the local fisheries. It remains to be seen if the women's inherent participation in this mariculture venture can provide more favorable alternatives/supplements for themselves and their households. It is hoped that their outcomes of their organizational activities will also affect their strategic interests, as they themselves are able to define, as women.

The women's work and self-exploitation (in this sense, specific for income-generation) are motivated, in most instances, by needs for sheer day-to-day survival. At other times, they serve to support/to attain for perceived avenues (education, job-seeking, etc.) by which their children can overcome present conditions. They are not strictly inspired by norms of efficiency and capitalist accumulation. Similarly, the physical level of fishing effort in the

community as a whole reflects an intensification of labor to maximize, rather than optimize, diminishing natural resources.

From the larger perspective, the uneven capitalist development and market penetration is evident in the nature of the commodities that they utilize. Milkfish and shrimp prices are fully integrated into the national economy; but their taeaba, dayok, pawod and other handicraft production are not. There has been a decline of copra as cash crop and minimal production of rice staple at Talangban. Further, there have been huge investments and access to lands (i.e., fishfarms) by outsiders who bought or leased lands locally. Frequent references to former access of subjects' families to land is an index of the marginalization process that entry into fisher occupations signifies.⁶ Moreover, with the decline of local food stocks, their preference to sell the high-value food products to buy other (cheaper or diverse) foodstuffs presents the women as having become consumers rather than food producers.

Moreover, attempts to regulate the exploitation of aquatic resources have largely relied on formal (legal) measures. Most community-based mobilizations, normally regarded as more informal processes, are of recent vintage. Yet both approaches are but tentative attempts to manage the idiosyncratic character and relations of natural as well as human forces. The finite (and non-rational) character of human capabilities has to be admitted more openly in the face of the unchanging quality of total existence. As a whole, these constraints not only signify but also condition the subjects' agency, status, and prospects.

7.2. Synthesis and Recommendations

7.2.1. A Synthesis

Throughout this work, I have used the idea of gender as depicting not only the differences between women and men, but more importantly to examine the implicit power relationships that these differences imply. The

⁶ See discussion on page 245.

empirical evidence ranges from the meanings that the subjects ascribed to linguistic expressions as well as their personal values, household and community experiences.

At different levels of analysis, issues surrounding subjectivity and discourse are central to the persistent perception of gender divisions which implicate the existence of patriarchy. They are relevant to a deeper understanding of structural and interpersonal factors that sustain and propagate multiple hierarchies and inequalities. The women's subjective perceptions, relations, and specific activities portray images of themselves not only as subordinated but also "conflicted" actresses in a yet predominantly male-dominated social order. Nevertheless, as they express their subjectivities, their attitudes, intentions, and aspirations they also engender discourses which are examined as indicative of their needs and concerns as well as practical and/or strategic interests.

However, the nature and scope of their power and agency are conditioned by their knowledge or cognizance of oppressive inequalities as subject to change. The women's self-understanding of their status and activities shapes their concrete realities. As posited above, their comprehension of the pangabuhi and pangita underlie all these.

Significantly, variances in the women's use of pangabuhi refer to different aspects of their life-worlds and their specific situations. They speak of having one's own life, marked by conditions of separateness such as breaking away from parental to a conjugal association, or, as a widow, being on one's own. Further, they allude to living conditions which they consider as poor or adequate.

The women's expressions tend to reveal that pangabuhi-an embraces the simplicity and effectivity of informal forms of subsistence through self-provisioning and self-employment argued in Beneria's notion of 'making a living.' Similarly, pangabuhi echoes what Mies, Shiva, and Jonasdottir speak of as the comprehension of the 'creation/production of life,' which includes the

tedious and never-ending tasks of housework or the 'immediate production of life'. Thus, the complex requirements of pangabuhi are analogous to the underlying and inclusive concerns of reproductive work, largely identified as the 'private' and predisposed responsibilities, if not obligations, of women.

On the other hand, pangitan-an tends to involve more concrete activities which are associated or integrated with the 'public' and commoditized socio-economic system. Further, in view of a relatively low incidence of regular wage incomes among themselves and their families, the women explicitly associate petty commerce and entrepreneurial gains with pangitan-an. Even from the conventional understanding of 'home production,' the women's self-provisioning patterns and the petty market ventures are among unaccounted for (thus 'private') informal economic activities which feature as part of women's reproductive tasks.

Pangita clearly appears to have a narrower meaning for most of the subjects. It appears to correspond to what Beneria's analysis of 'productive work' dubs as 'earning a living,' based on conventional and quantifiable conceptions of livelihoods based on commercial exchange and the productivity of wage labor. Nonetheless, pangita is not something that is separate from pangabuhi; it represents a particular set of modes by which life is lived. Notably, therefore, the women's words lead us to reassess the relationship between our work and our lives. The oversight of this relationship lies at the root of the "colonizing divisions" of which Mies speaks.

On the whole, the women's remarks do not clearly disaggregate meanings and contexts for pangabuhi-an and pangita-an. Hence, I discern a seamless continuum rather than a strict divide in their views of women's reproductive (life-maintaining and enhancing) and men's productive (livelihood or income-generation) concerns and tasks. Implicitly, this insight suggests that life and work for these women have permeable boundaries and contexts which flow into and support each other. The tacit holistic discourse, thus, denotes

that the processes of pangabuhi (life/sexuality/reproduction) and pangita (livelihood/work/production) constitute a singular reality.

Nevertheless, the women also imply a greater inclusiveness and grant more importance for the concerns of pangabuhi compared with pangita. Pangabuhi intimates where one lives, apart from allusions to the manner by which one does so. It also frequently refers to the actual and prospective situations for themselves and their children. Further, pangabuhi-an may be provided by, or sourced from, others; pangitan-an, on the other hand, largely refers specific strategies for living based on one's self-effort. Thus, the women tend to use more behavioral indicators when speaking of pangita-an than when they do of pangabuhi-an. Whatever they do, either or both as pangabuhi or pangita, enable their acquisition of basic necessities, especially suea. Ultimately, they suggest that issues of production and reproduction redound to questions of means (pangita) and end (pangabuhi).

