The Kham Magar Women of Thabang

~ augusta molnar

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN NEPAL

volume II part 2

THE KHAM MAGAR WOMEN OF THABANG

The Status of Women in Nepal

Volume II: FIELD STUDIES

Part 2

THE KHAM MAGAR WOMEN OF THABANG

AUGUSTA MOLNAR

CEDA

Centre for Economic Development and Administration

Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal

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FOREWORD

The CEDA Status of Women Project was a multidisciplinary Research endeavor carried out by Tribhuvan University's Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA) under a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The overall purpose of the project as stated in the project agreement between His Majesty's Government and USAID was

> " ... to collect and generate information on the status and roles of a representative range of Nepalese women in order to support planning to facilitate the increased integration of women into the national development process."

To achieve this broad purpose both secondary and primary research was carried out in consecutive phases. Phase I was devoted to collection and analysis of available secondary data on Nepalese women in a number of specific areas which helped the project team to clarify its research objectives for the second phase comprising the field work. It also resulted in the publication of the following monographs comprising the Volume I Background Report on the Status of Women in Nepal:

1. Statistical Profile of Nepalese Women: A Critical Review, Volume I, Part I (by Meena Acharya)

2. Tradition and Change in the Legal Status of Nepalese Women, Volume I, Part 2 (by Lynn Bennett with assistance from Shilu Singh)

3. Institutions Concerning Women in Nepal, Volume I, Part 3 (by Bina Pradhan)

4. Annotated Bibliography on Women in Nepal, Volume I, Part 4 (by Indira M. Shrestha)

5. Integration of Women in Development: The Case of Nepal, Volume I, Part 5 (by Pushkar Raj Reejal)

The present study is the outcome of the Project's Phase II which was intended " ... to develop methodologies and implement pilot socio-economic case studies of women in traditional rural communities." Altogether eight separate village studies on the Status of Women were carried out by the project researchers in the following communities:

Region/District	Community	Researcher
1. Eastern Terai (Dhanusha)	Maithili (Mixed Castes)	Meena Acharya
2. Central Middle Hills (Sindhu Palchowk)	Tamang	Indira M. Shrestha
3. Kathmandu Valley (Lalitpur)	Newar (Jyapu + Others)	Bina Pradhan
4. Central Middle Hills	Parbatiya (Brahman, Chhetri, and low caste Sarki)	Lynn Bennett
5. Western High Mountains (Mustang)	Baragaonle (Tibetan-Speaking People)	Sidney Schuler
6. Eastern Middle Hills (Sankhuwa Sabha)	Lohrung Rai	Charlotte Hardman
7. Far Western Inner-Terai (Dang Deokhuri)	Tharu	Drone Rajaure
8. Far Western Middle Hills (Rolpa)	Kham Magar	Augusta Molnar

Using both in-depth anthropological methods and quantitative survey techniques the researchers gathered comparative data on women's economic role and their status in the family and wider social group. Of particular importance in the project's effort to document the economic contribution of rural women was the observational time allocation study which each researcher conducted as part of his or her fieldwork.

The present monographs are the parts of the Volume II, Status of Women Field Studies Series which includes eight village studies written by the individual researchers. It also consists of a ninth monograph which analyses the aggregate data and summarizes the major findings of the village studies. The ninth monograph is an attempt to

distill the policy implications of the Phase I and Phase II findings and provide guidelines for a National Plan of Action to increase both the productivity and the status of Nepalese women.

It is our sincere hope that this pioneer research work on Status of Nepalese Women will contribute positively towards promoting equality of sexes in the Nepalese society.

All the members of the project team deserve thanks for their admirable research endeavor.

Dr. Govind Ram Agrawal
Executive Director

February, 1981

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project which is one of the first attempts to look at the present status of women in Nepal has been completed with the combined efforts of an inter disciplinary project team. Its success has to be attributed to a large number of people and it is not possible to identify their contribution in a compartmentalized fashion, as the project was quite broad in scope and also of a long duration encompassing about thirty-two months. CEDA would like to express its sincere appreciation to all those who have actively contributed to the successful completion of the project.

The project team had the privilege of working on specific issues with certain individuals and it is felt that their contributions be specially mentioned. The project team was constantly advised by a Board of Advisors consisting of Honorable Mrs. Kamal Rana as Chairperson, who is also the Chairperson of Women's Services Coordination Committee (WSCC). Her continuous interest and help in the project's success is highly appreciated. The other members of the Board, Honorable Dr. Ratna Shumsher Rana and Prof. Upendra Man Malla, Vice Chairman and Member of the National Planning Commission respectively, also provided valuable advice and guidance at different times to the project for which CEDA is greatly obliged.

The project team has worked very hard and it is basically their sincere dedication and commitment that have materialized in the final outputs. CEDA would like to express its special appreciation to Dr. Lynn Bennett who has contributed significantly both as a team member as well as in her capacity as Project Advisor. The other members of the team, Ms. Bina Pradhan, Ms. Meena Acharya, Ms. Indira Shrestha, Mr. Drone Prasad Rajaure, Dr. Augusta Molnar, and Ms. Sidney Schuler have also worked very hard from the beginning of the project to its end. Their individual monographs dealing with the different ethnic communities are the concrete evidence of their dedicated and committed efforts and admirable research endeavor. To all of them CEDA owes its deep gratitude and sincere obligation.

Apart from the team members, several other persons have also assisted the project with their expertise. Mr. Narendra Shrestha's contribution as programmer, Mr. Shalik Ram Sharma's as statistician, and the contributions of

Dr. Chaitanya Misra, Ms. Padma Shrestha and Ms. Basundhara Dongal in the project are duly acknowledged. Mr. Govinda Sharma, Mr. Vishnu Nepal and Mr. Bishnu Bhakta Shrestha helped in the tabulation of the field data.

Several United States Agency for International Development (USAID) officials have helped in project completion. Mr. Samuel Butterfield, the former Director of USAID to Nepal deserves special appreciation. Mr. Thomas Rose took keen interest in the project and helped in the later part of the project. Dr. Laurie Mailloux's continuous interest and help has been a great source of encouragement in expediting the project work. Mr. John Babylon and Mr. William Nance also helped significantly at different times.

On behalf of the project team and myself, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to our present Executive Director, Dr. Govind Ram Agrawal, who has taken keen interest and has been a constant source of inspiration for the project, right from the time of his taking over the leadership of CEDA. His academic and intellectual input along with the kind of administrative support so much required for the successful completion of the project is deeply and sincerely appreciated. Mr. Sant Bahadur Gurung, Deputy Director of our Centre has always been a great help to us at different, and sometimes difficult, times. Dr. Khem B. Bista and Mr. Madhukar Shumsher Rana, our former Executive Directors helped us extensively during their tenure of office, and we owe a deep sense of gratitude to them. Dr. Puskar Raj Reejal also contributed to the project by taking over the Directorship of the project at the earlier period and Mr. Devendra Raj Upadhaya's contribution as consultant to the project is also appreciated.

The project team also received substantial help from Mr. Devendra Gurung, Ms. Pavitra Thapa, Mr. Iswor Narayan Manandhar and Mr. Manoj Shrestha in their different capacities. Mr. Dibya Giri deserves our special acknowledgement for his patience and hard work in typing and retyping the manuscripts. Mr. Prem Rai's contribution for the project is also duly acknowledged.

Apart from the contributions of the above mentioned persons, several other individuals and institutions have helped us. The CEDA administration and other professional colleagues at our Centre are duly acknowledged in a collective way for their help and assistance.

The project materialized due to the sincere desire on the part of His Majesty's Government for finding out the present status of Nepalese women and to suggest measures for improvements. This challenging task was entrusted to CEDA for which we owe a deep and sincere gratitude to His Majesty's Government. We hope and believe that the output will be of immense help in designing and implementing the future programmes aimed at the upliftment of the status of women in our country.

Last, but not the least, the United States Agency for International Development Mission to Nepal deserves special thanks and appreciation for funding this research.

Mr. Bhavani Dhungana
Project Director

February 1981

METHODOLOGICAL FOREWORD[1]

Research Objectives and Theoretical Perspectives

This monograph is part of the Volume II field studies series which represents the final outcome of a three year research endeavor on the Status of Women in Nepal. As its name indicates the general objective of the project was to analyse and evaluate the role and status of Nepalese women. In particular the project sought to focus on rural women and their relation to the development process. These specific objectives entailed first of all, recognition of the fact that Nepalese women are not a homogeneous group and secondly, a commitment to document as accurately as possible the actual contribution women make to the rural economy. The result was a research design involving two distinct phases. The first phase was to be an analysis based on existing data of the macro-level variables affecting the over-all socio-economic position of women in Nepal. This phase was completed with the publication of five monographs in Volume I.

The second phase was planned as a series of intensive field studies on the dynamics of the day to day life of village women and the diversity of ways in which women's roles and status have been defined by different ethnic groups within Nepal. Specifically, the objectives set for the second phase were to investigate those areas where the existing information on rural women was either inadequate or inaccurate.

Extended field studies were carried out to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on women in eight different communities in various parts of Nepal. The development of a unified methodological approach to be used in these eight studies was made simpler by the fact that despite our varied

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[1]For fuller discussion of the theoretical perspectives on which the Status of Women study is based and of the methodologies used in data collection see Chapter I of the Aggregate Analysis (Acharya and Bennett), The Rural Women of Nepal: An Aggregate Analysis and Summary of Eight Village Studies, Volume II, Part 9, C.E.D.A., Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu. (1981).

backgrounds as economists, linguists and anthropologists all the project team members shared the basic theoretical assumption that the concept of "women's status" could not be treated as a unitary construct having a single explanation. (See, Aggregate Analysis).

It was one of our central hypotheses that, despite the title of our project, it is misleading to speak of the status of women -- even within a single group. We expected that if we looked carefully enough, our studies of the various communities in Nepal would all reveal a good deal of ambiguity in the relations between the sexes. Specifically, we expected that women's status vis-a-vis men (in a given community) would vary with women's many roles and the contexts within which these roles are enacted. Since status is a function of the power, authority and prestige attached to a given role by society and since everyone, male and female, must enact a number of different roles in the course of a lifetime (or indeed in a single day or even simultaneously at a given instant), we would expect the status of any one individual -- or any social category like male or female -- to be a complex configuration arising from these many roles and the various powers, limitations and the perceived values assigned to them.

From the point of view of development, it is our conviction that an effective integration of rural women into the development process must begin with a clear-eyed vision and an unbiased understanding of who these women are, what they do and what they want. We must know not only where they are vulnerable and in need of support, but also where they are strong so that this strength can be further encouraged.

Research Design and Methodology

To address these issues we needed an approach that would allow us to embrace the complexity of the phenomena of sexual stratification which we expected to -- and did -- encounter during our extended fieldwork. We decided that for purposes of data collection and for the initial stages of analysis we would distinguish the following "dimensions" of women's status:

1. Economic
2. Familial
3. Political/Community

4. Educational
5. Legal
6. Ideological/Religious

In formulating these "dimensions" we were influenced by Giele's (1976) typology of six major life options or areas of control or access to opportunity as determinants of women's over-all status. We modified the categories to make our "dimensions" more appropriate to the context of village Nepal and more useful to our basic focus on development issues. Yet we knew from the beginning -- and it became even clearer during the course of fieldwork -- that all the dimensions overlapped in numerous ways and that the divisions we had made were ultimately arbitrary. Almost all of us have ended up reorganizing the dimensions in the course of analyzing and writing up the data from our respective villages. Perhaps the main value of the "six dimensions" was to encourage each of us to look into aspects of village reality and the problem of women's status that are not usually dealt with in detail by our particular discipline.

In order to capture the diversity of the Nepalese situation and the multiplicity of factors affecting women's status it was necessary to make several departures from convention in our approach to the collection of field data.

The first departure was in the weight given to the cultural variable in the choice of survey sites. It is our conviction that the gender systems which essentially define male and female and their roles and relationships to each other within a particular ethnic group are socially constructed. This is not to deny that biological and ecological factors influence women's status and the relationship between the sexes. But it does mean that we must look beyond such factors if we are to either to account for the marked cross cultural variation in human gender systems or to fully comprehend the dynamics of the female role in any particular culture.

This conviction led the research team to attempt to cover in depth as many cultural groupings as possible within the resource constraint of the project. As a result eight communities were covered in the second phase.

Despite our emphasis on the importance of cultural factors we did not want to underestimate the role of economic

variables in the determination of women's status. It has been one of our hypotheses that substantial improvement in the economic status of a household might well be accompanied by an actual deterioration of status of women vis-a-vis men in that household (Acharya 1979). Therefore, for analytical purposes, we have classified all our quantitative data according to the economic strata. By inter-strata comparison we hoped to ascertain the role of economic factors in determining the status of women versus men.

All the sample households have been classified into three economic strata: top, middle and bottom. Income rather than property has been taken as a basis for this economic stratification. We considered income to be a better indicator of the actual economic well-being of the household than land holding since land is only one of the sources of income. In fact, although the landed gentry retains much of its former prestige and influence as a vestige of traditional systems of social stratification, in many parts of Nepal the landed gentry appears to be losing its economic predominance. Members of the emerging trading or bourgeois class are in many cases economically better off than the landed gentry. Moreover, classification of households according to land holdings alone would not capture the economic differentiation between landless but relatively well off businessmen and professionals on the one hand, and marginal farmers and landless laborers on the other.

Another consideration in economic classification in the current analysis is that the sample households have been stratified according to village economic standards and not national or international standards. The economic of each household was determined on the basis of household production and income data. Using the average 1977 per capita income for Nepal of Rs. 1320 or $ 110 given by the Asian Development Bank (Key Indicators of Developing Member Countries of ADB, Economic Office, Asian Development Bank, Vol. X, No. 1, April 1979, p. 157) as the mid-point we established the middle stratum as being all those households whose per capita income was within 25% (or Rs. 330) below or above the national average. Thus our cut off points were

Rs. 990 for the bottom stratum and Rs. 1650 for the top stratum.[1]

The second methodological departure in our research design was the decision to use a balanced two pronged approach incorporating both in-depth anthropological and quantitative survey methods. This was a natural outcome of our equal concern to understand the cultural and the economic variables affecting women's status.

Qualitative Data Gathering

The most important element in our approach to qualitative data gathering was simply living with the people we wanted to learn about. Each researcher became a resident of the community he or she was studying, living with a local family and practicing techniques of participant observation and the unstructured interview with key informants. The period of fieldwork ranged from six months to several years (in the case of the co-operating anthropologists who had already been engaged in their own dissertation research in their communities). All the team members were fluent in Nepali and five of them were also able to communicate easily in the local language as well. This they reported was especially important, not only because it enabled them to understand casual comments and conversation in the family

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[1] Interestingly in 7 out of the eight villages this definition gave us the expected distribution between bottom, middle and top strata households. In Kagbeni however, all but two of the households were found to be in the top stratum. Although the people of Kagbeni do appear to be doing relatively well economically, it should also be remembered that the prices of basic food supplies and other commodities are very much higher in Kagbeni than in other areas studied so the increased income may not necessarily result in increased purchasing power or a higher standard of living. For the village monograph, the Kagbeni population was re-classified by the researcher into 3 economic strata applicable to the village. For aggregate analysis the original strata definition was retained.

where they lived, but also because in several villages[1] communication with women in particular would have been severely limited had the researcher not been able to speak the local language.

To guide the collection of descriptive, in-depth information a Field Manual was prepared containing sets of "leading questions" for each of the six dimensions. The Manual also contained "Key Informant Schedules" on certain topics such as child rearing practices,[2] legal awareness and kinship terminology where the number of people interviewed was not as important as having good rapport with the informant and being a sensitive listener. The Manual also included practical suggestions about how researchers might go about indirectly collecting certain types of sensitive information as well as how to informally cross check the quantitative survey data which they were also responsible for gathering.[3]

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[1]The Maithili speaking women in Sirsia, and the Tharu women in particular were unfamiliar with Nepali. Kham speaking Magar women, the Lohorung Rai, Newar and Tamang women and the Tibetian speaking women of Baragaon were fluent in Nepali but of course preferred communicating in their own language. Nepali was the mother tongue in only one of the 8 sites.

[2]The schedule used by the team was a revised version of one prepared by Mrs. Basundara Dungal of CNAS and generously shared with the Status of Women team.

[3]For further background on the type of qualitative data sought and approaches used see Field Manual: Guidelines for the Collection and Analysis of Data on the Status of Women in Rural Nepalese Communities, Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA), Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal. 1979. (Bound Mimeo).

Quantitative Data Collection

Site Selection and Sample Size

The sites for the eight village studies were purposively selected according to ethnic group and geographic area (Mountain, Hill and Terai). The map (Figure i) shows the locations of the research sites and the communities included.

Within each village[1] a random sample of 35 households was selected making a total of 280 households in all. In three of the villages (Sirsia, Bulu and Bakundol) which were of mixed caste populations the sample was stratified by caste. Within this sample a sub-sample of 24 households in each village was randomly selected for the observational time allocation study.[2] Households were defined to include all members who ate from the same kitchen[3] and who had lived in the village for at least 6 months during the previous year.

Survey Instruments

The team developed a series of survey instruments to generate quantitative information on the following aspects of the sample population:

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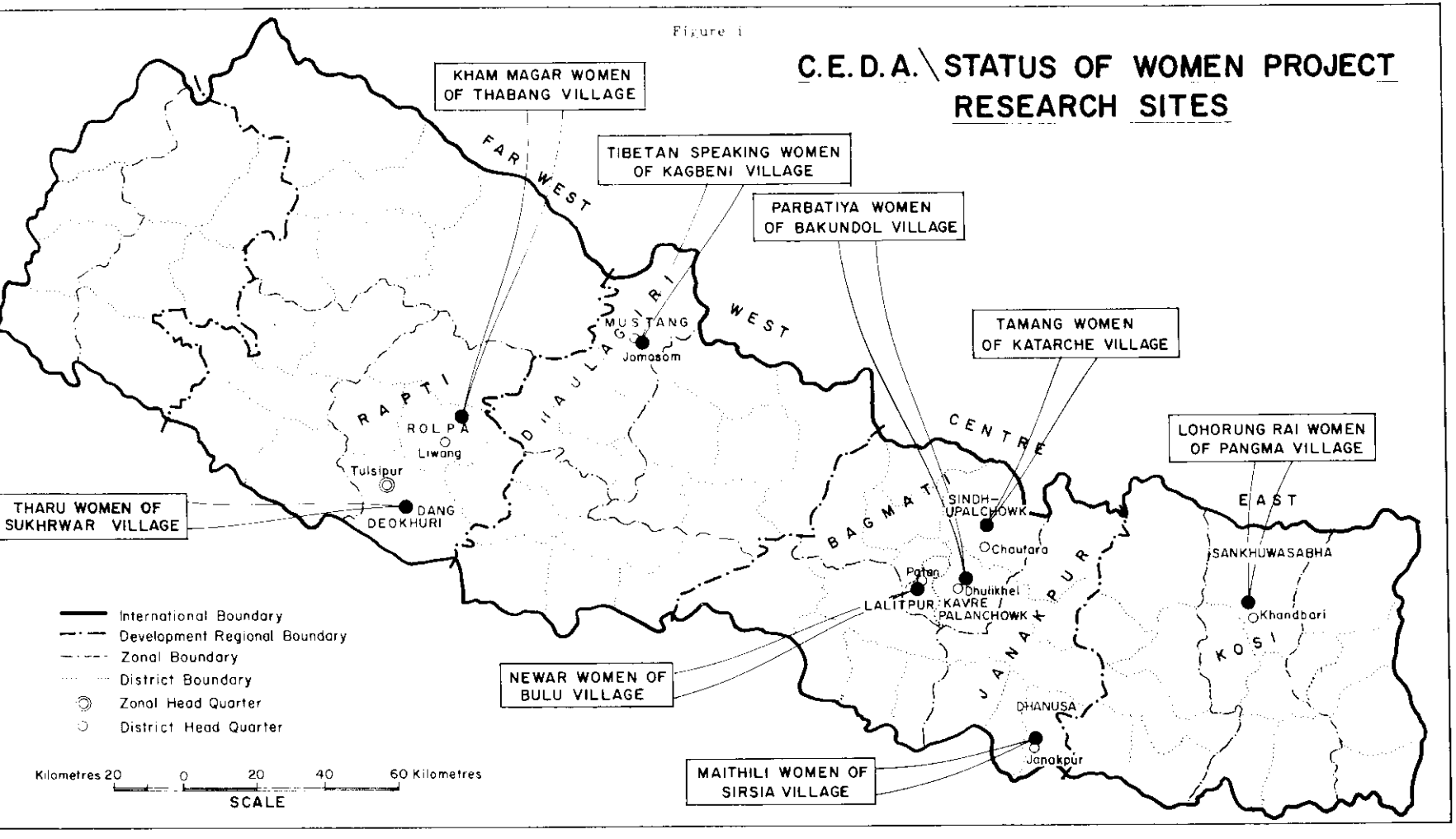
[1] By "village" we refer to a traditional residential unit locally known and named as such rather than to the larger administrative unit or panchayat which generally consists of several villages and is usually too large and unwieldy to study in depth.

[2] A smaller sample was selected for the Time Allocation Study because our methodology required that certain sub-groups of households be visited on alternate days within the period of one hour. We were concerned that we would not be able to visit more than six households within an hour so we limited the sample to 4 groups of six or 24 households. With the wisdom of hindsight we now realize that we could have visited more houses in an hour and included the entire 35 household population in the Time Allocation Study.

[3] In the case of communities like the Kham Magar where some family members spent extended periods in the families' high pasture dwelling, eating from the same kitchen meant sharing household food supplies.

Figure 1


C.E.D.A.\STATUS OF WOMEN PROJECT
RESEARCH SITES
KHAM MAGAR WOMEN OF THABANG VILLAGE
TIBETAN SPEAKING WOMEN OF KAGBENI VILLAGE
PARBATIYA WOMEN OF BAKUNDOL VILLAGE
TAMANG WOMEN OF KATARCHE VILLAGE
LOHORUNG RAI WOMEN OF PANGMA VILLAGE
THARU WOMEN OF SUKHRWAR VILLAGE
NEWAR WOMEN OF BULU VILLAGE
MAITHILI WOMEN OF SIRSIA VILLAGE
FAR WEST
MID WEST
CENTRE
EAST
RAPTI
DHAULAGIRI
BAGMATI
JANAKPUR
KOSI
MUSTANG
Jomosom
ROLPA
Liwang
Tulsipur
DANG
DEOKHURI
SINDHUPALCHOWK
Chautara
Patan
LALITPUR
Dhulikhel
KAVRE PALANCHOWK
SANKHUWASABHA
Khandbari
DHANUSA
Janakpur
International Boundary
Development Regional Boundary
Zonal Boundary
District Boundary
Zonal Head Quarter
District Head Quarter
Kilometres 20 0 20 40 60 Kilometres
SCALE

1. Demographic Variables: Besides the conventional demographic data on individuals such as sex, age, marital status, fertility history, education and literacy, this set of information includes data on marital history, type and forms of marriage, short-term mobility of household members as well as each individual's kinship position (relation to the household head) within the family. At the household level, information has been collected on the caste/clan and lineage identity of the households, composition of the households and family structure.

2. Time Use Data: Observational time use data was collected for all members of the sample households. (To be discussed below).

3. Income and Production: An attempt was made to capture the total household production with a detailed structured set of schedules matching the time-use categories. Five schedules were used each on different categories of income namely, agricultural production, industrial products and processed food, other production, (such as kitchen gardening, hunting and gathering) income from capital assets and wage/salary and income transfers.

4. Household Assets: The schedule on property holdings included questions on household property as well as personal property. It also included questions on rights of disposal of joint family property. The schedule was devised in detail to capture all likely items of household and personal assets including conventional items like land and animals, cash bank deposits as well as jewellery and valuable clothing, household utensils, furniture etc. There was also a schedule on women's independent income and their use of these earnings.

5. Credit: Access to and use of credit by men and women.

6. Employment: Employment opportunities and attitudes toward different kinds of work and employment outside the home differentiated by sex.

7. Exchanges at Marriage: Exchanges of cash, goods and labor between affinal families as part of the formalization of marriage.

8. Literacy and Education Levels: Educational attainment and attitudes to male and female education.

9. Social Images: Male/Female stereotypes and qualities appreciated in brides and grooms.

10. Women's Political Consciousness and Community Participation: Awareness of local, district and national political figures, voting records, panchayat meeting attendance, attitudes toward and involvement in extension and development activities.

11. Household Decision Making: This included seven different schedules covering decision making in the following areas: a) Household labor allocation, b) Agriculture, c) Cash and kind expenditure (food, gifts, travel, medicine etc.), d) Investment, e) Borrowing, f) Disposal of family food production, g) Disposal of other family resources.

It should be mentioned that data collection on personal property was problematic but instructive. In the process of interviewing we learned that the concept of "personal property" was ambiguous and irrelevant to the villagers. The data on exchanges in marriage were also found to be too complex for quantification in the way we had envisioned.

The project's questionnaires on decision making represent another innovation in data collection techniques. In these forms we avoided general questions such as "who makes decisions about buying clothing ?" Instead for each category of decision we asked what particular transactions or purchases had taken place in the past two weeks, month or year (depending on how important and frequent the type of transaction). After writing down the particular item decided (i.e. the sale of a hen, the taking of Rs. 500 loan or the purchase of a new cooking pot), we then asked questions about the stages of the decision making process. For each decision made we asked who had initiated it or suggested the idea, who had been consulted, who had finally executed the decision (and in the process decided the amount of money to spend for the purchase or to accept for the sale) and who if anyone had subsequently disagreed with the decision made. Since we are particularly interested in women's role in decision making and knew that in most communities men would be the culturally accepted "decision makers" in most spheres, we specifically administered this series to adult women -- trying whenever we could to talk to them when senior males were not present.

The fourth and most important departure from convention was our attempt to capture the full subsistence production of the household. The inadequacy of conventional statistics for the measurement of household production and subsequently, the contribution of women to household subsistence in developing countries, has been discussed by various authors (Boserup 1970, Lele 1975). Acharya (1979) discussed these issues in the specific context of Nepal in Volume I, Part 1 of the present Status of Women Project. For the field studies we tried to capture physical production within the household to the maximum extent. This is reflected in the detailed schedules on household production and food processing. Moreover we realize the importance of other activities within the household for the maintenance and reproduction of the household and have generated data on the time use patterns of all members within the household.

Collection of data on production of physical goods involved problems of valuation for aggregation. There are several alternative methods by which these goods can be valued. Most writers however, agree that for valuation of physical goods the use of market price or replacement cost is best. Since we had no intention of valuing the services produced within the household (i.e. services such as a mother's care for her own children for which we do not feel economic valuation is appropriate or feasible),we adopted a combination of first and third methods in valuation of the goods produced for household consumption. Traded goods were valued at the prevailing market price. Since much of the food processing involved home produced raw materials, the following procedure was adopted for the valuation of food processing done at home. The market cost of raw materials (e.g. paddy) and cash and kind cost involved in processing (milling charges if any) were deducted from the total market value of processed good (husked rice in this case) and the difference taken as the income generated by food processing

within the household.[1]

Non-traded goods like dried green vegetables were valued at the price of the cheapest vegetable in the off-season. Thus a conservative replacement cost approach was adopted for valuation of these goods.

The Time Allocation Study (TAS)

The Time Allocation Study (TAS) was in many ways the central component of the project's attempt to assess the actual economic contribution of rural women. Analysis of the available macro-level statistics, such as for example, labor force participation rates, in the first phase of the project (Acharya, 1979) revealed the inadequacy of conventional statistics for the assessment of women's real economic role in Nepalese villages. Therefore, in order to support long range economic planning, to stimulate the reformulation of government policy on women and to provide the kind of detailed, area specific information necessary for the incorporation of women into rural development programs, the team decided that micro-level data on women's work should be gathered to supplement the existing national level statistics.

We were particularly interested in the non-market, subsistence sector of the economy: the sector which is least amenable to conventional modes of economic measurement and where we hypothesized women's input to be the greatest.

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[1] It should be noted that the value added income from food processing activities such as liquor making, grinding, husking etc. was not included in the household income calculations used for determining economic strata. This is because the Asian Development Bank's per capita income figure used as a median for our stratification procedure was not based on such detailed accounting of home production income. The considerable amount of such income earned by these activities would have inflated the per capita income of the sample households relative to the national average.

This led us to focus on the household and to attempt to measure how its members — young and old, male and female — use their time in productive versus reproductive activities. In fact, we felt that the whole question of what is "productive" activity -- the whole definition of work itself -- needed to be reassessed on the basis of fresh observation of what village families do with their time to meet and if possible to surpass, their subsistence needs.

We adopted our methodology from an unpublished paper by Johnson (1974)[1] who had used the "spot check" technique of randomly timed household observations to gather time allocation data on the Machiguenga community in South America. This method may be described in the following stages:

1. Preparation of a detailed list of activities and their definitions is the first step in any attempt towards data collection on time allocation. A structured list of activities is a must for preserving uniformity in the definition of activities. Our list included 97 activities classified in 12 major categories.[2]

2. Selection of the sample households in the survey sites (which had already been selected as discussed above) was the next step. In villages with strict caste distinctions the households were classified according to the caste for sampling purposes and a random selection of households made within each group. Thus the caste distribution of the village households was also reflected in the sample distribution.

3. These 24 sample households were divided into four groups (A, B, C & D) of six households each. Each group consisted of six households because that was thought to be the maximum number of households which could be visited by the researchers

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[1]The findings of this study appeared in published form in 1975 as "Time Allocation in a Machiguenga Community" IN Ethnology 14:301-10.

[2]For complete list of all 97 sub-activities see Field Manual (CEDA 1979), Appendix VI or The Rural Women of Nepal: An Aggregate Analysis and Summary of Eight Village Studies, Vol. II, Part 9. (Acharya and Bennett, 1981).

within the specified hour. The researchers visited two groups of households each day at two different hours which were determined in advance by random selection. Each group of households was thus visited on alternative days for a period of six months in four villages and one year in another four villages.

We had wanted to cover the full agricultural cycle for all the village studies to obtain a complete record of the seasonal variation in women's and men's workloads. However, because of the limited time and funding available, the CEDA staff team members working in Sirsia, Sukrawar, Pulu and Katarche were only able to observe their sample households over a six month period. Fortunately we were able to time the field research to encompass most of the agricultural busy season and a portion of the winter slack season. The Kagbeni study was carried out over an eight month[1] period and the remaining three studies (in Thabang, Pangma and Bakundol) cover a full year.

The hours of daily visits for each group of households were selected randomly from within the universe of a 16 hour (4 a.m. to 8 p.m.)[2] day for 26 weeks. Thus each

---

[1]This study was planned to cover a full year but had to be suspended when the research assistant, having been mistaken for one of the parties in a local faction, was murdered. His death was not related in any way to his role as a research assistant and theoretically someone else could have been trained to carry on the work. However, by the time the general shock and disruption caused by the murder had subsided in the community there had already been too long a gap in the data collection and the principal researcher decided to suspend the study.

[2]In Kagbeni the researcher was unable to visit families before six a.m. because of the large Tibetian mastifs which are let loose at night to protect households against thieves. Only after they are chained in the morning is it feasible to venture out and visit homes. Therefore the period of observation for this village was only 14 hours. Similarly the researcher in Sukhrawar village was able to begin his observation at 5 a.m. and covered only a 15 hour period. The reason we set our starting time so early is that we knew that in many communities women grind their flour at this time and also that during the summer months both men and women may begin work in the fields well before 6 a.m.

household was visited 78 times in six month studies and 156 times in one year studies. Total number of households covered in eight villages was 192. (For details on parameters of each field study see attached Figure ii).

4. The field workers were provided with Form 'A' (attached) and Code Sheets. Their job was to visit the households during the pre-determined hours (a chart of which was provided to them) and check the appropriate box on the Form 'A'.[1] Form 'A' has a precoded and predefined activity list on the vertical column and person code of the household members on the horizontal line. Field workers were asked to write the name of the household members in the horizontal line against appropriate person codes before visiting the households. (For more detailed discussion, see Aggregate Analysis).

The data collected by this method represented the frequency of observations of a given activity within the time horizon used. This was taken as the frequency of time distribution and the resulting time allocation data derived. There is an explicit assumption in this jump (which is supported by statistical probability) that if people devote in general more time to activity A than to activity B, people will be observed more times performing activity A than B. This data does not provide information on time intensity of operation A compared to operation B.

In other words, it was assumed if people spend more time cooking than washing their hands, we would encounter more people who were cooking at the moment of our spot check than people who were washing their hands. This assumption is valid provided the group of households being visited within the hour are more or less homogeneous in their major activity pattern.

---

[1] As with Johnson's study our aim was to record "what each member of the household was doing before they became aware of our presence .... When members were absent, but nearby we went to observe them -- otherwise we relied on informant testimony about the activities of absent members, verifying where possible". Researchers report that other family members generally gave an accurate account of what members were doing.

TABLE i

PARAMETERS OF RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE CEDA/STATUS OF WOMEN TIME ALLOCATION STUDIES

Code No.	115	121	123	124	226	228	237	239	All Villages
Village	KAGBENI	PANGMA	THABANG	BAKUNDOL	BULU	KATARCHE	SUKPAWAR	SIRSIA	
Ethnic Group	Baragaonle	Lohorung Rai	Kham Magar	Parbatiya	Newar	Tamang	Tharu	Maithili	
Daily period from which observation points were randomly chosen	14 hrs.	16 hrs.	16 hrs.	16 hrs.	16 hrs.	16 hrs.	15 hrs.	16 hrs.	Varies
Number of months observed	8 mo. (34 wks.)	12 mo. (52 wks.)	12 mo. (52 wks.)	12 mo. (52 wks.)	6 mo. (26 wks.)	6 mo. (26 wks.)	6 mo. (26 wks.)	6 mo. (26 wks.)	Varies
Starting Dates	1 Jan. 78	26 Feb. 78	27 Feb. 78	26 Feb. 78	1 Aug. 78	4 Aug. 78	25 Jan. 79	31 Jul. 78	
Number of Sample households	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	192
Sample population for TAS study	110	123	133	146	115	119	307	168	1221
Observation points per week per household	3	3	3*	3	3	3	3	3	3 random times per week
Total observations per person in each village	(34x3) 102	(52x3) 156	(52x3) 156	(52x3) 156	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	Varies
Approximate total number of observations per village	11220	19188	20748	22776	8970	9282	23946	13104	129234

Dr. Molnar the Researcher working in Thabang actually made 6 visits a week to each household and collected twice the number of observations on each individual. This "double data" however, has not been included in the aggregate study. Through an analysis of this data at a future time the Researcher hopes to evaluate whether an increased number of observation points has any affect on the time allocation patterns that emerge.

Form A

Daily Activities

Village No. | Household No. | Month | Date | Hour

Activity Code and Description / Person Code and Name		01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	-
Code	Activity										
01010											
01020	Animal Husbandry										
	Agriculture										

Monograph Content and Format

Although in a certain sense the Field Manual and the quantitative survey instruments provided a broad analytical framework for the data collection effort, the extent of the analytical uniformity intended for the village studies should perhaps be clarified. This is especially necessary with regard to the qualitative aspect where a great deal of flexibility in terms of both data collection and interpretation was expected and in fact, encouraged. The Field Manual was intended to ensure that certain basic information was gathered on all six "dimensions" while allowing the individual researchers to concentrate their attention on those areas which particularly interested them or which emerged as central to understanding the status of women in the community where they worked. Thus each team member has organized his or her material in a different way to address those theoretical issues which he or she felt to be the most important from among those discussed in the Manual.

The quantitative data gathered through the questionnaires and schedules were of course uniform for all villages. The same surveys were administered at each research site and a set of standard tabulations were prepared for all villages. Nevertheless, the final decision as to which statistics or tables to incorporate in each monograph and how to interpret them was left to the individual author. Some have relied heavily on their quantitative data and in the course of their analysis developed new ways to present it in tabular or graph form. Others have preferred to concentrate on the presentation and analysis of their qualitative data gathered through participant observation. To facilitate comparison between the villages a standard set of tables on demographic and socio-economic aspects of each community have been included in the Appendices of the summary and aggregate analysis monograph.

Research Team

Status of Women Project

CEDA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout my research on the Kham Magar, I was continually struck by women as individuals. While this monograph is an attempt to understand the status of women in Kham Magar society and describe the patterns of behavior that characterize the women of Thabang, the village that was the focus of the research, it is also a study of the rich variation in women's personalities and the role of circumstances in shaping individuals. The following quote conveys the individuality of Magar women.

> Today Nana and I went to Morantang, the nearest hamlet to the main village, to see her married sister. We stopped on the way to talk to Juna's father, who lives in Morantang with his second wife. As I suspected, half of Nana's reason for making the trip to Morantang was to ask about Juna's elopement with Mohan the night before. Juna hid her clothes last night with her best friend and then she and Mohan slipped away at night. They are now staying with Mohan's parents. Juna's father complains about Juna's secrecy in the whole affair, but doesn't seem terribly upset. Later when I ask Nana she tells me that he really is pleased by the match and does not want to pay for an expensive wedding for Juna anyhow. Juna's stepmother offered us some beer during the conversation and chatted with Nana about Juna's friend who is a widow in her late twenties with a four-year-old son.
>
> "These days young widows have no self-respect. Look at her running off like that to fairs all the time and selling liquor while she flirts with all the young men. It is fine for her to sell liquor and earn some money for her son, but she has no right to behave in that fashion. What are respectable matrons like us to think? Mark my words. That young widow is going to remarry soon, just like Juna."

> After a bit more beer, we went to ask Nana's sister if she could spare a day to come and help Nana weed her cornfield, the ostensible purpose of the trip to Morantang.
>
> - extract from my diary, June 1977.

Thabang women are hard to describe in the collective. They are widows, they are weavers, they are spinners. They are hard workers who weed the summer corn ten to twelve hours a day in June. They are married women who are not afraid to express their opinions in discussions with male kin. They are the wives of soldiers who manage the family estate for years at a time until their husband's return with a pension from the army. They are mothers carrying their babies in their workbaskets as they walk to distant fields. They are small girls in velvet, Nepali-style shirts with silver bangles on their ankles to protect them from evil spirits. They are teenage girls selling liquor at a fair with their friends to earn money for a new blouse. They are school girls in faded, flowered frocks writing the alphabet by kerosene light on small slate boards.

There are two central concerns that appear and reappear throughout this monograph. The first is that women are not a homogeneous group in Magar society, nor a single type that can be described by a single pattern. Women assume a variety of roles in Magar society and are accorded a variety of statuses. Their position in society and the family depend upon many factors, such as age, whether or not they are married, the relative wealth of their families, their education, and their particular personality.

The status accorded to women in Magar society is different according to each sphere of activity, and is also different within each sphere. Legally, Magar women are denied rights to land and family property, yet in the economic sphere women are accorded a position of authority in the household that is complementary to men. Ideologically women are highly valued as potential childbearers and as brides who cement the social ties between their own and their husband's lineage. Yet within the same ideological sphere, some women are feared as witches and are restricted from conducting household and community rituals. The status of Magar women is not something, therefore, that can be measured in general terms; it may be high in some respects and low in others. Rather than

providing a single definition of what it means to be a Magar woman, the concern of this monograph is to describe and analyse the range of possible roles a woman can assume, the types of options women have, and the variety of statuses accorded to them. While Kham Magar women, like women in virtually all societies, are subordinate to men, this fact tells very little about the complexity of Magar women's status. It is not the crucial question in this study; what is important is not this fact in itself, but its implications for women's status.

The second concern of this monograph is that the development process should incorporate women both by extending their traditional roles in Magar society and by protecting rights that traditionally accrue to women. While some of the recommendations made in this monograph suggest changes in women's position that would improve Magar women's status as a group, others seek to incorporate women in the development process preserving their existing roles and status. In some areas of the society, Magar women play a central role and make and influence important decisions. This status could be endangered if development programs focus more upon men than upon women and do not acknowledge the complementary roles played by both sexes.

Theoretical Framework: Defining Status

Theorists of women's status in a society have examined status in a number of ways and defined the concept of status and its determinants from a variety of perspectives (see Alice Schlegal 1977: 1-37, and Sharon Tiffany 1977). Status can be used to mean a number of things: position of women in a society, the prestige or value assigned to women's roles, the power that women exercise in a particular role, or the rights and duties that accrue to women in various roles. Status can be defined by the society or culture or it can be an objective concept used by the researcher or planner to evaluate or understand individuals in that society. It is the latter concept with which I am concerned in this monograph. I will focus on three definitions of status.

The first is women's position in society. This definition is neutral; it is descriptive in that it examines the roles assumed by women and the implications of these roles, without placing a cumulative summation of these roles or implications as better or worse,

higher or lower, on some objective scale. A cumulative evaluation does not lead to questions that are of importance in really describing the complexity involved, or in making suggestions for the purpose of planning. Therefore, I wish instead to describe what women do in Magar society and how they and their actions are viewed in that society. While this includes the values placed on women and their activities by Magar culture, it does not evaluate women's position on the basis of those culturally internal values. They serve merely to provide information about women in understanding their position in Magar society.

The questions that must be answered in defining women's status in this regard are: 1. What characterizes women in Magar society? What are the traits, roles and qualities that define women? 2. What value or prestige is assigned by Magar culture to these traits, roles and qualities? 3. What are the spheres or domains of society in which a woman participates? Economic, political, social or familial, ideological? 4. In which spheres, or areas within a particular sphere, does a woman exercise control over herself and others? 5. What is the degree of flexibility women have in choosing between roles and taking options within roles?

The second definition of status is women's status vis-a-vis men. This definition serves to discover areas in which women as a group have less social prestige or options than men and the reasons for this. This is a comparative definition. This includes such questions as: 1. How does the prestige or value assigned to women and women's roles compare to that assigned to men and men's roles? 2. How does the control over others and the flexibility women have compare to that of men? 3. Do men and women occupy separate domains or occupy complementary roles within domains? In what activities are women excluded and why? 4. Do women have as much access to outside opportunities as men or are they restricted in their movements? Why?

The third definition of status is in terms of human rights, i.e. the quality of life or the standard of living. This is an aspect of women's status that is important in terms of suggestions for development. Women in a society may not have less prestige or power than men, but may be denied certain things that are crucial to their well-being or the well-being of the society. A society may, for instance, lack an appropriate grinding technology to relieve women from time-consuming grain

preparation. This may prevent women from spending the proper amount of time in childcare activities crucial to the health of their children. Women may not have the expertise to limit their fertility when a pregnancy would endanger their health. These may not be things that men in the society have control over either, but these affect a woman's well-being and thus the quality of life.

The status of women in Magar society overall will be evaluated by these three definitions. For organizational purposes, I have divided the discussion of these into the different spheres of domains or society; social, legal, economic, political, and ideological. After women's roles and status in these five domains have been discussed it will be possible to evaluate the status of Kham Magar women overall.

Methodology

The data used in this study was collected through participant observation, structured interviews, household and village surveys, and questionnaires. Research for this project was conducted along with research for a Ph.D. in anthropology over a period of 2 1/2 years from December 1976 to June 1979. Most of the data was collected in Thabang Village Panchayat and supplemented with data on surrounding areas.

The statistical data is based primarily upon a random sample of 35 households. During the course of research I also conducted surveys for the village overall. Where this data was more useful I have included it in the discussion. For purposes of brevity, unless otherwise noted, figures and percentages on demography, marital frequency, and economic participation are culled from the 35 household sample, and not from the additional surveys.

The use of both structured surveys and interviews or informal participant observation was invaluable. The surveys sometimes yielded data I could not get otherwise, as it sparked a recollection or a topic informants would not otherwise have discussed. For instance, if I pressed for ages of family members, they would recall all sorts of events in trying to calculate how old they were. I thus found out about many former disputes, unusual marriages, natural disasters, and illnesses I would otherwise never have known existed.

Questions about land holdings or crop yields would evoke discussions of land quality or problems of subsistence. Earlier forms of taxation and the value of old copper money would also be discussed in response to these surveys.

My knowledge of the village over time enabled me to check incongruous data given by informants for the questionnaires. It also gave informants the confidence to answer personal questions since they felt from experience I would not use the material against them. The use of a local assistant to conduct questionnaires was also invaluable, as the assistant knew the households intimately and quickly noticed discrepancies in information. As the background data on economics and demography was collected towards the end of the daily time-allocation survey, households were accustomed to my assistant's and my own presence and were used to the survey format.

Taped interviews and the informal use of a tape recorder was also a technique used to collect data. This was invaluable in offsetting the difficulties presented by my imperfect knowledge of the Kham language. It was also a very appropriate tool for the study of the Magar. The villagers were fascinated by my tape recorder from the very beginning and loved to hear themselves talk on tape. Often they would spontaneously decide to discuss a subject on tape. Women would tell me about personal experiences, such as the difficulties they had as a wife in a polygynous marriage or the sorrows of widowhood. The tape to them made their discussions more distant, and they felt they could say things on tape that they could never say in public for fear of being laughed at or ignored. I always asked if an informant wanted something kept personal but women seldom requested that I prevent other people from hearing what they had recorded.

Problems as a Researcher

The greatest problem I faced as a researcher initially came not from my ambiguous position in the village as a single, independent woman from a strange society, but from my up-bringing in a modern, Western society where my use of kinship was limited to a few cousins and aunts I saw every fifth Christmas and to articles on anthropological theory. Suddenly I found myself in a village where kin relations are both an identification and an important structure for social interaction. People introduced me to a new person with a kin term derived

from their own fictive relation to me, not by a name. They referred to people in conversation by their appropriate actual or customary kin term. Even after I became relatively fluent in Kham, I still had to stop and analyse who they were talking about by an arduous mental diagram; never did I become proficient in thinking of more than my immediate friends by their appropriate kin term. Nor could I remember who called a particular person what and why this term was the correct one. I constantly lost the gist of an interesting conversation that should have been yielding me numerous insights, while I tried to figure out what person was being discussed. I would interrupt to ask 'Who'? and they would reply, 'My brother's aunt's husband, of course', and I would still be in a quandary, while I tried to attach a face to this new reference. For a person brought up in such a society, such a framework is natural and presents no problem; for me, it was a constant nightmare, and handicapped my fieldwork even after two years in the village.

The second most difficult problem came from my sex. People were initially taken aback by my strangeness as an alien being from a distant country. That I was single at an age when most women were married and seemed unconcerned that I had no children, did not fit with their idea of female behavior or normal female attitudes. I was untied to any family they knew about and I had chosen to live away from my home and family for a long period of time in their village. This was a strange behavior for any person, but especially for a woman. Although there were some unmarried women with whom they could identify me, this still did not explain my seemingly total independence from my family and my desire to live so far away from home. At first, women were hesitant to discuss aspects of marriage and motherhood with me; they felt I would neither understand nor truly be interested in such topics.

Men were equally perplexed. I seemed to have a knowledge of the outside world that only men traditionally have and a self assurance about travelling and living alone that women do not possess. I was interested in a variety of topics and asked numerous questions in many situations a woman would ignore or never be a part of. While women discuss many topics, including politics, with men, they do not go to public meetings or enter all-male conversations unless the topic personally concerns them. I did not follow a pattern of expected female behavior

and this both confused and threatened them. They were reluctant to talk seriously about many topics because they did not know how much I already knew, could not understand what I needed to know, and could not decide whether to treat me as they would an unmarried Magar woman of the same age or as an important outsider. My questions asked them to respond to me as they would to an educated outsider, but they knew I was an inexperienced woman.

Although I could sometimes elicit a variety of perspectives and kinds of information by manipulating my own ambiguity as neither male or female, knowledgeable or unknowledgeable, men often refused me answers by casting me in the role of an unmarried girl. They would tease me as if I were marriageable. Unused to having rituals, meetings, or serious conversations interrupted by seemingly out-of-place questions, they would respond by joking rather than by straightforwardly answering my questions. If I initiated a serious conversation with a man or a group of men I could keep the conversation serious or directed. But by simply listening to an on-going conversation, although I often learned a lot, the mood would change to a teasing one, and they joked unmercifully about my sex, my appearance, or my marital status. I often wished for a husband, who could converse with them more easily, or a married status that would prevent them from assuming teasing or joking relationships.

Part of the dynamic of my relations with men may have stemmed from my focus on women. I spent most of my time with women and they were the focus of my research. Men may have resented this as it seemed I was giving more weight to women's feelings and opinions. Indeed, a few men did mention that I spent too much time with women to get a really correct understanding of Magar society and language. Men were also never sure how many village secrets I had been told by women that they would have preferred to keep secret.

I too found the sexual question ambiguous, I could never decide how much to follow Magar rules of female behavior and how 'proper' to be. I did not know how much I could joke in reply to the men and how much I could force information from men about political and family affairs. I realized this self-ambiguity one day when I danced in a local dance festival first as a woman, and the following day dressed as a man. The villagers responded to me as if I had assumed the sexual role of my costume. Men flirted when I was dressed as a traditional woman and

slapped me on the back when I was dressed as a man. I suddenly saw there was a difference in the topic of conversation and mood they assumed depending on the play role they adopted towards me. I also found I reacted differently in Magar women's clothing, and I could see I had adopted many 'female' traits unconsciously. The experience of doing fieldwork as a single woman was frustrating and I never knew if my difficulties were the result of my sex or my own fault. I am still not sure which was the case.

In most ways I was fortunate to have chosen a group where people were very frank and very open to new ideas and new people. Everyone was pleased I wanted to learn the language. When I first came to the village, I stayed with, and was introduced to the villagers by Kagendra Sangam, a Nepali hired to do a research project on migration in the village by a Nepali anthropologist in the main university. Kagendra told them my purpose was to learn the Kham language as he felt they would be unable to comprehend initially my role as an anthropologist. He also hoped this would encourage them to give me more help with the language. This did seem to be the case. Everyone corrected my speech patiently and explained something I did not understand in Kham. Once the villagers were convinced I was genuinely interested, the doors opened and I could learn as much as my knowledge of the language enabled me to understand.

My choice of a village was, as it often is, largely made by chance. I had heard of the Western Magar from my advisor, and in Nepal from the Nepali anthropologist doing the migration study. When I arrived, I found the presence of a Nepali researcher/surveyor made my introduction easier and decided to stay. Kagendra's familiarity with the village gave me a head start on fieldwork and the two months of overlap between my stay and his own was invaluable. We spent many hours discussing customs and culture and trying to make sense of the events we witnessed. I later brought Kagendra back to work with me for a few months as his rapport in the village and training in the social sciences were useful in survey work.

My original project was a study of women's religious roles and beliefs. I was initially very depressed because I could not find any information on either religious rituals or religious roles that was striking in terms of women. It took me many months to realize that religion was simply not an area in which women's roles were significantly marked, nor was it a particularly

central institution in Magar culture. The ideology regarding women was more often expressed in a secular idiom, not a religious one. While I struggled to collect information relevant to my original project I found a wealth of fascinating data on women's economic and social roles, that increasingly seemed as important and interesting as my original topic. I decided to stay and focus on the economic and social roles of women, instead of seeking a group more suited to the investigations of women and religion. The decision to stay was not easy; it was a long time before I accepted the new focus as an equally important one and stopped viewing my lack of data on ritual as anything but a failure on my part to ' do anthropology'. While I did collect important data on women and ritual, I never found it as important or interesting a part of the culture in terms of women as other aspects of the culture. The problem was also related to the centrality of the shaman in religion. In the particular village I studied, no women are shamans and thus the study of shamans shed little light on women. Also shamans were very difficult to study as they were clever, evasive and secretive with me. I was never able to work with them and always felt irritated by their attitudes. My sparse data on them stemmed from this inability to get past their evasive attitude and learn how to work with them.

My language problem was made much easier by the work of a linguist, David Watters.He and his wife had spent many years in a village north of Thabang and written an excellent grammar and short dictionary of the Kham dialect there. Although there were some major differences of dialect between the two villages, the dictionary was a great help in learning quickly. Through his work, I also became interested in the northern villages and went to visit these villages as well. I thus had a broader picture of the Magar area and a better idea of the differences between northern and southern villages as a result. In the village I worked for the first seven months with a Magar woman who had studied to seventh class. She gave me a good start on the language and provided me with an informant I would question about constructions that made no sense to me.

I initially moved into the room rented by Kagendra in the headman's house. This was the only house with unoccupied space that could serve as a separate room where there was some privacy to write. The headman's family was well-off and had a surplus which was important in a subsistence economy where there was no nearby bazaar

to buy supplies not available locally. There are always advantages and disadvantages to the place one chooses to live. I had decided to live with a family so I would have plenty of practice in the language during meals and evening conversations. I found that living on the edge of the village with the headman somewhat separated me from the central village activity but did provide me with a separate room and less noise. I had relative privacy, although people soon learned the balcony of my window was easy to scale if the door was locked, and they never hesitated to come in,even when I had locked the door to ensure privacy while I went over notes or questionnaires. Living with a wealthy family was both a good and bad choise. I had to make more effort to make close friends in poor households and I am certain the experience would have been different if I had lived in a poor household. However, because the house was that of the headman, people often dropped by informally to discuss village politics or family disputes and I thus learned about many events of which I would otherwise have remained ignorant.

Setting

The Kham Magar are a Tibeto-Burman speaking group, who occupy a northern region of the middle foothills in the Far Western Development Region south of the Dhaulagiri and Dolpa Ranges. They speak a distinct language called Kham (not to be confused with the dialect of Tibetan spoken in Kham province). They claim to have migrated from Mongolia sometime in the far distant past. There is a dearth of historical evidence about this group; written records regarding them are at present unknown and their own clan myths and stories are vague and unhelpful for the reconstruction of the history of their movement into the area. They bear the same tribal name of 'Magar' as the group of Magar whose native language is Magarkura, that are settled mainly in Palpa and Gandaki. Except for Pun, a clan name found in both Magar groups, the clans are very different. The more southern Magar-speaking include the Ale, Rana, Thapa, and Burathoki clans while the Kham-speakers include the Rokha, Bura, Gharti, and Jhankri clans.

Kham and Magarkura are mutually unintelligible and exhibit quite different characteristics in vocabulary and structure.* The exact connection between the two groups is obscured by the lack of historical evidence available; it seems possible that they are the product of two separate waves of migration into Nepal, or that the Kham speakers are a different group who assumed the name of Magar after their arrival in Nepal, in the same way as did other groups, such as the Chantel. Both Kham and Magarkura speakers have matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, a similar clan structure, and similar ancestral cults (Hitchcock 1965: 207-215), but are vastly different in many other respects: settlement pattern, economic strategies, rituals, and language. While part of the difference between groups may be due to the respective adaptation of each group to varying ecological conditions and the greater degree of Hinduization on the part of Magarkura speakers (Hitchcock 1974: 1-3), this cannot explain it entirely.

The Kham Magar exploit an area in the districts of Rukum and Rolpa in Rapti Zone, and Baglung district in Dhaulagiri Zone. Their zone of exploitation is a series of valleys and ridges in the area drained by the Sano Bheri, Bheri, Uttar Ganga, Bhuji, and Nishi rivers. The settlements are large in comparison to many hill villages in Nepal; the main villages range in size from 200 to 500 households, with smaller hamlets scattered on either end of the river valley away from the main village. Although the present panchayat boundaries have somewhat altered the traditional affiliation of hamlets to a larger village, for the most part hamlets along the same end of a valley are connected by clan and marriage ties to the larger villages. The people of any complex of village and surrounding hamlets exploit the land along the river valley at 6,000 to 9,000 feet extending to the ridges above

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* The Kham language, for instance,has a verb morphology in which transitive verbs have personal affixes designating the person and number for both subject and object in a S-V-O order. Magarkura does not have a similar morphology, but conforms to the standard Tibetan morphology. In Kham, this appears to be an independent innovation, according to the extensive language research conducted by David Watters (1971, 1974, 1976).

the valley to high alpine pasture along the tops of the ridges at 11,000 to 13,000 feet.

Traditional rights to pasture and forest above a valley settlement are clan-based. The Kham Magar practice a high-altitude agriculture that requires the use of a variety of cropping patterns. Land varies greatly in quality and yield because of altitudes and drainage. Agriculture is supplemented by animal husbandry; the Kham Magar raise both cattle and sheep and goats. Sheep and goats are herded in a transhumant pattern. They are taken to high pastures in the summer in the area around the northwest of Dhorpatton to altitudes up to 15,000 feet and then moved along the ridges over a period of several months to the forest areas above the Dang valley, near the Nepal-Indian border, where they remain in the winter months, at an altitude of 1,500 to 2,000 feet. Cattle exploit a more limited area but also move from higher altitude grazing on the ridges in the summer to a more moderate altitude above the villages in the winter.

The climate is temperate. Temperatures drop to near or below freezing in the winter and snow sometimes falls in the village in the winter, although it does not last a long time. The upper ridges are snow-covered for several months of the winter and are considerably colder than the valleys. Even in the summer, the ridges are cold at night. The area can become quite windy and severe hail storms sometimes destroy crops in early spring. The settlement patterns of the main villages are quite dense and this may be one reason. The walls of adjacent houses act as windbreaks. In southern villages houses have wood-shingled roofs and even the houses in the center of the village may lose parts of roof in high winds. The northern houses, built where winds are more severe, are of Jumli style with flat roofs edged with slate. Rainfall is moderate. Although there is plenty of water in the streams all year round in the valleys, springs do not flow in the high pastures until

the monsoon is well begun, and this is one reason for the pattern of herding at lower altitudes until the summer months.

Thabang, the settlement in which I conducted my primary research, is a more southern community located at 6,500 feet. The villagers raise more cattle and relatively fewer sheep and goats than the more northern villages.* Despite differences in degree in the use of various mixed-farming strategies, it is quite similar to the other Kham Magar communities. The socio-economic pattern described for Thabang in this monograph can be applied in general to the whole area with some allowance for different concentrations of cropping patterns and livestock. Because of the difficult nature of the terrain and the mutually exclusive exploitation of the valleys, Magar communities exhibit a high degree of isolation. Marriage takes place mostly within a single settlement complex, except for a few marriages contracted by wealthy villagers with wealthy villagers of different communities. The patterns of transhumance and trade lead to some contact between Kham Magar in different valleys, and some news is carried in this way, but the contact is not of sufficient intensity or duration to maintain cultural and linguistic homogeneity.

The Kham dialects spoken in the most extreme ends of the area are only partially mutually intelligible. Tales of misunderstandings during conversations with members of far apart villages are common jokes in every village.** Sometimes Magars of different villages resort to the use

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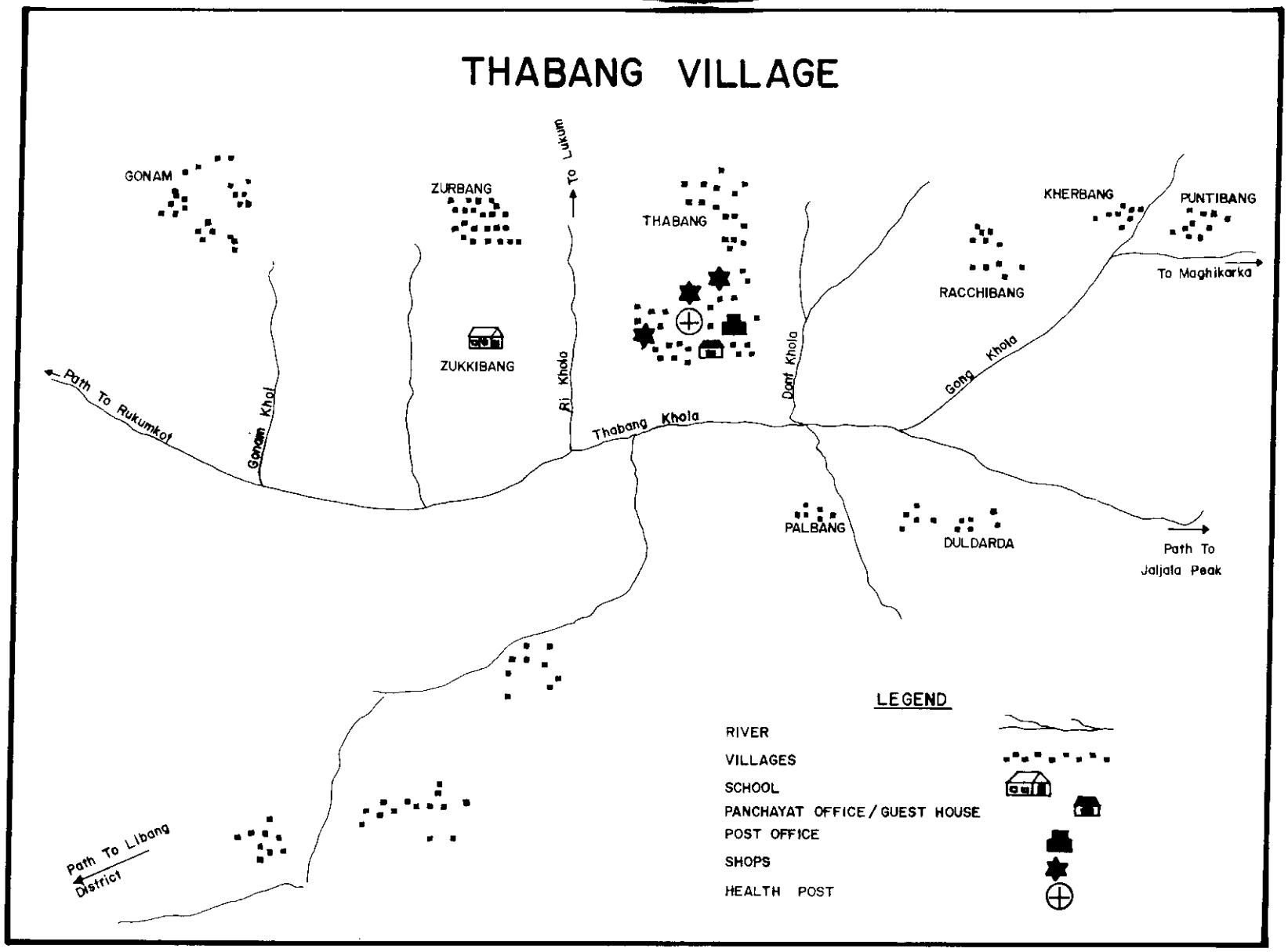
* See Molnar (1979) for a more complete discussion of differences between northern and southern Kham Magar villages.

** During my first year of research, I went to one of the northern villages for a few weeks. On my return, I found I had picked up a number of northern phrases and intonations. The villagers were appalled and immediately set out to 're-educate' me in the 'proper'dialect.


THABANG VILLAGE
GONAM
ZURBANG
To Lukum
THABANG
KHERBANG
PUNTIBANG
To Maghikarka
RACCHIBANG
ZUKKIBANG
Ri Khola
Dant Khola
Gong Khola
Path To Rukumkot
Gonam Khol
Thabang Khola
PALBANG
DULDARDA
Path To
Jaljala Peak
LEGEND
RIVER
VILLAGES
SCHOOL
PANCHAYAT OFFICE / GUEST HOUSE
POST OFFICE
SHOPS
HEALTH POST
Path To Libang
District

of Nepali as a common lingua franca to avoid misunderstandings. There are also minor differences in dress, house structure, ritual belief and practice, and social custom.

The area exploited by the Kham Magar is bounded by communities of Hindu groups; Brahmans, Chetris, southern Magar, occupational castes, and a few Newar are settled to the south, west, and east. Acculturation to Hindu belief and custom is limited, as the area is isolated geographically and is outside the main routes of trade and transportation. Historically, the Magar were administered by various Hindu rajas (kings), but only minimally. Taxes were levied on their lands, but because the land has a low productivity in comparison to the lower-altitude valleys, no attempt was made to integrate these communities and often only occasional taxes were collected.

Thabang is influenced to a larger extent by external factors than are the northern communities, but still has a history of relative independence. Historically, the Kham Magar for the most part ignored or distrusted any outside form of government, and this attitude persists in their dealings with the district and national political structures. They have adopted the caste ideology, but it is not as structured as in other Hinduized groups. They fall somewhere in the Vaishya category, or matwali, with the other Tibeto-Burman speaking hill groups (Sharma 1978). The occupational castes of Kami (blacksmiths) and Damai (tailors) settled in the area as service castes some generations ago and work for the Magar on a modified jajmani system of payment. These caste groups are responsible for some codifying of caste ideology among the Magar, who consider them untouchable (nachunne). The Kami and Damai have, over time, become acculturated to Magar customs and speak Kham in their day-to-day dealings with the Magar. Inter-caste relations are fairly relaxed in the village.

Thabang has no real bazaar. A few households sell a variety of small manufactured goods from India, such as cloth, batteries, soap, flashlights, and thread, and some Nepali goods, such as cigarettes, matches, kerosene, and cooking oil, but the bulk of manufactured and other outside goods are purchased in the main bazaars, five to ten days walk away, during winter trading trips. The main bazaars are Tansen, Bhairawa, Ghorahi, and Nepalgunj. As these bazaars are situated beside roads or near the Indian border, goods are considerably cheaper than those sold in the village. Salt is purchased from these bazaars or traded for hemp fiber or cloth in the village when Tibetan

or, more commonly, Hindu traders pass through.

The village is two days' walk on a dirt track from Libang, the district center of Rolpa. Libang is the seat of several government offices: a health post, an agricultural extension service, education administrator, district administration, smallpox control, a local court (adalat), a family-planning office, a government-subsidized grain corporation office. There is a bank and a high school and a police post. Libang has a small bazaar where villagers sometimes buy goods and supplies if they come into Libang on business.

Thabang itself is beginning to share in various development programs. A health post was opened eight months before my departure in 1978, but as in other remote areas of Nepal, the government has been unable to find a Health Assistant willing to be posted in such an 'isolated' community. Most of the medicines lie unused and minor ailments are treated by unsupervised village health workers. The next nearest health post is in Libang and the nearest hospital is in Ghorahi, a four days walk for a healthy person, or in Tansen, a seven days walk. Occasionally staff from Ghorahi come through to check for leprosy or tuberculosis cases and encourage these people to go to the Ghorahi hospital for treatment. Most illnesses are treated by the local shamans (jhankris), or by the local astrologers (jainshis), (Nep. jyotishis). People seldom take a sick family member to the hospital as the trip is long and strenuous and villagers are afraid of dying along the way far from their kinsmen.

There is a locally-recruited family planning officer who works in the panchayat distributing information and contraceptives. Formerly school was taught to the seventh grade, but in 1979 a high school was opened. It now goes through the eighth class and in the next two years will be extended to tenth class. Now, the older students study in Piuthan district or in Libang. A post office was opened eight years ago and serves as a center for several panchayats. It is quite busy due to the large amount of mail going to and from Indian army soldiers and their families. Before, it took months to receive a letter which was hand-carried by other soldiers to the village; now the mail takes a week to ten days to come from India. In the month before I left the village, a police check-post (thana) was opened in the panchayat, but I was not there long enough to see what effect it has had on the village.

Villagers see these changes as positive and were instrumental in starting both the health post and high school. They expect little from the government, and, although concerned, are not surprised that the health post has no personnel to diagnose and treat diseases properly. They regard the process by which government services and programs are started as somewhat mysterious and know that it often depends upon personal contacts which they are usually lacking.

Table 1.1

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE POPULATION BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Age Group \ Sex	Male	Female	Total	Sex Ratio (F/M) Females per 100 Males
0 - 1	4 (4.5)	4 (4.3)	8 (4.4)	100.0
2 - 4	8 (9.0)	6 (6.5)	14 (7.7)	75.0
5 - 9	11 (12.4)	8 (8.7)	19 (10.5)	72.7
10 - 14	8 (9.0)	13 (14.1)	21 (11.6)	162.5
15 - 24	19 (21.3)	18 (19.6)	37 (20.5)	94.7
25 - 34	11 (12.4)	17 (18.5)	28 (15.5)	154.5
35 - 49	17 (19.1)	17 (18.5)	34 (18.8)	100.0
50 - 59	6 (6.7)	2 (2.2)	8 (4.4)	(33.3)
60 & Above	5 (5.6)	7 (7.6)	12 (6.6)	140.0
Total	89	92	181	103.4

Figures within parentheses indicate column percentages.

Table 1.2

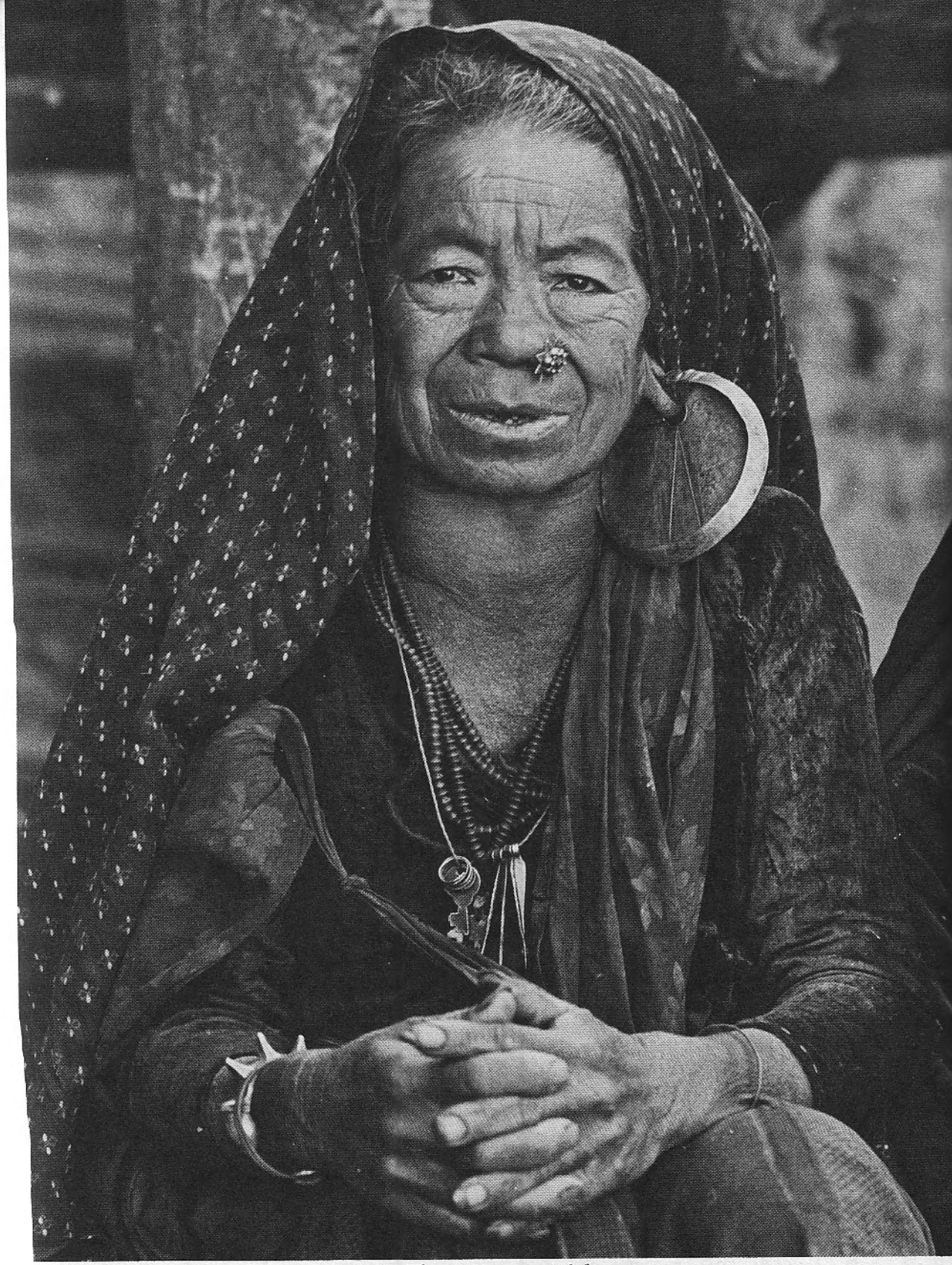
SEX RATIO BY AGE GROUP AND ECONOMIC STRATA

Age Group \ Economic Strata	Top			Middle			Bottom			All Strata		
	M.	F.	F/M Ratio	M.	F.	F/M Ratio	M.	F.	M/F Ratio	M.	F.	M/F Ratio
0-1	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	(66.7)	4	4	(100.0)
2-4	1	2	(200.0)	2	2	(100.0)	5	2	(40.0)	8	6	(75.0)
5-9	3	0	0	2	3	(150.0)	6	5	(83.3)	11	8	(72.7)
10-14	2	4	(200.0)	1	4	(400.0)	5	5	(100.0)	8	13	(162.5)
15-24	5	7	(140.0)	5	1	(20.0)	9	10	(111.1)	19	18	(94.7)
25-35	3	2	(66.7)	2	5	(250.0)	6	10	(166.7)	11	17	(154.5)
35-49	7	5	(71.4)	4	3	(75.0)	6	9	(150.0)	17	17	(100.0)
50-59	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	(33.3)	6	2	(33.3)
60 & Above	1	0	0	2	4	(200.0)	2	3	(150.0)	5	7	(140.0)
Total	23	20	(87.0)	18	24	(133.3)	48	48	(100.0)	89	92	(103.4)

Figures within parentheses indicate sex ratio of females per 100 males.

Young girls playing around the site of a new house.

Figures within parentheses indicate sex ratio of females per 100 males.



A Kham Magar widow.

View of main village looking across at a nearby hamlet.

CHAPTER II

ECONOMIC STATUS

Kham Magar women enjoy a high status economically. They assume roles that are complementary to those of men and contribute most of the agricultural labor as well as make many important decisions regarding agriculture, and the allocation of resources and household products. They also have access to a variety of economic options that enable some women to establish social and economic independence. In this chapter, the women's economic status will be evaluated and the implications of this status for development will be considered.

While Kham Magar women's status is in part dependent upon the prestige or value judgements placed upon women's economic roles, the material conditions of women's participation in the economic sphere are more important in defining their status. To provide a framework for an evaluation of status, I have drawn upon models outlined by a number of theorists of women's status, notably Peggy Sanday (1973, 1974). (See also Alice Schlegal 1977, Giele and Smock 1977). A woman's economic status can be measured, according to these theorists, by five major factors: 1. her position of authority in the household, 2. the centrality of the household in economic activities undertaken in the village 3. her access to and control of economic resources, 4. her control over production of both subsistence goods and cash-generating goods, and 5. her control over economic surpluses, both cash and in kind.

On the first criterion, Kham Magar women rate very highly. A woman's position of authority in the household is a concomitant of her role as wife and mother. She is accorded this position when she resides with her husband, and often retains this position even when widowed and living alone or with her children. Although women are denied huk, or full rights in property, they are given control of property and the authority to make and influence decisions involving the use of this property.

The other four considerations outlined above depend upon the economic structure, division of labor, economic decision making processes in the household, patterns of lending and borrowing, entrepreneurial activities, and patterns of trade and employment. In Kham Magar society in particular, several factors are of importance in determining women's roles. One is the central role of women as child-

bearers. Child-care responsibilities structure a woman's participation and in large part confine women to the village. They tend to perform tasks that give them flexibility in movement and allow for interruptions to tend to their children. Another factor is the existence of a mixed-subsistence economy.* Because agriculture and animal husbandry have very different kinds of labor requirements, there is a complementary division of labor between herding and agriculture that is made mainly on sexual lines. Women tend to assume primary responsibility for agricultural activities, while men are primarily involved in tasks related to animal husbandry.

Another contributing factor is outside employment. Many males leave the village for extended periods of time to seek employment in the army or engage in migratory labor in India, leaving their wives behind to manage the household during their absence. A fourth factor is the presence of a number of income-generating activities which center around women, notably cottage industry, and which also define women's economic participation. These activities supplement agricultural production and also give certain women a means to establish their independence from their own or their husband's kin group.

Concomitant to the evaluation of women's economic roles and status in Kham Magar society is a consideration of the effect of local technology on a woman's allocation of time and labor. Methods of food processing and storage, and techniques used in agriculture and home industry determine the amount of time and labor required to complete various tasks, and determine whether women can afford time for new economic activities, such as cash-generating industries or the growing of better or supplementary crops. Improvements in traditional agricultural techniques, such as the use of insecticides or new fertilizers and technology also determine the time available to women for child-care, social visiting, and community concerns. For development questions, technology considerations are of central

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* By subsistence economy I refer to an economy in which the basic economic transaction is reciprocal local exchange and in which outside markets play a very minor role. The most important economic unit is the household and transactions are non-monetary and between households.

importance. In a society where women constitute a large percentage of the agricultural labor force, changes instituted in agriculture directly affect women, and in a society where there is not a specialized division of labor, time spent by women in one activity depletes the time available to them for other tasks. Kham Magar women play an important role in household decision-making as will be shown in this chapter. To effect improvements in the economy, it is therefore crucial to incorporate women as much as possible in the change process.

The Economy

All of the land in the Magar areas is pakha, or non-irrigated terrace. The lack of irrigation precludes the growing of rice. The main crops are corn, barley and wheat, and naked barley (uwa) to the north. Some bitter buckwheat (papar) and millet is also grown by villagers who own enough land to supplement that used to grow the main crops. Potatoes, which were introduced to the villages by Tibetans some 50 years ago from the north, have now become a major crop, and are intercropped in the corn or planted in marginal lands at higher altitudes. Soyabean, squash, beans, amaranth (changey), cucumbers, radish and spinach are also intercropped with corn. Some villagers grow taboacco for home use or local sale. Hemp and puwa (a thistle plant) are cultivated in marginal land, allowed to grow up between the wheat crop, or grown wild.

Land holdings in Thabang are relatively small. Holdings range from 1/4 to 6 acres in size with the average falling around 1 to 2 acres.* All villagers

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* This estimate was made from data on the 35 households. Land is measured locally in the amount of corn seed that can be sown in a given plot. The seed sown by each household in each of its holdings were recorded. Plots sowing a given amount of seed were then measured in feet and an estimate of size per given amount of seed calculated. Farmers can give a quite accurate estimate of seed used and, since corn is sown in rows at equidistant points, a fairly accurate estimate of seed/land could be calculated. This estimate of holdings, incidentally, coincided almost exactly with the estimated land distribution given by the village headman and several village councilmen for a conservation questionnaire.

own some land, although the lower caste groups, Kami and Damai, support themselves mainly by practising their traditional occupations and by wage labor. According to local informants, these groups have increased their land holdings in the last twenty years. Some have bought land from their earnings in migratory labor and some cleared marginal lands near the forest areas above the valley. In general land holdings of the Kham Magar have decreased in size over time as the population has increased and sons have split off, dividing each estate into smaller and smaller units.

Until ten years ago, marginal lands were being cleared by farmers for use in growing potatoes or by farmers whose lands were insufficient. As a result of both pressure from the government and increasing awareness by the village leaders of the strains being placed on the environment, the clearing of new land has been made illegal and for the most part the rule is enforced by the community. A few marginal lands are still cleared by Kami and Damai, but only where there is no good forest. Land ownership is one part of an individual's identity as a member of his lineage and as a member of the village. There is no custom of tenancy and even Kham Magar who get badly into debt and cannot survive on their own land will never hire themselves out as laborers. Instead, they migrate to the Terai or India in search of work. The village is poor by pan-Nepal standards; on the basis of land assets of the 35 sample households, about a quarter could produce more than enough food for subsistence needs, a third barely meet subsistence needs and the rest, a little under half, have less than enough land to meet subsistence needs.*

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* In order to calculate average grain production for the households in the sample, the different types of fields were graded according to cropping pattern and quality from informants' accounts. An expected yield for each grade of land was obtained from informants. The average yield in the different family plots was calculated on the basis of expected yield and the record of seed sown by the household. An estimated yield for each household's land holdings could then be obtained. This figure was divided by the amount of grain consumed annually in each household. It was estimated that each adult consumes 4.56 muri per year (1 muri = approximately 120 lbs.), which compares favorably with similar estimates made by Hitchcock (1974) for the Bhuji Khole area. Each child

Many villagers support themselves with extra income from varied sources. Some perform migratory labor on the potato farms in Simla, India in the black mountains (kalo pahard) as the area is called locally. Others go to serve in the Indian Army, or occasionally the British Army. There are at present 31% of Thabang households with one member in active service and 10% who draw a pension from a current or deceased member. In the period before and during the Second World War, a number of Kham Magar went into the British Service, but now, competition is so high from other hill groups that no one in the panchayat has been selected in over ten years. The Indian Army recruits more men and is less selective. The Kham Magar had difficulty being accepted for service as they were usually passed over for the Magar-kura speakers whose identity as Magars was better known and who were already known by the British recruiters to be excellent fighting men. (See Hitchcock 1961). Another small percentage of villagers seek unskilled jobs in India. One lahori, as the soldiers are called, left the Indian army after an initial four years to work in a factory in Bombay. He explained that he could make more money more quickly and would not have to maintain the discipline required by the army.

A breakdown of the distribution of income from various sources is set out in Table 2.1 and a breakdown of income from non-agricultural sources is included in Table 2.3. Even with the added income, many of the poorer villagers are in debt to their relatives among the more wealthy villagers.

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under the age of 10 was estimated to consume half of an adult. For example, household 8 has 8 members of which 3 are under the age of 10. Household 8 needs 6 1/2 times 4.56 muri to meet its basic subsistence requirements. As the average yield from the household's land holdings is approximately 32 muri and only 29.64 muri is needed for annual consumption, this household is above subsistence on the basis of land holdings alone.

Table 2.1

INCOME FROM VARIED SOURCES

Source	Value in Rupees*	Percent of Total
Agricultural Production	113202	48.8
Kitchen Garden/Animal Husbandry	39073	16.9
Manufactured Goods	7185	3.1
Processed Food	28970	12.5
Total	188430	81.3
Capital Assets	14970	6.4
Wages	4884	2.1
Pensions	7250	3.1
Salary	16445	7.1
Total Pension, Wages, Salary	28579	12.3
GRAND TOTAL	231909	100.0

*Aggregate figures for all households in the sample.

Part of the economic pressure is created by climatic conditions. Snow or rainfall in the winter is not predictable and a too early or too late hailstorm, as mentioned earlier, can destroy the wheat or barley. Every few years, cornborers breed in large numbers and do considerable damage to the corn. The last year I was in the village, corn was planted three times by many households as the borers were particularly bad and ate the young plants from the first two sowings. Mixed cropping patterns thus serve two purposes; to adapt to varying land quality and to provide an alternative crop should one crop fail. In the year the project data was taken, wheat had been poor due to hail, and corn was also poorer than usual in yield due to the cornborers. On the basis of production that year, the percentage of below subsistence households jumped greatly in relation to land holding figures. 14.2% produced a surplus, 17% had sufficient grain and potatoes, and 68.8% were below subsistence level. Added income from animal husbandry and cottage industry and other sources are thus necessary to most villagers to help tide them over in famine years. In this particular year, the added income was still not sufficient for all of the households. With the total income, the adjusted economic status was 20% of the households below subsistence, 51.5% at subsistence, and 28.5% above. Of the ten above subsistence, five received income from either army pensions or a salaried job.*

Agriculture is supplemented by animal husbandry. Cattle are raised for the production of manure for use in fertilizer and bullocks are used in ploughing and terrace preparation. Sheep and goats are raised for meat and wool which is consumed locally or sold in the bazaars in the Terai and to the west. The ability to engage in animal husbandry depends in part upon access to capital and the economic stratum of the household. About 83% of the sample households owned cattle and about 35% of these

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* Income from all sources, household production and local and outside employment were used for this calculation. By adding the amount of grain that could be purchased with the added income for each household, an adjusted subsistence figure was obtained. Since households that do not grow enough grain use cash from non-agricultural income to purchase grain locally, the cost of grain was based upon local prices, rather than the cost of distant markets.

households also raised sheep and goats (See Table 2.2 for a breakdown of household asset structure). Those households who owned no animals were mainly the poorest households in terms of land holdings and moveable property. The number of households who own sheep and goats has declined overall in the southern villages in the past twenty years for several reasons. Indian goods have created competition in the traditional wool markets. fees on grazing rights in the winter and summer pastures have become exorbitant, and villagers who have some facility with the Nepali language and the dominant Hindu culture have begun to seek salaried jobs or begun to trade in other goods. Several families own herds of 200 to 300 head of sheep and goats, but most large herders have 70 to 100 head and the rest 20 to 40. Those households with small herds usually combine their herds with other households and graze them collectively, assigning one family or one man to tend those animals outside the village.

Division of Labor

The required labor is quite different for agriculture and animal husbandry and this tends to lead to a sharp division of labor in the household (see Table 2.5). In households with animals, men and young boys spend much of their time with the cattle or sheep herds in pasture and forest areas outside the village. Neither cattle nor sheep and goats are kept inside the village. While in areas to the north, Kham Magar keep a few cows with calves and a lactating buffalo under the house, in Thabang, only a sick cow or calf will ever be seen in the village, and only for a short period of time.

The herding patterns skew the time-allocation data on men and women in directly productive activities, as much of the herding takes place outside the village and could not be tallied in spot-check observations, which were dependent upon what the individual was actually doing at the time of observation. In Table 2.4, the relative time spent by men and women in various activities is presented. The time allocated by men to herding in the village is miniscule. In point of fact over 50% of their time is spent outside the village (see Figures 2.1A-C and Table 2.6) and most of this time is spent herding for all economic strata. This situation skews the time-allocation data in Table 2.4. Men's work burden is low compared to women's partly as a result of women's greater involvement in domestic activities. The comparative figures for productive activities (5.52 for men and 6.40 for women)

TABLE 2.2

ASSET STRUCTURE BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In rupees value)

No. of H. Hs.	Economic Strata \ Assets		Land/ Building	Major Animals	Minor Animals	Total Livestock	Agricultural Equipment	Gold & Silver	Other Assets	Total
7	TOP	Total Assets	223,840 (44.6)	52,300 (36.1)	51,900 (56.1)	104,200 (43.9)	2,360 (32.2)	26,200 (52.4)	35,500 (43.4)	392,100 (44.6)
		Average Assets/ Household	31,977 (6.4)	7,471 (5.2)	7,414 (8.0)	14,886 (6.3)	337 (4.6)	3,743 (7.5)	5,071 (6.2)	56,014 (6.4)
8	MIDDLE	Total Assets	96,850 (19.3)	26,600 (18.4)	7,940 (8.6)	34,540 (14.5)	2,320 (31.7)	19,800 (39.6)	22,800 (27.9)	176,310 (20.1)
		Average Assets/ Household	12,106 (2.4)	3,325 (2.3)	993 (1.1)	4,318 (1.8)	290 (4.0)	2,475 (4.9)	2,850 (3.5)	22,039 (2.5)
20	BOTTOM	Total Assets	180,850 (36.1)	65,950 (45.5)	32,700 (35.3)	98,650 (41.6)	2,650 (36.1)	4,000 (8.0)	23,500 (28.7)	309,650 (35.3)
		Average Assets/ Household	9,043 (1.8)	3,298 (2.3)	1,635 (1.8)	4,933 (2.1)	133 (1.8)	200 (0.4)	1,175 (1.4)	15,483 (1.8)
35	ALL STRATA	Total Assets	501,540 (100.0)	144,850 (100.0)	92,540 (100.0)	237,390 (100.0)	7,330 (100.0)	50,000 (100.0)	81,800 (100.0)	878,060 (100.0)
		Average Assets/ Household	14,330	4,139	2,644	6,783	209	1,429	2,337	25,087

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.3

SOURCES OF INCOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In rupees value)

Economic Strata	Income / Sex	SALARY	PENSIONS	INCOME TRANSFERS	WAGES	TOTAL
TOP	Male	5870 (76.3%) (66.2%)	0	0	1820 (23.7%) (100%)	7690 (100%) (71.9%)
	Female	3000 (100%) (33.8%)	0	0	0	3000 (100%) (28.1%)
	Both	8870 (83.0%) (100%)	0	0	1820 (17.0%) (100%)	10690 (100%) (100%)
MIDDLE	Male	1440 (22.9) (100%)	4850 (77.1%)	0	0	6290 (100%) (98.0%)
	Female	0	0	0	130 (100%) (100%)	130 (100%) (2.0%)
	Both	1440 (22.4%) (100%)	4850 (75.5%) (100%)	0	130 (2.0%) (100%)	6420 (100%) (100%)
BOTTOM	Male	6135 (73.6%) (100%)	800 (9.6%) (50.0%)	0	1406 (16.9%) (58.4%)	8341 (100%) (82.3%)
	Female	0	800 (44.4%) (50.0%)	0	(41.6%) (41.6%)	(17.7%) (17.7%)
	Both	6135 (60.5%) (100%)	1600 (15.8%) (100%)	0	2406 (23.7%) (100%)	10141 (100%) (100%)
ALL STRATA	Male	13445 (60.2%) (81.8%)	5650 (25.3%) (87.6%)	0	3226 (14.5%) (74.1%)	22321 (100%) (81.9%)
	Female	3000 (60.9%) (18.2%)	800 (16.2%) (12.4%)	0	1130 (22.9%) (25.9%)	4930 (100%) (18.1%)
	Both	16445 (60.3%) (100%)	6450 (23.7%) (100%)	0	4356 (16.0%) (100%)	2725 (100%) (100%)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 2.4

TIME USE PATTERN BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA
FOR POPULATION OVER 15 YEARS IN NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

(In hours per day)

Activity \ Economic Strata/Sex			TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA		
			Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
WORK	PRODUCTIVE	Animal Husbandry	0.42	0.26	0.31	0.35	0.18	0.25	0.65	0.21	0.35	0.50	0.22	0.32
		Agriculture	1.75	2.56	2.30	2.47	3.56	3.07	3.19	3.52	3.41	2.62	3.26	3.04
		Fuel Collection	0.40	0.70	0.60	0.64	0.55	0.59	0.62	0.51	0.55	0.58	0.57	0.57
		Hunting and Gathering	0.07	0.12	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.06	0.17	0.08	0.11	0.11	0.08	0.09
		Manufacturing	0.22	0.57	0.46	0.58	1.97	1.34	0.47	1.22	0.98	0.44	1.20	0.93
		Food Processing	0.24	0.78	0.61	0.13	0.72	0.45	0.26	0.73	0.58	0.22	0.74	0.56
		Outside Income Earning Activity (In-Village)	0.80	0.70	0.73	1.38	0.05	0.65	0.35	0.08	0.17	0.79	0.25	0.44
		Construction	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.25	0.18	0.21	0.41	0.04	0.16	0.28	0.06	0.14
	1. Sub-total for Productive Activities		3.96	5.72	5.15	5.87	7.25	6.63	6.12	6.40	6.31	5.52	6.40	6.09
BURDEN	DOMESTIC	Cooking/Serving	0.29	0.88	0.69	0.23	1.00	0.65	0.48	0.85	0.73	0.34	0.89	0.70
		Cleaning Dishes and Pots	0.02	0.43	0.30	0.07	0.43	0.27	0.06	0.25	0.19	0.05	0.34	0.24
		Cleaning House/Mud Plastering	0.07	0.18	0.14	0.05	0.23	0.15	0.05	0.23	0.17	0.05	0.21	0.16
		Laundry	0.04	0.12	0.10	0	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.12	0.09	0.03	0.12	0.09
		Fetching Water	0.24	0.41	0.36	0.08	0.19	0.14	0.29	0.25	0.26	0.21	0.28	0.26
		Shopping	0	0.01	0.01	0.02	0	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
		Other Domestic Activity	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02
		Child Care and Rearing	0.38	0.61	0.53	0.03	0.86	0.49	0.26	0.85	0.66	0.22	0.78	0.58
	2. Sub-total for Domestic Activities		1.06	2.64	2.14	0.51	2.84	1.80	1.22	2.58	2.14	0.96	2.65	2.05
I	Work Burden (1 + 2)		5.02	8.36	7.29	6.38	10.10	8.42	7.35	8.98	8.46	6.48	9.05	8.14
	3. Education		0	0.05	0.04	0	0	0	0.01	0	0	0.01	0.01	0.01
	4. Personal Maintenance		1.24	1.06	1.12	2.06	1.46	1.73	1.43	1.31	1.35	1.59	1.27	1.38
	5. Social Activities		0.77	0.17	0.36	0.10	0.03	0.06	0.26	0.09	0.15	0.33	0.10	0.18
	6. Leisure		8.96	6.36	7.20	7.46	4.42	5.79	4.55	5.62	6.04	7.60	5.57	6.28
II	Sub-total (3 + 4 + 5 + 6)		10.98	7.64	8.71	9.62	5.90	7.58	8.65	7.02	7.54	9.52	6.95	7.86
III	Total for In-Village Activities (I + II)		16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00

TABLE 2.5

DIVISION OF LABOR BY SEX AND AGE

Activity	Man	Woman	Boy	Girl
Herding	+	0	+	0
Care and feeding of animals in compound	+	S	+	S
Fodder collection	S	+	+	+
Castration/Breeding	+	0	0	0
Shearing	+	0	S	0
Milking	+	0	+	0
Butchering	+	0	+	0
Land preparation (Ploughing)	+	0	+	0
Terrace upkeep	+	0	+	0
Collection and preparation of fertilizer	S	+	S	+
Spreading of fertilizer	S	+	S	+
Sowing	S	+	+	+
Weeding	S	+	S	+
Harvesting				
Cutting/Bundleing	S	+	S	S
Drying crop residue	+	+	S	S
Storing grain	S	+	S	+
Threshing/Cleaning grain	S	+	+	+
Kitchen gardening	S	+	S	+
Seed selection/Storage	0	+	0	0
Hunting	+	0	+	0
Fishing	+	0	+	0
Gathering fibers	S	+	S	+
Gathering bamboo	+	S	+	S
Gathering edible food	0	S	+	+
Weaving	0	+	0	0
Spinning	+	+	S	S
Rope/Basketry	+	0	+	0
Repairing tools	+	S	+	0
Wood craft	+	0	+	0
Sewing blankets	+	S	0	0
Repairing clothes	0	+	0	+
Grinding	0	+	0	+
Liquor making	0	+	0	0
Making of dried foods	0	+	0	+
Preparation of dairy products	+	S	+	0
Cooking/Serving	S	+	S	+
Cleaning pots	0	+	0	+
Cleaning house	0	+	0	+
Washing clothes	0	+	S	+
Gathering wood	S	+	S	+
Chopping wood	+	+	0	0
Fetching water	0	+	+	+
Building/Repairing house	+	0	+	0
Carrying stones	S	+	S	S

Key

+ = Activity usually performed by this category of persons
S = Activity sometimes performed by this category of persons
0 = Activity rarely or never performed by this category

are deceptive, however, as time in herding could not be incorporated. The graphs in Figure 2.1 show a more accurate picture in percentages of observation by incorporating both in-village and out-of-village observations. Averaging in these outside activities gives a different picture, since the "spot-check" methodology does not allow for calculation of these activities in hours. This fact must be taken into account in assessing the time-allocation figures in Table 2.4.