The women's activities and perceptions discussed above have unavoidably crossed presumed 'public' and 'private' boundaries between men's and women's domains. Hopefully, they reveal more nuances that may lead to the creation of more complex but usable models by which examine gender relations in both historical/diachronic and cultural/synchronic ways.

From all these, I venture to present a scheme that appears to emerge from the women's stories. Though apparently dichotomous, the elements therein ought not to be considered as static, oppositional, nor exclusive categories. Its usefulness at this point is to synthesize the gendered observations and interpretations made throughout this thesis based on the local concepts.

Figure 8. Proposed Schema

PANGABUHI	PANGITA
REPRODUCTION	PRODUCTION
LIFE	LIVELIHOOD
SEXUALITY	WORK
SELF-PROVISIONING	COMMODITIZED
HOME	SOCIETY
PRIVATE	PUBLIC
FAMILY	HOUSEHOLD
STRATEGIC	PRACTICAL
WOMEN	MEN

7.2.2. Some Recommendations

My thoughts on the inclusive concerns delineated in this study are relevant not only to prospects in academic and applied research and education, development work and planning but also ordinary everyday living. Since women's sphere in dominant discourses remains centered on the household, family, and children, despite changes in family form, kinship structures, marital arrangements, women's activities are not recognized as important as those directed to the production of things or their distribution. Rural women, as peasant producers within a family enterprise, helpers of small holders, or as wage workers are also drawn into the domains of capital accumulation, competition, and exploitation where they have less access to formal economic and political structures. There are even measures of social control over their sexuality (especially for procreation) and spatial mobility. Various barriers of silence and fear surround women's emotional and affective needs and even tend to underlie economic and population growth policies.

Such a comprehensive perspective is needed to understand the bases (and sources) of women's agency and autonomy related to the organization of production and reproduction processes implicit in the local concepts highlighted in this study. The manner by which the women vendors acquired their capital and expertise are related to broader systems of distribution and exchange as much as they are affected by their subjective comprehension of wide sets of conjugal and family obligations. Incisive studies on distribution as well as on intra-household patterns of consumption can further clarify the situation of the women in peasant fishing households.

The empirical situation in the study site clearly manifests a rapid deterioration and internal competition over the use of local natural resources is creating increasing gaps among the assets and resources among a relatively homogeneous community. Importantly, they indicate certain methodological considerations that should guide further specification of women's situations and conditions:

Flexibility and openness in investigations of concrete situations, in contrast with the abstract rigor of theoretical formulations, seems a natural and healthy consequence of the recognition that economic and social changes occur in actual societies with their own configurations of political forces at local and higher levels, with all kinds of complex and sometimes conflicting processes at work both within and beyond the village, whose interaction with general 'tendencies' results in specific patterns of differentiation.⁷

Moreover, what is evident in the kind of accounts obtained from the key informants and the subjects towards which effectively created their local history is that they clearly attest to events and developments coming from direct personal experiences. The accounts of the men among the key informants (Pilo, Kitoy, and Dodoy) reveal a broader grasp of trends and changes throughout the village; the women (Aure, Mar, and Okit) spoke largely from the contexts of their own more confined 'sphere' in the community. The limits become even narrower for most of the subjects, many of whom had not had experienced much of the environment beyond their homes, farms, the river, and the marketplace where they sell.

Hence their portraits of their community had quite different angles. Nevertheless, they clearly depict a very narrow world. References to places beyond the village, for example, feature only with reference to their migration or visits, or the presence of relatives there. But they were very knowledgeable and expansive about concrete realities of their everyday existence. Matters of broader concern were largely brought on by my inquiries into their participation in elections. There were a few guarded observations about troubles involving the NPA and the military which, though never permanently within the village, mattered to their sense of personal security. Ironically, the villagers as a whole are more oriented towards Metro Manila than any other point on the island of Panay, outside of Kalibo and adjacent villages and

⁷ White, "Problems in the Empirical Analysis of Agrarian Differentiation," 1989, 18-19.

municipalities, evidently a result of the relatively easier transport and communication they have with the national capital region.

Nevertheless, the yet predominant invisibility and undervaluation of women in the development process largely results from biases in planning categories, and hence, absence of adequate and appropriate data on women's contributions, especially in largely in the informal and unpaid sectors of the Third World. Poverty draws women into formal or informal (conventional) economic activity, yet the ideal of the non-working wife and the ideology of female domesticity remain. What poor rural women like the subjects are able to discern for themselves revolves around the daily demands of sustenance and survival. Thus, projects that are tailored for clearly manifested and validated priorities determined by, or obtained with the women themselves, are those deemed to be useful and sustainable in various ways.

As suggested in the conceptual development framed here, an important starting point for a feminist critique of development lies in the deconstruction of the central myth of gender as an essential distinction between women and men expressed in the opposition of processes of production and reproduction. Planning for economic growth must give equal weight to the production and maintenance of human beings and of social relationships, not only in terms of the production and distribution of goods and services but also in the affective categories which affect the women's sense of social worth and value. In practical terms, sensitivity to how the women have mapped their norms and values, interpersonal relations and everyday experiences, as their subjectivities, should lead not only to the apprehension of how development and other societal forces have differential impacts on women and men; as well, it should lead to strategies in development work that ensure that these are empowering and beneficial processes.

We should try to foster a sensitivity by focusing on parallels, not identities, between different sorts of oppressions. Despite sympathetic views,

those who are not members of an oppressed group should realize the possibility of misunderstanding issues relating to an oppression they do not share.

Men who share household and child-rearing responsibilities with women are mistaken if they think that this act of choice, often buttressed by the gratitude and admiration of others, is anything like the woman's experience of being forcibly socialized into these tasks and of having others perceive this as her natural function in the scheme of things.⁸

Caution is also raised over feminist use of the doctrine of "double vision" or the claim that oppressed groups have an epistemic advantage and access to greater critical conceptual space.⁹ The sense of alienation that emerges as a result of inhabiting mutually incompatible frameworks can be minimized if the critical straddling becomes integral to an ongoing critical politics. "The thesis that oppression may bestow an epistemic advantage should not tempt us in the direction of idealizing or romanticizing oppression and blind us to its real material and psychic deprivations."¹⁰

Nevertheless, with 'assigned' or 'unassigned power,' all women are encouraged be empowered, i.e., to construct new meanings and assert their knowledges. Women's power is manifest not only in active strategies for earning, migrating, or joining organizations. More subtly, it is also found in women's knowing, naming, claiming, and, even in passive strategies of silence or avoidance.