In general, then, only limited comparisons of male-female time in productive farm labor can be made on the basis of daily hours spent in these activities. A strong difference does, however, emerge in productive versus domestic activities. Men spend only 6% of their in-village time in domestic activities as compared to 16.5% by women (males spend .96 hours and females 2.65 hours daily).

Cattle are herded on a modified pattern of transhumance. In summer, the cattle are grazed in forests close to the timberline or above, in the grassy pasture on the top of ridges extending north and east of the village. The herders spend several weeks at a time with these animals, coming down occasionally for a night or two for supplies. In each grazing area, the herders have makeshift huts (got) of bamboo or simple stone houses with thatched roofs. The cattle are brought into the village during the harvest season and, as the crops in each section of fields are reaped, the cattle are brought to graze in each section. The herders erect bamboo huts which they use from area to area until the harvest is over. The herders remain in the village until ploughing is completed and then take the cattle to the winter pastures where cattle are provided fodder by the herders. Winter pastures are usually closer to the village, at a lower altitude. The gots in these pastures are of a sturdier and more elaborate construction than those in the summer pastures. During the slack agricultural season, which is from approximately November to March, whole families may go to live in these gots. Since the gots are built below the forest, there is usually land near the got that can be planted with potatoes and sometimes a single crop of corn, wheat, or barley. The crops planted here ripen later than those in the village, and the cattle are brought to graze during the harvest of these crops after the harvest is completed in the village. The grain or potatoes from these fields are stored in the got for the herder's consumption. If a family has sufficient cultivable land near the winter

Figure 2.1 A

IN-VILLAGE AND OUT-VILLAGE WORK DISTRIBUTION for MALES AND FEMALES ≥ 15

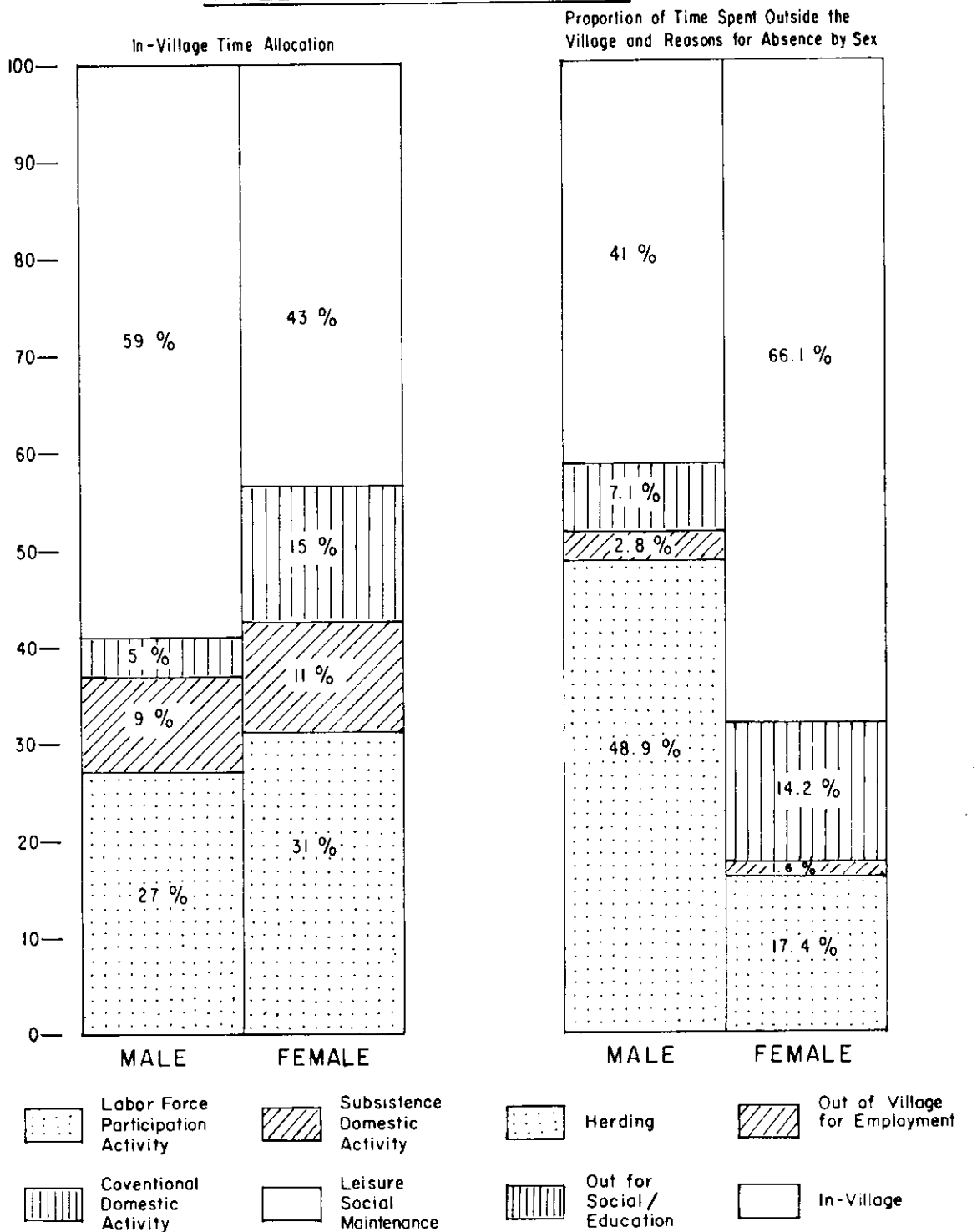


Figure 2.1 B

IN-VILLAGE TIME ALLOCATION for MALES AND FEMALES ≥ 15 BY ECONOMIC STRATA

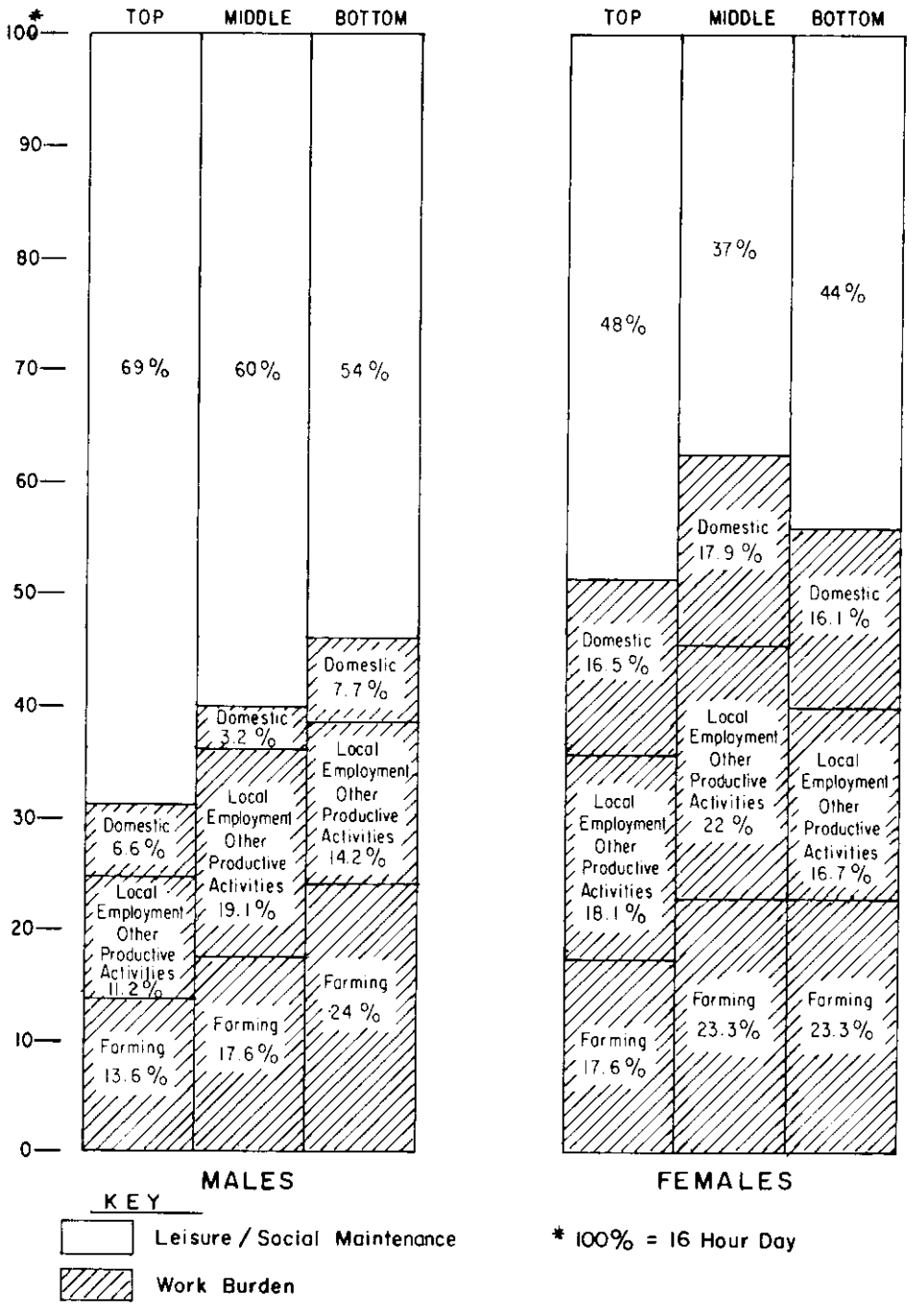
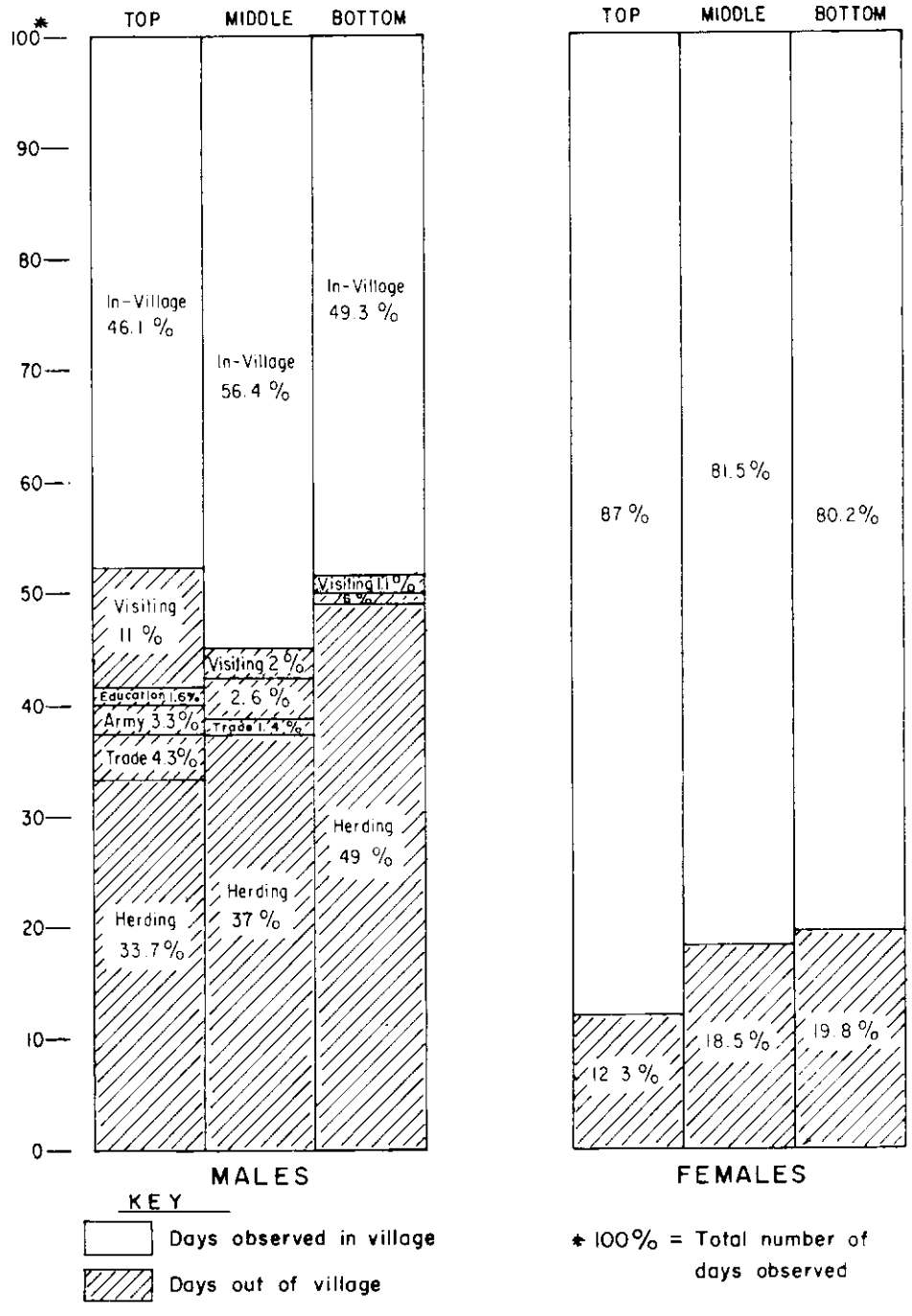


Figure 2.1 C

PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE BY ECONOMIC STRATA FOR MALES AND FEMALES ≥ 15



got, the whole family may migrate to the got for the few months between busy agricultural seasons. The women spend much of their time weaving and spinning wool fiber and the men do a lot of basket work, rope making, and woodwork. Both share the herding tasks. Table 2.6 shows the frequency of observations outside the village. As the table shows, men of all economic strata spend considerable time in herding activities outside the village. Although women spend most of their time in the village, they still spend a significant amount of time in the pastures or got.

If there are tasks to be completed in the village, women make periodic trips home. Otherwise, they remain until March when winter fields are ready for harvest. For those women whose households have fields where fiber crops, hemp and puwa are planted, the got provides an ideal place to strip and process the fiber so that less raw material needs to be carried in bulk to the village. Women who live in the village usually go to the family got for a week or two in the winter to strip fiber, and then return to the village to process the raw material into thread.

Herding of sheep and goats is done in a fully transhumant pattern. Because of the cold winter climate, the animals must be taken south to the area above the Dang Valley in the Mahabharat range. The animals move through forest and pasture near the village in late October and November and the herders gradually make their way to the Mahabharat, remaining there until early March, when they begin the trip north towards summer pastures. In order to obtain a thick, good-quality wool, the animals are grazed in pastures several days north of the village from June to October, when the coming cold forces them down to warmer climates. Usually only men go with the flocks, although in northern villages whole families will migrate as well. People with only small flocks will send one or two adult males or a hired herder with the animals. Those with larger flocks take turns if there are several men in the household; otherwise the available male is a full-time herder. Villagers prefer to tend their own flocks, as the animals can easily become sick or slip on steep hillsides if improperly tended. While cattle belonging to wealthy families are often tended by a hired herder at least part of the time, sheep and goats are usually tended by a family member. In the northern villages, where sheep and goats are raised in larger numbers, unmarried women in the household may stay with the cattle in the got.

TABLE 2.6

REASONS FOR BEING OUT OF VILLAGE BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

ACTIVITIES \ ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX	TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
I. OUT OF VILLAGE EMPLOYMENT	68	0	68							68	0	68
1. Army Service	(5.4)		(4.0)							(1.6)		(1.0)
2. Salaried Government/ Other Employment				0	1	1				0	1	1
					(0.1)	(0)					(0)	(0)
3. Business/Trade				0	1	1				0	1	1
					(0.1)	(0)					(0)	(0)
4. Herding	738	130	868	851	565	1416	1999	749	2748	3588	1444	5032
	(58.7)	(30.4)	(51.5)	(85.6)	(47.8)	(65.1)	(96.8)	(65.1)	(85.4)	(83.1)	(52.3)	(71.1)
5. Other Work or Seeking Employment	100	6	106	29	5	34	13	121	134	142	132	274
	(8.0)	(1.4)	(6.3)	(2.9)	(0.4)	(1.6)	(0.6)	(10.5)	(4.2)	(3.3)	(4.8)	(3.9)
Sub-Total - I.	906	136	1042	880	572	1452	2012	870	2882	3798	1578	5376
	(72.1)	(31.8)	(61.8)	(88.5)	(48.4)	(66.7)	(97.4)	(75.6)	(89.6)	(88.0)	(57.2)	(76.0)
II. OUT OF VILLAGE FOR SOCIAL EDUCATION, ETC. 1. School	32	88	120	108	2	110	9	106	115	149	196	345
	(2.5)	(20.6)	(7.1)	(10.9)	(0.2)	(5.1)	(0.4)	(9.2)	(3.6)	(3.5)	(7.1)	(4.9)
2. Visit to Relations (Specifically Natal Home of Married Woman)	318	202	520	5	608	613	43	175	218	366	985	1351
	(25.3)	(47.2)	(30.9)	(0.5)	(51.4)	(28.2)	(2.1)	(15.2)	(6.8)	(8.5)	(35.7)	(19.1)
3. Other Reasons	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	3	2	5
	(0.1)	(0.5)	(0.2)	(0.1)		(0)	(0)		(0)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Sub-Total - II.	351	292	643	114	610	724	53	281	334	518	1183	1701
	(27.9)	(68.2)	(38.2)	(11.5)	(51.6)	(33.3)	(2.6)	(24.4)	(10.4)	(12.0)	(42.8)	(24.0)
III. TOTAL "OUT OF VILLAGE" (I & II)	1257	428	1685	994	1182	2176	2065	1151	3216	4316	2761	7077
	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)	(100.0%)
IV. PROPORTION OF OUT OF VILLAGE TO IN-VILLAGE OBSERVATIONS	90.6	22.0	49.7	117.8	23.8	57.5	60.0	30.0	43.2	69.3	77.1	73.8

In frequency of observations with column percentages.

The busy agricultural season is from March to October (see seasonal charts of time allocation in Figures 2.2A-E). Barley and wheat are winter crops, planted in the fall after the corn is harvested. In late September and early October the fields are ploughed, fertilizer applied and the crops planted. The choice of which crop to plant in a given cultivated area is often a village decision. Because of the practice of rotating cattle from field to field as the harvest progresses, any one field should be planted with the same crop so that the grain will ripen at the same time. The choice of crops is usually a customary one. lower fields are planted with barley in the winter so that corn can be planted as a double crop in the same fields in the summer. If the last season's or last few season's crop was particularly bad, or if the barley was damaged by hail, the villagers may decide to plant wheat in place of barley in some fields. Since wheat ripens more slowly than barley, no corn can be planted in a wheat field the same year. Higher fields which will only support one crop are usually planted with wheat or potatoes, but may also be planted with barley if the villagers predict that that crop will be more successful. While the decision of which crop to plant is made in formal meetings by men, much of the decision-making process involves informal mixed-sex conversations. Women are thus participants in the decision-making of which crop should be planted (see Table 2.10).

Women usually apply fertilizer although this may also be done by the household jointly. Women also carry most of the fertilizer to the plots. Men plough the fields while women follow behind, breaking up the large clods and sowing seed. In fields where potatoes have been planted, old potatoes are collected by women and used as a vegetable. Once the barley and wheat have been planted, they require little care. The barley is weeded by small children in the course of collecting a variety of edible greens that grow up between the stalks.

Winter months are slack agriculturally except for the preparation of compost. Compost is made with one part manure and three parts leaf and grass. Women carry leaves and grass to the cattle sheds where manure is collected for compost during the winter. Families with no cattle will compost the manure in the pig sties during the winter. Some manure is left on the fields by the

Figure 2.2 A

SEASONALITY CHART OF TIME ALLOCATION IN AGRICULTURE
for
FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS BY ECONOMIC STRATA

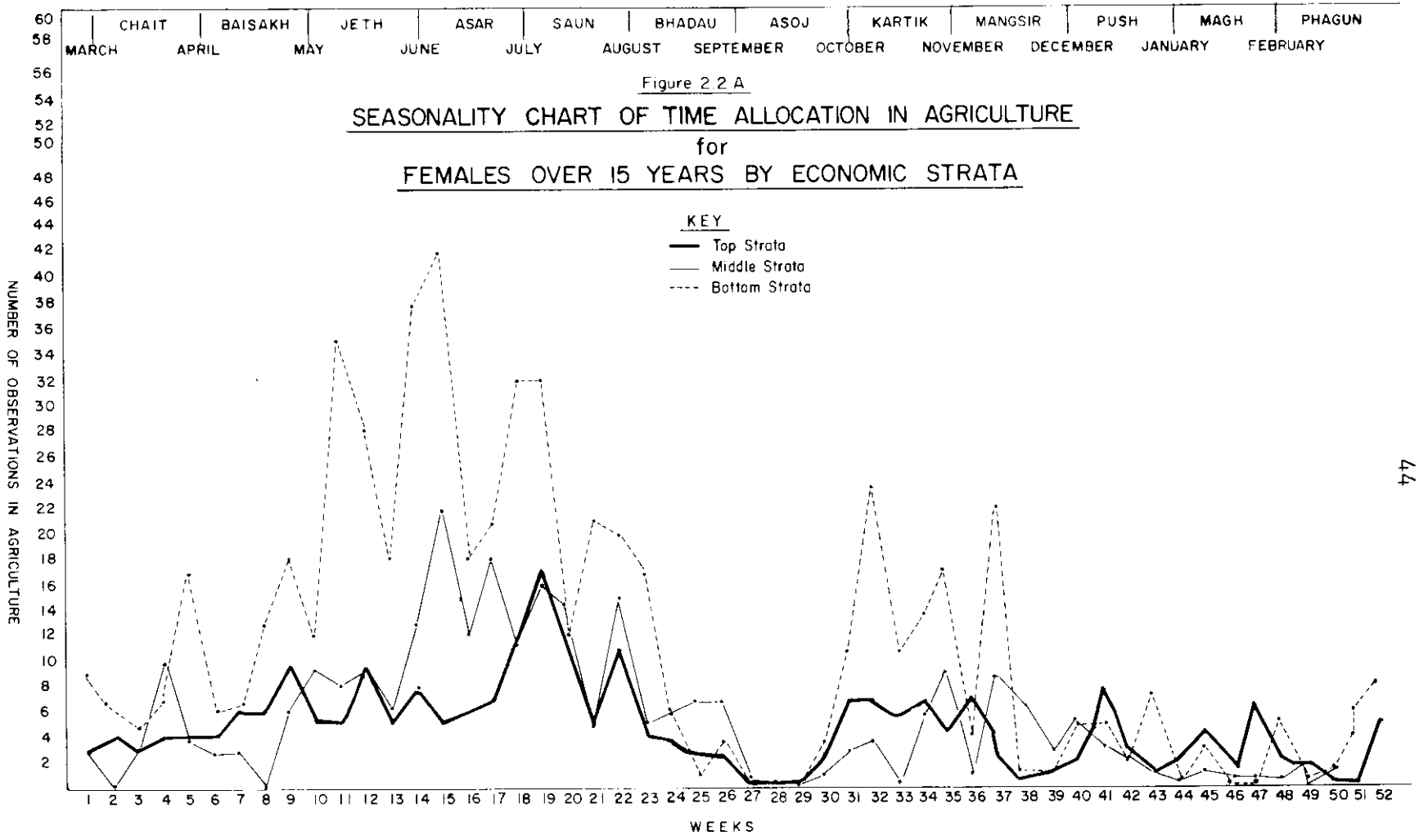
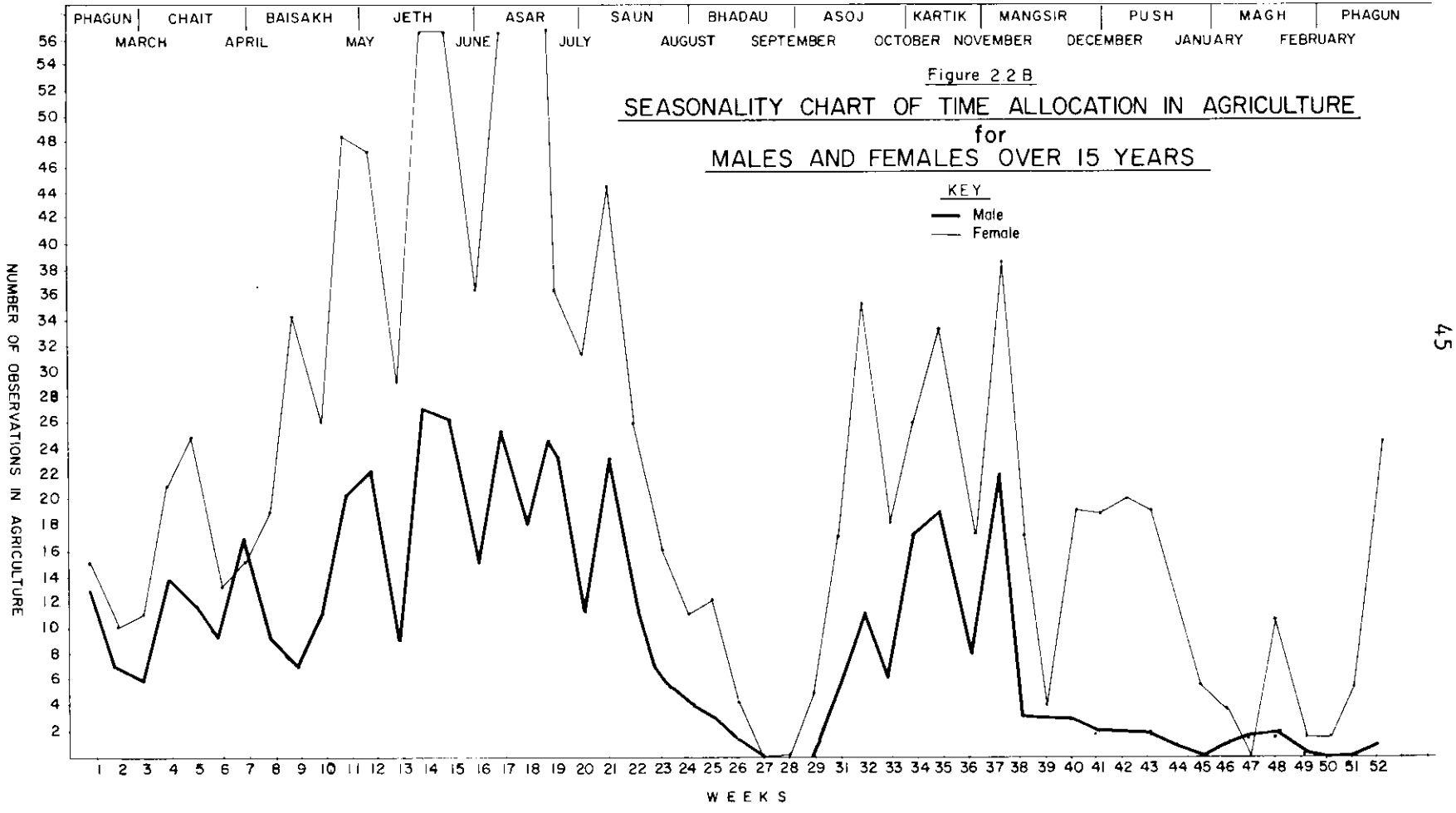


Figure 2.2 B

SEASONALITY CHART OF TIME ALLOCATION IN AGRICULTURE for MALES AND FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS



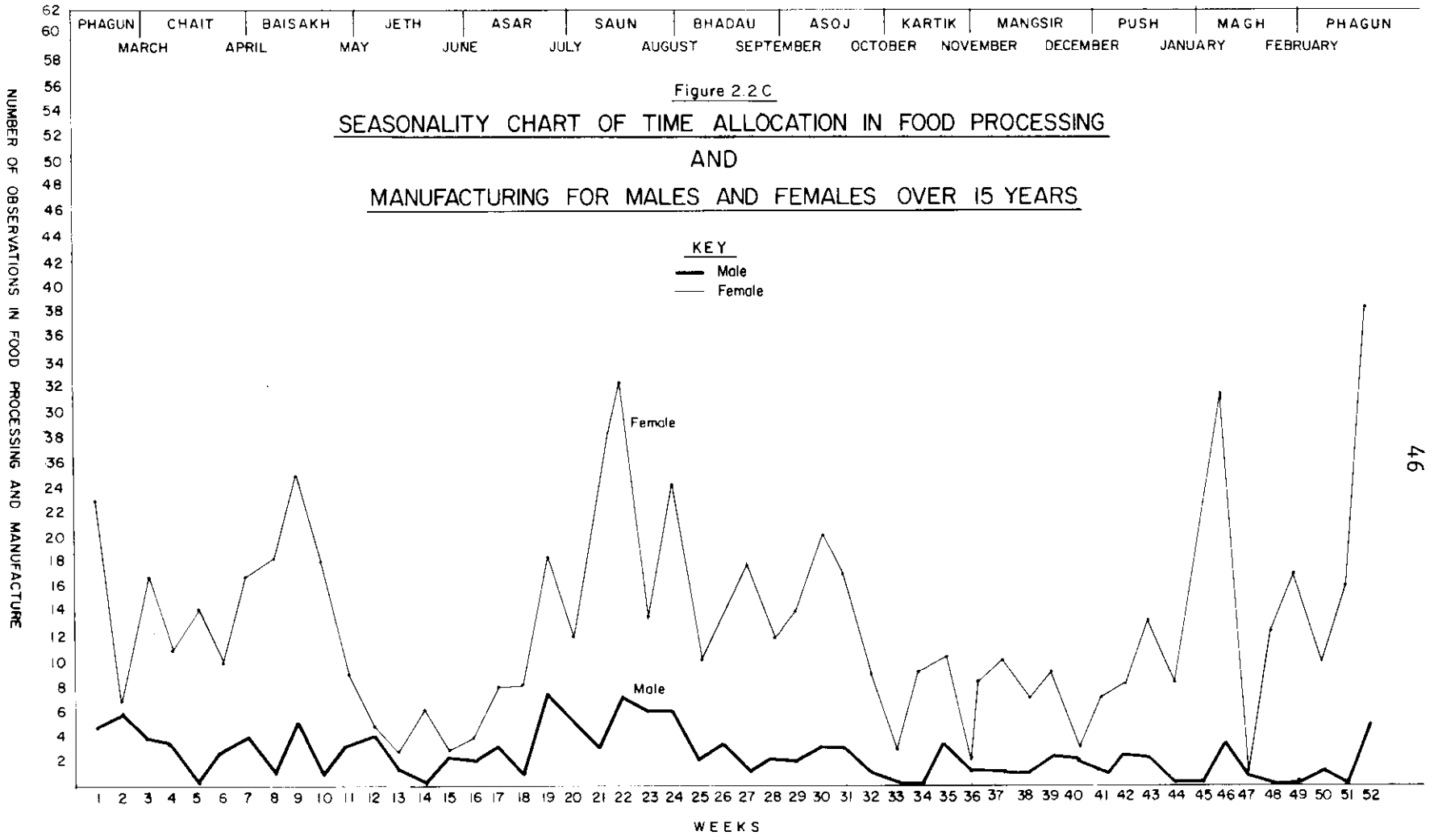


Figure 2.2C

SEASONALITY CHART OF TIME ALLOCATION IN FOOD PROCESSING AND MANUFACTURING FOR MALES AND FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS

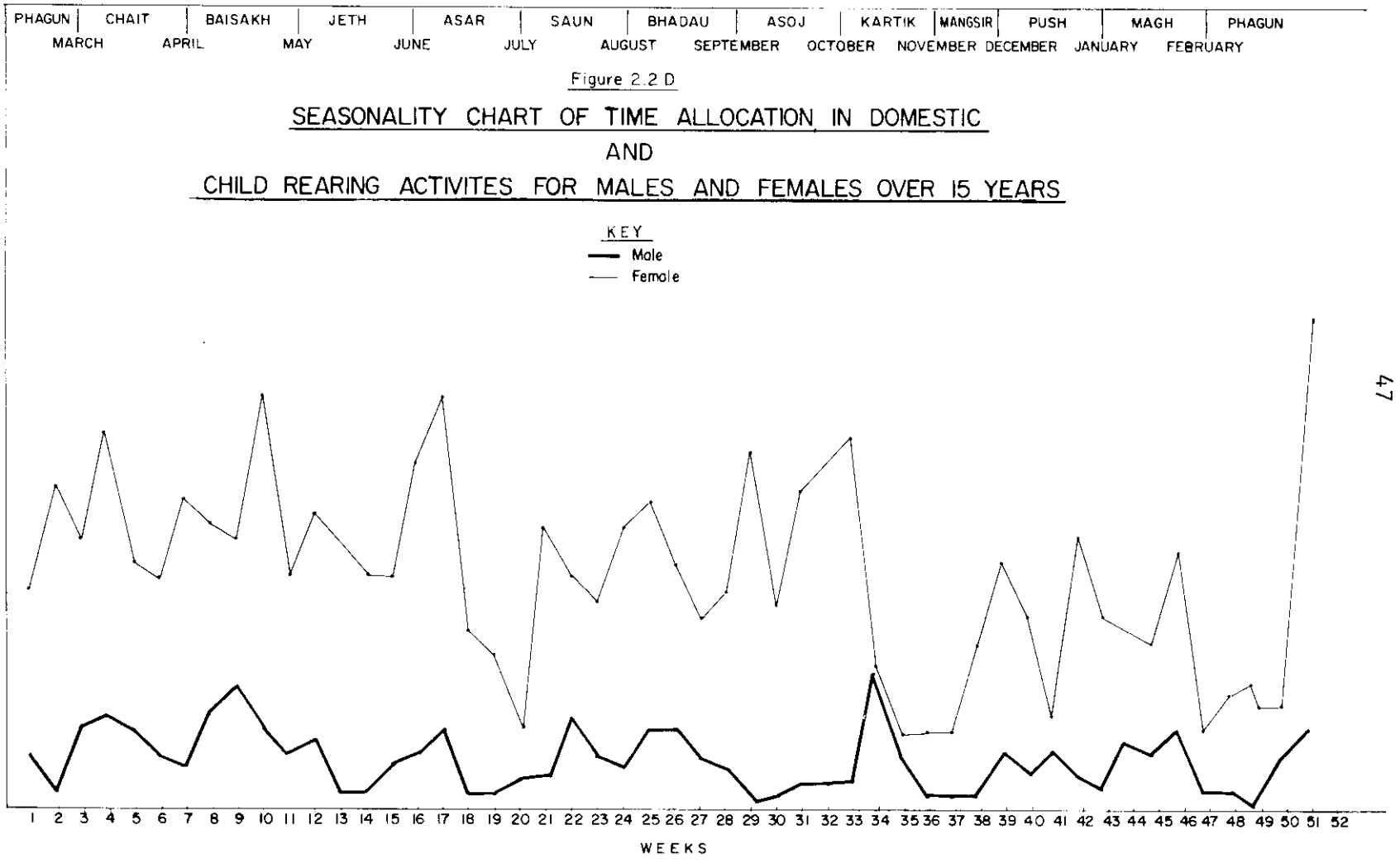
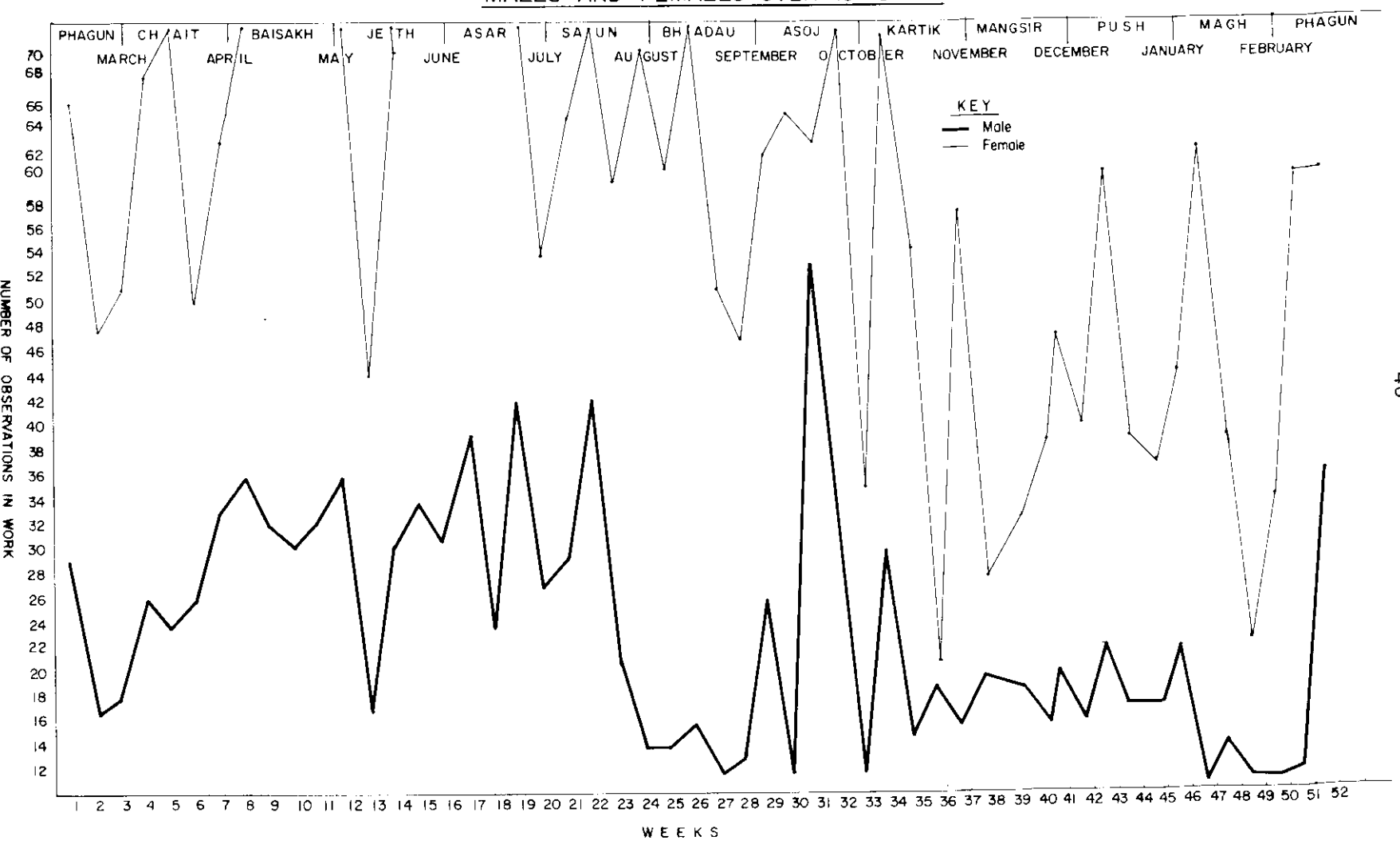


Figure 2.2 D

SEASONALITY CHART OF TIME ALLOCATION IN DOMESTIC AND CHILD REARING ACTIVITES FOR MALES AND FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS

Figure 2.2E

SEASONALITY CHART OF TIME ALLOCATION TOTAL WORK BURDEN for MALES AND FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS



grazing cattle during harvest. Poor villagers will allow other villagers to graze their cattle on their harvested fields in return for the manure produced. These villagers are expected to provide some of the salt needed by the cattle in exchange for this service. Barley begins to ripen in late April and the cycle is complete by May.

Grain is cut near the top of the stalk with small hand sickles called rangil, and threshed in freshly-mudded courtyards by hand with an implement called a lapata, which is a revolving block of bamboo and wood attached to a wooden handle. After threshing the grain is left to dry for a few days and then winnowed in bamboo trays on a windy day on a hillside. After it dries more completely, it is stored in large copper pots, wooden bins, or large mud-calked baskets. The stalks of the barley are cut and left in the fields for the cattle or transported to the winter got for fodder. Grain loss due to rodent damage is minimal because the Kham Magar trap and eat the rodents. Rat is considered a delicacy and traps are continually set in the house and the got to trap them.

Women do most of the winnowing and drying. Men who are free to thresh help in the process as do older children. Older men and women are assigned the task of watching the drying grain. They sit most of the day by the bamboo mats to scare away village chickens who come to eat the grain. Storage is done by both sexes; the men carry the heavy grain into the house and the women store it. Women are responsible for the seed selection for the next year's crop.

Corn is harvested in the fall in a similar pattern. It is mostly processed and stored by the women. The women work in groups husking the corn and later shelling the dried corn. Seed corn is braided in long strings and hung over the balcony rail over the pig sty or over the house verandah to dry. Some of the husking, shelling and seed selection is done in the evenings near the fire. Whoever comes by to smoke a pipe and gossip joins in the work. If there are unmarried girls in the household, young boys will come to entertain the workers and sing and joke. Flirtatious girls can sometimes cajole a few young boys into helping with the work for an hour or two.

The content of the Kham Magar diet is seasonal. It depends upon which grain is in supply at any one time. A boiled mush is made of barley, wheat, or corn and eaten in the morning and evening. Some families who grow buckwheat or millet make thick, flat bread that is eaten in place of the customary mush. Wheat bread is made occasionally and fried for special occasions. The mush or bread is eaten with a thin sauce of chili, salt, turmeric, and vegetables or occasionally meat. The preparation of mush requires the almost daily chore of grinding meal in a hand-driven stone mill (rantai). Women usually grind in pairs, waking before dawn to grind for an hour or two until it gets light. Once or twice a month extra meal must be ground to send to the got for the herder's consumption. Women either make periodic trips with this meal and other supplies or wait for the men to return on visits and carry back the grain themselves.

Grinding by hand is extremely time-consuming. 1.6% of women's time in the village and 4.9% of their time in productive activities is spent grinding grain. This activity accounts for almost half of the time (47%) spent by women processing food. A couple of women can grind about a pathi (approximately 7 lbs.) of grain per hour; a single woman can grind one pathi in an hour and a half. In comparison, the traditional water-driven stone mill (ghutta) used in some villages, can grind 8 to 9 pathi in an hour and the process is not so laborious. Several enterprising villagers tried to put water mills in the stream next to the village but not having the necessary expertise, were unable to prevent them from being carried downstream in the monsoon. It was believed that this catastrophe was the result of the anger of the earth god at the tempering with the stream and villagers are reluctant to build new ghutta. A hamlet that is a 45 minute walk away has two ghutta, but they only grind efficiently during the monsoon when the stream is full. Most women do not want to take the time to go to use these for the few months of the year that they are functioning. The women are habituated to the hand-driven mills and though they occasionally discuss making a trip, none ever go. Another reason for using the hand-driven mills is that the Kham Magar prefer a coarse meal for mush. The finer meal is separated from the coarse after grinding and added to the boiling mixture of coarse grain and water at the end of the cooking process. This keeps the mixture from being gluey in consistency. The water mills yield an evenly ground, fine meal that cannot be used in this way.

Women's allocation of time for food processing, manufacturing, and domestic activities is considerable. The allocation of time for such activities is quite different for males and females. When the work patterns of male household heads and the wives of household heads are compared, this difference shows up quite clearly. These males spend 4.13% of their time in food processing and manufacturing and 5.98% in domestic activities, and their wives spend 12.16% of their time in food processing and manufacturing and 16.57% of their time in domestic activities. While the time spent in agricultural activities by each sex is fairly equal (19.4% for males and 21.76% for females) and the division of labor between outside herding for males and in-village farming tasks for females is also fairly equal, women assume the bulk of daily household chores and cooking and food preparation. Part of the higher in-village work burden of women is, of course, due to the fact that one of the major productive activities for males is herding, which takes place outside the village and does not, therefore, appear in the work burden of males. Nevertheless women have less leisure than men because they are engaged in food processing, child care, and other household domestic tasks in addition to a full day of agricultural labor. Although their burden is lessened in an extended household where older women assume some of the household chores, even so, on average a male household head spends 48.7% of his time in the village in leisure activities, while their wives spend only 33% of their time in leisure activities. (See Table 2.4).

In addition to the main two meals, the Magar eat an afternoon snack. This consists of roasted corn and roasted soyabeans in the winter, and roasted barley meal mixed with local beer or roasted wheat in the summer Meat is expensive. It is only eaten once a month in subsistence households or only at a ritual feast by poorer families. Soyabeans provide the main source of protein in the diet. Sometimes shimi beans are ground to make a thin sauce in place of the customary vegetable curry. Because most families do not produce sufficient grain for year round consumption, potatoes are used in place of grain in the summer months until the corn ripens. Many households subsist entirely upon potatoes for two or three months of the year, supplementing them only with greens and wild mushrooms.

In the winter the main vegetables are potatoes, squash, radish, and dried greens and nettles. The edible greens collected in the barley fields are dried in

winnowing trays by the women and stored for winter Nettles grow along walls and edges of fields and are collected to make a thick sauce with cornmeal. The larger leaves are bitter and are fed to the pigs, while the smaller leaves are used for a sauce.

Women spend considerable time (1.2 hours daily over the entire year) during the slack agricultural seasons, and when they are not busy with agricultural activities during the rest of the year, engaged in local cottage industries. They make a number of wool products, mainly blankets, from their own wool or wool purchased locally from other villagers. Blankets are used in the household as bedding and in the winter as coats. Women also fold blankets and put them against the back of their baskets to keep the heavy load from rubbing against their back as they move. A married couple sleep under the same blanket at night, as do teenage girls and young children of both sexes. Teenage boys are given their own blanket which they take with them in the evenings or to the got. Herders need one blanket for a covering and one goat's hair hooded blanket (gum) which serves as bedding and as a rain hood. Most men wear out a blanket in a year. Blankets used only in the house last longer. After two or three years they will become thin and be used as sleeping pads, rather than as covers, for an additional four or five years. A family thus needs at least one new blanket a year and two if they are herders (see Table 2.7).

The wool processing is quite time-consuming. After the wool is sheared it is washed and fluffed with a bow-like implement and made into small bundles to spin. Small wooden spindles (rihp) are twisted between the forefingers and the thumb to spin the thread. This thread is then made into balls of yarn and double-threaded onto a spindle. The double-threading is often done by men, either in the got or during their leisure time in the village. The wool is then woven on a back strap loom (tana) by the women. A blanket is made from two loom lengths 1 1/2 foot by 18 foot. These are cut in half lengthwise and sewn in strips to make a 5 1/2 foot by 7 1/2 foot blanket. After the blanket is woven it is washed and kneaded with the feet until it is thick and rainproof. This makes it both shorter and narrower than the original loom. A finished blanket weighs about 10 1/2 lbs. There are a limited number of designs for a blanket. Most are white or brown and black-checked.

TABLE 2.7

TIME USE PATTERN IN MANUFACTURING BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA FOR POPULATION OVER 15 YEARS

Economic Strata / Sex / Sub-Activity	TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Textile	0.16	0.56	0.43	0.31	1.91	1.19	0.26	1.19	0.89	0.25	1.17	0.85
Rope/Basketry	0.07		0.02	0.26	0.05	0.15	0.18	0.02	0.07	0.18	0.02	0.08
Sewing		0.01	0.01				0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Others								0.01	0.00		0.00	0.00
Total for Manufacturing	0.22	0.57	0.46	0.58	1.97	1.34	0.47	1.22	0.98	0.44	1.20	0.93

Occasionally a blanket will be woven with thin lines of black or dyed wool woven through it. Sewing is done only by men but kneading by both sexes. Sometimes coats and wool caps are made of the material and piped with thick colored cotton for decoration.

Blankets are sold locally for 80 to 100 rupees for a white blanket and 200 to 240 rupees for black and brown ones. The latter are more expensive since brown wool costs 80 rupees per darni (7 lbs.) as opposed to 40 rupees. Goat's hair gum costs between 100 and 150 rupees a piece, which weighs close to one darni. Prices of wool blankets are usually higher in the bazaars by thirty or forty rupees.

In addition to woolen cloth, women weave cloth from both hemp and puwa. Hemp fiber yields a sturdy cloth like jute, which is used for large grain sacks, coverings, and sometimes as an extra sleeping pad. This cloth is popular throughout the Rapti zone and traders or villagers making a trip to the bazaar for supplies will take these bags to sell. Hemp is stronger and longer-lasting than jute and people will pay a higher price for the hand-made hemp bags rather than pay less for poorer quality jute bags. Traders passing through the village will also buy lengths of the cloth or exchange the cloth for salt. The raw fiber is also exchanged for salt locally or sold in nearby villages.

There is a festival to the god Baraha each summer in June or August on the nearby ridge. Many people attend this festival from the surrounding area. Women who cannot afford the capital to make wool blankets for selling will make bags of hemp which sell for 10 rupees a piece at this festival. One loom length which sells for 10 or 12 rupees in the village can be made into three or four bags. An enterprising woman can make quite a profit at this festival. One widow, whose children are away at high school, goes regularly to these festivals. The festival falls at the end of her children's vacation. The three of them go to the festival where she sells the hemp and earns money for their expenses for the next few months at school.

Processing of the fiber is time-consuming, as it must be stripped, dried, pounded and spun. The processing of hemp is less time-consuming than that of puwa but the profit margin is smaller. Prices are set locally and depend more upon custom than upon any calculation

of the time expended in production.

Puwa is also a popular fiber which is used both for grain bags and bags to store dried greens, and for clothing. Formerly women wore skirts and their traditional sur (a cross-tied piece of fabric worn over the shoulders) was made of hand-made puwa cloth but now Indian cotton is more popular. Men still wear short lungis and sur of this fabric. It is quite sturdy and finer than hemp. It can also be dyed to make decorations in the weave. Puwa is washed and dyed in lime before pounding and spinning. Only women spin this and hemp fiber, although men will help sometimes with the pounding and collections of these fibers. Puwa and hemp provide fiber for all local bags and rope, and the sale of the cloth provides needed income for households which are unable to meet subsistence needs.

Were the technology for processing these fibers more advanced, Kham Magar women could make a considerable profit in these industries. These fibers are strong and thus preferred by villagers nearby and in the bazaars to Indian jute products. Women also weave some cotton cloth with purchased thread on the same back strap looms. This is worn by men as sur or lungi.

Children and the Division of Labor

As an infant the child is primarily the responsibility of its mother. If a mother goes to the fields to work she keeps the infant in a covered basket she carries on her back which she sets down near her while she works. The child is thus exposed at a very young age to the whole range of female activities. After the infant gets a little older and no longer needs regular breast feeding, it is also cared for by a variety of relatives. Siblings and women play with children extensively, carry the children about, and entertain the children while the mother is busy with a particular task. Fathers also undertake similar care of the children. Men can be seen wandering about the village with an infant son or daughter on their back. A young child is thus also exposed to a range of male activities. Small children are entrusted with the care of a younger sibling when the mother is in the vicinity. Mothers-in-law may also assume the care of the child, if the mother is outside the village or busy in some activity. Women also spend considerable time visiting their maiti as young mothers, and may leave the child with their mother if they must

go somewhere. Watching an infant is seen more as a privilege than a chore by relatives, though not if asked to do so too often. Children will take their younger siblings when they go to play and usually look out to see that the younger child is not hurt.

A child is toilet trained between one and two but this is a gradual process instilled as much by the example of other children, either siblings or older relatives, as by parental discipline. Older children imitate their parents' attempts to teach their younger brother or sister to walk or talk and thus contribute as much to the process as do the parents. When a child reaches the age of four or so, it begins to learn tasks by imitation of both its siblings and its parents. A child practises making an imitation loom, begs to be given a basket to carry around, makes clay objects and bamboo pieces, practises cutting with a knife, etc. Unless the child is obviously harming itself or a friend, these imitative activities are given free reign. At this stage both sexes imitate all types of activities, both those customarily performed by women and those performed by men. Children are given small tasks to do and allowed to try and cook, husk, thresh, etc. By the time children are seven or eight, they begin to be assigned larger tasks. Both boys and girls are sent to fetch water at the river with small pitchers. Many boys continue to carry water regularly until they are old enough to marry. Boys begin to go to the got with their father where they assist with herding tasks. Until they are ten or so, they are not given much real responsibility but imitate their father or brothers to learn what tasks are required and how to do them. At home, girls are assigned more chores than are boys (Tables 2.8 and 2.9) and are expected to be obedient. While a recalcitrant boy will be ignored and the task sometimes given to an older sibling or done by a parent, the girl will be scolded until she obeys. There are of course individual variations between families and whether or not a child attends school greatly determines the number of tasks he or she will be assigned. Most children prefer to go outside the village with their parents whenever possible and enjoy the excitement of such trips. At first boys will go both to the fields with their mothers and to the got with their fathers, but by the age of nine tasks are fairly differentiated by sex. Girls continue to go to the fields with their mothers and assume more and more responsibility - beginning to hoe seriously, harvest corn, or whatever -

TABLE 2.8

TIME USE PATTERN BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA
FOR POPULATION 10-14 YEARS IN NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

(In hours per day)

Activity \ Economic Strata/Sex			TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA		
			Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
WORK BURDEN	PRODUCTIVE	Animal Husbandry	0	0.19	0	0.31	0.12	0.14	0.21	0.48	0.32	0.35	0.25	0.28
		Agriculture	2.49	1.98	2.11	1.84	2.62	2.53	1.58	3.44	2.31	1.79	2.60	2.30
		Fuel Collection	0.83	0.85	0.85	0	0.78	0.69	0.42	1.29	0.76	0.47	0.94	0.77
		Hunting and Gathering	0	0	0	0	0.04	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.08	0.04	0.05
		Manufacturing	0.12	0.12	0.12	0	0.16	0.14	0	0.48	0.19	0.03	0.23	0.16
		Food Processing	0.24	0.19	0.20	0	0.24	0.22	0.07	0.54	0.25	0.10	0.31	0.23
		Outside Income Earning Activity (In-Village)	0	0.19	0.15	0.92	0.04	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.15	0.17	0.13	0.15
		Construction	0	0	0	0	0.04	0.04	0.11	0.05	0.08	0.08	0.03	0.05
	1. Sub-total for Productive Activities		4.50	3.53	3.77	3.08	4.05	3.94	2.64	6.55	4.19	3.07	4.53	3.99
	DOMESTIC	Cooking/Serving	0.24	0.04	0.09	0	0.20	0.18	0.18	0.32	0.23	0.17	0.17	0.17
		Cleaning Dishes and Pots	0.12	0.12	0.12	0	0.04	0.04	0.14	0.21	0.17	0.12	0.12	0.12
		Cleaning House/Mud Plastering	0.12	0.23	0.20	0	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.38	0.17	0.05	0.22	0.16
		Laundry	0	0.04	0.03	0	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.05
		Fetching Water	0.59	0.27	0.35	0	0.57	0.51	0.32	0.75	0.49	0.35	0.51	0.45
		Shopping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Other Domestic Activity	0	0.04	0.03	0	0	0	0.07	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.05
		Child Care and Rearing	0	0.31	0.23	0	0.74	0.65	0.25	0	0.15	0.17	0.38	0.30
	2. Sub-total for Domestic Activities		1.07	1.05	1.05	0	1.72	1.52	1.02	1.88	1.36	0.95	1.51	1.30
I	Work Burden (1 + 2)		5.57	4.58	4.43	3.08	5.77	5.45	3.66	8.43	5.55	4.01	6.04	5.30
	3. Education		2.61	1.20	1.55	0	1.84	1.63	2.32	0.11	1.44	2.19	1.13	1.52
	4. Personal Maintenance		1.07	1.01	1.02	1.54	1.35	1.37	1.27	1.29	1.28	1.25	1.21	1.22
	5. Social Activities		0	0.16	0.12	0	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.27	12.80	0.03	0.16	0.11
	6. Leisure		6.76	9.05	8.48	11.38	6.96	7.48	8.72	5.91	7.61	8.52	7.45	7.85
II	Sub-total (3 + 4 + 5 + 6)		10.43	11.42	11.17	12.92	10.23	10.55	12.34	7.57	10.45	11.99	9.96	10.70
III	Total for In-Village Activities (I + II)		16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00

TABLE 2.9

TIME USE PATTERN BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA
FOR POPULATION 5-9 YEARS IN NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

(In hours per day)

Activity	Economic Strata/Sex	TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA		
		Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
WORK BURDEN	PRODUCTIVE: Animal Husbandry	0.17	0	0.17	0	0.05	0.04	0.20	0.04	0.13	0.18	0.04	0.12
	PRODUCTIVE: Agriculture	1.46	0	1.46	3.30	4.37	4.20	1.98	2.39	2.14	1.92	3.25	2.50
	PRODUCTIVE: Fuel Collection	0.41	0	0.41	0	0.72	0.61	0.29	0.48	0.16	0.31	0.58	0.43
	PRODUCTIVE: Hunting and Gathering	0.06	0	0.06	0	0.10	0.08	0	0.11	0.04	0.02	0.10	0.05
	PRODUCTIVE: Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.06
	PRODUCTIVE: Food Processing	0.12	0	0.12	0	0	0	0.20	0.11	0.16	0.16	0.06	0.12
	PRODUCTIVE: Outside Income Earning Activity (In-Village)	0.23	0	0.23	0	0.05	0.04	0.15	0.11	0.13	0.16	0.08	0.13
	PRODUCTIVE: Construction	0	0	0	0	0.38	0	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.06	0.23	0.14
	1. Sub-total for Productive Activities	2.40	0	2.40	3.30	5.72	0.32	2.98	3.45	3.16	2.85	4.43	3.54
	DOMESTIC: Cooking/Serving	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.04
	DOMESTIC: Cleaning Dishes and Pots	0.06	0	0.06	0	0	0	0	0.07	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03
	DOMESTIC: Cleaning House/Mud Plastering	0	0	0	0	0.19	0.16	0.12	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.10	0.09
	DOMESTIC: Laundry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.07	0	0.04	0.05	0	0.03
	DOMESTIC: Fetching Water	0.12	0	0.12	0.51	0.24	0.28	0.34	0.33	0.34	0.29	0.29	0.29
	DOMESTIC: Shopping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02
	DOMESTIC: Other Domestic Activity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.07	0.03	0	0.04	0.02
	DOMESTIC: Child Care and Rearing	0	0	0	0	0.05	0.04	0.22	0.07	0.16	0.15	0.06	0.11
	2. Sub-total for Domestic Activities	0.17	0	0.17	0.51	0.48	0.48	0.83	0.70	0.78	0.63	0.60	0.62
I	Work Burden (1 + 2)	2.63	0	2.63	3.81	6.20	5.82	3.80	4.15	3.94	3.48	5.04	4.16
	3. Education	2.98	0	2.98	0.51	0.48	0.48	1.00	0.04	0.62	1.52	0.23	0.95
	4. Personal Maintenance	0.76	0	0.76	2.03	1.11	1.25	1.59	1.47	1.54	1.39	1.31	1.35
	5. Social Activities	0.23	0	0.23	0	0	0	0.07	0.04	0.06	0.11	0.02	0.07
	6. Leisure	9.40	0	9.40	9.65	8.22	12.48	9.54	10.31	9.85	9.51	9.40	9.46
II	Sub-total (3 + 4 + 5 + 6)	13.37	0	13.37	12.19	9.80	10.18	12.20	11.85	12.06	12.52	10.96	11.84
III	Total for In-Village Activities (1 + II)	16.00	0	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00

while boys go only to the got, or to work with the men in the fields. Girls and boys continue to carry water, but boys are no longer expected to help with cooking or other household chores.

Cooking is not an exclusively female activity since men also have to cook when they are alone for long periods as herders. If a woman is busy, her teenage son or sometimes her husband will take over cooking until she finishes what she is doing. Women may go to a distant field for a few days and leave the husband or son in charge of cooking and cleaning if there are no other female household members to assign these tasks. Older boys and men seldom cook at home when the women are free, but when required to do so immediately assume responsibility and are quite efficient.

Girls are perceived to be of more value as a source of labor when young than are boys. Both parents told me separately in interviews that it was better to have a girl child before a boy child as the girl assumed responsibilities at a younger age and was able to ease the family workload. As teenagers girls spend more time working than do boys in the village. Boys are given a lot of free time to do as they please. A girl returns home from school and immediately begins to work in the house, while a boy goes off to play with his friends until the evening meal. While older boys are free to study in the evenings or go to evening gatherings, girls only do so when chores are finished and when they do go to a friend's house for a gathering they bring spinning materials with them.

Household Decision Making

The role of women in household-decision making and the allocation of household resources depends upon a number of factors. These factors include type and composition of the household, age and life stage of the woman in question, and the number of household males absent from the village. The breakdown of decision making in various areas by sex is presented in Table 2.10.

In a household with a monogamous unit of husband, wife, and their children, the husband and wife form an integrated unit. They each make decisions pertinent to their own economic tasks, consulting each other as necessary. Men take responsibility for routine decisions regarding the care of the animals and

allocation of labor for herding, while women take responsibility for agricultural decisions. The amount husband and wife consult each other depends upon the time the husband spends away from the household. If the husband is a full-time herder, the woman will seldom consult him about agricultural decisions and he will only consult her about herding if it involves sending supplies to the got or deciding whether to stall a sick cow in the household compound. Men are more apt to suggest major transactions involving property, such as selling animals, buying a relative's got, or buying land, but both man and wife make the final decision to actually buy or sell. If a woman feels the houseroof should be repaired or that the got should be converted into a more permanent structure for use by the whole family during the slack season, she will suggest the possibility to her husband.

Husband and wife generally do not interfere in each other's decisions regarding minor or customary transactions. However, it is expected that each will assume responsibility in the absence of the other. Thus, a woman will never sell an animal if her husband is in the village, but if he is in India in the Army, she may sell an animal when in need of money and he will not be angry with her upon his return. When a man is away, his herd of cattle is usually cared for by another male relative, such as his brother. It is his wife who assumes ultimate responsibility however. If the brother mismanages the herd and the wife does nothing about it, the husband will be as upset with the wife as with his brother.

> A good example of a wife taking responsibility in her husband's absence is the case of a young village woman named Monsurra. Monsurra is the wife of a soldier in the Indian Army, who has three brothers. The eldest brother lives in a distant hamlet, the second brother is a soldier in India, Monsurra's husband is the third brother, and the youngest is recently pensioned soldier. Monsurra and the youngest brother's wife often work together and the youngest brother ploughs her fields and tends her cattle. Before the youngest brother returned from the army with his pension, the two wives sometimes pooled capital to earn extra cash. Both sold liquor and occasionally went to local fairs to sell meat and liquor, splitting both the expenses and the profits. After the

> youngest brother returned, the two women continued to attend fairs together occasionally. In the absence of Monsurra's husband, a dispute arose over the boundaries of a plot of land belonging to him. Monsurra and the youngest brother went together to the mediation of the dispute by the village council chief and Monsurra argued as vehemently as the others present. A new land deed was drawn up in her husband's favor and both the youngest brother and Monsurra put their signature on the document confirming the decision. If there had been a similar dispute about her husband's debts, most creditors would have waited until her husband returned, knowing that he would bring a considerable salary, but Monsurra would assume responsibility for repayment if creditors pressed her in her husband's absence.

Women tend to make decisions regarding daily household or agricultural activities and resource allocation. They decide how many laborers to hire to weed the corn or whether to ask a male kinsman to cut down firewood, and decide how much and when payment is required. It is usually women who allocate the quantity of grain that would be needed for consumption, ritual and festival needs, and decide how much could be sold. They decide which and how much seed to set aside and the quantity to plant in a particular field. In the sample, 81.2% of seed decisions were made by women. This is quite high considering the fact that there is not an adult female present in every household. Men who do not herd, and as a result spend more time in agricultural tasks, may consult with their wives about what seed to plant and how much, but usually it is the woman's decision.

While I was making a survey of landholdings, which are measured locally by how much seed can be planted in a given plot, it was clear that often men had no idea how much seed went into a given plot and could not recall which fields had been planted with which crops from season to season. Women would constantly correct their husband's estimate, often laughing as they did so, when the estimate sounded particularly unreasonable. On the other hand, women often had no real idea of the size of

TABLE 2.10

DECISION MAKING IN VARIOUS AREAS BY SEX

Decision Making Area	SEX			No one. Tradi-tional	Total
	Male	Female	Both		
I. LABOR ALLOCATION DECISIONS					
A. Arranges Parma Labor Exchange	0	13(37.2)	5(14.3)	17(48.5)	35(100.0)
B. Arranges Wage Labor	0	11(31.4)	12(34.3)	12(34.3)	35(100.0)
C. Controls Labor Allocation of other HH Members	0	16(45.8)	2(5.7)	17(48.5)	35(100.0)
D. Controls Own Labor Allocation	0	5(14.3)	24(67.0)	6(17.7)	35(100.0)
Sub-Total I	0	45(32.2)	43(30.7)	52(37.1)	140(100.0)
II. AGRICULTURAL DECISIONS					
A. GRAINS AND AGRI-CULTURAL PRODUCTS					
1. Planting Decisions	7(20.5)	6(17.6)	20(58.8)	0	34(100.0)
2. Seed Decisions	3(9.9)	27(81.2)	3(9.9)	0(0)	33(100.0)
3. Fertilizer (Type/Amount)	0	0	33(100.0)	0	33(100.0)
Sub-Total A	10(10.0)	33(33.0)	56(56.0)	0(0)	100(100.0)
B. KITCHEN GARDEN					
1. Planting Decisions	7(24.0)	8(28.0)	14(48.0)	0	29(100.0)
2. Seed Decisions	4(14.0)	22(78.5)	2(7.5)	0	28(100.0)
3. Fertilizer (Type/Amount)	0	0	0	28(100.0)	28(100.0)
Sub-Total B	11(12.9)	30(35.3)	16(18.8)	28(33.0)	85(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

(CONTINUED)

TABLE 2.10 (CONT'D)

Decision Making Area	SEX			No one Tradi-tional	Total
	Male	Female	Both		
C. FIBER CROPS					
1. Planting Decisions	7(21.0)	5(15.0)	22(64.0)	0	33(100.0)
2. Seed Decisions	4(12.5)	25(78.0)	3(9.5)	0	32(100.0)
Sub-Total C	11(17.0)	30(46.0)	25(37.0)	0	65(100.0)
Sub-Total II	32(12.8)	93 37.2)	107(42.8)	28(11.2)	250(100.0)
III. DECISION MAKING ON HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES					
A. Who Keeps Money?	8(25.8)	21(67.7)	2(6.5)	0	31(100.0)
B. Who Goes to Bazaar?	8(26.0)	5(16.0)	17(54.8)	1(3.2)	31(100.0)
C. Small Food Items & HH Necessities					
1. Who Suggested Expenditures?	33(21.4)	84(54.5)	30(2.0)	11(7.1)	154(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	9(6.0)	17(11.5)	34(23.0)	88(59.5)	148(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	10(6.7)	14(9.7)	38(26.2)	78(53.6)	145(100.0)
Sub-Total C	52(11.5)	115(25.5)	102(22.6)	177(39.4)	451(100.0)
D. Daily Grain Use	0	31(88.5)	4(11.5)	0	36(100.0)
Sub-Total III	52(11.0)	146(30.0)	106(21.7)	177(36.3)	487(100.0)
IV. CLOTHING AND HOUSEHOLD DURABLES					
A. CLOTHING					
1. Who Suggested?	23(27.1)	41(48.2)	20(23.5)	1(1.2)	85(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	2(2.5)	10(12.1)	29(35.4)	41(50.0)	82(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	5(6.0)	14(17.0)	29(35.4)	34(41.6)	82(100.0)
Sub-Total A	30(12.2)	65(26.1)	78(31.3)	76(30.4)	249(100.0)

(CONTINUED)

TABLE 2.10 (CONT'D)

Decision Making Area	SEX			No one Tradi-tional	Total
	Male	Female	Both		
B. HOUSEHOLD DURABLES					
1. Who Suggested?	4(66.7)	2(33.3)	0	0	6(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	0	1(20.0)	1(20.0)	3(60.0)	5(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	0	1(20.0)	1(20.0)	3(60.0)	5(100.0)
Sub-Total B	4(25.0)	4(25.0)	2(12.5)	6(37.5)	16(100.0)
Sub-Total IV	34(12.8)	69(26.0)	80(30.1)	82(30.1)	265(100.0)
V. CASH AND KIND EXPENDITURES					
A. TRAVEL					
1. Who Suggested?	4(28.6)	7(50.0)	3(21.4)	3(21.4)	14(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	0	5(36.0)	6(43.0)	3(21.0)	14(100.0)
3. Who Decided to Spend?	1(7.5)	2(14.0)	9(64.5)	2(1.5)	14(100.0)
Sub-Total A	5(12.0)	14(33.0)	18(43.0)	5(12.0)	42(100.0)
B. SOCIAL					
1. Who Suggested?	5(13.0)	2(10.0)	15(50.0)	8(27.0)	31(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	10(60.0)	10(33.4)	30(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	17(56.4)	11(37.0)	30(100.0)
Sub-Total B	7(7.7)	5(5.5)	40(44.0)	29(31.8)	91(100.0)

(CONTINUED)

TABLE 2.10 (CONT'D)

Decision Making Area	SEX			No one Tradi-tional	Total
	Male	Female	Both		
C. MEDICAL TREATMENT					
1. Who Suggested?	1(9.0)	4(36.0)	5(46.0)	1(9.0)	11(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	1(9.0)	1(9.0)	6(54.6)	3(27.3)	11(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	0	0	8(72.7)	3(27.3)	11(100.0)
Sub-Total C	2(6.0)	15(15.0)	19(58.0)	7(21.0)	33(100.0)
Sub-Total V	14(8.5)	24(14.5)	77(46.7)	41(30.3)	165(100.0)
VI. HOUSEHOLD BORROWING AND OTHER MAJOR TRANSACTIONS					
A. BUY/SELL LAND/ BUILDINGS					
1. Who Suggested?	3(50.0)	3(50.0)	0	0	6(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	1(17.0)	2(33.0)	3(50.0)	0	6(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	0	1(17.0)	5(83.0)	0	6(100.0)
Sub-Total A	4(22)	6(33.5)	8(44.5)	0	18(100.0)
B. EDUCATE CHILDREN					
1. Who Suggested?	1(50)	1(50.0)	0	0	2(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	0	1(50.0)	1(50.0)	0	2(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	0	1(50.0)	0	1(50.0)	2(100.0)
Sub-Total B	1(17.0)	3(50.0)	1(17.0)	1(17.0)	6(100.0)

(CONTINUED)

TABLE 2.10 (CONT'D)

Decision Making Area	SEX			No one Tradi-tional	Total
	Male	Female	Both		
C. CONSUMPTION NEEDS					
1. Who Suggested?	4(26.0)	10(76.0)	1(7.0)	0	15(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	1(7.0)	4(26.0)	5(33.5)	5(33.5)	15(100.0)
3. Who Decided how much to Spend?	0	3(20.0)	9(60.0)	3(20.0)	15(100.0)
Sub-Total C	5(11.0)	17(38.0)	15(3[illegible].0)	8(18.0)	45(100.0)
D. IMPROVED CULTIVATION					
1. Who Suggested?	2(100.0)	0	0	0	2(100.0)
2. Who was Consulted?	2(100.0)	0	0	0	2(100.0)
3. Who decided how much to Spend?	1(50.0)	0	1(50.0)	0	2(100.0)
Sub-Total D	5(83.0)	0	1(17.0)	0	6(100.0)
Sub-Total VI	15(20.3)	26(33.4)	25(33.3)	9(12.0)	75(100.0)
GRAND TOTAL I-VI	147(10.6)	403(29.1)	438(31.6)	389(28.7)	1382(100.0)

herds of either cattle or sheep or goats. They freely over and under-estimated the number of young animals and occasionally forgot about the addition of a new sheep or bullock to the family property.

Concommitant to women's control over seed selection and planting decisions is their control of the agricultural products of the household. Section III of Table 2.10 shows that 88.5% of decisions regarding daily grain use were made by women. 30% of the decisions regarding small household expenditures were made by women and 36.3% traditionally. Traditionally in this case usually implies the women made the decisions since no formal consultations were required. Women are the ones who decide if a certain amount of grain can be set aside for making liquor, if more expensive grain will be sold or consumed, or if rice should be bought from local traders passing through with extra household cash or borrowed money. Since husbands usually have little idea how much of a particular grain was produced in a given season, they do not know how much grain a woman has sold from the family store. Wealthy women may become considerable entrepreneurs in this way, selling grain instead of using it to make liquor or preferred foods for home consumption, or loaning grain in non-harvest seasons to poor households at half again the harvest price. As a rule they also keep the household money (68% of the cases), so their husbands are unaware of where this excess cash is spent. While this cash is often needed and used for social and household consumption needs, women may also use some of this cash to buy clothing for themselves or jewelery to save for their daughter's future. Generally husbands have no objection to such decisions, but sometimes they may be angry if they discover the wife is being unnecessarily frugal. One husband discovered after his return from a long trading venture that his wife had been very frugal and made only a minimal amount of liquor to feed guests from their ample surplus in his absence. He was incensed that she had not lived up to a standard of hospitality he was careful to maintain when in the village. He knew she was being frugal, but because he had no real idea of the exact amount of grain that had been harvested, he could not do much but scold in a vague way. He felt his prestige in the village was being jeopardized by his wife's behavior, but was never able to curtail her entrepreneurial activities more than minimally.

General household decisions like whether or not to perform a particular religious ritual are made by the couple jointly. Women are responsible for seeing that traditional contributions of food are made to a relative for a

funeral, birth ritual, or festival and women make sure preparations of food for household rituals are done properly. It is they who tend to remember what food and ritual objects are required for a particular ceremony. When the grandfather died in the house I stayed in, the men worried about the proper procedure for wrapping and carrying the body, and seeing that the proper clothes were buried with the corpse; the women were the only ones who remembered which grains and what quantity of grains should be buried with the body.

Both men and women consult on major decisions that require a large cash expenditure or that may have important ramifications. While men have the final authority in such decisions, women participate in decisions regarding division of family estate, a child's marriage, or sending a son into the army.

Women and men both make decisions regarding borrowing of money (see Table 2.10 in regard to borrowing). Usually loans are made jointly, though each may borrow small amounts for use for short periods of time without consulting the other party. Women and men have very extensive borrowing networks in the village. Women's networks include members of work groups, relatives and wealthy neighbors. Because women tend to work in groups and in the course of visiting maintain numerous village contacts, they have very good information channels about the state of outstanding loans and the availability of cash in various village households. While most villagers know when a household acquires considerable cash from a successful trading trip, the return of a family member on leave from the army with pay, or the sale of property, it is only through the extensive information channels maintained by women that villagers know when a creditor has collected on a loan and has cash available to lend to someone else. Men get a lot of such information secondhand from women in their household.

Table 2.11

SOURCE OF LOANS

Relative without interest	35%
Neighbor collateral/no interest	4%
Neighbor at 20% interest	40%
District Bank loan against gold/short term	20%
Other outside source	1%

Most loans are taken in the village (see Table 2.11). In-the-village loans made up 79% of all loans taken, 20% of the 21% taken outside the village were loans made against gold and silver. Bank loans are hard to get and few men or women have the necessary facility in Nepali to convince a bank to lend them money. Bank loans also have to be paid back within a specified time limit. A village lender will always allow for extenuating circumstances that prevent the borrower from repaying the loan on time. It is customary to give borrowers extensions of a year or two if needed, and to allow them to pay the interest when they repay the entire principal. This custom makes lending money an uncertain and sometimes unprofitable business. The creditor is hard put to get back his money when he himself needs cash. He is under pressure socially to lend money if he has a supply of cash on hand, even if he wants to save it for his own use. Since women's information channels are so effective, few men or women can hide the fact that they have a supply of cash on hand. Unless they can prove to the potential borrower they have an immediate need for this supply of money, they can usually be persuaded to part with the cash for a short period of time. The lender then takes an extension on the loan, and the creditor is left with no means to raise capital for his own ventures without foreclosing on another loan or taking a short-term loan himself.

Loans are usually taken at 20%. The lender extracts 10% from the principal when he gives the loan and the loan collects an annual interest rate of 10%. I was suspicious of this seemingly low interest rate, since in the rest of Nepal loans may reach an annual interest rate of 50% or more, for cash, but I have never been able to find contradictory data, even though I have been present at the repayment of several loans and present when interest on a loan was paid. Before government rates were set traditional interest was 30% annually, of which 1/3 was paid at the time of the transaction. Villagers claim that now lenders adhere to the official rate of 10%. There are also interest free loans made to relatives that are flexible arrangements. These usually have a written contract (tamsuk) but if the sum is small, not always. Many villagers borrow small amounts in this way. When I surveyed villagers about outstanding debts and loans, almost half of the loans they mentioned were non-interest, non-collateral loans.

There is one type of bank loan taken by villagers;

the borrowing of cash against gold. Gold can be put into the bank at Libang and a sum of 500 or 600 rupees per thola (11.2 grams) borrowed at 15% interest for a period of six months. Many villagers who are in need of short-term loans will borrow money in this manner, especially unmarried women or divorced women who engage in a lot of entrepreneurial activity. Villagers who have no gold of their own may borrow gold from other villagers to put in the bank. There is no set interest rate for this type of borrowing, but usually the lender will expect about 100 rupees interest on 2-3 tholas and 200 rupees on 3-5 tholas of gold over a six month period. The borrower thus pays the 15% interest to the bank as well as about 10% to the owner of the gold.

Under customary law, a loan taken by a woman is considered the responsibility of the entitled property owners of the household in which she resides. In contrast, the National Code states that a man is only responsible for loans he himself has incurred before partition of the joint estate and is not responsible for debts incurred by a future co-parcener, such as his wife, if the co-parcener dies before partition. By this system, a woman's debts are not legally the responsibility of her husband and he cannot be made to repay a debt to a creditor if she dies or she is unable to pay. In Kham Magar law, a creditor can demand such repayment and this enables women to borrow money more easily than they would be able to if the Nepali code was followed. Their creditors know that the husband or estate owner will assume responsibility for that loan if the woman does not pay, and thus are willing to lend a woman the money.

In a household with more than one conjugal unit, such as a household with two married brothers or married parents and their married children, decisions are made somewhat differently than in a monogamous household. Seniority supercedes all other lines of authority in most household decisions and the oldest woman assumes the most responsibility for agricultural and household decisions and the allocation of resources. This is the reason most young married women prefer to set up their own household soon after they begin to live completely in their husband's house. If a woman is married to the youngest son, she will remain with her mother and father-in-law until they die and she remains subordinate to her mother-in-law. As she becomes established in the household she begins to take a major part in decision-making however. She

cannot sell family grain without the permission of her mother-in-law, but can help with seed selection or planting. She may suggest making liquor with some of the grain or suggest using capital to make wool products or other saleable goods. While her mother-in-law will make the main decisions about labor and decide whether the daughter-in-law should weed the corn or help at home, the daughter-in-law can offer opinions and discuss these decisions. As the mother-in-law gets older and can no longer assume heavy tasks, the daughter-in-law increasingly makes more decisions.

Labor Exchange

Like most societies in which the household is the basic economic unit for production and exchange, Kham Magar society depends upon labor intensity in the household to generate a surplus or simply to meet subsistence needs. A large family is, in most cases, an asset rather than a burden. Labor is needed for a variety of activities: agriculture, animal husbandry, cloth production for home use and sale, household chores and maintenance, and outside employment. Every household member over the age of seven is productive and adds to the household's capacity to generate income. Land holdings are small and land is relatively low in yield. In the absence of irrigation and the use of improved seed or high-grade fertilizer, increase in production depends upon labor intensity. In households with large land holdings and large herds, a large family is needed to make full use of the family estate. If there is a shortage of family labor, there is a sufficient surplus in wealthy households to hire additional labor. If there is a shortage of labor in a poorer family, there will not be enough land or property to generate a surplus to hire additional laborers.

Insufficient household labor creates a problem for households of both high and low economic strata. While families of an upper stratum may be able to hire laborers to meet subsistence needs, their ability to generate a surplus will be limited. Families of a middle to low economic stratum will have difficulty making full use of their material resources. In a household with a surplus of labor, additional family members can generate added income through non-agricultural activities. A family with a number of sons can send one or more sons to India to perform migratory labor or serve in the army. One son can work locally as a hired herder. If educated,

a son can seek a government job locally in the post office, school, or health post or in the district in a similar government service. Older women or unmarried daughters who are not needed in agricultural activities can weave fiber or wool products for sale or make and sell liquor for added family income.

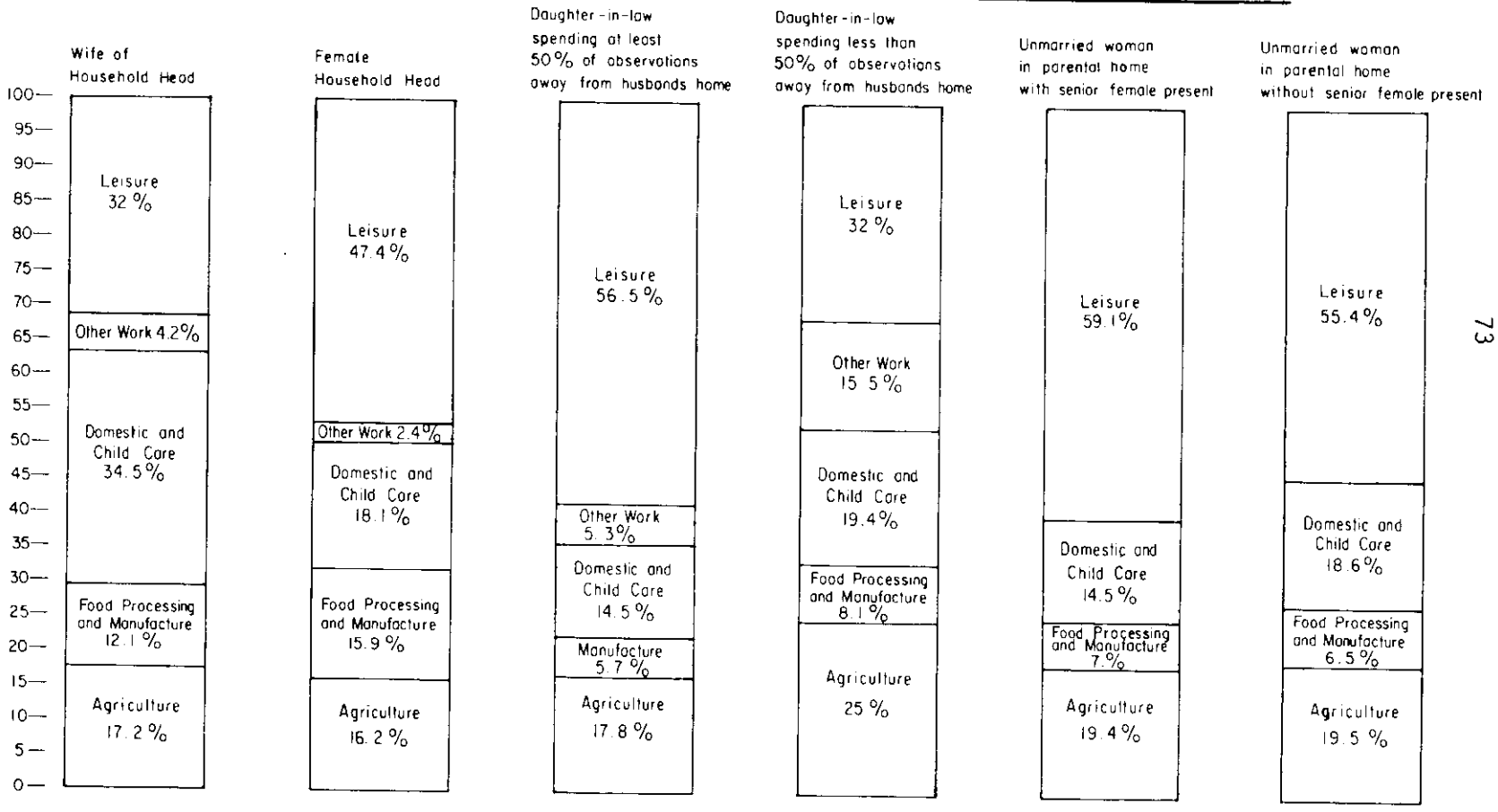
The need for additional labor may be as marked in an extended household as in a nuclear one. The time-allocation data shows an interesting situation in regard to daughters-in-law. In the initial months or even years after a couple is married, the new bride spends considerable time in her natal home. The reasons for this are discussed in detail in the next chapter on social organization. This creates a division of labor among female members of an extended household that contradicts the stereotype in Nepal of a daughter-in-law who works much harder in her husband's home than other female members. Figure 2.3 show the relative time spent by various women by relation to household head in various activities. A daughter-in-law might be expected to have a heavier work burden than the spouse of the male household head or than unmarried daughters, but in fact in Kham Magar society daughters-in-law work less than does the wife of a household head in terms of the total work burden. This can be attributed in part to the custom of extensive visiting in the natal home for an extended period after marriage.

In Figure 2.3, I have delineated two categories of daughters-in-law: those who spend more than 50% of the total observations visiting their natal home and those who spend most of their time in their husband's home. The second category of daughters-in-law have a higher rate of participation in all work activities than the first category of daughters-in-law. There is a greater similarity between the work patterns of daughters and of those daughters-in-law who visit their natal home frequently than between the work patterns of the two categories of daughters-in-law.