Women's struggles of resistance and exercise of their power are comprehensive and progressive cyclical ones in which more equitable status, entitlements, and bargains are obtained and sustained through self-awareness and self-effort at all levels. The irrepressible nature of multiple sites of power threatens the interests of those who consciously or unconsciously maintain the hegemony of patriarchal "relations of ruling." The goal of empowerment is

⁸ Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology," 1989, 265.

⁹ This claim derives from knowledge of the practices of both their own contexts and those of their oppressors since they must acquire some fluency with these practices in order to survive. Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology," 1989, 265-267.

¹⁰ Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology," 1989, 268.

ultimately men's as well, i.e., when dominating structures are eliminated and when reciprocal and non-hierarchical relations among individuals and societies, between humanity as a whole and the natural environment, are fully expressed.

Meanwhile, much unravelling is needed to fully appreciate the conflicting tugs that systemically influence the women's and men's complex life situations. There is much to be learned of how our realities are divided and shaped from reflections on indigenous knowledge and ideological values expressed in ordinary language of everyday life. Much of our autochthonous traditions have been devalued, denigrated, and supplanted in the quest for modernity and material progress.

APPENDICES

A. List of Interviews with the Subjects

1. Josela Montes Alba (Sela) Number of interviews = 7
12 May 1993
29 June 1993
30 June 1993
21 July 1993
14 September 1993
17 December 1993
25 January 1994
2. Linda Samonte Bello (Lerma) Number of interviews = 9
12 May 1993
26 May 1993
20 July 1993
11 August 1993
19 August 1993
3 September 1993
15 September 1993
21 October 1993
20 January 1994
3. Virginia Sison Castro (Virgo) Number of interviews = 8
10 June 1993
19 July 1993
12 August 1993
20 August 1993
15 September 1993
8 December 1993
9 December 1993
27 January 1994
4. Ramona Montes David (Ramona) Number of interviews = 6
23 June 1993
21 July 1993
15 September 1993
20 October 1993
20 January 1994
27 January 1994

5. Lolita Castro de Leon (Lolit) Number of interviews = 6
12 May 1993
25 June 1993
19 July 1993
20 August 1993
22 October 1993
12 January 1994
6. Estrella Mendoza Ingalla (Star) Number of interviews = 10
23 June 1993
21 July 1993
11 August 1993
21 August 1993
15 September 1993
22 October 1993
26 October 1993
26 January 1994
27 January 1994
11 February 1994
7. Delilah David Juarique (Ling) Number of interviews = 5
21 July 1993
9 September 1993
16 September 1993
21 October 1993
12 January 1994
8. Linda Lopez Liao (Linda) Number of interviews = 6
18 May 1993
20 July 1993
22 October 1993
23 October 1993
9 December 1993
11 January 1994
9. Ruth Isidro Montes (Ruth) Number of interviews = 8
13 May 1993
29 June 1993
20 July 1993
19 August 1993
3 September 1993
7 October 1993
22 October 1993
19 January 1994

10. Josefina Ingalla Deocampo (Josie) Number of interviews = 8
11 May 1993
18 May 1993
10 June 1993
21 July 1993
12 August 1993
19 August 1993
9 September 1993
27 January 1994

B. The Key Informants

1. Teofilo Vicente (Pilo) 25 and 26 January 1994

With ancestors originally from the town of Batan and son of a former Teniente del Barrio of Camaligan, Emeterio Vicente, Pilo is well-known throughout Camaligan. He also worked with the health department in Manila, claiming and manifesting a closeness with the political families of Tumbokon, Legaspi, and Cabagnet of Aklan. Single, now 63 years old, he was the village but currently reassigned to Malay, Aklan, to which he commutes daily. He is village's renowned source of local lore and an avid promoter of "progress" of the three adjacent barangay, marked by his promotion of the activities of the CAMACA Theater Arts Club, establishment of the Catholic parish and cemetery at Camaligan. He is also an active populist voice in the CAMACA cooperative.

2. Marianito Almanon (Kitoy) 25 and 26 January 1994

Born in 1930, Kitoy is originally from Caiyang, son of Agapito Almanon's third marriage. Having himself married Pilo's sister, his family moved to Camaligan, after three children. His father was briefly assigned to take over the town of Batan after the surrender of Spanish supporters during the Philippine Revolution (prior to the Philippine-American War); he himself was once a barangay councilman for Camaligan. But he also spent some years working in Manila.

3. Roquita Bautista Beltran (Okit) 26 January 1994

Okit has been principal of the high school at Camaligan since its opening in 1973, and proud administrator of the newly "nationalized" Camaligan Barangay High School. She is a native and resident of Sitio Aksam and a niece of Barangay Chairman, Anacoreto Bautista, though her husband is from Barangay Aranas, Balete. A devout Catholic, Okit is also a promoter of

the Couples for Christ group at Camaligan. Nearing retirement, she has been sickly lately, but untiring in school-related and other community work.

4. Marqueza Cabande Dionisio (Mar) 26 January 1994

In her late 30s, Mar is from Caiyang and married a Dionisio from Sitio Minoro, Camaligan. She is also a distant relative of Dodoy, through her maternal grandparents. She started as midwife for Camaligan 13 years ago, in 1980, even before the present health center was built. Her first assignment was at Altavas. She has worked closely with the FSDP and related research in the area.

5. Aurea Iligan Refindor (Aure) 27 January 1994

Around 70 years old, the widowed Aure lives a much easier material life than most other Talangban residents. Her own parents were from Malinao who settled first at Dumeog and later moved to Punta within Talangban. She married into the Refindor family from Caiyang and continues to reside with a granddaughter in the most permanent and luxurious dwelling in Talangban. Next door is the home of another son who has not moved away from the sitio. She occasionally visits her married children who live in Kalibo and elsewhere. She runs a variety store from her home and assists in the rice farm and aquaculture enterprises of her children, and thus, a respected and sought after patroness in the local community.