It is difficult to explain exactly which factors cause this difference in work patterns. The labor demands of each household (natal home and husband's home) may have an effect on the work patterns. These visiting daughters-in-law may perform more productive labor in their natal home for the initial years of marriage. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this custom of visiting the natal home may be used by unhappy brides to avoid an unpleasant situation in their husband's

Figure 2.3

PERCENTAGE OF IN-VILLAGE OBSERVATIONS IN PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES for FEMALES OVER 15 YEARS BY RELATIONSHIP TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD



household. Mothers-in-law may attempt to placate such daughters-in-law by giving them a smaller work burden, for fear they will separate from their husband's and return home permanently.

The constant absence of a daughter-in-law may mean that even extended households may need additional labor, either hired or exchange labor. Daughters-in-law who do not visit their natal homes frequently spent more time than other women in agricultural activities, while daughters-in-laws who visit their natal home often did not.

While economically a large family is desirable, in most households the family unit is small.* The average household size for the whole village is 5.2 members. There are a number of factors which limit household size. Because of the pattern of neolocal residence, older sons split off from the main household soon after marriage or the birth of their first child. Because of the practice of giving widows control of family property, young widows and their children usually maintain a separate residence from other members of the patriline. The main factor limiting family size is low fertility. The growth rate in Thabang, is low in comparison to the rest of Nepal and on Nag's scale.** This low level seems to be the result of a high child mortality rate, the practice of polygyny, and the extended absence of some males from the village during their wife's child bearing years.

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* An average of 5.2 members per household is quite low since there are joint families in the sample. There are many households in Thabang that have less than the average of 5.2.

** The 1971 census records a higher reproductive rate than that found among the Kham Magar, (The Analysis of the Population Statistics of Nepal, Central Bureau of Statistics National Planning Commission Secretariat, H.M.G.; Kathmandu (February 1977: 118). Nag (1968) uses four criteria to measure fertility in non-industrial societies. These are crude birth rate, total maternity ratio, child/woman ratio, and gross reproduction rate. On Nag's scale, Kham Magar rate low on all four criteria.

There are a number of ways that a household deals with the labor problem. One is the use of hired labor, as mentioned above. As an alternative to hiring labor, there are a number of traditional systems of labor exchange used in the village.

While households of all but the poorest strata use some hired labor in the busiest agricultural season, it is only the wealthier households that rely extensively upon such labor when there are not sufficient laborers in the household during most of the year. Almost all hired laborers are Kami and Damai. The Kami and Damai laborers are usually chosen from families who have traditionally provided blacksmithing, tailoring, or service as musicians to a particular household. Locally, their traditional relationship to their employers is known as jela. In addition to piecemeal payments for services and daily wages for labor, these families also receive an annual payment of one basket (about 12 pathi) of barley and one basket of corn. Except for ploughing, which is exclusively a male activity, most agricultural wage labor is undertaken by women. Female laborers are paid 3 rupees per day and given two meals and an afternoon snack. Their wages may be paid in grain as well, and this grain may also be given as a loan prior to work. If wages are paid in kind, payment is equal to two pathi (a little over 16 cups) of whatever grain is planted in the field in which the laborer works. With the present increasingly high price of grain, the grain earned is usually worth 1 to 3 rupees more than the wage, and unless a laborer is particularly in need of cash, she will ask to be paid in grain. Small children can be brought to the fields for such work and are customarily fed as well as the working mother.

Kami and Damai are also hired for construction work in the building of house or a got. For such labor, which requires carrying large quantities of stone, wood and mud, a higher wage is paid in cash, in addition to two meals. Those performing skilled labor receive 12 rupees per day in wages while unskilled laborers receive eight rupees per day plus food. These wages have increased over the last ten years. Formerly, a laborer received six rupees for unskilled work and 8 or 9 for skilled labor. The Kami and Damai women who have a traditional jela relationship to a particular household can also be asked to do some non-agricultural task in exchange for only meals on the days they work. These tasks include carrying manure and fetching wood.

For households who cannot afford more than occasional hired labor, there are a number of non-wage labor systems that range from permanent to temporary work groups and that may or may not be truly reciprocal. Most of these are informal and have no particular term of description. The most formal system is called palle, or paincha, and corresponds roughly to the parma exchange used elsewhere in Nepal. It is mainly used by poorer families who have no animals as a way of exchanging bullock labor for human labor. Female or male labor is an acceptable exchange. The laborers receive two meals and an afternoon snack. This gives extremely poor households access to bullocks and provides an outside source of grain to supplement their own meager supplies. As with hired laborers, children usually go with the mother if she goes to work in a household and are also provided meals. Women who work for a particular family may also be given old clothes.

As a system of exchange, paincha is limited to poorer households. It is considered somewhat degrading to work in direct exchange on someone else's fields, and if people can afford not to do so, or to work on a more informal basis, they will. Yet paincha is a step above wage labor in terms of status. Apparently because of the association of wage labor with low castes and the high correlation between economic status and landedness, wage labor is considered a sign of destitution and Kham Magars will seldom work for wages in the village unless they have no alternative. They are more likely to send a member of the household to seek temporary employment in India.

A more common form of non-wage labor is exchange of labor between members of work groups, between close relatives, or the borrowing of a junior member of a related household for a day or two. These are referred to variously as sojoze yen da ne (to work just because), sagai ne (to help out), or chuta mi lie yen ye ne (to give someone else work or assistance). Labor of this sort may or may not involve feeding the laborers. If the work is done in the village and is confined to one day, usually food is only provided in the evening. If the work requires staying over night, the household usually provides food. Exchange of labor between members of work groups or close relatives is not strictly accounted. It is assumed that a person will provide as much labor as she or he receives, but this does not have to occur within one season or in regard to one particular agricultural

TABLE 2.12

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

Economic Strata	Particulars \ Sector: / Sex:	Agricultural Labour		Service in Non-Organized Sector		Service in Organized Sector		All Types of Paid Employment	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
TOP	Total Person-Days Worked	0	10	0	0	740	0	740	10
	No. of People Employed	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	1
	% of Total Person-Days Employed	0	100.0	0	0	100.0	0	100.0	100.0
MIDDLE	Total Person-Days Worked	0	10	0	0	265	0	265	10
	No. of People Employed	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
	% of Total Person-Days Employed	0	100.0	0	0	100.0	0	100.0	100.0
BOTTOM	Total Person-Days Worked	58	78	50	0	740	0	848	78
	No. of People Employed	3	4	1	0	3	0	7	4
	% of Total Person-Days Employed	6.8	100.0	5.9	0	87.3	0	100.0	100.0
ALL STRATA	Total Person-Days Worked	58	98	50	0	1745	0	1853	98
	No. of People Employed	3	6	1	0	7	0	11	6
	% of Total Person-Days Employed	3.1	100.0	2.7	0	94.2	0	100.0	100.0

activity. Accounting works more by social pressure than by actual tallying. If a woman appears to take more labor than she gives, villagers will gossip about her, and she will try to work more in exchange. The very idea of strict accounting would place labor exchange in the same category as paincha, an undesirable situation for status reasons.

For certain agricultural tasks that must be completed in a definite period of time, women work together for different households. Weeding, reaping, grain storage, some planting, and harvesting and stripping of hemp or puwa are tasks that must be done in a short space of time. As the fields are differently affected by climate and altitude, households will be busy at different times. During the weeding of corn, for instance, different plots require weeding at different times. Weeding must be done three times between Jedh and the end of Sravon. Most households cannot do this work alone. Some laborers may be hired for wages, but work groups of neighbors or friends who usually spin and weave together during the slack seasons, will weed each other's plots on the days they are not busy in their own fields.

Women's work groups are important informal, social and economic institutions that form on the basis of kin ties or ties of women to those of neighboring households. The core of the group may be the wives of several brothers in one patriline together with a neighbor or two. Women who work in the same or adjacent courtyards during the winter months may form a group when they become close friends and their families may exchange labor or work together in busy agricultural seasons. A woman may belong to a few groups; one based on her ties as a neighbor; one based on her tie to a friend she had as a teenager; one based on her ties to her husband's household. There is some flexibility in the composition of groups. Some women will be busy when other women in the group decide to go somewhere and other women will ask women from another group with which they have ties to come instead. Strong friendships form in these groups that may last a long time and serve to solidify a group. For example, one such group was centered around two young girls in their twenties who were next-door neighbors and pooled their capital to sell liquor at fairs. During the weeding seasons these two friends, their mothers, and one girl's niece would weed each other's fields. Sometimes the two families ate alone, sometimes the particular owner of the field would provide food.

If strong friendships form between two women, their female children may extend these ties into a subsequent generation. Another work group that has been in existence for two generations consists of next-door neighbors and their children. One woman is the rejected wife in a polygynous marriage and the other a widow. These two women worked in the same courtyard regularly and were sometimes joined by the polygynously married woman's sauta (co-wife) who is the second wife now passed over for a third wife. Sometimes the husband's elder sister and her daughter-in-law also join these women. The daughter-in-law and the two daughters her age sometimes go along to work together when the older women are busy. Young married girls retain their membership in these groups for several years after marriage. They will divide their time between their own group and that of the husband's household. This behavior is expected and a mother-in-law will defer to the request of a daughter-in-law's work group to go and help on days she has no pressing need for the daughter-in-law's help.

These groups, even when not composed entirely of kin, tend to be women of a similar economic stratum. A poorer woman would be uncomfortable in a wealthy woman's group as she would not be able to feed these women as well in her own household on the days they helped in her fields. There is also a lot of informal exchange of food, liquor, and tobacco. For example, a woman whose family grows tobacco will give tobacco to women who are in her work group. Another woman who has dried greens for winter will send a small amount over to the house of another woman in her group. If a woman makes liquor she will sometimes give a bottle to a neighbor or relative in the group or ask one woman to come and sample the brew. These exchanges of food, like exchanges of labor, are not tallied. They tend to even out over time and women have a fairly clear idea of the balance, but there is no exact accounting. A woman would become angry, however, if she continually gave more than she received. For practical reasons, groups tend to consist only of women of similar economic standing.

Less permanent groups consist of a household and one or two female relatives who are asked to help from another household. A woman who decides one or two extra hands are needed, will go early in the morning to several related households and ask if a worker could be spared. For instance, one woman's paternal uncle's daughter lives in a

household with the daughter's maternal uncle. If the woman is short of labor, she goes to ask the daughter to come and help in the fields. She gives the girl meals as a rule, although if she decides to call her too late in the day to feed her a morning meal, she will simply provide her with a snack and the evening meal.

Younger women in the household also give a fair amount of unaccounted labor to other households. If a woman has no one to carry water and has an unexpected guest, she may ask a neighbor's child or a niece to fetch water and no reciprocity is expected. Women who live alone, such as widows with young children, will often ask for labor from their lineal or affinal relatives. They regularly request help for ploughing and repairing the house from the husband's brother or their sister's husband. Often a brother's daughter or husband's brother's daughter will be asked to do household chores. Informants told me this labor was customary and need not be directly reciprocated. Widows do provide some help to households in return at festivals or special occasions, but in general such labor is considered to be in a sense owed to a widow by the lineages.

Work groups thus provide a means of acquiring needed additional labor for agricultural activities. They also serve as important channels for the exchange of information and may be the basis for strong friendships between women outside the circle of household or kinship. They serve to seal social relationships between women that become important for entrepreneurship and non-economic activity.

Entrepreneurship

Liquor is made from a variety of grain, both household grain and purchased grain from the village or the bazaar. Entrepreneurs are the only people who buy grain in any quantity to make liquor. A few poor households buy grain to make liquor for festivals, but they are more apt to buy small quantities of liquor from entrepreneurs for birth ceremonies, jhankri healing sessions, or other small, ritual events. Other households usually make liquor only with surplus grain, which they can calculate down to the mana (approximately 2 cups) from season to season. The most common liquor grain is corn and barley, but entrepreneurs or wealthy families will also make wheat, millet or rice liquor. Millet or rice are the

best grains for fine, distilled wine (mudda)and this liquor is the most highly valued.

The process of making beer involves cooking grain in a large copper pot until it is slightly soft. A standard liquor pot (koi) holds 6 pathi of grain. The cooked grain is transferred to a bamboo mat to cool to slightly higher than room temperature and yeast cakes purchased from the bazaar are mixed in. The grain is transferred from the mat to a covered basket to ferment for a day or two and then stored in a clay pot stopped with corn husks. After four or five days, the grain is aged enough for a sweet beer and after seven to ten days it is ripe. The ancestor spirits are believed to oversee the fermentation process and women from another household cannot touch the grain once it leaves the copper pot, even if the yeast has not yet been added, but most women are not so strict. Good beer depends upon specific temperature at each stage of the process, the texture of the cooked grain, and the transfer of the grain from the basket at the proper moment. Women are very sensitive to slight degrees of temperature.

The ripe beer is prepared by adding water to a bamboo sieve full of fermented grain. Afterwards the water is squeezed through and added until the grain is the desired consistency. The more important the occasion, or the more honored the guest, the thicker the beer.

Distilled wine (mudda) is made from very ripe beer grains. Two copper pots are needed, one below to collect the liquor and one above for water. A wooden pot is placed inside the bottom pot on top of a mixture of water and grain. As the water heats up, the vapor of the liquor collects in the wooden pot and condenses. The best liquor requires two changes of water, but sometimes only one is made. While many women can make excellent beer, good mudda making is a fine art, perfected only by the older and wiser women of the village.

Women realize the greatest profits on liquor selling at fairs. Several women will pool their resources in cash and grain and make large quantities of nokkan for beer or distilled liquor. For a fair, the wine is thinner; instead of distilling the customary 16 bottles (1 bottle - 1 pint) of wine from one pot, the wily women add more water and make 24 bottles. Beer is also watered down at fairs. Since the number of rounds of liquor a teenage boy or a man can buy for his peers or

friends from neighboring villages determines his prestige, women can sell as much liquor as they can carry. The more clever women try to borrow capital for a fair from male fair-goers rather than other villagers. This gives the lender credit to buy liquor at the fair and if a girl is a successful flirt, she can cajole a young man who has lent her money into spending it all at her stand and more easily make a profit. The price is also higher at a fair than in the village. Thick beer sells for one rupee per bottle in the village; watered down beer at a fair costs three. Liquor that sells for 2-3 rupees in the village costs five rupees at a fair.

Entrepreneurs who sell liquor include young, unmarried girls, widows who cannot subsist without added income, divorced women who have returned to their maiti, women whose husbands are away in the army or working in India, and some older women who live with their daughters-in-law and have free time to make and sell liquor, since the daughters-in-law do most of the agricultural labor. Some of these women also raise pigs for sale in the village or at fairs. They feed the pigs with the left-over grain from the preparation of beer and wine. Women will also sell hemp and puwa cloth and some blankets, and if they are liquor-makers will use some of these profits to buy grain for beer. Young girls are usually given some grain to start a business by their families. The profits are theirs to use as capital and the initial input is never repaid to the family. Divorced sisters who live with a married sister will also be given some grain as starting capital. They are able to buy their own clothes as a result of these entrepreneurial activities and thus take some strain off the household.

Cases of women entrepreneurs are quite variable. It is useful to present a few examples of women in these activities.

> One example of a good entrepreneur is Maya Suri. She and her best friend, who is also nineteen, pool resources with her sister-in law, who is widowed with a small child. The three of them and sometimes a fourth, also a widow, pool their capital, borrowing about 300 or 400 rupees before a fair. They buy a small piglet a few months in advance, fatten it, and take the slaughtered meat to cook and sell at the fair as well. They spend the considerable money at the fair themselves,

as they eat meat and drink tea with fried breads or biscuits that are for sale at the fair. Still, with 500 rupees as capital they can make a profit of 300 or 400 rupees, a profit of 70 to 100 rupees per person, if they do not spend too much money at the fair. This profit then goes into capital for more grain to make liquor for sale at a smaller profit in the village. In three years of entrepreneurial activity, Maya Suri has amassed enough capital to go to the big bazaar on the road to Ghorahi to buy fabric and she even bought 1000 rupees worth of gold and a 400 rupee radio. Her sister-in-law manages to dress herself and her child in nice clothes and has bought about 800 rupees worth of gold. Both are continually in debt in small amounts ranging from 100-600 rupees but they are good credit risks. An angry creditor can always coerce them into borrowing from someone else to pay back the loan or try to collect immediately upon their return from the fair.

Danti is an older woman with two married sons, and ten grandchildren. She and her husband live with the youngest son and his wife and children. Danti is in her late fifties and no longer has the strength to spend long hours in agricultural labor. She sends her daughter-in-law to do most of the heavy field work, while she watches the children. Her husband and son tend the cattle in the pastures above the village, returning only once a month or so for supplies. Danti makes blankets as her family owns close to 100 head of sheep and goats. These are used in the household and sold to villagers and passing traders. She also makes liquor - she is reputed to be the best liquor maker in the village. Villagers who need an especially good bottle of mudda for a ritual or to give a guest go to her house first to see if she has any to sell. She makes liquor while she watches her grandchildren and does small household chores. Unlike the younger women she does not sell a lot to teenage boys. They usually go to the house of a young entrepreneur where they

can flirt and joke while they drink. She sells to other women and older men who come to chat about old times in the afternoons and evenings around the fire.

Puri and Shanti are sisters; they inherited their father's property after his death because there were no close male relatives or sons to inherit the estate. They sell liquor and blankets. They have no sheep of their own, so they buy wool from herders in the village. They have travelled a fair amount and once went to the bazaar of Tansen. During their travels they learned to grow a variety of herbs and onions and often serve their customers spicy vegetables and meat with their liquor. Thus they have a thriving business, and herders will often stop in the afternoons with their friends and drink a bottle or two of wine or beer while they discuss village affairs before returning to the got. Puri raises pigs which she slaughters periodically for sale or sells to the villagers. Since she and her sister always make liquor, they have a lot of fermented grain to feed the pigs. They are saving money to make a trip to Kathmandu one day with a male relative and his wives.

Entrepreneurship is an important means of support for a woman who chooses to divorce or separate from her husband. It enables young girls to establish their economic independence to some degree before marriage, and allows them some choice after marriage. If their marriage is unhappy, they know they can continue to be entrepreneurs in their natal home, if they return home, and be less of a burden on their family. If women choose to live separately, there is some means for them to supplement the output of any lineage property they control. Widows who have no sons can supplement a tijara with entrepreneurial activities and be more economically secure. Women can also go to live with a single female relative who lives alone and provide additional labor in that woman's household. Thus one woman's choice to remain single can create an option for another woman who has too little property or access to property otherwise to remain independent of her own or her husband's patriline.

Development Implications

Economically women are thus important producers and decision-makers, both living alone and as the wife and female household head in their husband's ghar. Table 2.13 shows the distribution of household income between the market and subsistence sector. It gives some indication of the extent of entrepreneurial activities, especially in the area of manufacturing which includes hemp and puwa production, and making of blankets. The figures do not include any personal income, such as income earned by unmarried girls or divorced women resident in their parental home, maiti. Only production and sales of household goods which contribute to consumption by all household members is included. The economic status of Kham Magar women raises important development considerations. Any attempt to improve the economy both affects women and entails women's participation in any changes made. In terms of agricultural improvements, women must play a central role. Since they are the active decision-makers regarding the allocation of resources and labor and selection of seeds, they must be equal participants with men in agricultural development programs. It is equally important to make women aware of new seeds and new techniques as it is to educate men to possible improvements. Agricultural training programs have until now been focused upon men. Some attempts have been made in Nepal to teach women about new seeds and techniques, but the main thrust has been directed to male farmers. If a local training program is instituted in Kham Magar villages, women as well as men should be recruited. Much of the information used by women comes from their work groups and similar information channels. Training women and convincing them of the value of certain techniques and new inputs would provide an effective means of disseminating information through these channels to reach a large number of households.

Much of the present stress on women and development has been on subsidiary economic activities such as cottage industry. This has potential, but agriculture should be equally stressed. It is here that technology also becomes an important issue. The present processing technology constrains women's other activities because it is unnecessarily time-consuming. Collecting drinking water is another time-consuming activity. Water brought from the river is unpolluted but the trip requires a half hour in Thabang and up to an hour in other Kham

TABLE 2.13

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION & SALES BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In rupees value)

Economic Strata	Production / Sector	Food Grains	Kitchen Garden	Animal Husbandry	Hunting & Gathering	Manufacturing	Food Products	Total
TOP	Subsistence	46392 (62.9) (90.3)	1414 (1.9) (100.0)	4600 (6.2) (49.4)	4572 (6.2) (85.7)	2068 (2.8) (75.9)	14756 (20.0) (99.9)	73802 (100.0) (86.9)
	Market	5000 (44.9) (9.7)	0	4720 (42.3) (50.6)	760 (6.8) (14.3)	656 (5.9) (24.1)	12 (0.1) (0.1)	11148 (100.0) (13.1)
	Total Production	51392 (60.5) (100.0)	1414 (1.7) (100.0)	9320 (11.0) (100.0)	5332 (6.3) (100.0)	2724 (3.2) (100.0)	14768 (17.4) (100.0)	84950 (100.0) (100.0)
MIDDLE	Subsistence	25290 (62.8) (90.8)	396 (1.0) (100.0)	2865 (7.1) (94.2)	4188 (10.4) (93.3)	1165 (2.9) (79.5)	6346 (15.8) (79.1)	40250 (100.0) (88.9)
	Market	2560 (51.1) (9.2)	0	175 (3.5) (5.9)	300 (6.0) (6.7)	300 (6.0) (20.5)	1672 (33.4) (20.9)	5007 (100.0) (11.1)
	Total Production	27850 (61.5) (100.0)	396 (0.9) (100.0)	3040 (6.7) (100.0)	4488 (9.9) (100.0)	1465 (3.2) (100.0)	8018 (17.7) (100.0)	45257 (100.0) (100.0)
BOTTOM	Subsistence	32210 (57.9) (97.9)	1458 (2.6) (100.0)	4920 (8.5) (82.1)	8728 (15.7) (95.6)	2317 (4.2) (77.3)	5964 (10.7) (96.4)	55597 (100.0) (94.8)
	Market	700 (22.8) (2.1)	0	1074 (34.9) (17.9)	400 (13.0) (4.4)	679 (22.1) (22.7)	220 (7.2) (3.6)	3073 (100.0) (5.2)
	Total Production	32910 (56.1) (100.0)	1458 (2.5) (100.0)	5994 (10.2) (100.0)	9128 (15.6) (100.0)	2996 (5.1) (100.0)	6184 (10.5) (100.0)	58670 (100.0) (100.0)
ALL STRATA	Subsistence	103892 (61.2) (92.6)	3268 (1.9) (100.0)	12385 (7.3) (67.5)	17488 (10.3) (92.3)	5550 (3.3) (77.2)	27066 (16.0) (93.4)	169649 (100.0) (89.8)
	Market	8260 (43.0) (7.4)	0	5969 (31.0) (32.5)	1460 (7.6) (7.7)	1635 (8.5) (22.8)	1904 (9.9) (6.6)	19228 (100.0) (10.2)
	Total Production	112152 (59.4) (100.0)	3268 (1.7) (100.0)	18354 (9.7) (100.0)	18948 (10.0) (100.0)	7185 (3.8) (100.0)	28970 (15.3) (100.0)	188877 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

Table 2.14

FEMALE PERSONAL INCOME

	Yes	No	Total
1. Do you have a personal source of income you can spend as you like?	27 (81.8)	6 (18.2)	33 (100.0)
2. If so, what is the source(s) of your income:			
A. Gift from maiti at marriage.	20 (74%)		
B. Income from cottage industry.	10 (37%)		
C. Trade.	1 (3.7%)		

Magar villages. If there were piped water in the village, this would be beneficial. Women could collect water more quickly and easily. Also washing clothes and bathing would be less time-consuming and could be done more often. In the winter, it is too cold to bathe in the river. Women wash themselves and their children only when they have the time to collect water from the river and heat it in the house. If water were piped to the village, women could wash themselves, their children, and their clothes more often and still have time for weaving, spinning, and agricultural tasks. Some women bring standing water from a kuwa (natural pool) where rain water collects, if they come home late from the fields and need water. This water is stagnant and therefore unsafe for drinking. While this is usually only used for washing dishes, it is also sometimes used as cooking and drinking water. This probably contributes to the high level of disease.

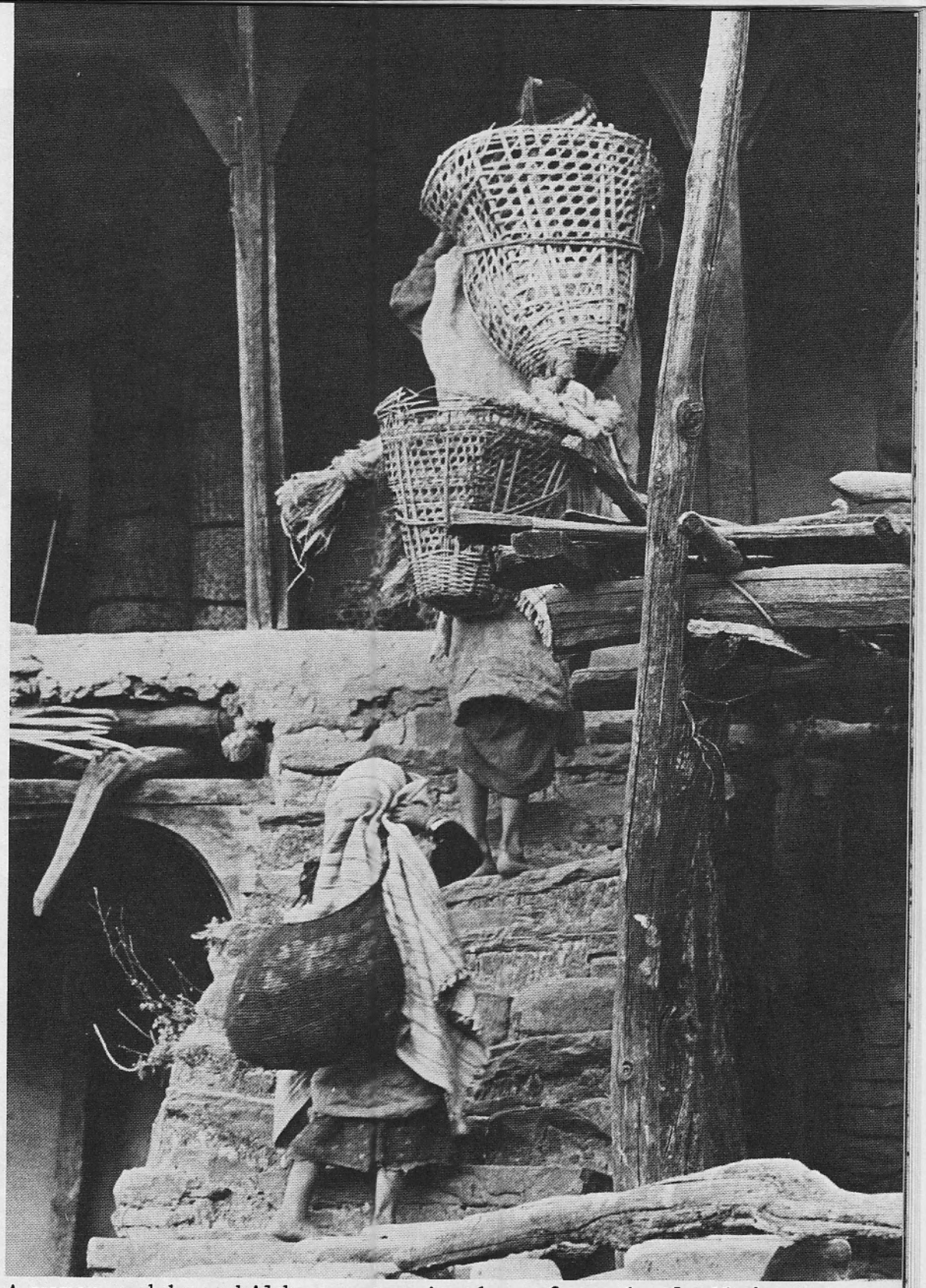
Another area of improvement would be the introduction of more vegetables to improve vitamins in the diet. Vegetables are time-consuming to grow as they require more care than grain. Women are the ones who would be responsible for the growing of such crops. Thus it is important both to convince them of the feasibility of growing vegetables and to give them time to grow them.

Women express interest in cottage industry training

programs. Two younger women were sent to Pokhara to learn to use an upright loom for weaving cotton cloth and to use knitting machines. One is now making cloth in the village, while the other has migrated to the Terai. The woman in the village can sell as much cloth as she can produce. Although a number of programs do exist outside the village, most village women know little about these. 79% of the women interviewed had no idea where such training could be obtained (the response was similar for all economic strata). 25% of the women interviewed said they had heard of the Nepal Women's Organization. If more women could be trained and their own local technology improved as well, cotton and local fiber products could be made. In addition, wool carding and spinning techniques could also be improved to make the local processing more efficient.

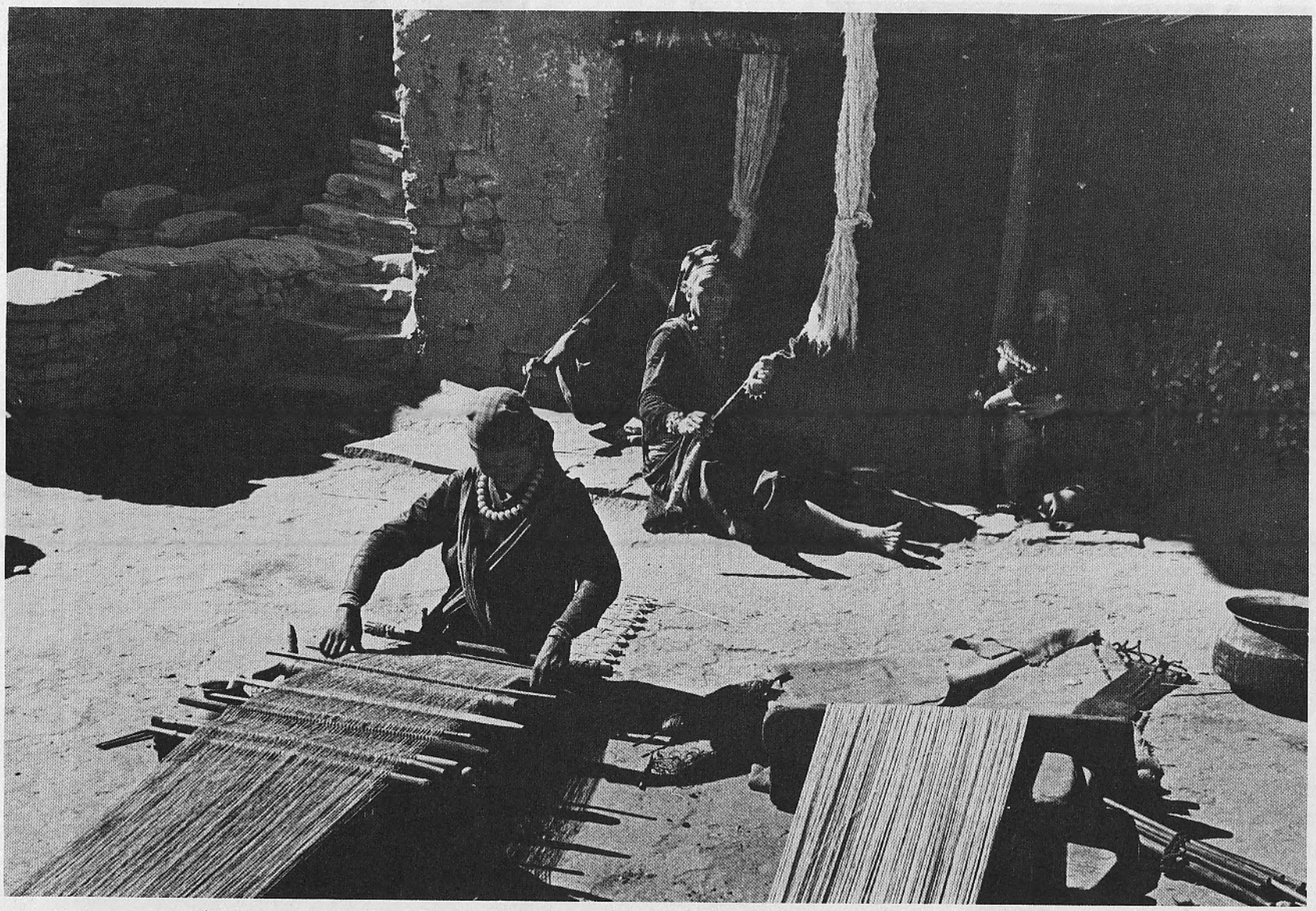
The district center has a training program in weaving but it is too far away and does not pay enough during the initial program to cover living expenses nor afterwards to give women sufficient incentive to attend the program. They want a program that is local, so they can continue to maintain the household. They also need flexible hours to weave whenever they have free time. If hours were flexible and weaving could be done in the village, there is sufficient demand for the goods produced to make such a project feasible. There are also a number of women who are single who could profit from this added income, as well as married women who are in a minimum subsistence level household. However, to give women time to increase cottage industry production, other technological improvements are needed. Otherwise they must either forfeit time needed for child care or rely upon child labor to complete other economic tasks. There is great potential in these areas, if the above considerations are taken into account in planning programs.

One problem which exists in any such improvements, agricultural and cottage-industry based, is the participation of women in extra-household decision-making. When male villagers were asked about improvements needed in the village, technology involving women was low on their list of priorities. Unless women have a voice in village decisions, their role in development plans will be minimal.



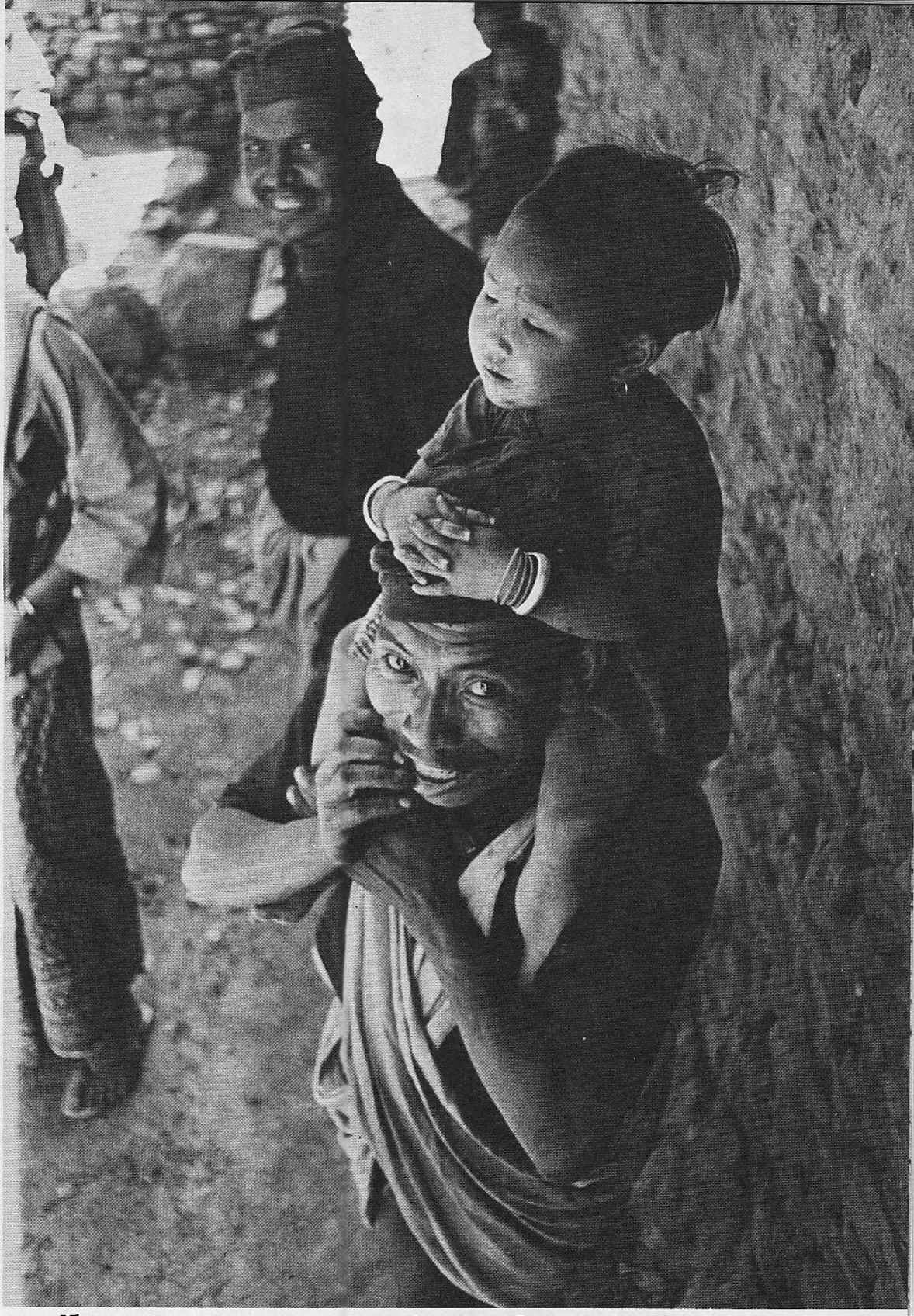
A woman and her children returning home from the family's got in the high pasture bringing a variety of products: raw wool, bundles of hemp fiber and puwa.

Preparing food is a major part of a woman's daily work burden.



A woman weaving hemp cloth on the left while two women spin puwa fiber in the background.

A woman weaving cotton cloth on a backstrap loom in her courtyard.



When women are away at work men often assume child care responsibilities.

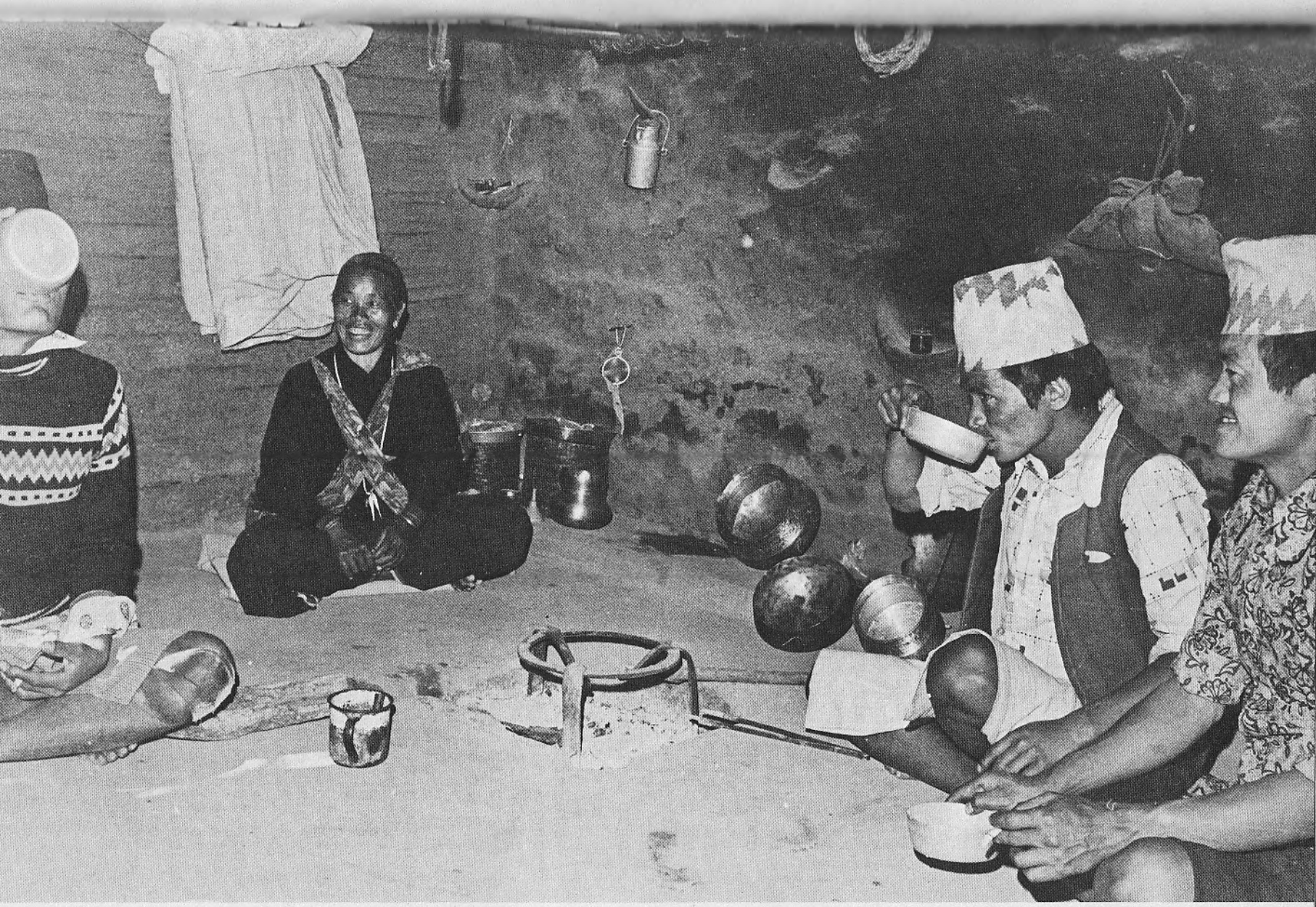
Children still too young to have to work in the household play on the edge of the village.

Girls learn to carry large loads at a young age.

An older woman taking a break from work over a pipe of home-grown tobacco.

A woman's work group going to get leaves for compost.

When the liquor runs out the flirting stops: young female entrepreneurs.



Young men gather in an older entrepreneur's house to exchange news over a kuri of beer.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

In the last chapter, an overview of the economic roles and activities of women was presented and areas of possible improvement outlined. Women's economic roles were shown to be contingent upon a number of social factors: household composition, patterns of authority, and a woman's marital status. To prepare realistic programs for women, it is necessary to understand fully these social factors and the effect of the existing social framework upon women's participation in Kham Magar society. The analysis of the social sphere and the structures of social interaction will be the subject of this chapter.

In the ensuing discussion, kinship will play a central role. For a Kham Magar, kinship is the main structure or set of criteria defining social interaction. While in a more complex or urbanized society, other structuring principles, such as political boundaries, state laws, or bureaucratic rules, have as much effect upon an individual's identity and relationships, in a small village-based community like that of the Kham Magar ties of kin are the most important principle structuring social organization and social interaction.

Where families and individuals are all interrelated by ties of kinship, these ties form a woman's main support system. Kinship structures a woman's relations with other members of her society by limiting whom she can marry, by determining the rights and obligations she has as a member of a particular kin group, and by defining categories of people she can turn to outside of her immediate household in times of stress. It also structures her economic relationships by defining whom she can ask for labor and from whom she can ask for money. Much of the success of programs that seek to broaden women's opportunities or improve their status economically, legally or politically depends upon taking account of the many dynamics of women's interaction in Kham Magar society.

There are then three aims to this chapter: first, to describe the principles of Kham Magar kinship which define the support system; second, to show how these principles affect a woman's marriage choices, her choice of residence, and her social position in the household; and third, to explore the flexible nature of the kinships system and the ways in which a woman can use this flexibility to her advantage.

Organizing Principles

There are two basic structuring principles of kinship, or two sets of criteria, for organizing Magar society: descent, or the ties of ancestry, which serve to identify individuals and determine their affiliation to a group, and alliance, or ties of marriage, which determine the rights and obligations individuals have vis-a-vis other kin groups to which they are related by ties of marriage.

For descent, the first structuring principle, the most general criterion, is the name or identity of Magar. The next criteria is membership in a thar,* or clan. There are five main Kham Magar thar: Buda, Rokha, Gharti, Pun, and Jhankti. Members of any one thar claim a common identity and a common origin, but in point of fact these thar are so old that members have no history of their exact origin and line of ancestry.

The thar is further subdivided into a unit, also called thar, which for the purpose of discussion will be called a sub-thar, which is a named group of all the males and their sisters who trace their affiliation to, or descent from, a common male ancestor. The sub-thar may be found only in a single community or it may have members in a number of communities, but locally, in a single area, it is the culturally defined unit for naming, rules of succession, and rules of marriage.

Like the rest of the Tibeto-Burman speaking peoples, the Magar trace their line of ancestry through the father, not the mother, or patrilineally. An individual at birth becomes a member of the sub-thar of his or her father and assumes the identifying name of the group. Such a system is called in anthropological terms patrilineal descent.

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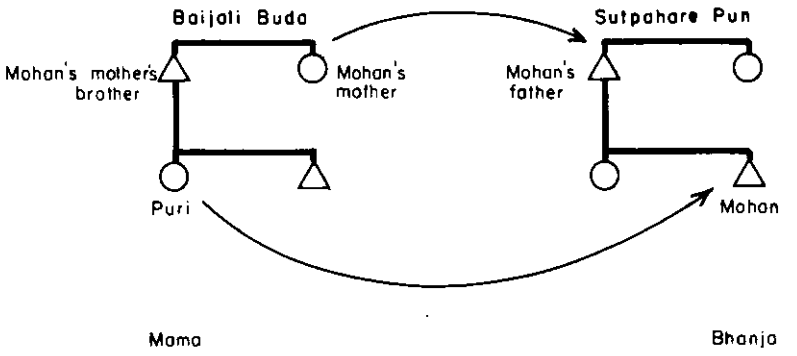
* The kinship terms in this section are those used by the Kham Magar. These coincide to a large degree with the Nepali kinship terms. Since a number of them are not completely coterminous, however, such as thar (that can mean variously clan, sub-clan, or exogamous group), it is important that the reader not assume that these terms or the relationship they imply is identical in both Kham and Nepali usage.

Where such alliances exist between two lineages, subsequent marriages should parallel this relationship of mama-bhanja, not reverse it. If a lineage were to take a bride from one to which they had given a bride, this would skew the existing ritual ties and create a confusing, impossible social situation. This is easier to follow with an example. In the chart below, the Baijali Buda have given a bride to the Sutpahare Pun. If in the succeeding generations, they take a bride, they would owe prestations and obligations to the Sutpahare Pun and be of a ritually lower rank, while still being owed obligations and, by the prior marriage contract, being of higher ritual rank. The Baijali Buda must instead take their brides from a third lineage, such as the Ronkami Buda. The Ronkami Buda would become bride-givers, or mama to the Baijali Buda and be accorded higher ritual rank than the Baijali Buda. The Sutpahare Pun cannot give brides to the Baijali Buda because of the status problem entailed, but can give brides to the Ronhami Buda.



Like descent, marriage also creates ties of relation, or alliance. Marriage is not a contract between individuals in this type of society, but a contract between groups. A marriage of two individuals establishes their kin ties and creates certain rights and obligations between members of the respective lineages. The two families of the bride and groom become related as bride-givers (mama) and bride-takers (bhanja). Such a system of marriage alliance hinges upon the concept of the woman as someone of great value as a childbearer and as a source of labor. In marriage, the groom's lineage receives a woman who will potentially provide them heirs and who will provide them labor throughout her lifetime.*

In some groups where such a concept exists, there is a brideprice, consisting of a set amount of goods and/or cash, given in exchange for the woman at, or soon after, marriage, which is in effect a payment of the bride's lineage or family for the loss of a woman. In Magar society, there is not a bridesprice. The loss of a woman to the groom's lineage is compensated instead by services and presentations given over a number of generations. At marriage there is a ritual inequality created between the two lineages, which expresses this new relationship. The bride-givers, are accorded a higher rank vis-a-vis the bride-takers (bhanja). This mama-bhanja relationship remains until a number of generations have passed. Until that time, unless another marriage is contracted that further extends that relationship, the bhanja owes certain presentations and labor contributions to the mama. Some of these are formal, such as labor given at a funeral, wedding or ancestor worship ceremony. Others are informal, such as labor given by the groom at busy agricultural seasons to his wife's household or help given by a visiting male of the bhanja by carrying grain to the storeroom or fixing a plow.

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* Some kinship theorists have viewed the woman as in some economic sense a commodity to be exchanged by the men of the various lineages. I do not feel this system of alliance can be viewed in economic terms, nor do the Magar see the marriage of their women in this way. The woman's value as childbearer and laborer is the basis of her high status in Magar society, and to reduce her value to economic terms is a distortion of the complexity of the situation, at least in the Magar case.

Marriage alliances are an important means of establishing ties between lineages. Marriages which follow prior patterns of marriage renew these ties and strengthen the relationship of rights and obligations between two groups. The preferred marriage contract in Magar society is with the mother's brother's daughter (sali). This is the most immediate marriage that can be contracted to strengthen an existing mama-bhanja relationship between lineages. In the diagram below, Puri is Mohan's mother's brother's daughter. In the preceding generation, Mohan's father married a woman of Puri's lineage, Mohan's mother, and his lineage is now bhanja to Puri's lineage. If Mohan marries Puri, who is his mother's brother's daughter, he further strengthens this tie in the succeeding generation. Magar kin terms define these basic ties of alliance. All women that Mohan can marry are his sali. Sali means both actual mother's brother's daughter and any marriageable woman. Mohan's closest sali is Puri, his mother's brother's daughter, but all women of his generation of any lineage which are mama to Mohan are his sali. Mohan is Puri's bena. Puri calls all men of any lineage which is bhanja to her own, bena, and any of these can become her husband.

Most marriages take place within the village unit. In Thabang 90% of the marriages are contracted within the village.* Since this has been true for numerous generations, over time all lineages have become related by ties of mama-bhanja. Each lineage has some lineages that are mama, from which it takes brides, and others which are bhanja, to which it gives brides.

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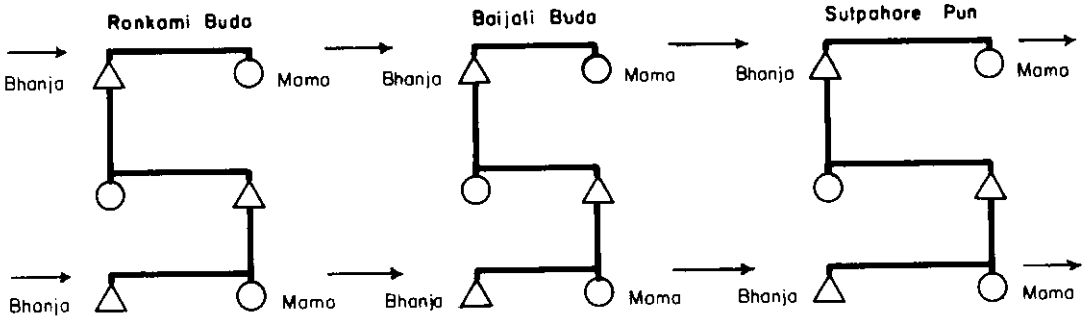
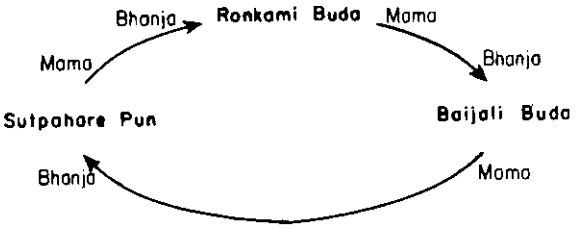
* This figure is derived from an analysis of marriages contracted by all ever-married members of the 35-household sample.





The implications of such a system of kinship for a woman in Magar society are twofold. First, a woman grows up in such a system with a pre-defined relationship to the other members of her society, either on the basis of descent or of marriage, alliance. From early childhood, she is taught the proper behavior that goes along with these various relationships. Secondly, she learns from a young age which males in her generation are possible marriage partners and which are not. The males whom she can marry are her bena. These are the only males of related lineages with whom flirting or sexual teasing is permitted. Some marriages are arranged for children by their parents, but increasingly marriages are made by choice. But even when marriages are not arranged most individuals still marry a villager who is bena or sali. The behavior appropriate to these kin is established at such a young age that it is only this category of individuals they can conceive of romantically. This is borne out by actual patterns of marriage. In Thabang, 49% of all marriages were between a man and his actual mother's brother's daughter, and another 25% were with a woman whom he called sali because of a more distant relationship.

These central ordering principles of descent and alliance do not form the only structure for contacts used by a woman. Friendships are also important for a woman. A woman's friendships may be with close kin or with distant kin and neighbors as well. The friendships a woman

develops change with her life-stage. The close friends a woman has as child are not the friendships she cultivates as an adult. Her friendships change also when she is married, widowed, or divorced. As a child, a girl has a circle of friends that includes siblings, children of her age in nearby households, and children of close relatives. When she becomes a teenager, she is busy with household chores and loses those old friendships. She develops a strong tie to one or two girls her age. She and these friends go to evening gatherings together, attend fairs and sell liquor together, and may even pool their capital to make liquor or raise a pig. After a woman is married, she becomes drawn into the work circle of her household. She sees her old friends occasionally but not often. The best friends outside of her immediate kin are usually members of her work group, an institution discussed in Chapter II. If she returns home to her maiti she will develop ties to other women her age in a similar marital situation. When she grows old and is widowed, she will spend her time with other widows of the village, or become close again to some of her teenage companions if they are still alive and now also widows. Her close daily contacts center mostly upon her kin group. Friendships are subsidiary and her chance to develop friendship is determined by her position vis-a-vis her kin group.

Friendships between women are an important aspect of social interaction that are relevant for development program consideration. Friendships may be the basis of a business partnership between female entrepreneurs in both traditional activities as well as new cottage industry programs. Friendships are also important elements in information channels. They are one way in which information about new opportunities can be exchanged outside of circles of kin. The importance of friendships ties will be discussed further in the section on the education of women in Chapter VI.

Marriage

Marriages are of three types. The most formal is an arranged marriage, wang she bibha. A marriage can be arranged by parents when the children are young or when they are in their middle teens. The marriage usually takes place when the boy is about twenty and the girl a few years younger. Such a marriage requires the consent of both the girl and the boy, even if it has been arranged when both parties are very small. At the time of arrangement, the boy's parents pay an arrangement fee of anywhere

from 100 to 500 rupees. If, for any reason, the arrangement is broken off, the girl's family is expected to return this fee. An arranged marriage was once a more common form of marriage; now only the more wealthy families can afford the ceremony. In the village, of first marriages contracted by couples now over 35 years of age, 65% of these marriages were arranged. Of the couples who are now 35 years old or younger, 31% of first marriages were arranged.

The second form of marriage is marriage by choice, rai shu bibha. Usually, rai shu implies a decision on the part of the couple to marry, independent of parental advice. There are a number of marriages that take place in this fashion; a boy and girl are attracted to one another and eventually decide to marry. This marriage can also, however, be the result of initial urging by parents. If a family cannot afford an arranged marriage, they may suggest that a certain girl or boy would make a good partner for their son or daughter and encourage a relationship if it begins to develop. Unlike an arranged marriage, this type involves only a minimal ceremony. It is expected that the groom's family will give a feast, but it can be small and include only fairly close kin and neighbors. The dowry given for this kind of marriage is usually smaller than that given at an arranged marriage, and thus less of a burden on the bride's family. If one of the partners in a marriage has been married before, a formal ceremony is precluded and even if there is a large exchange of prestations, the marriage will be considered a rai shu bibbha (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). In Table 3.1 the much higher precentage of arranged marriage for men than women is due to the fact that men divorce more often. A woman who marries a previously divorced man will seldom have an arranged marriage. Although it is her first marriage, it is the man's second marriage. Thus for her it is "Marriage I, by choice". This situation obscures the fact that a marriage of two previously unmarried people is often arranged and it accounts for the higher percentage in the tables of arranged marriages for males (32.8% as opposed to 26.8% for women).

The third and most informal type of marriage is marriage by elopement, udale ba ne. Although elopement may also be encouraged by parents who cannot afford even the minimal ceremony, usually such a marriage takes place without parental consent. The couple will arrange to meet in the night at a designated spot, usually in the house of a girl their age who acts as a go-between. The girl leaves her clothes at the go-between's house and the two slip off

Table 3.1

FORM OF MARRIAGE AND NUMBER OF MARRIAGES BY SEX

No. of Marriages \ Form of Marriage & Sex	Own Choice		Arranged		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	25	35	18	13	43	48
	(58.1)	(72.9)	(41.9)	(27.1)	(100.0)	(100.0)
2	13	6	2	2	15	8
	(86.7)	(75.0)	(13.3)	(25.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
	(31.7)	(14.6)	(10.0)	(13.3)	(24.6)	(14.3)
3	3	0	0	0	3	0
	(100.0)				(100.0)	
	(7.3)				(4.9)	
Total	41	41	20	15	61	56
	(67.2)	(73.2)	(32.8)	(26.8)	(100.0)	(100.0)
	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Table 3.2

FORM OF MARRIAGE BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(For All Marriages)

Economic Strata \ Form of Marriage / Sex	Own Choice		Arranged		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top	13 (65.0) (31.7)	9 (8.18) (21.9)	7 (35.0) (35.0)	2 (18.2) (13.3)	20 (100.0) (32.8)	11 (100.0) (19.7)
Middle	9 (90.0) (22.0)	10 (83.4) (24.4)	1 (10.0) (5.0)	2 (16.6) (13.3)	10 (100.0) (16.4)	12 (100.0) (21.4)
Bottom	19 (61.3) (46.3)	22 (66.6) (53.7)	12 (38.7) (60.0)	11 (33.4) (73.4)	31 (100.0) (50.8)	33 (100.0) (58.9)
All Strata	41 (67.2) (100.0)	41 (73.2) (100.0)	20 (32.8) (100.0)	15 (26.8) (100.0)	61 (100.0) (100.0)	56 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Table 3.3

FORM OF MARRIAGES BY SES

(For All Marriages)

Form of Marriage \ Sex	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Own Choice Without Parental Consent	16 (26.2)	17 (30.3)	33 (28.2)
Own Choice With Parental Consent	25 (41.0)	24 (42.9)	49 (41.9)
Arranged Without Own Consent	8 (13.1)	8 (14.3)	16 (13.7)
Arranged With Own Consent	12 (19.7)	7 (12.5)	19 (16.2)
Total	61 (100.0)	56 (100.0)	117 (100.0

Figures within parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.4

FORM OF MARRIAGE AND TYPE OF CEREMONY BY SEX

Form of Marriage / Type of Ceremony / Sex	Own Choice Without Parental Consent		Own Choice With Parental Consent		Arranged Without Own Consent		Arranged With Own Consent		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
No Ritual	9 (81.8) (56.2)	10 (83.3) (58.8)	2 (18.2) (8.0)	2 (16.7) (8.3)	0	0	0	0	11 (100.0) (18.0)	12 (100.0) (21.4)
Min. Ritual	7 (25.9) (43.8)	6 (23.1) (35.3)	20 (74.1) (80.0)	19 (73.1) (79.2)	0	0	0	1 (3.8) (14.3)	27 (100.0) (44.3)	26 (100.0) (46.4)
Max. Ritual	0	1 (5.6) (5.9)	3 (13.0) (12.0)	3 (16.7) (12.5)	8 (34.8) (100.0)	8 (44.4) (100.0)	12 (52.2) (100.0)	6 (33.3) (100.0)	23 (100.0) (100.0)	18 (100.0) (100.0)
Total	16 (26.2) (100.0)	17 (30.3) (100.0)	25 (41.0) (100.0)	24 (42.9) (100.0)	8 (13.1) (100.0)	8 (14.3) (100.0)	12 (19.7) (100.0)	7 (12.5) (100.0)	61 (100.0) (100.0)	56 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Table 3.5

LOSS OF RITUAL STATUS BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

Ritual Status / Sex / Economic Strata	Loss of Status		No Loss of Status		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top	0	0	12 (100.0) (27.9)	10 (100.0) (20.8)	12 (100.0) (27.9)	10 (100.0) (20.8)
Middle	0	0	8 (100.0) (18.6)	11 (100.0) (22.9)	8 (100.0) (18.6)	11 (100.0) (22.9)
Bottom	0	0	23 (100.0) (53.5)	27 (100.0) (56.3)	23 (100.0) (53.5)	27 (100.0) (56.3)
All Strata	0	0	43 (100.0) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)	43 (100.0) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Table 3.6

TYPE OF CEREMONY AND SEQUENCE OF MARRIAGE BY SEX

Sequence of Marriage \ Type of Ceremony / Sex	No Ritual		Minimum Ritual		Maximum Ritual		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
First Marriage	4 (9.3) (36.4)	9 (18.8) (75.0)	18 (41.9) (66.7)	23 (47.9) (88.5)	21 (48.8) (91.3)	16 (33.3) (88.9)	43 (100.0) (70.5)	48 (100.0) (85.7)
Second Marriage	6 (40.0) (54.5)	3 (37.5) (25.0)	7 (46.7) (25.9)	3 (37.5) (1.5)	2 (13.3) (8.7)	2 (25.0) (11.1)	15 (100.0) (24.6)	8 (100.0) (14.3)
Third Marriage	1 (33.3) (9.1)	0	2 (66.7) (7.4)	0	0	0	3 (100.0) (4.9)	0
Total	11 (18.0) (100.0)	12 (21.4) (100.0)	27 (44.3) (100.0)	26 (46.4) (100.0)	23 (37.7) (100.0)	18 (32.2) (100.0)	61 (100.0) (100.0)	56 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

at night to an empty cowherder's hut. When they return in the morning, they are considered 'married' and move into the boy's house. If the parents object strongly to the union, they may try to convince the couple to split up, but if the couple refuse they will be forced to recognize the marriage.

There was once a fourth form of marriage, marriage by capture, but this is no longer practised. This usually took place at a spring dance festival when the local youth, both male and female, spent a night away from the village merrymaking. A boy would send his friends to capture the girl and meet them at a prearranged spot. Since this type of marriage has not been practised for a long time, it was not possible to find out the details of how the girl was persuaded to accept the boy or the criteria for acceptance. The spring dance festival still has such connotations for the Magar, however, and often girls are teased about being captured on the day they go to spend a night away from home. It is not uncommon for one or two couples to elope either during or soon after this festival.

The age at marriage varies greatly, but usually marriage takes place when the girl is in her late teens or early twenties (see Table 3.7 on the age at first marriage). This is a relatively late age for a girl to marry in Nepal. The World Fertility Survey data on Nepal (1976) sets the mean age for marriage at 15. One third of all girls of age 15 were married, and three fifths of all 16 year old girls were married. Groups with a more Hinduised ideology attach great importance to virgin brides, and girls will be married close to puberty to avoid any chance of premarital liaisons. The Magar are not particularly concerned that a bride be a virgin, and other factors control the age at marriage. The prevalence of marriage by choice tends to raise the average marriage age. As McFarland (1976), points out in discussing the Gurung, when men or women choose a partner themselves, they tend to wait until their late teens before they find someone compatible.

The period after puberty and through the teens and early twenties until marriage is considered to be the most enjoyable stage of life. Teenage boys (dapa) and girls (dami) engage in considerable merrymaking and are free from the heavy social responsibility that begins with marriage. While some elopements occur when the couple are very young, given the choice, most teenagers try to prolong the period before marriage.

TABLE 3.7

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

Economic Strata \ Age at First Marriage / Sex	10-13 Years		14-16 Years		17-20 Years		21-25 Years		26 Years & Above		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top	1 (8.3) (50.0)	0	1 (8.3) (33.3)	1 (10.0) (14.3)	6 (50.0) (40.0)	7 (70.0) (25.9)	2 (16.7) (14.3)	1 (10.0) (10.0)	2 (16.7) (25.0)	1 (10.0) (20.0)	12 (100.0) (28.6)	10 (100.0) (20.4)
Middle	0	0	1 (14.3) (33.3)	2 (16.7) (28.6)	3 (8.28) (20.0)	5 (41.7) (18.5)	2 (28.6) (14.3)	3 (25.0) (30.0)	1 (14.3) (12.5)	2 (16.6) (40.0)	7 (100.0) (16.7)	12 (100.0) (24.5)
Bottom	1 (4.3) (50.0)	0	1 (4.4) (33.4)	4 (14.8) (57.1)	6 (26.1) (40.0)	15 (55.6) (55.6)	10 (43.5) (71.4)	6 (22.2) (60.0)	5 (21.7) (62.5)	2 (7.4) (40.0)	23 (100.0) (54.7)	27 (100.0) (55.1)
Total	2 (4.8) (100.0)	0	3 (7.1) (100.0)	7 (14.3) (100.0)	15 (35.7) (100.0)	27 (55.1) (100.0)	14 (33.3) (100.0)	10 (20.4) (100.0)	8 (19.1) (100.0)	5 (10.2) (100.0)	42 (100.0) (100.0)	49 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

The Magar have a custom of chutti basne,* similar to the Gurung rodi, in which teenagers gather informally in village houses in the evenings to sing and have fun. There are also a number of local fairs (ram) held outside the village that unmarried villagers attend. Unmarried women sell liquor and groups of dapa-dami sing and dance practically the entire night. After marriage husbands are generally too burdened with work to attend, and married women are expected to stay home.

Unless a girl is unhappy at home and sees marriage as a means of improving her situation, she will wait to marry. Young girls engage in a number of entrepreneurial activities before marriage, such as liquor selling, blanket weaving, and pig raising. The cash they earn is their own and not their family's. They are expected to contribute a portion to the house but most they keep to buy clothes and jewelry or save to take with them at marriage. Girls are therefore reluctant to marry before they have amassed enough savings to take with them at marriage or have travelled at least once to a distant bazaar with their friends for entertainment. Their earnings also increase their eligibility as marriage partners. Boys are more attracted to girls who have been able to buy clothes and jewelry, and the boy's parents prefer a daughter-in-law who has shown herself to be an enterprising and clever businesswoman.

Pressure for a couple to marry late also comes from the parents. The bride's parents should give a girl's dowry within a year of the wedding. The eldest usually takes a large portion of the wealth available. The youngest daughters will often marry at a late age as they must wait until the family has more wealth to give as a dowry or forego a dowry and elope. The groom's parents may delay a wedding because of the initial expense. Table 3.9 shows the amount of dowry given in recent marriages in the 35 household sample.

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* This custom is found throughout western Nepal among a variety of groups. Campbell (1977) notes this in the western area of Jumla.

Table 3.8

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Age Group	Sex \ Age at First Marriage	10-13 Years	14-16 Years	17-20 Years	21-25 Years	26 Years & Above	Total
10-19 Years	Male	0	1 (33.3)	2 (66.7)	0	0	3 (100.0)
	Female	0	1 (33.3)	2 (66.7)	0	0	3 (100.0)
20-29 Years	Male	0	0	5 (55.6)	3 (33.3)	1 (11.1)	9 (100.0)
	Female	0	2 (15.4)	7 (53.8)	4 (30.8)	0	13 (100.0)
30-39 Years	Male	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	2 (25.0)	3 (37.5)	1 (12.5)	8 (100.0)
	Female	0	1 (9.1)	3 (27.3)	4 (36.3)	3 (27.3)	11 (100.0)
40-49 Years	Male	1 (9.1)	0	5 (45.4)	3 (27.3)	2 (13.2)	11 (100.0)
	Female	0	2 (15.4)	9 (69.2)	1 (7.7)	1 (7.7)	13 (100.0)
50 Years & Above	Male	0	1 (9.1)	1 (9.1)	5 (45.4)	4 (36.4)	11 (100.0)
	Female	0	1 (11.1)	6 (66.7)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	9 (100.0)
Total	Male	2 (4.8)	3 (7.1)	15 (35.7)	14 (33.3)	8 (19.1)	42 (100.0)
	Female	0	7 (14.3)	27 (55.1)	10 (20.4)	5 (10.2)	49 (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 3.9

DOWRY WEALTH IN THE FORM OF JEWELRY OR COPPER AND BRASSWARE IN RUPEE VALUE (U.S. $ VALUE)

Category by Amount	Average Amount in Rupees (&$)	No. of Marriages in Category
more than Rs. 6000 (US $ 500)	Rs. 7176 (US $ 598)	6
more than Rs. 3600 (US $ 300)	Rs. 4461 (US $ 372)	7
more than Rs. 1200 (US $ 100)	Rs. 2288 (US $ 191)	11
less than Rs. 1200 (US $ 100)	Rs. 483 (US $ 40)	7
All marriages	Rs. 3449 (US $ 287)	31

Another factor stems from the customary residence patterns It is expected that a couple will live with and be supported by the youngest son in their old age. If there is more than one son, it is customary for the older son or sons to live in separate households, neolocally. Some time after the older sons marry, they set up their own household. Setting up a new household is the occasion for a division of the family estate. If there are younger siblings a boy's parents may wish to delay his marriage until they feel a property division will be economically feasible. Once this division occurs, the sons who have split off from their parent's estate no longer have rights to any additional property acquired by the younger son. If there are several sons, parents may encourage one to go into the army so that he can earn some cash to add to the estate before it is split. McFarland (1976) finds a similar situation in Gurung villages. Different family conditions may, however, introduce other factors. For instance, if a family has no daughters, they may need a daughter-in-law to help with agricultural tasks and therefore encourage a son to marry sooner rather than later.

In general, marriage is a relatively untraumatic transition for a Magar woman for a number of reasons. Most women marry within their natal village. They are not sent to a strange village in a new household where they must

TABLE 3.10

MARITAL STATUS BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(15 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Economic Strata / Sex / Marital Status	Top		Middle		Bottom		All Strata	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Presently in Marriage 1	7 (24.1) (58.4)	9 (25.0) (90.0)	6 (20.7) (75.0)	8 (22.2) (66.7)	16 (55.2) (69.6)	19 (52.8) (70.4)	29 (100.0) (57.4)	36 (100.0) (73.5)
Presently in Marriage 2	1 (20.0) (8.3)	0	2 (40.0) (25.0)	0	2 (40.0) (8.7)	1 (100.0) (3.7)	5 (100.0) (11.6)	1 (100.0) (2.0)
Presently in Marriage 3	1 (100.0) (8.3)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (100.0) (2.3)	0
Presently in Marriage 4 or more	2 (100.0) (16.7)	0	0	0	0	0	2 (100.0) (4.7)	0
Widow Not Remarried	1 (16.7) (8.3)	0	0	3 (37.5) (25.0)	5 (8.3) (21.7)	5 (62.5) (18.5)	6 (100.0) (14.0)	8 (100.0) (16.3)
Divorced or Informal Separation	0	1 (25.0) (10.0)	0	1 (25.0) (8.3)	0	2 (50.0) (7.4)	0	4 (100.0) (8.2)
Total	12 (27.9) (100.0)	10 (20.4) (100.0)	8 (18.6) (100.0)	12 (24.5) (100.0)	23 (53.5) (100.0)	27 (55.1) (100.0)	43 (100.0) (100.0)	49 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 3.11

MARITAL STATUS BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Marital Status \ Age Group	5-9 Years		10-14 Years		15-19 Years		20-34 Years		35-49 Years		50 Years & Above		Total	
Sex	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Never Married	11 (32.4) (100.0)	8 (24.2) (100.0)	8 (23.5) (100.0)	13 (39.4) (100.0)	12 (35.3) (80.0)	6 (18.2) (66.7)	3 (8.8) (20.0)	6 (18.2) (23.1)	0	0	0	0	34 (100.0) (44.1)	33 (100.0) (40.5)
Presently in Marriage 1	0	0	0	0	3 (10.4) (20.0)	3 (8.3) (33.3)	11 (37.9) (73.3)	16 (44.5) (61.5)	8 (27.6) (47.0)	14 (38.9) (82.3)	7 (24.1) (63.6)	3 (8.3) (33.3)	29 (100.0) (37.7)	36 (100.0) (43.9)
Presently in Marriage 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (20.0) (6.7)	1 (100.0) (3.8)	4 (80.0) (23.5)	0	0	0	5 (100.0) (6.5)	1 (100.0) (1.2)
Presently in Marriage 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (100.0) (5.9)	0	0	0	1 (100.0) (1.3)	0
Presently in Marriage 4 or More	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 (100.0) (11.8)	0	0	0	2 (100.0) (2.6)	0
Widowed - Not Remarried	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (12.5) (3.9)	2 (33.3) (11.8)	2 (25.0) (11.8)	4 (66.7) (36.4)	5 (62.5) (55.6)	6 (100.0) (7.8)	8 (100.0) (9.8)
Divorced or Informal Separation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 (50.0) (7.7)	0	1 (25.0) (5.9)	0	1 (25.0) (11.1)	0	4 (100.0) (4.9)
Total	11 (14.3) (100.0)	8 (9.8) (100.0)	8 (10.4) (100.0)	13 (15.8) (100.0)	15 (19.5) (100.0)	9 (11.0) (100.0)	15 (19.5) (100.0)	26 (31.7) (100.0)	17 (22.0) (100.0)	17 (20.7) (100.0)	11 (14.3) (100.0)	9 (11.0) (100.0)	77 (100.0) (100.0)	82 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Table 3.12

TYPE OF PRESENT MARRIAGE BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(15 Years and Above)

Type of Marriage \ Economic Strata / Sex	Top		Middle		Bottom		All Strata	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Monogamous	8 (25.0) (72.7)	6 (19.4) (66.7)	7 (21.9) (100.0)	8 (25.8) (100.0)	17 (53.1) (94.4)	17 (54.8) (89.5)	32 (100.0) (88.9)	31 (100.0) (86.1)
Polygynous	3 (75.0) (27.3)	3 (60.0) (33.3)	0	0	1 (25.0) (5.6)	2 (40.0) (10.5)	4 (100.0) (11.1)	5 (100.0) (13.9)
Total	11 (30.6) (100.0)	9 (25.0) (100.0)	7 (19.4) (100.0)	8 (22.2) (100.0)	18 (50.0) (100.0)	19 (52.8) (100.0)	36 (100.0) (100.0)	36 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 3.13

NUMBER OF MARITAL UNIONS BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

Economic Strata \ Number of Marital Unions	1		2		3		4 or More		Total	
Sex	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top	7 (58.3) (24.1)	9 (90.0) (22.0)	2 (16.7) (18.2)	1 (10.0) (14.3)	1 (8.3) (100.0)	0	2 (16.7) (100.0)	0	12 (100.0) (27.9)	10 (100.0) (20.8)
Middle	6 (75.0) (20.7)	9 (81.8) (22.0)	2 (25.0) (18.2)	2 (18.2) (28.6)	0	0	0	0	8 (100.0) (18.6)	11 (100.0) (22.9)
Bottom	16 (69.6) (55.2)	23 (85.2) (56.0)	7 (30.4) (63.6)	4 (14.8) (57.1)	0	0	0	0	23 (100.0) (53.5)	27 (100.0) (56.3)
All Strata	29 (67.4) (100.0)	41 (85.4) (100.0)	11 (25.6) (100.0)	7 (14.6) (100.0)	1 (2.3) (100.0)	0	2 (4.7) (100.0)	0	43 (100.0) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

develop completely new friendships and kin ties. While they become more and more oriented to their husband's household and kin groups, they retain close ties with their own family and friends. They continue to receive emotional support from their kin and are geographically close enough to their natal home (maiti) to make frequent visits for advice, or to complain if they are unhappy.

Marriage is not a well-defined event that is complete with the performance of the wedding ceremony, but is a gradual transition that may last several years. Because there is a tradition of bride-groom service, whereby a new husband is expected to work for an indefinite period in his in-law's house, the couple may live matrilocally, in the woman's maiti, for an indefinite period. Residence can be a combination of matri-and patrilocal. The wife may go alone to her maiti and only cohabit with her husband in his house, her ghar, or they may stay together most of the time. Usually the birth of the first child cements the marriage tie, and the couple then set up their own household or live permanently with the husband's parents. The child's birth is the occasion of the last marriage rite, in which the couple take the child to the maiti for a feast. They bring a gift of food and liquor and the child is given silver ankle bracelets or a brass plate and bowl by the wife's parents.

Until a child is born, the extent to which and how soon a woman is incorporated into her husband's household depends upon her own parents, her happiness in her marriage, and her relations with her new in-laws. If her parents are displeased with her marriage, or need her labor at home, they may discourage her from spending much time in her ghar initially. If she is unhappy, she will stay in her maiti until the husband can convince her to return to his house. In Magar households a mother-in-law is likely to treat her daughter-in-law leniently. There is some danger the new wife will terminate the marriage if she feels unfairly treated in her ghar. One of the most common reasons for divorce given by divorced women was failure to get along with her husband's mother.

Table 3.14 shows the time spent in the natal home (maiti) by age group. 85.7% of the females in the 15-24 age group spent more than 90 days a year in their natal home. Females in the 25-44 age group spent much less time; only 45.8% of these women spent 90 days or more, and only 11.8% of the 45 and above age group spent more

TABLE 3.14

TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY AGE GROUP

(15 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Age Group \ Time Spent	0 Days	1-14 Days	15-30 Days	31-60 Days	61-90 Days	91 Days & Above	Total
15-24 Years	0	0	1 (14.3) (9.1)	0	0	6 (85.7) (31.6)	7 (100.0) (14.6)
25-44 Years	1 (4.2) (25.0)	2 (8.3) (40.0)	7 (29.2) (63.6)	3 (12.5) (37.5)	0	11 (45.8) (57.9)	24 (100.0) (50.0)
45 and Above Years	3 (17.6) (75.0)	3 (17.6) (60.0)	3 (17.7) (27.3)	5 (29.4) (62.5)	1 (5.9) (100.0)	2 (11.8) (10.5)	17 (100.0) (35.4)
Total	4 (8.3) (100.0)	5 (10.4) (100.0)	11 (22.9) (100.0)	8 (16.7) (100.0)	1 (2.1) (100.0)	19 (39.6) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

than 90 days in their natal home. There is thus an inverse ratio between the time spent in the natal home and the number of years since marriage. This has an interesting effect upon work patterns of young daughters-in-law . Table 2.15 in Chapter II on time allocation shows that less time is spent in productive activities by daughters-in-law than by the wife of the household head.

Structurally, cross-cousin marriage helps to give a woman a less formal and less conflict-laden relationship to her inlaws. The parents of a woman's bena are her phuphu (father's sister) and bobo (father's sister's husband). After marriage, a woman calls her in-laws by these terms rather than an equivalent of the Nepali terms for in-laws, sasu - sasura. A woman's relationship with her phuphu and bobo before marriage is characterized by closeness and leniency. These relatives tend to pamper her as a child. Children often said they would ask these relatives for something their parents would not give them. If a woman marries the son of her actual phuphu-bobo, the closeness in this relationship remains. Even when her husband's parents are not actually her phuphu-bobo, a degree of informality still may be established. She will be subordinate in the household, but is generally not given an undue burden of tasks and may speak out if she feels something is amiss.

The conflict that sometimes arises is one that hinges upon independence. A new wife does not have the position of authority she later has in her own household, and if she dislikes the decisions her mother-in-law makes, she may prefer to return to her maiti. Often, however, the new wife develops a good working relationship with her mother-in-law.

It is as common in Magar society for a conflict to arise between father-in-law and daughter-in-law as between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-laws. Such a conflict sometimes arises when the couple decide to set up their own household. As noted above, when a couple set up a separate residence, it is the occasion for a splitting of the family estate between sons. The youngest son remains in his parent's home and supports them in their old age, while the other sons take an equal portion of the estate and split off. While splitting is the accepted pattern (see Table 3.18 on frequencies of nuclear and extended households in the sample), the decision when to split is not always free of conflict. If the youngest son is still single and the

TABLE 3.15

TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(15 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Time Spent / Economic Strata	0 Days	1-14 Days	15-30 Days	31-60 Days	61-90 Days	91 Days & Above	Total
Top	0	1 (10.0) (20.0)	2 (20.0) (18.2)	2 (20.0) (25.0)	1 (10.0) (100.0)	4 (40.0) (21.2)	0 (100.0) (20.9)
Middle	2 (18.2) (50.0)	2 (18.2) (40.0)	1 (9.1) (9.1)	2 (18.2) (25.0)	0	4 (36.3) (21.1)	11 (100.0) (22.9)
Bottom	2 (7.4) (50.0)	2 (7.4) (40.0)	8 (29.6) (72.7)	4 (14.8) (50.0)	0	11 (40.8) (57.9)	27 (100.0) (56.2)
All Strata	4 (8.3) (100.0)	5 (10.4) (100.0)	11 (22.9) (100.0)	8 (16.7) (100.0)	1 (2.1) (100.0)	19 (39.6) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 3.16

DISTANCE TO NATAL HOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA

Distance \ Economic Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Same Village	9 (21.4) (90.0)	9 (21.4) (8.18)	24 (57.2) (88.9)	42 (100.0) (87.5)
0 - 6 Hrs.	1 (20.0) (10.0)	2 (40.0) (18.2)	2 (40.0) (7.4)	5 (100.0) (10.5)
6 Hrs. - 1 Day	0	0	1 (100.0) (3.7)	1 (100.0) (2.1)
Total	10 (20.8) (100.0)	11 (22.9) (100.0)	27 (56.3) (100.0)	48 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

Such antagonism generally evaporates after the couple split off and when the daughter-in-law has children. This gives her status as the provider of heirs, and her father-in-law views her more positively.

Divorce

The period before a woman is completely incorporated into her husband's household is to some extent a trial period. If the couple are unhappy with one another, or if one partner falls in love with someone else, or if the woman fights with her mother-in-law, they may terminate the marriage. Usually a divorce or separation occurs only if no children have yet been born to the couple. Especially if they have a son, a couple will remain together. In the project sample, 14.3% of the presently married women and 29.5% of the presently married men had contracted more than one marriage. Table 3.17 shows that 22.5% of the ever married women and 30.2% of the ever married men had contracted more than one marriage. Of these, 20.4% of the women and 20.9% of the men had divorced at least once. The percentage of divorced men is low because of the practice of polygyny. A man will often take another wife rather than divorce. There is no publicly recognized separation unless the first wife chooses to initiate it.

TABLE 3.17

MARITAL STATUS OF EVER MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN

Marital Status	Females 35	N=49 35	Total	Males 35	N=43 35	Total
Ever divorced	6	4	10(20.4)	8	1	9(20.9)
Ever married more than once	7	4	11(22.5)	9	4	13(30.2)
Contracted only one marriage	19	19	38(77.5)	19	11	30(60.8)
Ever widowed	7	1	8(16.3)	6	0	6(13.9)
Polygynously married	4	4	8(15.3)	3	1	4(9.3)
Total	26	23	49(100.0)	28	15	43(100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 3.18

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE POPULATION BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC STRATA

Economic Strata \ Family Structure	Nuclear	Extended	Other	Total
Top	15 (34.9) (17.6)	25 (58.1) (39.7)	3 (7.0) (9.1)	43 (100.0) (23.8)
Middle	21 (50.0) (24.7)	12 (28.6) (19.0)	9 (21.4) (27.3)	42 (100.0) (23.2)
Bottom	49 (51.0) (57.7)	26 (27.1) (41.3)	21 (21.9) (63.6)	96 (100.0) (53.0)
All Strata	85 (47.0) (100.0)	63 (34.8) (100.0)	33 (18.2) (100.0)	181 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

elder sons wife is needed to help in the household, the parents may pressure the couple to remain in the joint family for a while.

If a conflict of interests arises, the father-in-law may focus his hostility on his son's wife rather than on his son. The son's wife usually desires a split which will make her husband independent. During the period after marriage, when the couple live in the wife's maiti, the son begins to feel more independent of his own family, and also to want his own residence.* Unless the conflict over whether or not to split is clearly one limited to father and son, much of the antagonism is centered on the daughter-in-law. The father-in-law views her as the person most likely to benefit from a division of the estate, as she will become mistress of her own house and have control over the allocation of household resources, household decisions, and greater influence over her husband. The father usually refuses to believe his son wants to be independent and assumes the son is requesting a split to placate his wife. While this is usually part of the reason, it is seldom the only one. The mother-in-law will often try to cajole the daughter-in-law into remaining in the house. The son will strengthen his case by stressing his duty to make his wife happy, thereby exacerbating the conflict of father-in-law and daughter-in-law.

Bitter arguments may arise in such cases. One father-in-law who was discussing a proposed split, focused his anger on the daughter-in-law. He said she had no concern for his wife's need for extra labor and decried daughters-in-law in general quite vehemently. He felt his son was completely dominated by his wife and bemoaned the rift between himself and his son, which he saw as exclusively created by the daughter-in-law. From other conversations it seemed the son was also desirous of a split.

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* Suzanne Wilson (1975) has an interesting article on this type of post-marriage residence pattern. She points out this change in the son's attitudes as he begins to spend more time away from his parents and becomes oriented to his wife's family as well as to his own.

In the event of a separation, the lineage elders or the village council members (pancha) will decide upon the proper compensation fee. The customary fee is 1000 rupees for a woman initiating the separation and 500 rupees for a man. The difference in the fee is explained by the greater expense of a wedding for the groom's family. The National Code now establishes the fee at 1700 rupees for either party, depending upon which one initiates the divorce. One woman did take her husband to court when he ran off with another woman and won a settlement of 1700 rupees. No other cases have appeared in court so far and the customary fee remains the standard one.

If a marriage was by elopement, unless some prestations have been exchanged by the two families of the couple, separation requires no compensation. The couple merely agrees to separate and the woman returns to her maiti. If the marriage is by choice, separation may involve a fee or it may be treated as lightly as in the case of elopement. Formal procedures are only required if an aggrieved party brings the matter to the village council or lineage elders. A formal divorce may not be declared for many months after a girl returns to her maiti. Sometimes no steps will be taken until the girl decides to marry someone else or until the man takes another wife.

Divorce does not entail a loss of ritual status for either party and thus a woman's chances of remarriage are quite high. Unless a woman is divorced when relatively old or unless her parents pressure her to remain at home, she will probably remarry. Widow remarriage is also treated quite lightly. If a widow has children, especially male ones, who are eligible to inherit property, she will probably remain single and receive support from her husband's lineage. If she is young and has no children she will remarry. While her chances of remarriage are somewhat less than those of a never married woman, if her family can afford to give her a good dowry, she will have no trouble finding a suitable husband.

The maiti does not always provide unconditional support for a woman who is unhappy in her ghar. While a woman's return, if she is widowed or if her marriage fails, presents few problems if her parents are alive, if they are not she may find the situation difficult. Brothers and sisters are quite close in Magar society. Their children are possible marriage partners and they keep close contact throughout their lives. If a woman is widowed, and lives alone with

TABLE 3.19

REASONS FOR TERMINATING MARRIAGE BY SFOUENCE OF MARRIAGE AND SEX

Reasons for Terminating Marriage / Sequence of Marriage / Sex	First Marriage		Second Marriage		Third Marriage		All Marriages	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Not Terminated	24 (55.8)	36 (75.0)	13 (86.7)	2 (25.0)	2 (66.7)	0	39 (63.9)	38 (67.9)
Death of Spouse	9 (20.9)	8 (16.7)	0	3 (37.5)	0	0	9 (14.8)	11 (19.6)
Desertion by Spouse	0	0	0	1 (12.5)	0	0	0	1 (1.8)
Desertion by Self	2 (4.7)	2 (4.1)	1 (6.7)	1 (12.5)	0	0	3 (4.9)	3 (5.3)
Elopement by Self	1 (2.3)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (1.6)	0
Female Infertility	1 (2.3)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (2.3)	0
Mutual Consent	6 (14.6)	1 (2.1)	0	1 (12.5)	0	0	6 (9.8)	2 (3.6)
Husband Brought Another Wife	0	1 (2.1)	0	0	1 (33.3)	0	1 (1.7)	1 (1.8)
Intra Familial Disputes	0	0	1 (6.6)	0	0	0	1 (1.7)	0
Total	43 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	15 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	0	61 (100.0)	56 (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate column percentages.

her small children, her brother may plow her fields or help her with other tasks without requiring any repayment. But when a woman returns home after her parents' death, the relationship between brother and sister may be marred for two reasons. One, and the most important, is that the brother's wife may resent her presence and stir up a conflict that causes her to fight with her brother. The other is more subtle and on a structural level; she is not fulfilling her potential to her brother's lineage to create or strengthen an alliance by marriage through her own marriage.

The dynamics of a Magar woman's return to her maiti are thus quite different from those for a woman of the dominant Nepalese Brahman-Chetri castes. It is interesting to compare the Magar situation to that among the Brahmans and Chetris. According to Bennett, in the Brahman and Chetri context a woman is believed to be dangerous ritually unless her sexuality is controlled. Her sexuality is controlled by marriage and maintained by her faithfulness to her husband. When a woman returns to her maiti on a visit her sexuality is still controlled by her husband. If she is divorced or widowed, however, her sexuality is no longer 'controlled' and her position becomes ambiguous in her natal family. By standards of ritual purity, her fertility cannot be used in a legitimate way again, as remarriage entails a loss of status. If she is childless, this creates a resentment towards her as her maiti must support her even though she has not fulfilled her role as childbearer (Bennett 1978).

A Magar woman's return creates ideologically based difficulties of a different order. Symbolically there is no problem of controlling the returning woman's sexuality as the Magar do not believe a woman to be ritually dangerous. The problem that arises is structural and centers around her fertility on which is based, through her marriage, a social alliance of fundamental importance, that between her lineage and the in-law lineage.

For a Brahman-Chetri woman, the maiti is traditionally a place of love and affection after she has married out. She must work hard in her husband's home but in her maiti during visits she is usually given simple tasks to do and allowed to relax during her stay. If a Brahman woman returns permanently to her maiti, she still exercises the right to choose tasks and to rest if she wishes. The

brothers' wives on the other hand, work as hard as the daughter would in her ghar. They resent her pampered position in the maiti, especially the most junior wives who must work the hardest. When her parents die, the question of her support becomes problematic. The brothers and their wives are reluctant to give her support for their households. If there is a lot of conflict between a brother's wife and the daughter, the brothers are also reluctant to allow her to live permanently in their household.