6. Romeo Refindor (Dodoy) 27 January 1994

In his late 40s, Dodoy left Talangban after high school and took up an engineering course at the Iloilo Maritime Academy in Iloilo City in the early 1960s, never losing touch each year. He has retired as a ship captain of international vessels and lives with his family in Kalibo. But he maintains a close link with his mother in Talangban and is frequently at Talangban for many reasons. Now that there is a road into Talangban, he prefers the much shorter water route to reach the fishfarm that he bought at Aranas, Balete in 1980 via Talangban. Moreover, widely known for his philanthropic inclinations for his homeplace, and is the current chairperson of the Board of Directors of the local cooperative, the CMPCI.

C. Glossary of Non-English Terms

akae (to bubble or boil)
alimango (mud crab)
alsada (buy-and-sell)
amihan (season normally between September and December)
apog (lime made from crushed shells used when chewing betel leaves)
asawa (wife)
asin (salt)
babayan (religious intermediaries)
bagongon (fishpond snails or Telescopium telescopium)
bakud (a five-centavo coin)
balisasa (a bamboo trap for crabs)
baliwhagan (water channels)
balsa (bamboo raft)
balanak (bully mullet)
banak (flathead gray mullet)
bana (husband)
banca or baroto (small boat or canoe, occasionally powered and with outriggers)
bangeos (milkfish, Chanos chanos Forskal)
bangkero or motor (large motorized crafts)
banig (sleeping mat)
baraka (home-based variety or convenience retail store)
barangay (village)
barkada (peer groups)
batod (shrimps with darker and harder shells)
bat-oe (upland rice farm)
baye or habaye (women)
bentahan or bintoe (lift nets)
bubon (open shallow wells)
bueo (literally, 'the whole' and figuratively, 'origin or source')
bugas (cleaned rice)
buhi (literally, "life," "to live," or "being alive")
bukilyahan (fishpond gates)
bulgan (sea bass)
bumba (public artesian wells)
bunit (simple hook-and-line)
buri (Raphia pedunculata)
buyo (betel pepper plant)
capitan del barrio (village captain)
cofradias (religious societies)
compadrazgo (ritual co-parenthood)
daet or buntal (raffia fiber)

daigon (Christmas carolling)
dang-dang (dried shrimps skewered on bamboo sticks)
datus (petty rulers)
dayok (shrimp sauce)
doedoe (blocks of salt manufactured from sea water)
eab-as (fresh, usually with reference to fish)
eaki (men)
eanas (lowland rice farm)
eati (new moon)
encargado (caretaker)
encomiendas (land grants)
fiesta (feast of the local patron saint)
gaeab (sickle)
gahum (power)
galingkad (copra-making)
gamit (use)
ginabuocan (literally, "where one gets something")
ginamos (shrimp paste)
gusaw (juvenile mullet)
habagat (season normally between January and August)
hanapbuhay (from hanap or "to search" and buhay or "life")
harana (serenade)
hiligutmon (food items associated with lean seasons)
hilots (traditional midwives)
humay (cooked rice)
hunas or hugot (low tide)
hunkay-hunkay (gaudy sand clam)
ilada (iced or frozen, usually with reference to food items)
ilawod (wind direction from the sea)
ilaya (wind direction from land areas)
ilustrados (educated classes)
indios (natives)
inter esse (being among)
isda (a generic term for fish and other aquatic species)
kabulig (helper)
kaibahan or kaupod (companion)
kaingin (slash-and-burn cultivation)
kamalig (shed-like temporary shelter)
kasag (blue crab)
katig (outrigger)
katimbang (partner)
katunggan (mangrove areas)
kayog or ani (harvest knife)
kiskisan (small rice mills)

kita (literally, "to see" or "a find")
 kitang (long line)
 kiyaw-kiyaw (food offerings)
 konsehal (councillor)
 konsumo (consumption)
 lukon or sugpo (tiger shrimps or prawns, *Penaeus monodon*)
 mestizo (inter-racial offspring)
 minoro it Akean (the village of Aklan)
 mujer indigena (native women)
 municipio (municipality)
 namit (pleasure)
 nata de coco (a processed food item based on coconut juice fermented by a mother liquor)
 negosyo (commercial enterprise)
 nipa (*Nipa fruticans*)
 nito (an uncultivated forest vine)
 oey-oey (periods with no marked tidal movements)
 otro bucan (first and last quarters)
 pabrika (factory)
 padre de familia (father of the family)
 paeay (unmilled rice grain)
 pakikisama (generally understood as 'oneness')
 paltera (precursor of trained midwife)
 pamilya (family)
 pamugon (wage labor on farms)
 panagat (literally, "going out toward the sea")
 pan-ay (literally, 'the mouth of a river')
 pangabuhì (life/sexuality/reproduction)
 panggae (crab pot)
 pangita (livelihood/work/production)
 panimaey (household)
 paninilbihan (bride-service)
 pante (gill nets)
 paradahan (loading/unloading area)
 pasayan (shrimps with whiter and softer shells)
 pawod (thatch roof shingles from nipa palm leaves)
 payao (small sail boat)
 pilapil (mud dikes)
 piyagot (young goby)
 piyapi (*Avicennia officinalis* or *alba*)
 poder (authority)
 principalia (the elite classes)
 punong barangay (village leader)
 pusoy (a variant of poker)

rahetas (bundles of cut pieces of fuelwood)
resiko (water retention)
rigaton (large-scale fish dealer)
sa liwan (outside or beyond the home)
saduk (broad-brimmed hat)
saeoran or tangab (filter nets)
sagibin (exchange labor)
sagpang or sira-sira (barrier nets or barricades)
sagudsod (skimming net)
sakada (seasonal plantation worker)
salin-agaw (characteristic winds around February-March and August-September)
sandoko (a large knife)
sangha or tangke (fishponds or fishfarms)
Santo Niño (Holy Child)
semilya (fry and fingerlings)
senakulo (ritual commemorating Holy Week)
sibot (hand-held net)
sikla (lunar cycle)
sipa (kick)
sitio (village subdivision signified by housing clusters)
suea (as viand, nourishment or victuals)
sugae (gambling)
suki (a preferred customer, wholesale/retail buyer or seller)
taeaba (oysters)
tagad (a hand implement used for digging)
tagasilak (the dry season during the months of March to May)
talabon or kayang (a covered carriage borne by four people)
talang (stray)
ta-ob (high tide)
tasok (tubed shallow well)
tilapia (Tilapia nilotica)
tilapia (Tilapia mossambica)
timing (modified trap for shrimps)
tinapa (smoked fish)
tuba (a locally-produced intoxicant gathered from coconut sap)
tugbungan (boat landing areas)
tulis, taba or batak-batak (fish corrals)
ugsad (full moon)
unga (children)
usoy (meaning, 'to do,' 'solve,' or 'resolve some problem')

D. Additional Information on the Subjects

Table A-1. The Subjects

Nicknames/ Names (with maiden names)	Age / Year Born / Birth Order / Place of Birth	Age at / Year of / Place of Marriage	Remarks
1. Sela (<u>Josela</u> <u>Montes</u> <u>Alba</u>)	65 / 1928 /7th of 9 (2nd of 2 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	13 / 1941; 52 years ago at Batan town Church	Informally separated from husband for more than 10 years; Catholic; used to make salt with mother; gathers fish & shells for <u>konsumo</u> & sale, occasionally with aquaculture produce; makes <u>pawod</u> & maintains vegetable garden
2. Lerma (<u>Lerma Alba</u> <u>Samonte</u>)	33 / 1960 / 3rd of 12 (1st of 5 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	24 / 1984; 9 years ago at Balete town Church	Catholic; used to be a househelper; assisted at uncle's store in Nueva Ecija; gathers oysters for food & manages own store at home
3. Virgo (<u>Liwayway</u> <u>Nolasco</u> <u>Sison</u>)	35 / 1958 / 5th of 5 surviving (2nd of 2 daughters)/ Murcia, Negros Occidental	18 / 1976; 17 years ago at New Washington	Since 25 in 1984, cohabiting with Roming upon separating from her legal husband; initially Aglipay but converted with her family to the INK; helped with aunt's sidewalk sales in Kalibo; was a househelper in Quezon City; managed store subsidized by father-in-law in New Washington & at Talangban; sewed for cousin's dress shop in Kalibo; sometimes raises a pig; presently sells Roming's catch with aquaculture produce & occasionally sells snack foods; participates with KMT

Table A-1. The Subjects (cont.)

Nicknames/ Names (with maiden names)	Age / Year Born / Birth Order / Place of Birth	Age at / Year of / Place of Marriage	Remarks
4. Ramona (<u>Ramona</u> <u>Rivera</u> <u>Montes</u>)	63 / 1930 / 5th of 6 (4th of 4 daughters)/ Magubahay	23 / 1953; 40 years ago at Balete town Church	Widowed in 1980 at age 50; Catholic; made pawod since childhood; was househelper in Metro Manila; helped with parent's store; worked on fishpond & farm with husband & children; gathered shells & sold fishpond produce & others' with shrimps & shells; raises pigs, cows, and/or chickens & tends son-in-law's cow; receives rentals from leased fishpond; occasionally sells snack foods
5. Lolit (<u>Lolita Alba</u> <u>Castro</u>)	34 / 1959 / 1st of 12 (1st of 4 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	20 / 1979; 14 years ago at Quezon City Hall	Cohabited with Gardo five years prior to marriage; Catholic; sold cooked food from Quezon City home; ran a store at home in Talangban; sometimes gathers oysters for food & sells milkfish & shrimps on alsada
6. Star (<u>Estrella</u> <u>Lopez</u> <u>Mendoza</u>)	35 / 1958 /3rd of 5 (2nd of 3 daughters)/ Maeubong, Lalab	32 / 1990; 3 years ago at Batan Municipal Hall	Cohabited with Berto 14 years prior to marriage; Catholic, but intends to join the INK; shares copra proceeds from father's estate; has periodic access to maternal family's fishpond; operates <u>saeoran</u> with husband or son; occasionally sells aquaculture produce; BHW since 1984 & ran day-care center since 1986; employed with FSDP; raises pigs & sells cosmetics; participates with KMT

Table A-1. The Subjects (cont.)

Nicknames/ Names (with maiden names)	Age / Year Born / Birth Order / Place of Birth	Age at / Year of / Place of Marriage	Remarks
7. Ling (<u>Delilah</u> <u>Montes</u> David)	25 / 1968 /5th of 6 (2nd of 2 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	20 / 1988; 5 years ago at Camaligan parish church	Catholic; was a clerk-typist in Kalibo & a travelling sales representative for Kalibo-based company; managed store at Balete; sold husband catch & worked as farm laborer; gathers shells for <u>konsumo</u> ; occasionally sells snack foods & ready-to-wear goods; raises chickens and pigs
8. Linda (<u>Linda</u> <u>Montes</u> Lopez)	46 / 1947 /2nd of 5 (1st of 3 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	23 / 1969; 24 years ago at Marikina City Hall	Cohabited less than a year before marriage; widowed in 1993 at age 46; Catholic; worked as househelper & as waitress at Divisoria; sold cooked food from home in Tondo; regularly sells fish and shrimp produce on <u>alsada</u> ; raises chickens & pigs
9. Ruth (<u>Ruth</u> <u>Abello</u> Isidro)	29 / 1964 /3rd of 7 (1st of 2 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	17 / 1981; 12 years ago at Batan Municipal Hall	Jehovah's Witnesses; until recently, sold husband's fish/ shrimp catch & acted as local fish dealer with him at Talangban; sometimes accompanies husband when fishing & repairs nets; works with husband on KMT project
10. Josie (<u>Josefina</u> <u>Bustos</u> Ingalla)	42 / 1951 /4th of 9 surviving (3rd of 5 daughters)/ Talangban, Camaligan	24 / 1975; 18 years ago at Batan Municipal Hall	Cohabited a month prior to marriage; initially Catholic & converted to Jehovah's Witnesses; was a waitress at Metro Manila; sometimes gathers oysters & fish for <u>konsumo</u> ; provides labor for husband's family farm & assists widowed mother make <u>pawod</u> ; raises chickens & pigs; sells husband's catch & repairs nets; occasionally sells aquaculture produce