As in the Brahman-Chetri situation, a Magar woman's return is conflict-laden because of the brother's wives, but for a different reason. Resentment on the part of the brother's wives, arises not because the woman is perceived as working less hard in the maiti, but because the brother's wife resents her decision-making power in the household. As an unmarried daughter,a Magar woman assumes a full work load and after marriage she spends a lot of time in her maiti, but on such extended visits does as much work as other members of the households. When she returns permanently the brother's wife resents the sister's desire to share in the decision-making and allocation of household resources. A power conflict may arise; the sister feels her independence is constrained by her sister-in-law and competes for her brother's attention. As long as her parents are alive, the conflict is diffused by her parents' position of authority and their affection for her. Once they are dead, the sister is in a problematic situation.

Some Magar women do return to live in their maiti when their parents are dead, but often there will be such pressure on them to remarry if still young, and such resentment towards them if they are old, that they will move out and go to live with a married sister or a widowed female relative who can use their labor. Often a brother is unaware of this female-based conflict, and brothers sometimes bemoan the apparent lack of affection shown by a sister who has moved out. Brothers claim that they have more affection for their sisters than their sisters for them.

Woman's Role as Childbearer

A woman's role as childbearer is crucial to her status in her husband's household. Sons are particularly important to a couple because they carry on the patriline and provide support for a couple in their old age. Daughters are also valued, for their labor in the household

and because they strengthen or create important alliances between lineages through marriage. If there are no sons, daughters may also provide support for a couple in old age, but sons are more important because of the rules of property and inheritance.

Family property (angsa) is passed through the line of male descendents of a san. Land (jimi jagga), or immovable property, is the most valued property. The right and authority over land are referred to as huk. Huk implies total rights of control and alienation. The land in which an individual male has such rights is the property of the lineage (dajyu-bhai) and is in a sense communal property, but it is deeded individually to that individual male in that patriline. This land is traditionally passed to individual sons in equal portions at the time of the division of the estate, either during his lifetime, or at his death. The cardinal rule regarding immoveable property, land, is that women never have huk. While male members of a lineage who have inherited or acquired land, have complete huk over that land, which means they can will or sell it to any member of the dajyu-bhai, or to anyone else if the dajyu-bhai approves, a woman does not. She can, under certain circumstances, sell land, but any transaction she makes must be approved by the dajyu-bhai, even if she has legal title over that land or has use of that land during her lifetime.

Usually a couple live with the youngest son after the property is divided and a special portion is not reserved for them. The father remains household head until his death, and then his son assumes that position. If a man or his wife choose to live apart from their son, they are given a portion of the estate that varies from one-fifth to one-quarter of the total estate. When both the man and his wife die, this reverts to the sons and is divided equally among them. In the event that there are no sons, by custom this property reverts to the closest lineage brothers of the deceased.

An example will make this clearer. Suppose there is a Magar named Dal Man who has 30 ropanis (1/8 of an acre = 1 ropani) and 12,000 rupees worth of moveable property. Suppose at the time of his death he has three sons. When the estate is divided, he would bequeath each son 10 ropanis and 4,000 rupees worth of moveable property. If he has no sons, by traditional rules his brother's sons, or his brothers, divide this property equally. If he has no brothers then the next closest kin, in this case

the sons or grandsons of his grandfather's brothers, will inherit this property.

In Magar society, despite the allegiance of the individual to his lineage, there is a strong desire to keep one's own property in the direct line of descent if possible. A man keeps his property in his own line rather than passes it on to his brothers or other dajyu-bhai. This is one reason a son is so important. The son maintains the continuity of the line of inherited property. Another reason a son is so important is that he can perform funeral and ancestral rites. Funeral rites ensure a man will enter the realm of the ancestors at death rather than remain on earth as a wandering ghost. After the man enters the realm of the ancestors, his spirit must be continually propitiated in his household by his son. If there is no son and the property reverts to the brothers, one brother should incorporate the man's spirit into his own household ancestral spirits and do the proper rites to ensure the spirit's happiness. A man fears, however, that a brother will not give his spirit the central attention in rituals that a son would give.

Having a son is not the only way of keeping property in one's line. One common alternative is to adopt a daughter's husband as one's own son and allow his sons to inherit the estate and the responsibility to perform the ancestral rites. This practise is known as bhanja rai ne (literally: to bring in a bhanja). If the daughter has no sons, this property reverts to the dajyu-bhai upon her death or the bhanja's death. Another option is to adopt a brother's son as heir. If a man fails to do this before his death, and if the lineage brothers agree, the widow can adopt the brother's son in the name of her husband.

Neither of these is a guaranteed solution. A man cannot be assured of finding a man willing to join the household as an adopted bhanja, nor can he be sure his daughter will have sons. He cannot be sure a brother's son can be adopted. There is no real substitute for having one's own son. Nor is any man comfortable with the thought that a substitute son will perform his death rites.

There is, therefore, pressure on a married woman to have children, and preferably sons, to ensure her place in her husband's household. For a childless woman, ties to her natal lineage become very important as a support.

system. If she is widowed, there are sometimes provisions for her in her husband's household even if she has no children, but more often she will be forced to return to her natal home, or to the home of a natal relative. If she has no children, her husband may decide to take a second wife, and this may leave her in a powerless position in her ghar.

Polygyny

Polygyny is an accepted practice among the Magar. Its incidence is relatively low in comparison with other polygynous societies, particularly classic African examples but it is interesting in terms of women because it demonstrates the social factors discussed in this chapter. It demonstrates the importance of children, particularly sons, to legitimate a married woman's position in her husband's household, and also shows the importance of her kin ties and some of the ways she manipulates her dual kin affiliation. For these reasons, despite its low incidence, it is discussed in some detail. Women are aware of the conflicts created by polygyny and it is the subject of much discussion among them in the village (see Table 3.20). While only 9.8% of the currently married men in the village are married polygynously (they are married to 23% of the currently married women), the possibility that a man may take a second wife makes marriage insecure for a Magar woman.

Marriages are never contracted initially as polygynous. There are a number of factors that singly or in combination lead to a man taking a second wife. About half the polygynous marriages occur when the first wife has no sons. In the 19 cases of polygyny in the village, 17 (32%) of the wives have no living sons - - a reflection of the fact that around forty percent (40%) of all children born die before the age of seven. A man without sons, or whose wife repeatedly miscarries or loses her male children through infant deaths, will often take a second wife, even if he is not financially well-off. While a son is a great importance to a man, as discussed above, part of the pressure to take a second wife comes from a man's parents. If a couple have not had a living son after 6 or 7 years of marriage, the man's parents and patrilineal relatives will begin to pressure him to take another wife.

TABLE 3.20

NUMBER OF SPOUSES AT PRESENT BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

No. of Spouses / Economic Strata / Sex	1		2		3		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top	8 (72.7) (25.0)	9 (100.0) (24.3)	2 (18.2) (66.7)	0	1 (9.1) (100.0)	0	11 (100.0) (30.6)	9 (100.0) (24.3)
Middle	7 (100.0) (21.9)	8 (100.0) (21.6)	0	0	0	0	7 (100.0) (19.4)	8 (100.0) (21.6)
Bottom	17 (94.4) (53.1)	20 (100.0) (54.1)	1 (5.6) (33.3)	0	0	0	18 (100.0) (50.0)	20 (100.0) (54.1)
All Strata	32 (88.9) (100.0)	37 (100.0) (100.0)	3 (8.3) (100.0)	0	1 (2.8) (100.0)	0	36 (100.0) (100.0)	37 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures within parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

One widower who had only female children refused to remarry after his wife died, because he claimed that any woman he married would not love his daughters and would mistreat them. His brothers and other members of the patriline were very upset with him and continually pressured him to remarry. Periodically, the pressure became so unbearable that he would go to the headman's house to complain and seek support for his decision. Not only did the headman support him, but the women of the household felt he had made the right decision because they agreed that new wives usually mistreat a first wife's daughters.

Another reason that a man may take a second wife is the failure of his first marriage. This is especially likely if the first marriage is arranged. While an unsuccessful marriage usually ends in divorce, if there are children, or if the parents of the two families pressure a man, he may remain married. If a wife does not want to separate, she will enlist the support of her parents and they will pressure the husband through his parents to stay married. A man in this situation begins to attend fairs and evening gatherings. Often he finds a more suitable partner and takes her as his second wife.

Failure of a marriage is not the only reason a man will continue to attend such gatherings. A man may meet a woman at these events and fall in love. While this may develop simply into a romantic interlude and not lead to marriage, if the girl becomes pregnant, or the affair gets serious, it may result in marriage. While informants from other villages say that an infertile wife or a wife who has few children of her own will sometimes adopt a son born of such a liasion, no such case was seen in Thabang. If a man is wealthy, a younger girl may elope with him if the two fall in love. A widow, or divorced woman, who has been unable to find a suitable husband, may enter such a affair in the hopes it will lead to marriage.

Polygyny serves some functions not stated by village informants. One is the enhancement of male prestige. A fairly wealthy villager or pensioned soldier may take a second wife or third wife as a marker of social or economic status, or manhood. Polygyny is also useful as a way of increasing the number of women in a household available to do agricultural labor. If men in a household have cattle or sheep and goats, they spend most of their time in herding activities and have little time left over to help

in other activities. If there are no unmarried daughters to assume some of the work load, a second wife is a possible solution to the labor shortage. Herders also need women to take supplies periodically to the herder's huts (got) in the high pastures. If there is only one woman in the household, it is difficult for her to find time from the agricultural and household tasks to take supplies to the got. Men with sufficient land and income to support a second wife prefer to marry polygynously rather than depend solely on hired labor. In addition, those villagers with sheep and goats need someone to weave and prepare wool. Although both men and women spin wool, women do the carding, washing and fluffing of the wool and the weaving of woolen cloth. Families may 'borrow' a female relative to help in agricultural tasks so they have more time for wool preparation; a richer man may take a second wife.

> Polygyny can thus be the result of a combination of factors. A case from the household sample will make this clear. Ram is a wealthy herder who has been married five times. His first marriage was arranged and was unsuccessful; he fell in love with another woman and married her. His first wife ran off with another man, divorcing him. The second wife did not get along with his mother and went home to her maiti. He remarried but this wife died, and he remarried a woman who bore him a son but it died a few years after birth. She then gave birth to a daughter but no more sons, so he took a younger wife, who bore him a son. The last two wives live together in the household and get along well. The older wife makes most of the household decisions. The younger wife is stronger and does more heavy labor while the older wife does most of the wool preparation and household chores, and minds the son while the younger wife is in the got bringing supplies to the husband. The husband is quite proud of his many wives and jokes to villagers about taking another wife, even though villagers know he will not do so.

Women whose husbands want to take a second wife often try to avert this by enlisting support from their husband's kin and their own to persuade him to remain monogamous.

If a woman has sons, her mother-in-law may take her side and pressure her son to change his mind. If a woman cannot prevent her husband from taking a second wife, she has no choice but to accept the situation or divorce and return home. If she has children, the latter option is usually not taken.

Polygyny is usually conflict-laden from the wives' perspective. This is due to the economic and jural make-up of Magar society. In the majority of households property and economic goods are limited. Even those households with a surplus and a number of livestock are not free of economic pressures in the event of a household split. Clignet posits an interesting correlation in African societies between the economic independence of the wife vis-a-vis the husband and his property and the extent of cooperation between co-wives (Clignet 1970: 46-48). In the Magar context, wives are dependent upon the husband's resources. Because these resources are limited co-wives usually compete with each other for a better share for themselves or their children. The most acute conflict arises when a first wife has sons. All sons inherit equally in Magar customary law regardless of the seniority of their mother. A wife sees a co-wife as a potential bearer of sons who will compete with her own children for a portion of the husband's estate and for household resources while they are growing up.

If the first wife has no sons, she will be upset by her husband's decision to remarry because her daughter's interests will be second to those of sons of a subsequent wife. Her daughter could inherit under Nepali law if her husband has no sons at the age of 35, or an adopted bhanja could be brought in and the daughter's sons could inherit. She fears a co-wife,who can bear sons, and the co-wife resents the resources the first wife and her children use. If a woman has no children, she fears her authority and security in the household will be displaced by a second wife.

The allocation of authority is another great source of conflict. Both wives tend to compete for the position of authority to allocate tasks,to decide on the amount of grain to sell or consume, and to buy luxury goods. While the first wife usually has more seniority and a better chance of remaining dominant, if the second wife gains her husband's affections, she may with time acquire more authority. If one wife maintains or assumes authority over the other, the powerless wife will usually move out

out to her maiti or a separate residence. Although the husband still owes this wife some support, the main resources stay in the husband's residence. The remaining wife can usually exert the most influence and ensure that only a minimal amount reaches the absent wife. Unlike many polygynous societies in Africa (Giel and Smock 1977), there is no formalized hierarchy of wives and no formal rules regarding how much property a wife can control. The extent of any woman's control thus depends upon her ability to manipulate the situation and her husband to her advantage.

> Ben Bahadur has three wives. The first wife was married to him when they were both quite young, in their early teens. When he was about eighteen, she gave birth to a son. When the son was about ten Ben Bahadur fell in love with another woman and married her as a second wife. This wife had a daughter but no sons. He had two houses, one near his fields which contained a cattle shed, and one in the village. He lived in the village house during the heavy agricultural seasons and in the other house with the cattle during the winter months. When the two wives began to fight, the first wife moved more or less permanently into the more distant house and the second wife stayed in the village house. He divided his time fairly equally between them. He then married a third woman, who came to live in his village house. He began to lose interest in the second wife, and she moved out with her daughter to the ground floor of a village house. He gave her a small portion of land to support herself and her daughter and visited her occasionally. She supplemented this income with earnings from selling liquor. The third wife now has a son and a daughter and is clearly the highest in her husband's affections. He still visits the second wife when he is caring for the cattle, but goes less often as he is now wealthy enough to afford a hired cowherder. The first wife's son spends much of his time in Ben Bahadur's house as he is a teenager and goes to the

> evening gatherings in the village. The third wife has the most control over her husband's property although the first wife lives fairly well from the land adjacent to the house.

To avoid the problems of wives who do not get along, men may marry their wife's younger sister, as sisters tend to get along better in the same household than unrelated co-wives. Three of the polygynous marriages in the village involved marriage to two sisters, and in all three cases, the wives chose to remain in one house. The elder sister usually had more authority in the household, but both tended to cooperate in making decisions. Informants often told me that if a man had no sons, it was sensible for him to marry his wife's younger sister, if possible, because sisters would cooperate and not fight like most co-wives.

Regardless of the actual percentage of polygynous marriages, the practise of polygyny makes marriage less secure for women in Magar society. For all women sons are important, as they increase a wife's status in her husband's lineage, but all widows, even without sons, traditionally receive some support from their husband's lineage. However, if a man has taken another wife, the position of the widow without a son becomes tenuous. An unfavored wife is also usually unwilling to subordinate herself to a co-wife she dislikes, even if it helps her own position.

For a woman in Kham Magar society, the tight web of kin ties works both to her disadvantage and to her advantage. On the positive side, it acts as a multifaceted support system, a security if her immediate family relations fail to provide support or if these create conflicts she cannot resolve alone. The flexibility of her position as member of two lineage groups allows her to take options not available to many women in Nepal. Her ability to divorce and remarry without loss of status, to remarry if widowed, or to influence decisions in her husband's house depend to a large extent upon her manipulations of this support system. Although her choices may not always be optimal and her decision to remain married or return home may not be without conflict, she does have a number of options as a result of this support system.

Because of her dual affiliation a woman can rely on her natal lineage to support and take her in if her husband takes another wife, or if she is unhappy in her husband's house. If her husband leaves the village for a prolonged period as a migrant laborer or to go into the army, she has strong ties with her maiti which she can use to influence her husband's kin if a conflict arises with them.

Because there is always the option of returning to the maiti in the event of the marriage being unsuccessful, in-laws tend to cajole an angry or unhappy daughter-in-law, and daughters-in-law are not usually given the most unpleasant household tasks. (see above p. 124). Although a daughter-in-law who has no children after 6 or 7 years of marriage loses status in her husband's household, until that time she is not given the lower status in the household common in other groups in Nepal. She defers to her mother-in-law by virtue of her age but she will make her opinions known and will be heard in family discussions.

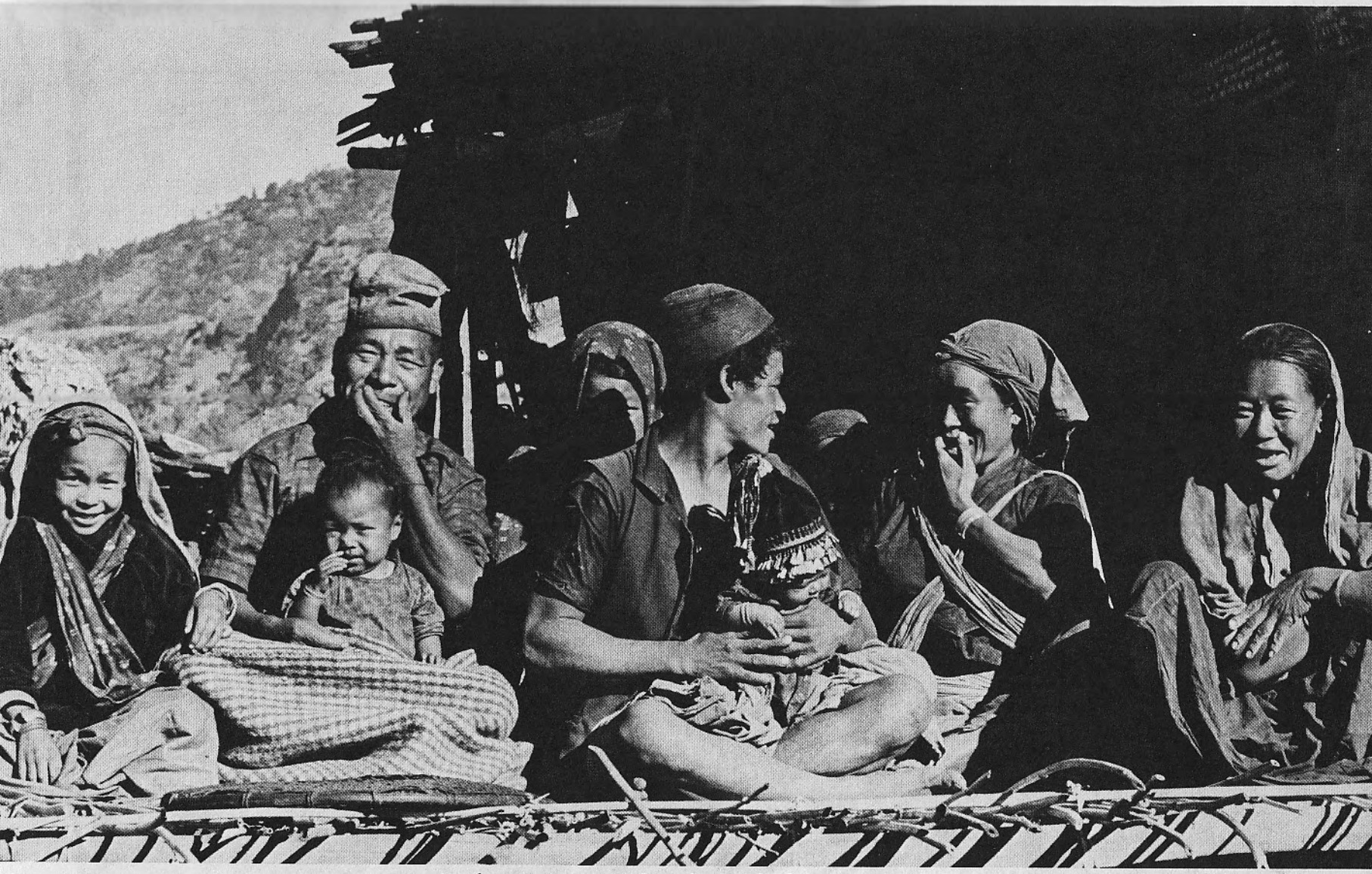
On the negative side, this dual affiliation can place a woman in a situation where she has conflicting loyalties to members of two lineages. A woman can easily be caught in the middle of an argument between her own and her husband's households. In the event of a dispute between two lineages her position becomes ambiguous because relatives know she can be swayed in either of two directions. Members of her husband's household fear she will convey family secrets to her natal relatives, while her natal relatives fear she will place more emphasis upon furthering the position of her husband and children than upon supporting their point of view.

The natal family may also interfere in a woman's affairs even when she would prefer to make her own decision. One woman who decided to remain with her husband when he took a second wife had great difficulty convincing her brothers and sisters that they should not interfere. They made tearful pleas for her to return home and only when she stopped seeing them completely for a while, did they agree to leave well enough alone.

Interference from natal relatives may also endanger the marriage of a recent bride. If her natal family is short of labor or if one parent dies and the remaining parent wishes the daughter to care for him or her, she may be pressured to separate from her husband and return

home. Several women in the village had returned to their maiti permanently to care for a surviving parent, but they were worried about what to do and where to live when that parent died, as they feared a conflict with the brother and his wife. Other types of demands on a woman from her natal household may include requests for loans or requests for labor.

Kinship as a structure of social interaction can be seen therefore as important in two ways for a woman. First it acts to facilitate a woman's choice of a particular place of residence or marital status. In this sense it widens a woman's choices in Kham Magar society and gives her a choice of a variety of roles. Second, it acts to limit a woman's options; it acts as a constraint. The particular ties a woman has to two lineage groups and two households as a married woman may create a situation that is impossible for her to accept, and she may choose to divorce or separate rather than juggle with the conflicting loyalties that arise. The last chapter has shown that women play a central role in economic activities and have a degree of economic independence that enables them to support themselves if divorced or separated. This chapter has described the social framework that affects a woman's choice of these options. The importance of particular relationships a woman has in her household has been stressed. The next chapter on legal rights in marriage and property will provide another perspective on women's economic and social participation.



A three generation household.

Kham Magar women are always busy. Even walking en route to their fields, or to collect fuel, they are constantly spinning fiber into thread.

A woman with her new born.

CHAPTER IV

LEGAL RIGHTS

Women's decisions regarding marriage and residence depend upon their use of the support system of kin and their position as a member of two lineage groups, their husband's and their father's. Another important factor affecting their options in Magar society is their degree of and type of control over property. In the discussion of economic roles and status, it was shown how women allocate resources in their control and how some women establish their economic independence through a range of entrepreneurial activities. Their control of property and their resulting economic status depend upon their legal rights, both in customary law, and, increasingly, in Nepali law under the National Code (Mulki Ain). Some of the rights over property rules of inheritance have already been discussed in the preceding chapter. This chapter covers those rights more completely and deals with the interface between rights and control over property.

Magar society is strongly patrilineal in ideology and stated rules of succession and inheritance. In actual practise, there is considerable flexibility in the application of these rules that gives women a means of controlling and even, in some cases, owning immoveable property. While much of Nepali law has as yet had little effect on property decisions in Magar villages, it has created a few new options for women. Women's knowledge and use of this law is still limited but it is increasing. Part of this chapter is concerned with whether and to what extent Nepali law improves a woman's options and the extent to which Nepali law conflicts with customary laws favorable to women.

There are two forms of property. One is property belonging to the dajyu-bhai (see above p. 136-137). The other is personal property, which for women takes the form of daijo, or dowry, and personal earnings. This, unlike lineage property, cannot be immoveable; it is moveable property which is passed through mother to daughter. Moveable property (sampatti) includes such items as cash, household utensils, jewelry, furnishings, and livestock. A house also comes under the category of sampatti, but although it can be titled to a woman and she may sell a house without consent of the dajyu-bhai, a house is always considered angsa, or family property,

never personal property.

In most cases, angsa (family property) passes only through males and should remain with the dajyu-bhai. A married woman's control of property is a right only accorded to her by virtue her husband's rights (huk)and later, by virtue of her son's huk. Actual control of property in a household of a married couple is joint; it is common, although not required, for a husband to consult his wife in any major transaction involving his estate. When property is divided among the husband and his sons, the wife usually participates actively in the decisions about the portions for each son. After the property is divided and the parents are living with the youngest son, the father retains his position as official household head. When the father dies, the wife assumes this position. Seldom will the youngest son undertake any major transaction regarding the estate without the consent of his mother.

A woman does not normally acquire a separate share in her husband's angsa under customary Magar law. The division of the estate is made with some portion reserved for the couple, which she is entitled to upon her husband's death. In Magar custom, there is considerable flexibility in the way property division may occur. One way is for the household head to reserve a portion of the estate for himself at the time of dividing the property. Depending on the number of sons, and upon the individual case, the portion can be 1/5 or 1/4 of the angsa. If all the sons are not yet married, the unmarried sons may be alloted some adjustment to their portion for marriage expenses.* The son, usually the youngest, who remains with the father receives the house as part of his share, and a portion of the value of the house is given to each of the remaining sons towards their building of a new house. The remainder is divided equally among the sons.

The originally reserved portions is the couple's jiuni. This comes from the Nepali term jiuni bhagh meaning "the portion of coparcenary property a person takes merely to sustain himself or "to exist" for the remainder of his life" (Bennett 1979:35). The wife remains with the

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* McDougall (1979) notes that among the Kulunge Rai this is standard practice. Among the Kham Magar this seems to be the case sometimes but not always.

youngest son after her husband's death. The widowed wife has rights over this jiuni if she decides to live apart from her son after her husband dies. This she would only do in the case of a serious conflict, and she would probably only receive a portion of this jiuni, not the whole amount.* At the woman's death, her funeral expenses are subtracted from the jiuni, and the rest is divided equally among the sons. The youngest may claim a larger share for expenses incurred by the parents while living in his house. If the widow goes to live with a married daughter, the daughter may, at her death, claim a portion of the jiuni for expenses incurred during the period her mother resided in that household. When the parties concerned cannot reach an agreement about the amount, such decisions are arbitrated by the lineage or lineages involved.

Women whose husbands die when their sons are small, before an estate division has taken place, will become regent for the estate. They will make most decisions without consulting the lineage brothers until the sons are old enough to assume responsibility. The lineage brothers owe the widow assistance when needed to plow her land, repair the house, or provide other needed services until the sons are old enough to help. If a widow needs to sell land because of an economic crisis, such a transaction requires the consent of the lineage. Usually this consent is given if the situation is serious, although an attempt may be made to lend her money for food to avoid alienating immoveable property. When her sons are old enough to marry, the estate can be divided among them and she will, by custom, remain with her youngest son. She remains household head until her death.

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* I have no cases regarding such an instance, although one woman who fought with her son threatened to move out and live alone. She went to the bang of her married daughter's house for one night but returned. She had intended to take only a slightly larger portion than the amount needed for funeral expenses and no immoveable property. Informants are very unclear about what she could claim under customary law.

Widows who have no sons, but who have been married a long time, are given what is called a tijara, a half portion of the estate for use during their lifetime. This ensures their support and pays for their funeral expenses. The dajyu-bhai claim the remainder of the tijara at the widow's death, unless she finds a legitimate heir. The other half becomes the property of the dajyu-bhai when the husband dies, but sometimes, especially if the widow has no daughters, she may have usage rights over the other half. It was not clear what factors determined a woman's ability to control her husband's estate, but she would be more likely to gain usage rights in the absence of close kin. That the husband's brothers will provide her labor is important, for it enables her to manage the estate alone. Most widows will try to find a legitimate heir to secure her rights over the property and provide labor. If she has daughters, she will try to adopt a bhanja, by bringing in the husband of one of her daughters as member of the household. His sons will inherit the property, although it remains within the dajyu-bhai. If he has no sons, it is divided among the closest patrilineal relatives at his death. If a brother of the widow's husband has a number of sons, she may adopt one of them as heir to the estate. This relieves the brothers of some economic pressure, as this son has to relinquish rights to his father's angsa.

There are six cases in the village of a bhanja being brought in as adopted heir. The adopted son-in-law in these cases was from a poor family, or from a relatively poor family with a number of sons. Usually such a solution to the problem of inheritance is problematic because the adopted bhanja must relinquish his rights and position in his own lineage to inherit his wife's estate. It is only if he has the chance to inherit a much larger holding that a man will be willing to become an adopted bhanja.* Although this provides

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* John Hitchcock also reports that adopting a bhanja seems somewhat undesireable as a solution, e.g. he found among the Magar to the east the case of a bhanja who left the village with his children and abandoned his claims on the estate after he had been adopted into his wife's household. (John Hitchcock, personal communication).

a means of extending the husband's property line, it is not as desireable a solution as adopting a brother's son.

Widows who are young and childless or sometimes with a daughter, will return to their maiti and eventually remarry, usually within a year or two of the death of their husband. No example was found of a young, childless widow gaining control of a portion of her husband's angsa.

Despite the flexibility of the rules regarding widows, a widow is much more secure if she has sons. They guarantee her full control over the property during her lifetime and provide her labor, their own and that of their wives, when she gets old. All of the young widows I knew in the village with daughters supplemented their income with entrepreneurial activities. If a widow without sons has a chance to marry a well-off villager, she will often remarry and forego the tijara share. From the man's perspective a woman with a daughter is not a burden. Her fertility is proven and her daughter will be able to contribute her labor to the household. A soldier's widow is considerably better off than most widows, as the usual procedure in the British or Indian army is to name the wife sole claimant on a pension should the soldier die in service or after his return. One young widow in her early thirties began to receive a partial pension after her husband's death while in service. She had one young daughter and until she began to collect on the pension was having difficulty supporting herself on the tijara given her by the dajyu-bhai. With the pension, however, she was able to buy new clothes as soon as the old ones began to get worn, a luxury not always possible for women whose husbands are still alive.

In customary law a man is expected to support all his wives. There are no set rules, however, regarding the amount that a wife should be provided in the event of her setting up a separate residence. Most women with sons are better off in that their status as the bearer of sons creates pressure on the husband to provide for them until a property split is made. But this is not always the case, and some wives may receive only minimal usage rights over a portion of the husband's estate prior to a split. Social pressure may also induce a man to support a wife.

> One soldier remarried after he returned on pension from service in the British army. His first wife had two sons. His second wife had a daughter and a son. The women

> did not get along and the first wife moved to her maiti. The sons spent most of their time in the soldier's house with the second wife. When the eldest son of the first wife was about twenty, the first wife convinced him to force a split. The soldier was unwilling but community pressure was exerted on him through gossip and conversations carried on in his or his wife's presence. He finally agreed to split his property. Because he received a large pension, there was some dispute as to how the most equitable division could be made. The sons sided with their mother and made the settlement as unpleasant for the soldier as possible. In the end, he kept the pension but had to give the first wife's sons the house, so that he and his second wife were forced to buy another. He had started a small store (dokan) selling Indian goods. The goods were split in three portions, one for each son. The first wife's sons brought their mother to live with them and began to sell goods at a cheaper price than the soldier sold his own goods. The soldier began to lose business as he could not afford to lower his own prices without taking a loss. The villagers joked constantly about his come-uppance, much to the soldier's embarrassment.

In all the cases in the village of men who had taken a second wife, even though the first wife had borne him sons, the first wife did not force a split, but waited until her sons were married or of marriageable age. This was true even when she felt neglected by her husband.*

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* McDougall (1979:60) reports that a Kulunge Rai woman with sons, whose husband remarries, will force a split and take her own and her son's portions. When the sons from the later marriage take their portion, even if it has increased, the sons of the first wife have no rights to an increase in their portions.

For a woman who has no sons, her support, if her husband takes a second wife, is only secure if she remains in the same house with the husband. She is entitled to some maintainence if she lives separately, but will usually return to her maiti, as the amount is usually not adequate to set up a separate residence. While she is entitled to a jiuni upon her husband's death, and, if the second wife has no sons, can divide the estate with the second wife, during her husband's lifetime she relies on her maiti for support. In this particular, the National Code is much more in favor of the first wife. A woman who has been married 15 years or who has reached the age of 35 is entitled to a share of the angsa that can be taken before the partition of the estate.

If a woman returns to her maiti after an unsuccessful marriage, she has no rights to natal property if there are male siblings, only support. In most cases an unmarried daughter must rely upon the support her family or relatives give her. If there are no sons, however, often a daughter will be given some portion of the natal angsa.

> There is one case in which an unmarried woman did inherit the entire estate of her father. Her parents died leaving no male heirs. Because there were no brothers of either her father's or grandfather's generation to inherit, the patriline decided to give her control of the property during her lifetime. Her older sister, who was married with no children at the time, decided to divorce her husband and return home to live with her sister.

Women are now aware of the change in the National Code that entitles an unmarried daughter over the age of 35 to inherit an equal portion of the estate. Whereas, formerly, women were encouraged to marry because this was the only assurance of access to land and other lineage property, now several women have chosen to remain single so they can inherit a portion of the estate. They include both women who have no brothers and those who do. They are mostly women who have travelled or been to school, and who are aware of the extra-village culture to some extent. These women argue that this law provides them a security that marriage does not necessarily provide (see Chapter III).

Since most women in the village marry and marriage is the desired state for women, it is interesting that these unmarried women have so far avoided the pressures to marry. None of them has yet reached 35 years of age. Two are thirty, and since most women marry before this age, it is possible that they will remain single and wait to inherit a portion of their father's estate. It is hard to determine all the factors that have gone into their decision, but since only a few older women are still unmarried and their reasons for remaining single seem to be economic rather than personal preference, those women seem part of a recent trend. Some of the reasons may be economic, but not the whole reason. Two of the women are clearly influenced by an older, single woman who also intends to remain single. This woman is 34 and from one of the wealthiest families in the village. There is no eligible male her age who equals her economic status. She was chosen to be trained in the bazaar town of Pokhara to weave on looms as part of a Women's Affairs Training and Extension Centre project and now lives in the Terai to the south. While the other women have no similar training and no stated intentions to acquire similar training, she has set a model of independence for her two friends.

Their decision probably arises because of a new situation created by access to education in the village. Education has created a group of young women who do not have congruent female roles in the village. These women have aspirations to independence that do not have local channels by which they can be achieved. Marriage for these women would be an acceptance of traditional roles and for this reason, in part, they have chosen not to marry. The new law or their awareness of this law in the National Code has made this decision feasible.

There is still no customary or legal right that provides similar options for a once-married woman. If a woman has once been married, even for several months, she loses any legal rights under the National Code to inherit property if she is still unmarried at the age of 35.

> There is one woman in the village, Naya, who divorced twice in arranged marriages. In the first, she separated from her husband when he took a second wife within seven months of marriage. Her mother pressured her to remarry and arranged a second marriage. The girl was young, about twenty, when this second marriage

took place and she agreed to the marriage only because her mother was adamant. After she was married for a year she had several arguments with the mother-in-law and came home. After six more months, she paid compensation to the husband for a divorce. Part of her reason for separating was pressure from her mother, who was newly widowed and did not wish to live alone with her son. Naya is now worried that when her mother dies, she will fight with the brother. She wants to live separately after her mother dies, but is unsure of the means to support herself. She considers moving to another village where her eldest sister is widowed with two daughters. She does not want to move so far away, but cannot believe she will get along with her brother.

Personal Property

At marriage a girl is given a certain amount of personal property as a dowry (daijo) to take with her at marriage. It usually consists of gold and silver, some copper and brass pots, and occasionally a few sheep or goats, or a cow. This property varies in quantity depending upon the economic standing of the woman's family. Seldom is a girl married without it, no matter what the form of marriage. This is in addition to whatever a woman may earn herself before marriage. The property remains her personal property at marriage and is taken with her in the event of divorce or separation from her spouse. By custom, this property should not be alienated by her husband or other members of her husband's household without her express permission.

The daijo is thought of in two categories: wealth to be used in the couple's estate, such as animals or copper or brass pots; and personal property for the bride, such as gold or silver. If the number of pots given by the maiti is sufficient for a household's requirements, little need be given by the boy's parents to furnish the couple's new household when the time comes for them to separate from the joint family. Careful record is kept of which pots and pans are daijo and which are the property of the ancestral estate. At the woman's death, if there are no children, this should be returned, although it may be used during her lifetime or her husband's and returned upon his death. The customary line of inheritance

for this property is to her eldest daughter, although this may not happen. If the woman has no daughters she will usually will this property to her son. If there are no sons, it reverts to her maiti. Once this property is given to a woman it is hers to keep even if she divorces. If she remarries, she does not receive a new dowry, but takes the original dowry with her.

If a woman spends this wealth while married, it is almost impossible for her to receive any reimbursement from her husband or his family if she separates, divorces, or returns to her maiti as a widow. Women are very aware of their rights regarding personal property, both daijo and personal earnings. They know that any legal claim under Nepali law on this property requires a paper co-signed by the co-parceners of the natal family estate alienating this property to them. Customary law is protective of women in this regard and I have never encountered or heard of a case in which a woman was denied her daijo if it had not been spent by her for household needs while in her husband's household.

For most women it is an insurance against divorce or desertion or a personal fund to give to her female children at marriage. It is a sign of her wealth and status as well, and the amount a girl is given at marriage is a social indicator of the wealth of her parents. Some women spend this money from daijo to pay off household debts or in times of scarcity. There is a fine line between what is considered self-protection and what is considered stinginess regarding the use of this property for household needs. Husbands expect women to liquidate this wealth for serious household crises but never for common consumption needs. Seldom, however, would a husband or his family request that this property be liquidated, unless the marriage was stable and the couple had been married long enough to indicate the marriage would remain a serious commitment.

> One woman in the village separated from her husband because he wanted to pay off gambling debts with her personal gold. He had gambled away most of his land and the house, and wanted enough gold to try and recoup his losses. The woman refused, believing it was more sensible to save the gold for her children, a girl and a boy. The husband went to his first wife from whom he had separated some years be-

> fore, partly because they had had no children. He persuaded her to go with him to the Terai with her personal gold. Afraid her parents would persuade her to remain in the village, he convinced her to run away that night. She agreed. With the gold and his pension from the British army, he was able to start a hotel in a bazaar town that catered to Magar travellers and he has since become quite wealthy by village standards. The other wife used her gold to buy back some of the land and the house in her son's name and stayed in the village with her infant children. She considers his request an unpardonable offense and completely outside the bounds of marital responsibility. Other villagers agree that her decision was a reasonable one, although she is now extremely poor and in debt.

Another case involving a brother and sister demonstrates further a woman's control over property of her own, either daijo or self-earned.

> A brother gambled away a considerable sum of money and was almost forced to sell some of his land. His sister, who was divorced and living in her maiti with the brother, his children, and her mother, liquidated some of her personal property and daijo to pay off his debts. Although she was not married at the time, this was seen as her own as it was given to her at marriage. By various entrepreneurial activities she earned some of the money back. About five years later, the brother had a serious fight with their mother and threatened to turn her out. The sister intervened as she wanted neither to move out nor to live apart from her mother. A dispute ensued which required the lineage brother to arbitrate. These men ruled that unless the brother produced the amount equivalent to the debts paid by the sister, the house would become her property and he would be forced to move out. As the fight had become too bitter for reconciliation, the brother retreated to the family got in the high pasture. He tried to keep his children with him, but they returned to live with the

sister and the grandmother. Nothing has yet been settled.

The customary law concerning personal property is thus strongly protective of women's full rights to such property. Nepali law is now also protective of women's rights in this regard although to take a dispute to court a woman needs a written record of the transfer of property signed by her parents or the male of the household who gave her this property. Magar women are aware of this rule. In a questionnaire asked in the village regarding knowledge of legal rights, women all knew a signed transfer was required. This stipulation has hindered women of more Hinduized groups in Nepal from making use of this law (Bennett 1979). The customary stress on women's rights to personal property in Magar society is one important contributory factor to the high status of Magar women. In other groups, women's rights to daijo and self-earned property are not always as well respected.

Women in Magar society are in general ignorant of other rights in the National Code. They have recently become aware of the rule regarding inheritance by an unmarried daughter who is 35 years of age. They are unaware, however, of laws regarding a woman's rights to angsa if she is married and most are unaware of the laws regarding divorce and polygyny. Women told me that for a husband to take another wife, he needed a manjur (signed permission) from his wife. Under the National Code, there are limited conditions in which a man can take another wife. Only if a wife has no sons within 10 years of marriage, or if the wife has an uncurable disease or a severe handicap, or if she lives separately on her share of her husband's angsa, can he legally remarry.*

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* The Mulki Ain states that: "A man can legally take a wife if: a. the wife has no male issue within 10 years of marriage, b. the wife is lame and cannot walk, c. the wife is incurabley insane, d. the wife is blind and in both eyes, e. the wife has incurable syphillis or some other contagious venereal disease, g. the wife suffers from leprosy, h. if the wife lives separately from her husband, having obtained her share of the husband's angsa." from Bennett (1978).

Under Nepali law a woman can prevent her husband from taking a second wife if these conditions are not met, and can claim a full share in the estate. This she can claim before the property is divided if she has been married for 15 years or is 35 years of age. If she separates before this time, she loses all claims to the angsa, but can sue for five years' support for herself and her children, if they stay with her. Magar women believe that a manjur waives their legal right to dispute in court the taking of a second wife. This is not the case; if a man has taken a wife under any condition not listed under the law the wife has legal claim to annul such a union. Several wives with sons, whose husbands had taken a second wife, had given their husband such a manjur, and they believe it to be legally binding.

Magar law does not ensure a polygynously married woman with sons security during her lifetime before there is a division of the family estate, but the National Code does. In Nepali law, any married woman, regardless of whether or not she is the first wife, has the right to one share of the estate to be taken as soon as a woman becomes 35 or has been married 15 years. Magar customary law, does, however, provide enough flexibility to enable some women to control a larger portion of the estate vis-a-vis their sons. Because women who live apart from their husbands remain household head until their death, and retain authority over their sons, they can in fact acquire more rights once their sons inherit than accorded them under Nepali law. At her husband's death, a polygynously married wife without sons can, under Magar law, control an equal portion with the remaining wives if the other wives have no sons.

Under Nepali law, a woman is an equal co-parcener in her husband's estate. At the time of property division, she receives an equal share of the angsa with the husband and the sons. She can legally alienate one half of the immoveable property and all of the moveable property. However, a woman without issue who is widowed before the partition has no claim on her share as long as the parents-in-law (or surviving brother) give her minimum maintenance. (See Bennett 1978). A Magar widow, if she has been married a number of years or has daughters, can control a considerable amount of her husband's property and in some cases all the property during her lifetime.

Women in Thabang do not generally own land or other angsa property in their own name. The land they control

is put in their husband's name, his dajyu-bhai's, or their son's name. Women have control over this property but do not possess title to this land. Their rights are respected, however, and once they are given control over property it is not taken from them for any reason during their lifetime. Some women buy land, but it is not put in their own name, but that of a male relative, usually a son. The woman who bought back land gambled away by her husband did not put this land in her own name, but in that of her son. Women's claim to land in Magar society thus depends upon the trust that operates by customs. Sons or dajyu-bhai who have the written title will not claim this land from a woman who has control over that property.

In examining the interface between Nepali law and customary law several interesting issues for women's legal rights emerge. As the National Code becomes more a part of local legal procedings, a problem could be created for women, unless the assumptions of Magar custom are upheld in court. A woman has considerable control and flexibility, but this is not documented; it depends upon the community's respect (unwritten) for her rights to property. A woman could not rely on a court to respect such claims were she to sue in court for her rights. It is important that the conflict between customary and Nepali law is resolved without Magar women, and women in similar groups, losing rights now accorded them by local custom.

As noted above, women's personal property is one good example of the distance between Magar and Nepali law. While Nepali law recognizes a woman's rights to daijo and self-earned property and gives her sole right to will to whom she choses, it does so only when this property is given with proof of ownership. Legally she must have a record of transfer signed by all co-parceners of the estate from which it was transfered. There is also no direct passage of personal property from mother to daughter as there is in Magar custom. At a woman's death, under Nepali law, if she has not willed it to anyone the line of succession is from sons to husband to daughters to son's sons to daughter's sons. In customary law, whether or not she has willed this property the line of succession is from daughters to sons to the woman's natal dajyu-bhai. For self-earned property, the succession is daughters to sons to husband to other closest collateral relatives. Magars do not keep a record of personal property as they do with daijo, but woman's rights and those of her daughters are very clearly respected in this regard.

The girl carrying her younger brother in a work basket is wearing a traditional sur, a cross-tied piece of puwa cloth that serves as a carry-all.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The extent of women's power and authority in the political sphere is an important component of women's status in Magar society. Women have a central role in decision-making in the household sphere, and they have considerable say in the disputes that arise in their lineage groups as a result of their positions in the household. Traditionally, Magar women do not hold formal positions of authority in the extra-household, political sphere. Despite this, they wield considerable influence informally in political affairs.

The concern of this chapter is to examine the extent of women's traditional power in events affecting the wider community and the degree to which traditional channels of power are effective in affairs that concern the community in its dealings with the larger Nepalese society/political arena. This is extremely important for the discussion of change. There is a danger that as the Magar become more integrated with and affected by the broader society, women will be cut off from the process of political decision-making.*

Political power is defined here as the ability to exert control within the community, i.e. extra-familial sphere.** This power can be either legitimated, i.e. a socially recognized right to make decisions regarding others; or it can be informal power that stems from women's control of and access to knowledge needed to make political decisions. Recent studies of women and power, such as Sanday (1974), Rosaldo (1975), Nelson (1976) and Rogers (1979), have argued that women may have a great deal of influence on political decisions in many societies where they do not hold positions of authority or participate formally in central political institutions. Magar

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* A number of theorists have explored this problem in other countries: Tiffany (1977:37), Martin and Voorhies (1975), Sanday (1974), and Lamphere (1975:118-119).