Table A-2. The Women's Spouses

Nicknames / Full Names (with mother's family names)	Age as of 1993 / Year Born / Birth Order	Place of Birth	Age at Cohabi- tation / Marriage	Remarks
1. Ponso (<u>Alfonso Jayme Alba</u>)	69 / 1924 / 1st of 3 (1st of 2 sons)	Talangjan, Camaligan	17	Sickly and inactive, lives with daughter Merlina at Crossing Calamay; Catholic
2. Natan (<u>Nataniel Martinez Bello</u>)	45 / 1948 / 3rd of 7 children (?)	Zarraga, Iloilo	36	Fishing, and contract fishpond laborer for Melde Oquendo; Catholic
3. Roming (<u>Richard Alba Castro</u>)	29 / 1964 / 3 of 12 (2nd of 6 sons)	Talangban, Camaligan	20	Fishing; inactive with fisherfolk association; Initially Catholic, but informally joining the Iglesia ni Kristo
4. Panong (<u>Paterno Alba David</u>)	(73) / 1920 / 3rd of 9 (3rd of 5 sons)	Talangban, Camaligan	33	Used to fish, operate fishfarm and ricefarm; Died in 1980 at age 60; Catholic
5. Gardo (<u>Edgardo Ocampo de Leon</u>)	39 / 1954 / 7th of 8 (5th of 5 sons)	Tigbaw, Lalab	20 / 25	Overseas contract laborer in Saudi Arabia (driver); Catholic

Table A-2. The Women's Spouses (cont.)

Nicknames / Full Names (with mother's family names)	Age as of 1993 / Year Born / Birth Order	Place of Birth	Age at Cohabi- tation / Marriage	Remarks
6. Berto (Roberto Barrientos Ingalla)	39 / 1954 / 7th of 11 (3rd of 5 sons)	Talangban, Camaligan	22 / 36	Fishing and fishpond operation; formerly active with fisherfolk association; Catholic
7. Garing (Garing Canto Junsay)	27 / 1966 / 3rd of 7 (2nd of 5 sons)	Aranas, Balete	22	Fishing and contractual laborer on fishpond for Melde Oquendo; Catholic
8. Dado (Conrado Liao [Soliva])	(55) 1938 / ? of 16 (?)	Catbalogan, Leyte	28 / 29	Had a prior marriage before Linda; Died in 1993 at 55, weak and sickly before accidental death; Catholic
9. Toto (Jose Valiente Montes)	33 / 1960 / 7th of 7 (4th of 4 sons)	Talangban, Camaligan	21	Fishing and tilapia fish farming as head of a fisherfolk association; Catholic but informally joining Jehovah's Witnesses
10. Teban (Esteban Lopez Deocampo)	37 / 1956 / 1st of 10 (1st of 7 sons)	Davao	19 / 19	Fishing; Initially Catholic, but converted to Jehovah's Witnesses

Table A-3. Parents of the Subjects

Woman's Mother / Father (with middle names)	Age as of 1993 / Year Born / Birth Order	Place of Origin	Age at / Year of / Place of Marriage	Remarks
1. Poten (<u>Potenciana Ingalla Samonte</u>)	(98) 1895 (?)	Banga	?	Died in 1946 at 51, 47 years ago
Susing (<u>Jose David Montes</u>)	? / ? / (1st of 7)	Talangban, Camaligan	?	Died in the late 1940s around age 75
2. Eva (<u>Eva David Alba</u>)	52 / 1941 / (4th of 7)	Talangban, Camaligan	15 / 1956; 37 years ago at Batan town church	Reached first year high school; Presently lives at Talangban
Maning (<u>Manuel Santos Samonte</u>)	62 / 1931 / (2nd of 8)	Hueaton, Lalab	25	Finished Grade IV; Presently lives at Talangban
3. Iska (<u>Francisca Fuentes Nolasco</u>)	76 / 1917 / (5th of 5)	Poblacion Libacao	19 / 1936; 57 years ago	Widowed in 1972 at 55, 21 years ago
Budoy (<u>Wenceslao Villa Sison</u>)	(78) / 1915 / (?)	Napnot, Madalag	21	Died in 1972 at 57, buried at Kalibo
4. Norma (<u>Norma Ramos Rivera</u>)	? / ? / (3rd of 6)	Magubahay	?	Widowed in 1940, 44 years ago; Died in 1984, buried at Balete
Insoy (<u>Dominador Jayme Montes</u>)	? / ? / (3rd of 6)	Talangban, Camaligan	?	Died in 1940, buried at Balete
5. Monica (<u>Monica Alba</u>)	55 / 1938 / (1st of 3)	Talangban, Camaligan	20 / 1958; 35 years ago at New Washington	Presently living at Talangban
Lito (<u>Joselito Castro</u>)	62 / 1931 / (7th of 9)	Agsam, Camaligan	27	Presently living at Talangban

Table A-3. Parents of the Subjects (cont.)

Woman's Mother / Father (with middle names)	Age as of 1993 / Year Born / Birth Order	Place of Origin	Age at / Year of / Place of Marriage	Remarks
6. Maring (<u>Marina Reyes Lopez</u>)	71 / 1922 / (3rd of 4)	Talangban, Camaligan	33 / 1955; 38 years ago	Widowed in 1990 at 68, 13 years ago
Dadoy (<u>Diosdado Dimaano Mendoza</u>)	(76) / 1917 / (4th of 7)	Himbis, Lalab	38	Died in 1990 at 73, buried at Cabugao
7. Ramona (<u>Ramona Rivera Montes</u>)	63 / 1930 / (5th of 6)	Magubahay	23 / 1953; 40 years ago at Balete town Church	Widowed in 1980 at 50, 13 years ago
Panong (<u>Paterno Alba David</u>)	(73) / 1920 / (3rd of 9)	Talangban, Camaligan	33	Died in 1980 at 60, buried at Balete
8. Soping (<u>Sofia Rivera Montes</u>)	80 / 1913 / (1st of 6)	Magubahay	? / ca. 1942; more than 50 years ago at Balete	Presently living at Talangban
Peping (<u>Felipe Montes Lopez</u>)	80 / 1913 / (2nd of 3)	Talangban, Camaligan	?	Presently living at Talangban
9. Basyon (<u>Salvacion Deocampo Abello</u>)	58 / 1935 / (3rd of 9)	Agsam, Camaligan	20 / 1955; 48 years ago at Balete Municipal Hall	Widowed in 1985 at 50, 8 years ago
Carding (<u>Ricardo Benitez Isidro</u>)	(71) / 1922 / (2nd of 9)	Calizo, Balete	32	Died in 1985 at 63, buried at Balete
10. Auring (<u>Aurora Bustos</u>)	67 / 1926 / (1 of 2)	Venturanza, Banga	16 / 1968; 55 years ago at Batan Municipal Hall	Widowed in 1977 at 51, 16 years ago
Munding (<u>Raymundo Santos Ingalla</u>)	(76) / 1917 / (1st of 3)	Hueaton, Lalab	24	Died in 1977 at 60

Table A-4. Children of the Subjects

Parents	SONS Birth Order / Year of Birth / (Age)		DAUGHTERS Birth Order / Year of Birth / (Age)	
1. Sela & Ponso	1	1942 (51)	3	1947 (46)
	2	1945 (d. at 18 years)	4	1949 (44)
	6	1953 (40)	5	1951 (42)
	9	1959 (34)	7	1955 (38)
			8	1957 (36)
			10	1962 (31)
2. Lerma & Natan	2	1987 (6)	1	1985 (8)
	3	1989 (4)	4	1992 (1)
3. Virgo & Roming	1	1980 (13)	3	1986 (7)
	2	1984 (d. at 7 months)	5	1992 (2)
	2	1984 (9)		
	4	1989 (4)		
4. Ramona & Panong	2	1956 (37)	1	1955 (38)
	3	1962 (31)	5	1968 (25)
	4	1966 (27)		
	6	1973 (20)		
5. Lolit & Gardo	1	1976 (17)	3	1980 (13)
	2	1978 (15)	7	1989 (d. at 5 months)
	4	1982 (11)	8	1991 (2)
	5	1983 (d. at 6 years)		
	6	1986 (7)		

Table A-4. Children of the Subjects (cont.)

Parents	SONS Birth Order / Year of Birth / (Age)		DAUGHTERS Birth Order / Year of Birth / (Age)	
6. Star & Berto	1	1977 (16)	2	1979 (15)
	3	1981 (died at 7 years)	4	1984 (d. at 5 years)
7. Ling & Garing	1	1989 (4)		
	2	1990 (2)		
8. Linda & Dado	4	1975 (18)	1	1970 (23)
	5	1981 (12)	2	1971 (22)
	7	1989 (4)	3	1973 (20)
			6	1983 (10)
9. Ruth & Toto	2	1985 (8)	1	1982 (10)
	4	1989 (4)	3	1987 (6)
			5	1991 (2)
			6	1993 (3 months)
10. Josie & Teban	2	1978 (15)	1	1976 (17)
	3	1979 (14)	6	1982 (d. at 9 months)
	4	1989 (13)		
	5	1981 (12)		

E. Summary Presentation of Thesis

This research, which is based upon broad-ranging trends in feminist theory and methodology, empirically documents the varied life histories and situations of ten selected women in a remote riverine community in the Philippines (see attached map). In the process, it uncovers some taken-for-granted notions in everyday life and life-worlds of Third World women. Through the women's subjective realities, specific indices, instances, and determinants of their gendered existence are disclosed.

The core notions of pangabuhi and pangita are identified as respectively revealing implicit gendered concepts of reproduction ('private') and production ('public') which are central to current reformulations, especially among feminists. This theoretical model merges with a comprehensive division of work between women and men, the diverse and overlapping implications of which need to be thoroughly re-examined and redefined.

Among feminists, the concept of separate 'public' and 'private' domains lies at the core of women's dilemmas, often associated with critiques of the expansion of capitalism and emphases on individualism. This orthodox model underlies hierarchical gender ideologies that burden, devalue, and disadvantage the women and their activities. However, feminist arguments for social reform confront what has come to be deemed as the natural order in societies characterized as patriarchal.

The thesis argues that the gender order has historically derived from discourses that prevailed from arguments, interventions, or deliberate policies of what is regarded appropriate or necessary. Hence, the conventions are subject to renegotiation and reconstruction at various levels. The construction of distinctions and the setting of the boundaries between "the natural" and the "the artificial" are inherent in struggles over interests (e.g., entitlements, social

roles, interpersonal responsibility, and commitment). These processes are both products of and weapons of women's encounters as individuals and as groups.¹

At Talanghan, the local concepts (pangabuhi and pangita, pamilya and panimaay, gahum and poder) represent specific ways by which the model of exclusive spheres is weakened by the contexts of the women's daily discourses and activities. At the same time, they highlight the rural women's reflections on their access and control over the sources of their pangabuhi and pangita as well as the specific means by which they "work for life." The meanings and value that the women attribute to their activities for pangabuhi and pangita locate them in both 'public' and 'private' spaces in their community, despite reinforcements of the gender divide from existing social, cultural, economic and political structures. They also represent the women's understanding of themselves as women and indicate how they have dealt with repressions and inequalities (e.g., battering, deception, getting the right to vote or access to development projects). A way out is suggested through the reconceptualization of women's power and agency in the study's conceptual framework.

Further, the study demonstrates that the women's reproductive concerns include not just domestic labor or the renewal of labor power; it includes the mental, emotional, and manual labor entailed in the maintainance of daily family life. Pangabuhi (as reproduction/life/sexuality) also projects what the women perceive as "improved" living conditions for future generations and accounts for non-rational forces in the women's personal realities (temperament, emotions, tastes, preferences, etc.).

The women's experiences with pangita (as production/livelihood/work) are concrete manifestations of their practical struggles as peasants with limited alternatives within an increasingly commoditized economic system. Arduous techniques of self-provisioning and involvements in informal petty commerce

¹ Lisa Peattie and Martin Rein, "The Idea of the Natural," and "Housework: Women in the Domestic Economy," chaps. in Women's Claims: A Study in Political Economy (Oxford: Oxford University, 1983), 3 and 37.

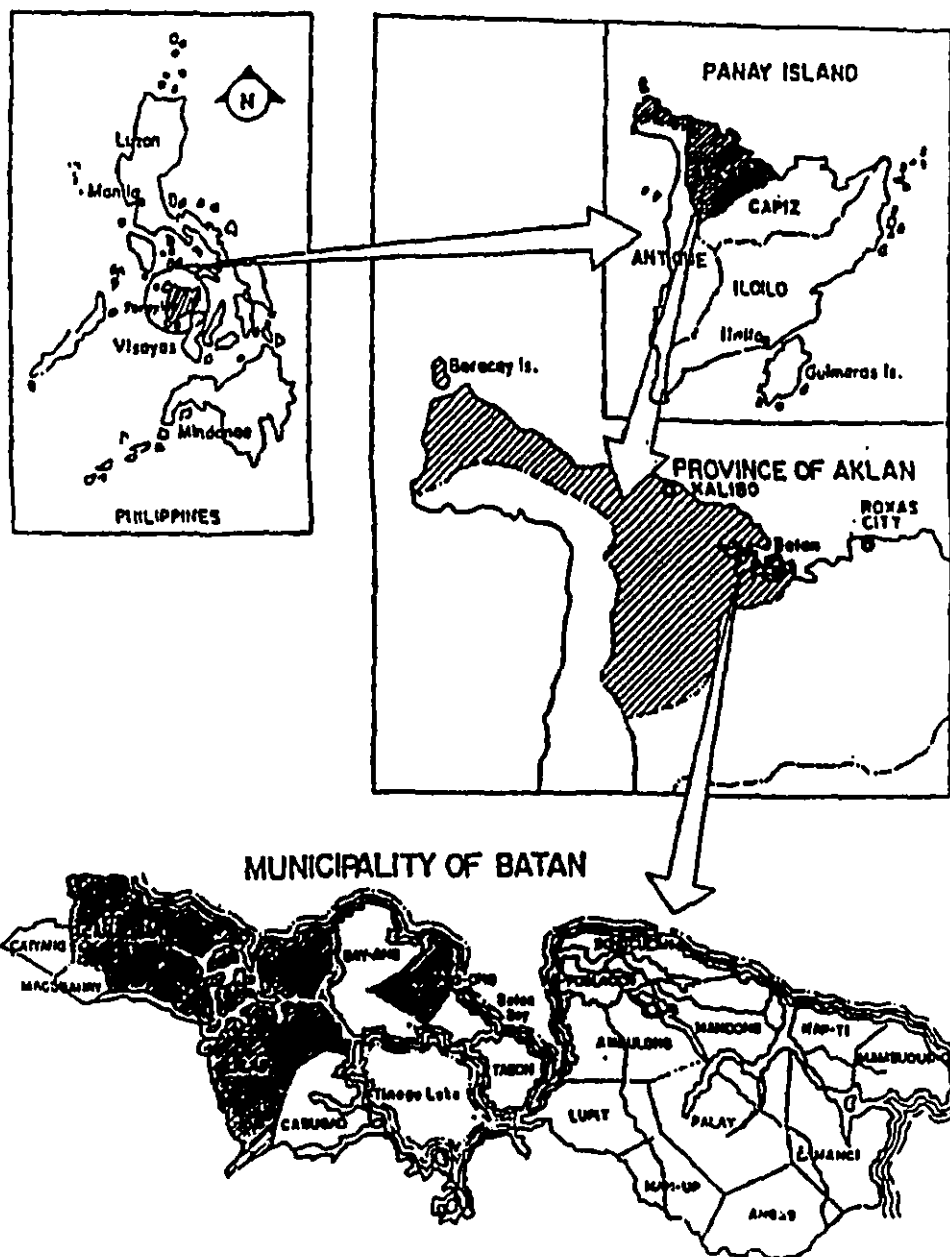
depict the women's contributions for the well-being and welfare of their households. The participation of some in the new aquaculture project of the KMT points to an innovation that is producing initial material and psychic successes that may unfold further in the immediate future.

Research efforts, such as this, that expose the permeability of female and male domain boundaries are part of on-going 'piecemeal' challenges to forms of patriarchal dominance which have defined existing notions of social order and legitimate authority. These challenges lead to broader conceptions of power which the women are not yet consciously aware of. The study legitimizes women's political agency at various levels and encourages women to engage in more active bargaining and negotiation for improved life conditions. Thus, development strategies for women's empowerment may be framed towards fulfilling their specific (practical and strategic) claims, interests, and entitlements at specific levels and networks within which women may have opportunities to unify for common purposes.

There has been a current move beyond "additive" and "compensatory" histories and theories about women towards more interlocking and holistic frameworks to account for the intersections of race, nation or ethnicity, class and gender. Environmental factors play a crucial part in this research, since the material realities for the women and their households are immediately affected by changes in food systems primarily based upon the local fishery. Such changes have the effect of opening up views on the peasantry in general and the household in particular, leading towards broader understanding of patriarchal forces that act upon individual members and collectives. In these ways, the study contributes to theoretical and practical grounds for framing and conducting development programs aimed to help improve the status of women.

From the fundamental issue of the gender divide that shapes subordinate and oppressive conditions for women, what stand out as pointers for future research and practical work with local community and gender issues are as follows:

1. Rural women tend to view pangabuhi and pangita as interactive goals and processes for their households' subsistence and survival.
2. The women's lack of awareness of their power is a result of inherited notions of established authority in a narrowly-defined political sphere from which they have been generally excluded.
3. The reexamination of gender relations, with an emphasis on increased particularization of subjective experiences between and among genders, leads to the reformulation of an inclusive theory that historically unifies the experiences of women and men, particularly in postcolonial societies like the Philippines.
4. Through participatory strategies, gender planning and development projects can be most sensitive to the value that women attribute to their daily activities and the scale of organizing that can best accomplish changes in women's situations.



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