** My definition of power is derived from Alice Schlegal's more general definition of power in Sexual Stratification (1977:8).

women traditionally fall into the category of women with informal power.

Power in the political sphere is also tied into the economic base. Sanday (1974) has advanced the theory that where women participate actively in the economic sphere and where the extra-domestic and domestic spheres are not radically separate, women will participate more equally with men in the political sphere. Given the structure of Magar society and the high status of women economically, it is expected that Magar women will participate in the political sphere. This seems to be borne out in the case of the Magar. Although women's traditional power channels are informal, they do participate actively in political decisions.

The integration of Magar society with the larger Nepalese society can make women's traditional avenues to power ineffective if political issues become more distant from household concerns and if the information needed to make decisions is only accessible to Magar who are familiar with Nepali society. To a certain extent this is the emerging situation in Magar villages. A few women have entered the political arena as village officials, mostly as a result of pressure from the district and government campaigns to raise women's status. The traditional esteem accorded women in Magar society has enabled these women to compete with male officials in the village. These women are not representative, however. They are young, educated to a degree, and single. The majority of Magar women are confined to traditional channels and have access only to information available in these channels not information regarding the broader Nepalese situation. As household and village spheres become more separated, there is a good chance Magar women as a whole will participate less and less in political affairs. The question is whether women can extend their traditional avenues and whether the new female officials can serve as effective information brokers for the other women in the village.

Traditional Power

The information channels that women use for economic and social purposes are also the channels for the exchange of important political information. Women have more access to and control of these information channels than do men. Because their role in household decision making requires them to visit other households in the village, women tend to maintain more extensive social ties to other households than do men. Women are constantly going to another house to make work plans, to seek extra laborers, to borrow liquor for a guest or to get coals to start a fire. If I sat in a house with a woman friend for a day, I would see a constant flow of women passing by to ask if a particular field were ripe, to borrow a pot to make liquor, to smoke a pipe on their way to fetch water, or to discuss preparations for a funeral. During these visits a bit of gossip is passed on or a discussion of some village event takes place. In work groups, women exchange information and during trips to the river to wash clothes or trips to distant fields or the forest women talk to other women on the trail. If they go to a distant field on a path that passes outlying hamlets, they may stop in the courtyard of a relative to visit and exchange news.

Ritual is also an important setting for information exchange. While both men and women attend rituals, women are more apt to attend the rituals of a distant relative. Men are more often out of the village herding or engaged in outside employment or trading. When men are home, they attend rituals of close relatives, but let their wives go to events of more distant kin. Only women attend the birth rituals held in the village, the feast given after the birth of a child. Since women are responsible for bringing the sho (household contribution each family makes to a ritual), women make several trips prior to the ritual to decide when and how much to bring. Rituals themselves provide a forum for women and men to discuss village affairs and give women a chance to present their arguments and influence political decisions.

Men also visit households for various reasons, but do not have the pattern of constant visiting that women have. Their visit to a household also entails more ceremony as they are the formal household head and because they go more infrequently. While a man's visit usually requires that the host or hostess extend some formal hospitality in the way of food or liquor, a woman can drop in informally. Women also have the added advantage

of being linked to two households, their husband's and their natal home. Women can drop in to their natal home without ceremony; a woman's husband cannot go without requiring some exchange of hospitality.

This is not to imply that men do not engage in a lot of informal discussion. Men spend much of their leisure time chatting over a glass of beer or wine about many village issues. Housebuilding or roofing are examples of male collective activities in which much informal discussion takes place. Men that are back from the got, visit friends and relatives in the village and gather to talk in front of the post office or the panchayat building at the foot of the village. Fairs are also a meeting place. Daily agricultural activities, however, and household tasks, are more exclusively the domain of women.

There are other advantages to a woman's informal role in the power structure. A man has certain obligations that he must deal with formally as a lineage member or public authority figure. Often he assumes a mediatory role in a different situation and remains as diplomatic as possible. A women has no formal authority role, and thus has more freedom to take sides, argue one strong position, or express strong opinions in a discussion. She can also provide her husband a counterpart who can say what he really feels while he maintains an attitude of diplomacy and conciliation.

A good example of villagers assuming this type of complementary role are the village headman and his wife. The village headman has a very close relationship with his wife, and they often discuss village affairs. While both are quite independent, they are in general agreement politically and the wife is a strong supporter of her husband's political stance in the village. When people, of both the community and outsiders, come to the house to discuss important issues, the headman maintains a neutral position as arbiter, one that is the basis of his popularity. His wife, however, through comments, jokes, and side conversations, can take a strong position and introduce his true sentiments into the discussion. She, as a woman, can make challenging statements, ones that provoke discussion, without causing ill-feelings. If her husband were to make such inflammatory statements, his opponents or constituents would grow heated. The two of them are thus able to sway villagers in a way that the headman could never do alone. This woman is by no means the only one to assume such a role. There are other

men whose wives and sisters behave in a similar manner.

Women thus act politically by disseminating important information among themselves that is then disseminated to their husbands and other male kin. They can in this way exert considerable influence on decisions made formally by men. In mixed sex conversations, although women defer to men as authority figures, they are also outspoken and willing to present and defend arguments. While public meetings are exclusively the forum for males, many of the opinions discussed at these meetings are largely influenced by women. Women may attend, and in some meetings may be sent to represent the household in their husband's absence, but they seldom speak out at these meetings.

Formal Participation

In one of the Magar villages during my period of research, an interesting dispute arose in which women actively participated. The various strategies the women employed in the course of this dispute are indicative of the variety of political options women can exercise in Magar society. The dispute revolved around a power conflict between two men and the political following that each formed as a result of this conflict. It has a long history and is still far from resolved. Because it focused upon a variety of issues over a long period of time, I will not try to describe it in full, but only extract aspects of the conflict relevant to the discussion of women and political participation.

The traditional leader of the village in question was challenged politically by a man I shall call Ganesh. Ganesh had become a successful entrepreneur and acquired wealth that moved him from a low to fairly high economic stratum. He tried to create a political following by playing upon his new wealth and his poor background to oppose the traditional leaders. The conflict of power that resulted was at first centered on the men of the village, but his mother employed an informal means to undermine his opponents and establish his leadership that involved women in the conflict. She was a deotini, a woman possessed at full moon by the god of fate represented by the sun, called Bhagwan. Her possession coincided with the son's rise in wealth. She induced the family, including Ganesh, to adopt certain rules of Hindu purity revealed as necessary by the god. When in

possession some time after the start of the power conflict, she began to reveal, under possession, evidence that the wife of the traditional leader and other wives of influential men on his side were witches. For a time, this somewhat discredited the opposition and Ganesh played upon this to further his own position. As a result of her accusations, the women in the traditional faction became incensed and found ways to discredit Ganesh's mother's claim to be a divine spokesman. Women who are allied to these wives became vocal in the conflict and the factional struggle became an issue discussed by the village women as well as the men.

The second strategy employed by women in the dispute was a more formal one. Several years later Ganesh tried to convince the villagers to ban the sale of local liquor and replace this enterprise with the sale of government distilled liquor (mowa). He and a friend obtained a license giving them exclusive rights to sell mowa in the village. He argued that the ban would cut down on the use of grain for liquor-making and channel more grain into use for general consumption needs. The village men were agreeable to the idea of a ban, initially, because they felt the district government would view the ban as an attempt of the panchayat to deal with their own subsistence problems and identify them as a panchayat open to development programs and change. The women, who make their living by entrepreneurial activities, particularly the sale of liquor, were outraged. Their main source of income was about to be cut off without provision of any alternative. Ganesh would grow wealthier as a licensed mowa dealer, while they would lose their main source of cash.

When the panchayat meeting was called for final discussion of the issue, about 70 women - both liquor sellers and others - came to debate the proposed ban. The women were initially ignored by the men, who spoke in Nepali rather than in the local language as a way of excluding the women. The women were reduced to jeering the men as they could not enter into serious discussion in Nepali. Women demanded a meeting the next day when rain threatened to fall since they feared the men would simply sign the ban and go home.

After much strategy debate among themselves, the women decided to present clear arguments and not stoop to jeering or give any ground on the issue. The next

day, they moved into the circle of men and refused to allow Nepali in the discussions. They were very forceful and clear in their arguments in this meeting. They argued that unless Ganesh and the panchayat officials offered them financial alternatives, the ban was unfair and would destroy the village economy, not strengthen it. The women claimed they could not pay panchayat taxes if they were denied the right to sell liquor. Liquor making did not divert the grain needed for consumption, they argued, it only provided a profitable use of surplus grain. Since liquor formed the basic ingredient for hospitality, ritual, festivals and gift exchange its ban was ridiculous. (One woman asked if they were supposed to bring mowa instead of home brew to Ganesh's funeral ceremony and anger the ancestor spirits.)

The arguments were convincing and soon panchayat officials began to support the women and turned the consensus of opinion against the ban. Women stopped arguing when men took up their cry, for fear they would lose decorum and their jeering would turn the men against them. After some discussion, the ban was voted down and women put their fingerprints on the document drawn up with the men. It is interesting that women for the first time banded together as a solidarity group and publicly influenced the decision. It is also interesting that when they showed signs of being successful, the women withdrew from the discussion and allowed the traditional male figures to make the actual decision to allow the sale of liquor. Women gained the authority to argue in a public forum, but not the authority to actually make a village decision.

Later in the dispute, another strategy emerged. After this successful resolution, other issues arose that led to several skirmishes between the members of the opposing factions. Two of these skirmishes took place at local fairs between the younger men. Women provided moral support to the men of the factions during this dispute and informally argued vehemently. A court case developed in which Ganesh accused some of his opponents of damaging his property. The defendents were put in jail to await trial. Another attempt was made to introduce mowa but this time with the implicit support of district officials and the licensed dealer was from a nearby village. Some women wished to band together again to oppose mowa, but female relatives of the men in jail feared a public display would hurt their relatives' cause. The return of relatives in some of the households was crucial. They tried to con-

vince other women to stay home from the next fair and not sell liquor. They argued that liquor could become a negative issue as the argument of the district officials was that the drunkenness of the fair-goers precipitated the skirmishes. The women who usually sold liquor attended the next fair but were careful not to make an issue of mowa. Meanwhile, the female relatives of the men in jail decided some additional persuasion was needed to settle the case in their relatives' favor. They held a feast for some prominent, respected village men and asked them to go to the district center and argue in favor of their relatives. The women promised to provide money and food to cover expenses on the trip. They themselves could not go to argue the case, because in dominant Nepali culture, women without education or official standing would have no power or authority to persuade village officials.

When I was about to leave for Kathmandu, the last trend in the case was discussions as to whether women should go to the district en masse for the court case. The traditional leader and his followers were trying to persuade the women to go, but the women were unsure of themselves and reluctant to appear in public.

This case reveals some significant points about women and politics. First, is the variety of strategies that women employ in political affairs, and the fact that, in some instances, they can move into the public sphere. It is central to the understanding of political power to note that women moved back into the private sphere when loyalties and conflict of loyalties between their household and community emerged. When male relatives were in jail, no woman was willing to sacrifice household based concerns of how to ensure the release of their kinsmen for a common issue involving women.

The women who forced a recall of the panchayat meeting and those who were most outspoken were also those directly involved in selling liquor. They were women who depended upon this source of income for their livelihood. The women who did not sell liquor remained on the periphery and sometimes agreed with statements made, but did not actively take a stand. When I discussed this with women who stayed on the periphery, they expressed the fear that active participation would threaten their position in the household, one which was of more importance to them than the interests of the women selling liquor.

Towards the end of my stay one educated single woman became a panchayat council member in the village in which I worked, and a woman from the adjacent panchayat was made assistant council chief (upa-pradhan) in her panchayat. The local woman was in her late twenties and still single. She had attended school and dropped out before her seventh class exams. The woman who became upa-pradhan had been a schoolteacher and was also unmarried. Both were respected in their panchayats by men and women equally. Women were positively inclined towards these council members because they felt these women represented a new type of educated woman who could use and benefit from opportunities created by the Nepali government. These council members were aware of some of the intricacies of the dominant culture in Nepal, and the other women believed they could handle the forces from outside the village all felt but did not understand.

The reaction on the part of the men to their election was mixed. Some men expressed anger and distaste that a woman had entered the public sphere. In the adjacent panchayat a group of men threatened jokingly to hang themselves by their wive's cumberbands, the long strip of cloth worn by women around their waist. The elected women officials did attend council meetings, however, and participated in decision-making along with the men. It is possible that these women will be able to influence decisions in favor of the women as they become more aware of extra-village issues and channels.

There are two possibilities for the direction that these female officials can take. They could become spokesmen for women's issues and try to institute changes favorable to women, or they could try to solidify their role as officials by emulating the men and concern themselves with more general village issues. At present they have discussed the possibilities of cottage industry programs, but these are still accorded a lower priority in discussions than other issues. While they discuss issues with some women, they are confined by ties of kin and work groups to one segment of the village. Unless more traditional women also participate in political affairs that concern changes from the outside, women as a whole could become cut off from information needed to influence decisions, as seems to be the case with other issues, such as the school and the health post. The election of women as officials is important in helping include women in village change processes, but it is important that more women than the few officials become aware of extra-village affairs.

One thrust of the Nepal Women's Organization had been to organize women to effect programs favorable to them. The case presented here demonstrates that even in a society where women participate actively in politics, albeit traditionally and informally, women will not organize themselves unless an issue arises which is central to their subsistence. They will also not maintain that organization if it creates conflicting loyalties with their household or kin.

TABLE 5.1

WOMEN'S POLITICAL AWARENESS

Questions \ Responses	Knows	Does not know	Total
1. Which panchyat does your village belong to?	32(100.0)	0	32(100.0)
2. Who is your pradhan panch?	31(100.0)	0	31(100.0)
3. What number ward do you live in?	28(90.3)	3(9.7)	31(100.0)
4. Who is your C.D.O of your district?	2(7.1)	26(92.9)	28(100.0)
5. Who is the jilla savapati of your district?	2(7.1)	26(92.9)	28(100.0)
6. Who is chairman of the district back-to-the-village campaign committee in your district?	1(3.7)	26(96.3)	27(100.0)
7. Who is your Prime Minister?	3(11.1)	24(88.9)	27(100.0)
8. Have you ever heard of the N.W.O. (National Women's Organization)?	9(28.0)	23(72.0)	32(100.0)
9. Have you ever heard of WSCC (Women's Affairs Training Centre)?	6(18.7)	26(81.3)	32(100.0)
Total	118(45.0)	144(55.0)	262(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 5.2

WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND THEIR ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Question	Response	No. of Respondents
1. Who in the village first suggested the improvement?	1. Men	58(90.6)
	2. Women	0
	3. Both	0
	4. Doesn't know	5(7.8)
	5. Not applicable	1(1.6)
	TOTAL	64(100.0)
2. What did you think of the idea? Did you want this improvement/project?	1. Yes	41(64.0)
	2. No	0
	3. Indifferent	22(34.4)
	4. Not applicable	1(1.6)
	TOTAL	64(100.0)
3. What contribution did your household make? (i.e. money, labour, contribution in kind, etc.)	1. No contribution	1(1.5)
	2. Money	4(5.8)
	3. Female labor	22(32.3)
	4 Male labor	0
	5. Labor of both sexes	40(59.0)
	6. Contribution in kind	0
	7. Doesn't know	0
	8. Other	1(1.5)
	TOTAL	68(100.0)
4. Did you approve of the contribution your household made?	1. Yes	48(75.0)
	2. No	1(1.5)
	3. Indifferent	14(22.0)
	4. Not applicable	1(1.5)
	TOTAL	64(100.0)
5. Do you think this project made your life easier or better?	1. Yes-very much	41(64.1)
	2. Yes-very little	10(15.6)
	3 Not very much	2(3.1)
	4 Not at all	1(1.6)
	5. No-negative effect	1(1.6)
	6. Doesn't know	7(10.9)
	7 Not applicable	2(3.1)
	TOTAL	64(100.0)

TABLE 5.3

MOBILITY PATTERN - NUMBER OF TRIPS BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Trips \ Age Group and Sex	10-14 Years		15-24 Years		25-39 Years		40 & Above Years		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
No Trip	7 (25.0) (87.5)	11 (21.2) (84.6)	5 (17.9) (26.3)	11 (21.1) (61.1)	6 (21.4) (35.3)	14 (26.9) (66.7)	10 (35.7) (45.5)	16 (30.8) (72.7)	28 (100.0) (42.4)	52 (100.0) (70.3)
1- 3 Trips	1 (4.8) (12.5)	1 (8.3) (7.7)	4 (19.0) (21.0)	3 (25.0) (16.7)	8 (38.1) (47.0)	2 (16.7) (9.5)	8 (38.1) (36.3)	6 (50.0) (27.3)	21 (100.0) (31.8)	12 (100.0) (16.2)
4-10 Trips	0	1 (14.3) (7.7)	4 (57.1) (21.1)	2 (28.6) (11.1)	1 (14.3) (5.9)	4 (57.1) (19.0)	2 (28.6) (9.1)	0	7 (100.0) (10.6)	7 (100.0) (9.5)
10 Trips and Above	0	0	6 (60.0) (31.6)	2 (66.7) (11.1)	2 (20.0) (11.8)	1 (33.3) (4.8)	2 (20.0) (9.1)	0	10 (100.0) (15.2)	3 (100.0) (4.0)
Total	8 (12.1) (100.0)	13 (17.6) (100.0)	19 (28.8) (100.0)	18 (24.3) (100.0)	17 (25.8) (100.0)	21 (28.4) (100.0)	22 (33.3) (100.0)	22 (29.7) (100.0)	66 (100.0) (100.0)	74 (100.0) (100.0)

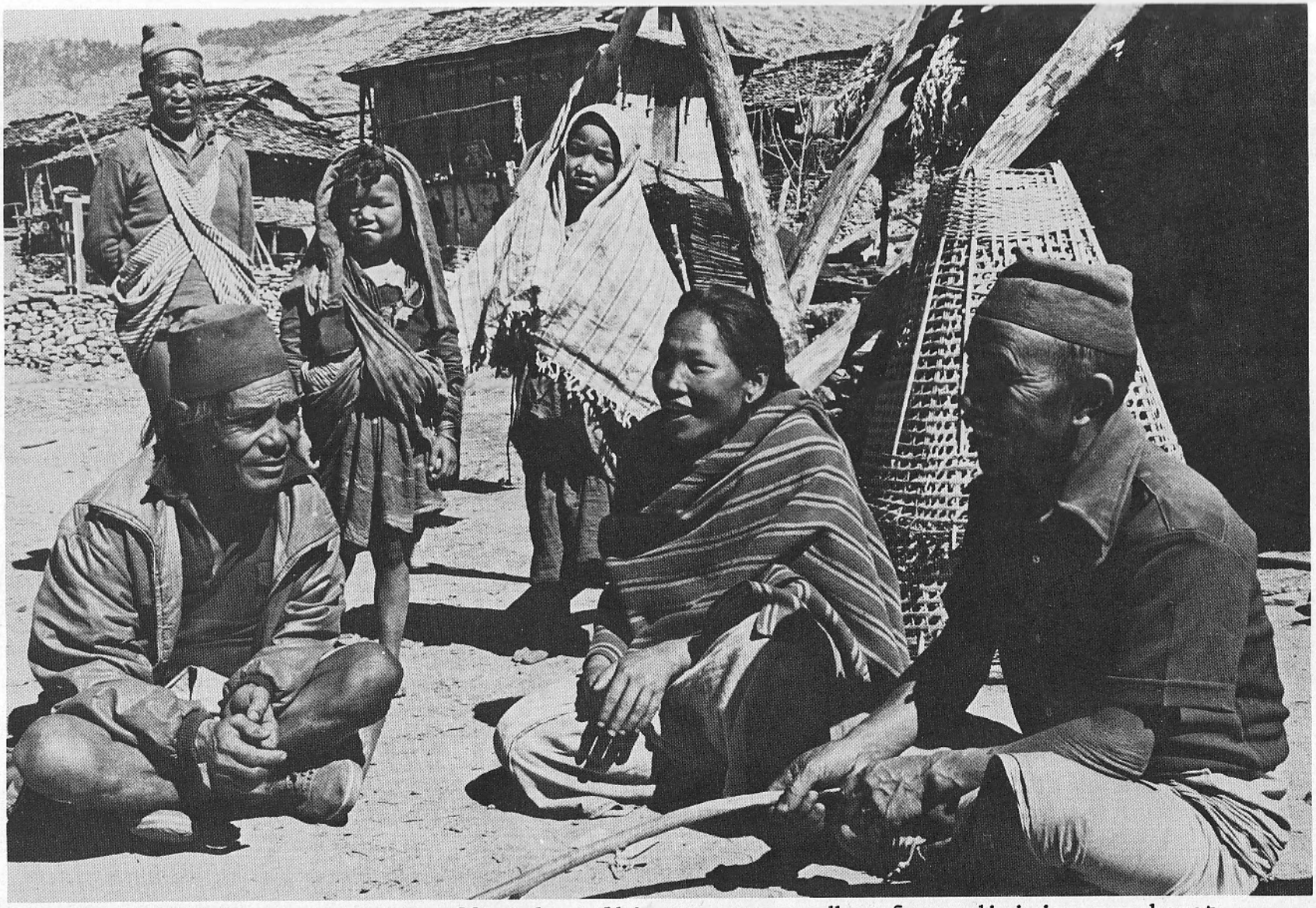
Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 5.4

MOBILITY PATTERN - NUMBER OF TRIPS BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

Economic Strata and Sex / Trips	Top		Middle		Bottom		All Strata	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
No Trip	7 (38.9)	13 (72.2)	5 (35.7)	11 (64.7)	16 (47.1)	28 (71.8)	28 (42.4)	52 (70.3)
1- 3 Trips	4 (22.2)	1 (5.6)	5 (35.7)	4 (23.5)	12 (35.3)	7 (17.9)	21 (31.8)	12 (16.2)
4-10 Trips	1 (5.6)	4 (22.2)	3 (21.4)	0	3 (8.8)	3 (7.7)	7 (10.6)	7 (9.5)
10 Trips and Above	6 (33.3)	0	1 (7.2)	2 (11.8)	3 (8.8)	1 (2.6)	10 (15.2)	3 (4.0)
Total	18	18	14	17	34	39	66	74

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.



Male Thabang panchayat officials talking to upa-pradhan from adjoining panchayat.

CHAPTER VI

HEALTH AND EDUCATION: AN IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter will focus on two topics: women's access to education; and the relation of traditional childbearing and childbearing practices to attitudes towards government health services. Both of these topics involve the question of Magar ideology and their discussion cannot be broached without some prior understanding of the effect of ideology upon women's position in society.

The way in which a woman is viewed ideologically has an important effect upon her position in society (see Schlegal 1977:31). The extent to which a woman's roles are shaped or restricted by conceptions of male and female and by cultural norms is variable from one society to another. Embree (1950) has described some societies as more closely-knit. In them stated norms are supported by strong social sanctions which encourage individuals to follow accepted patterns of behavior fairly closely. Other societies are more loosely-knit; norms serve as guidelines, but there is considerable flexibility in individual choices. Kham Magar society falls into the second, loosely-knit category. There are important conceptions and norms defining women's roles in Magar society, but the extent to which a woman must conform to these is highly variable. A number of conceptions of women have been presented in the discussions in previous chapters. The image of a woman as childbearer and mother strongly affects women socially and economically. Defining descent according to 'bone' and 'blood' excludes women from direct inheritance of angsa (family property) and makes it important for a wife to have sons to legitimate her position in her husband's household. A bride is seen as a link between two lineages, and the means to cement important social ties. This conception of a woman is expressed throughout ritual. In funeral rituals, a woman's dual affiliation to her own and her husband's lineage is demonstrated by the fact that a woman who has married out continues to attend the rites for members of her natal lineage. The importance of a woman who has married out to her natal lineage is demonstrated in a number of festivals, particularly Dasain, the main religious festival in Nepal. Elsewhere in Nepal, other Nepali groups perform a ceremony called bhai-tika. In this ceremony there is an exchange of gifts and respect between brother and sister. Brothers are given a tika, a mark on their forehead of rice, milk and colored powder, signifying a religious blessing. In Magar villages, the ceremony of bhai-tika is called cheli man-nu (to pay respect to one's outmarried female lineage members). Brothers go

to their sisters' houses to give tika, but do not themselves receive it. The ceremony serves to reinforce the ties of the outmarried women to their natal male kin, another expression of a woman's continuing affiliation and obligation to her natal lineage.

While these are important conceptions of women and shape their appropriate roles, they are not the only ones. Women grow up with the ideal of fulfilling a role as wife and mother and a bearer of sons, but there are no strong social sanctions against a woman who does not fulfill these roles. This gives women the freedom to live alone, if unhappy in their husband's household, and is the basis for the practice of giving a son-less widow control over tijara property during her lifetime, even though she has not provided her husband a son. And as discussed earlier, unlike Hinduized groups, there is no emphasis on a woman's sexuality being ritually dangerous and needing control through marriage. Divorce and remarriage and widow remarriage are not problematic ideologically. If a woman is divorced or widowed, she does not fall in ritual status, but continues to be an equal participant in the family and community rituals.

Women are not accorded a subordinate position in Magar ideology vis-a-vis men. Instead, their different roles are considered complementary to those of men. This has an important effect upon women's access to education. The Magar feel that girls should be educated along with boys if the economic demands of the household can be met. In the survey on attitudes towards education, respondents who felt male children should be educated also felt that female children should be educated. A number of girls have been educated to the seventh grade in the village (see Tables 6.5 and 6.6). Three village girls are now in high school in nearby districts at considerable expense to their families, since, though they are accommodated in houses free, they must have money for food and supplies. A number of girls have also learned to read simple Nepali and do simple accounting with the help of a few educated villagers and the encouragement of their parents. Six of the eight families listed as literate were educated in this way.

Though it is common for a young girl to attend school for a few years until her labor is increasingly needed at home, fewer girls are sent to school than boys. The restriction on sending girls to school is at present economic, and not due to negative values placed on the education of women. Young girls are usually needed at home to help their mothers with agricultural and household tasks. While some boys are kept at home because they are needed in the got to assist with

TABLE 6.1

LITERACY AND SCHOOLING PERCENTAGE TO POPULATION BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Total Population, Literacy, Schooling and Sex / Age Group	Total Population		Literate		Illiterate		Schooling		No Schooling	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
5- 9 Years	11	8	11 (57.9)	6 (28.6)	8 (42.1)	15 (71.4)	8 (72.7)	0	3 (27.3)	8 (100.0)
10-14 Years	8	13					4 (50.0)	6 (46.2)	4 (50.0)	7 (53.8)
15 Years and Above	58	61	38 (65.5)	8 (13.1)	20 (34.5)	53 (86.9)	22 (37.9)	5 (8.2)	36 (62.1)	56 (91.8)
Total	77	82	49 (63.6)	14 (17.1)	28 (36.4)	68 (82.9)	34 (44.2)	11 (13.4)	43 (55.8)	71 (86.6)

Figures within parentheses indicate literacy percentage to total population.

TABLE 6.2

LITERACY PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(5 - 14 YEARS)

Sex and Literacy / Economic Strata	Male		Female		Total	
	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate
Top	4 (66.7) (36.4)	1 (33.3) (12.5)	2 (33.3) (33.3)	2 (66.7) (13.3)	6 (100.0) (35.3)	3 (100.0) (13.1)
Middle	0	3 (42.9) (37.5)	3 (100.0) (50.0)	4 (57.1) (26.7)	3 (100.0) (17.6)	7 (100.0) (30.4)
Bottom	7 (87.5) (63.6)	4 (30.8) (50.0)	1 (12.5) (16.7)	9 (69.2) (60.0)	8 (100.0) (47.1)	13 (100.0) (56.5)
All Strata	11 (64.7) (100.0)	8 (34.8) (100.0)	6 (35.3) (100.0)	15 (65.2) (100.0)	17 (100.0) (100.0)	23 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 6.3

LITERACY PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(15 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Sex and Literacy / Economic Strata	Male		Female		Total	
	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate
Top	12 (100.0) (31.6)	4 (22.2) (20.0)	0	14 (77.8) (26.4)	12 (100.0) (6.1)	18 (100.0) (24.7)
Middle	9 (81.8) (23.7)	4 (26.7) (20.0)	2 (18.2) (25.0)	11 (73.3) (20.8)	11 (100.0) (23.9)	15 (100.0) (20.5)
Bottom	17 (73.9) (44.7)	12 (30.0) (60.0)	6 (26.1) (75.0)	28 (70.0) (52.8)	23 (100.0) (50.0)	40 (100.0) (54.8)
All Strata	38 (82.6) (100.0)	20 (27.4) (100.0)	8 (17.4) (100.0)	53 (72.6) (100.0)	46 (100.0) (100.0)	73 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 6.4

EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(5 - 9 YEARS)

Sex and Schooling / Economic Strata	Male		Female		Total	
	No Schooling	Schooling (Primary)	No Schooling	Schooling (Primary)	No Schooling	Schooling (Primary)
Top	0	3 (100.0) (37.5)	0	0	0	3 (100.0) (37.5)
Middle	1 (25.0) (33.3)	1 (100.0) (12.5)	3 (75.0) (37.5)	0	4 (100.0) (36.4)	1 (100.0) (12.5)
Bottom	2 (28.6) (66.7)	4 (100.0) (50.0)	5 (71.4) (62.5)	0	7 (100.0) (63.6)	4 (100.0) (50.0)
All Strata	3 (27.3) (100.0)	8 (100.0) (100.0)	8 (72.7) (100.0)	0	11 (100.0) (100.0)	8 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 6.5

EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(10 - 14 YEARS)

Economic Strata \ Sex and Schooling	Male				Female				Total			
	No Schooling	Schooling			No Schooling	Schooling			No Schooling	Schooling		
		Primary	Secondary	Total		Primary	Secondary	Total		Primary	Secondary	Total
Top	1 (33.3) (25.0)	0	1 (50.0) (100.0)	1 (33.3) (25.0)	2 (66.7) (28.6)	1 (100.0) (20.0)	1 (50.0) (100.0)	2 (66.7) (33.3)	3 (100.0) (27.3)	1 (100.0) (12.5)	2 (100.0) (100.0)	3 (100.0) (30.0)
Middle	1 (50.0) (25.0)	0	0	0	1 (50.0) (14.3)	3 (100.0) (60.0)	0	3 (100.0) (50.0)	2 (100.0) (18.2)	3 (100.0) (37.5)	0	3 (100.0) (30.0)
Bottom	2 (33.3) (50.0)	3 (75.0) (100.0)	0	3 (75.0) (75.0)	4 (66.7) (57.1)	1 (25.0) (20.0)	0	1 (25.0) (16.7)	6 (100.0) (54.5)	4 (100.0) (50.0)	0	4 (100.0) (40.0)
All Strata	4 (36.4) (100.0)	3 (37.5) (100.0)	1 (50.0) (100.0)	4 (40.0) (100.0)	7 (63.6) (100.0)	5 (62.5) (100.0)	1 (50.0) (100.0)	6 (60.0) (100.0)	11 (100.0) (100.0)	8 (100.0) (100.0)	2 (100.0) (100.0)	10 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 6.6

EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(15 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Economic Strata \ Sex and Schooling	Male						Female						Total					
	No Schooling	Schooling					No Schooling	Schooling					No Schooling	Schooling				
		Primary	Secondary	Higher	Army	Total		Primary	Secondary	Higher	Army	Total		Primary	Secondary	Higher	Army	Total
Top	10 (41.7) (27.8)	2 (100.0) (25.0)	1 (100.0) (25.0)	2 (100.0) (25.0)	1 (100.0) (50.0)	6 (100.0) (27.3)	14 (58.3) (25.0)	0	0	0	0	0	24 (100.0) (26.1)	2 (100.0) (20.0)	1 (100.0) (14.3)	2 (100.0) (25.0)	1 (100.0) (50.0)	6 (100.0) (22.2)
Middle	7 (36.8) (19.4)	2 (66.7) (25.0)	1 (100.0) (25.0)	3 (100.0) (37.5)	0	6 (85.7) (27.3)	12 (63.2) (21.4)	1 (33.3) (50.0)	0	0	0	1 (14.3) (20.0)	19 (100.0) (20.7)	3 (100.0) (30.0)	1 (100.0) (14.3)	3 (100.0) (37.5)	0	7 (100.0) (25.9)
Bottom	19 (38.8) (52.8)	4 (80.0) (50.0)	2 (40.0) (50.0)	3 (100.0) (37.5)	1 (100.0) (50.0)	10 (71.4) (45.4)	30 (61.2) (53.6)	1 (20.0) (50.0)	3 (60.0) (100.0)	0	0	4 (28.6) (80.0)	49 (100.0) (53.3)	5 (100.0) (50.0)	5 (100.0) (71.4)	3 (100.0) (37.5)	1 (100.0) (50.0)	14 (100.0) (51.9)
All Strata	36 (39.1) (100.0)	8 (80.0) (100.0)	4 (57.1) (100.0)	8 (100.0) (100.0)	2 (100.0) (100.0)	22 (81.5) (100.0)	56 (60.9) (100.0)	2 (20.0) (100.0)	3 (42.9) (100.0)	0	0	5 (18.5) (100.0)	92 (100.0) (100.0)	10 (100.0) (100.0)	7 (100.0) (100.0)	8 (100.0) (100.0)	2 (100.0) (100.0)	27 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

herding, many fathers who value education are willing to assume a heavier work load to enable their sons to attend school. A woman, however, often depends upon her female child to supply labor that must otherwise be obtained from hired workers, an expense the family can seldom afford. A second factor is the preference for educating a male child first if there are only limited family funds to use for educational purposes. A male child will inherit the estate, and it is felt to be more important for a son to be able to read and write so that he can understand problems that arise with taxes or property disputes. Parents also feel an educated son is more likely to find suitable employment to supplement family income.

While some of the stress of educating girls in Thabang is due to the greater awareness of and orientation to the outside society as compared to more isolated Magar villages, there is evidence that the value placed on female education derives from generally held Magar values. This is shown by the fact that in two villages that are more conservative than Thabang, there are elementary schools with locally recruited female school teachers.

There is a problem at present for educated women in Thabang, one that arises because of the lack of local employment opportunities. As mentioned in the chapter on legal rights, there are a number of single, educated women in the village. Two were trained by the Women's Affairs Training and Extension Center and can employ their skill in weaving and knitting to support themselves. Other women who have attended school but do not have other skills do not want to assume the traditional role of wife and mother and not use their education in some way. They are, however, reluctant to leave the village in search of employment even though there are no available jobs locally; all suitable local jobs have been filled by village boys with more education.

> One of the women educated up to seventh grade wanted to go to high school, as her older brother had done, but the family could not afford the additional expense. For a few months she went to work in the district center as a clerk in a bank office. She was uncomfortable there because she did not have sufficient command of the rules of the dominant culture to fit in with the local women. She was unable to make friends easily and missed her friends and family in the village. She returned to the village on leave and then

> resigned from her job. Now she is at home and talks about the lack of local employment for women. She would like to learn to weave on government cottage industry looms, but has no funds to use for the training program.

Other villagers do not ridicule these young, educated women because they do not want to get married and assume traditional tasks. Education is seen as a chance for a better life and women view female education as a harbinger of change and new opportunities. When village women were interviewed about which women they most respected in the village, while most were reluctant to answer or named women from their own kin or work groups, those who named women outside their own group invariably mentioned at least one of the single, educated women as someone they respect.

The problem at present is that while villagers value education for female children, there are no local roles for educated women to assume. If training opportunities become available, there are a number of women that would be willing to participate in such programs. The opportunities presently available to women require them to leave the village or require too much expense to be a real option.

Health: Childbirth

In Magar society, conception is believed to occur when the mother's 'blood' mixes with the father's 'seed' to form the foetus. Villagers believe conception will most likely occur from the end of the menstrual period until eleven days have passed. Conception itself is a gift from the gods, mainly Baraha, the god of the high pasture. If a woman does not become pregnant after four or five years of marriage, a barrenness ceremony is performed to the god Baraha by her and her husband. If either the husband or wife are lax in ritual obligations, this can affect the wife's fertility. There are no exclusively female rituals to induce pregnancy as exist among other caste groups in Nepal (see Bennett 1976).

Once the woman becomes pregnant there are no special ceremonies or rituals until the child is born. A boy child will be carried higher and slightly to the left side of the stomach. Spirits and witches can affect the birth of a child. A badly deformed child is believed to be the result of witchcraft practiced on the mother, and such a child is usually allowed to die at birth. Multiple births, however, are believed to be extremely auspicious. Each child born is the gift of a different god and thus all children born should be cared for equally. If there are triplets, the mother will

nurse two of the infants herself, and another relative or village woman will be found to nurse the other child.

When the mother approaches her ninth month by local calculations - - Magar women, like other Nepalis calculate pregnancy by including the month of conception as the first month and thus pregnancy lasts ten months (see Bennett 1976) - - she is given lighter loads to carry but otherwise continues to work as hard as usual. The Magar, like other groups in Nepal, conceptualize foods in two categories, as either hot or cold. The hot category includes cereal grains, meat, eggs, distilled liquor, ghee, tea and milk. Cold foods include green vegetables, beer, potatoes, rice and buttermilk. When a woman is in her last month of pregnancy, she is told to eat less cold foods and more hot foods. She is advised to eat only small quantities of vegetables. While she eats more meat, ghee, and other hot foods, few families can afford to give her more than occasional tea and a little extra ghee. After the birth, traditionally a woman was given honey, distilled liquor, meat, eggs and rice. Now these are expensive and a woman is either given a smaller quantity of these traditional foods, or only meat and liquor.

While most deliveries are made by the women of the household, and sometimes with only the aid of the husband, for difficult births, an older knowledgeable woman, called a surelni, will be called. For a breach birth or a transverse lay, the surelni will try to turn the child in the womb. Often this is unsuccessful and the mother dies. Villagers explain that this is because the infant bites at the mother's heart and causes her to die. If there is difficulty in expelling the afterbirth, the new mother will be given a mixture of oil and leaves to drink to make it 'slip out of her body'. Often birth complications are the result of malevolent demons or witches. A shaman (jhankri) may be asked to come and try to exorcise these spirits. The jhankri may administer a mixture of roots and auspicious leaves in addition to oil to speed delivery.

If the child is stillborn or if the woman has a miscarriage, there is a danger that the spirit of the infant will remain on earth to hinder the birth of a subsequent child. This spirit (ra) becomes jealous of the new foetus and will try to kill it or the mother. A ceremony must be performed by the jhankri to exorcise this ra, so that the woman can continue to have children.*

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* See the discussion of the ra in David Watters (1976).

Thabang informants told me that the foetus should be cut into pieces and buried in a number of locations so the ra will lose its identity and not try to harm the mother. If mother and child die during labor, they are buried separately for the same reason.

After the birth, the mother cuts the umbilical cord and buries the afterbirth behind the house to prevent witches from using it to harm the mother or the child. Within two to five days of birth, the mother and child are taken to the river and bathed by a female relative and the house is purified by spreading a fresh mixture of cowdung and mud on the floor and sprinkling urine around the house. Women are sometimes given a mixture of asadafoetida (hing) from the bazaar, and local roots, to help start the flow of milk. The child is nursed until it reaches the age of three or four or until another child is born. Solid food is given after the sixth month or so but no attempt is made to force this on the child. Weaning is a gradual and untraumatic process.

Health: Children and Illness

When a child is still young it is in great danger of witchcraft or harm from malevolent demons. Some mothers put silver bangles on the wrists or ankles of their young children to protect them from evil spirits. Silver bangles are also put around the edge of their velvet baby caps for the same purpose. If a mother has lost one or two children before, the family may wait a year or two to name the new child. The rationale seems to be that as long as the child has no name it is more protected from witches. If a young boy becomes seriously ill, an iron bangle may be put around its wrist as protection. A young girl will sometimes be protected by a mock 'marriage ceremony'. Her parents arrange her marriage with an old widower and pay the arrangement fee. If she lives, when she marries properly, the widower is given a mock 'compensation' and invited to the wedding feast. This custom is known as re de ke ne (to throw to the husband). My informants were unable to tell me the rationale behind this practice.

If the child falls ill, the mother is usually the first family member to suggest that a jhankri should be called. Sometimes the mother will pay the jhankri a visit and ask him what the cause of illness might be. He will usually suggest a remedy and if this fails he will come to perform a diagnosis and cure. Ancestor spirits who have not been properly propitiated can cause illness in children. If a family eats pork in the house this may anger the ancestor

spirits and cause the child to grow ill. For this reason, many villagers will not cook or eat pork in the house, and if a child is sickly, the mother may stop eating pork completely.

Villagers are aware of the existence of western medical care, but until the health post opened in Thabang were afraid to travel several days to a health post believing a child could not survive the trip. Many children grow anaemic due to a variety of worms which sap their strength. Mothers know that the western remedies for worms are effective and will use this medicine if it is available. For serious illness, however, mothers will rely mainly upon the jhankri and occasionally supplement his cures with medicine if it is available.

As in other parts of Nepal, the use of western forms of medicine and traditional healers are not incompatible (see Stone 1976). The Magar feel that the effect of each system is different and the use of one complements the other. Western medicine treats the symptons of illness to make the patient well, while the jhankri exorcises the spirit or witch which is the root of the illness and thus effects a cure. If medicine is available, mothers will often use both systems at the same time. If the illness is the result of an imbalance of hot and cold, usually because the child has eaten too much food of one category, then western medicine is believed to counteract this imbalance. If there is no apparently obvious cause of illness or if the child does not respond to treatment, then the cause is believed to be supernatural. If a child falls over a hillside, for instance this is believed to be due to interference by a witch, as usually a child is agile and does not fall or slip. If a child grows weak for no apparent reason and develops a fever, this is also usually attributed to some supernatural force.

Modern Health Care

While women are open to the idea of western medicine, traditional healers are the only curers upon whom they can really rely. The nearest hospital is a few days' walk away for a healthy person and the trip is expensive. The district health posts do not have as extensive facilities as the hospital and often run out of medicine. Villagers are reluctant to walk two days to the district center to discover the doctor is away from the health post or to find the medicine they need is not in supply. There is now a health post in Thabang, but there is no competent staff to diagnose or treat properly. The village level health workers are young and inexperienced and have only trained for a few months. In

the absence of a higher level worker they do some diagnosis and treatment. Often they run out of a particular drug, such as worm medicine, or are unable to diagnose the illness. Although the more sophisticated villagers are aware that these assistants are not trained to do more than minor medical treatment in the health post and understand the problems involved in obtaining a qualified health worker, most villagers do not. They find the inadequacies of the health post indicative of the poor quality of western medicine and believe that western medicine treats the symptons rather than the cause of the illness. While they continue to go to the health post, they feel less and less secure with this service. Another problem exists that decreases credibility. Villagers have been exposed to the use of injections to cure tuberculosis and other major disorders and have the belief that injections contain stronger and 'better' medicine than tablets or capsules. They want, therefore, to be given an injection in place of a series of pills, and they feel that the health workers are refusing them injections simply because they contain more expensive medicine.

There is a family planning worker in the village who was trained to work at the village level in the district center. He is a young married man who dispenses condoms and pills. A few women have taken pills, but have little faith in them. Of the five women who took birth control pills during my stay, all five became pregnant within the year. While it is possible that some of them did not take them regularly, this cannot explain all of them without some more investigation. Whatever the reason for their ineffectiveness, women are now reluctant to take birth control pills because they believe they do not work and because they are afraid of the side effects that result. The family planning worker does not have the expertise to monitor these women and, because most of the women are shy in his presence, he cannot successfully allay their fears.

Another reason that women are disinterested in birth control is the extremely high incidence of death among infants and children. In a survey conducted with 68 women, of 201 children born alive 24.5% (49) died before the age of one and 37.8% (46) died before the age of seven. In the project sample of 165 children conceived by 52 women, 143 (86%) were born alive and 111 (67.2%) were alive at the time of the survey. This gives child mortality rate of 32.8%. Accurate figures on miscarriages and still births are difficult to obtain since women tend to under-report pregnancies in such cases and may 'forget' infants who die soon after birth.

It is therefore reasonable to estimate that the actual child mortality rate is closer to 35-40%. More complete data on fertility is present in Table 6.7. Economic stratum seems to have little effect on child mortality. In Table 6.8 a breakdown on women's fertility by economic stratum shows women in the middle economic stratum to have the highest number of conceptions and children born alive. Given the size of the sample it is impossible to explore other factors affecting fertility, such as the economic value of children as household sources of labor. However, in completed fertility of older women (over 40) women in the higher stratum have a greater number of conceptions and of children now alive.

Women whose children are not yet in their teens are thus reluctant to limit family size until they are sure that their children will live to maturity. Even if a woman has two male children and at least one female child, she will be afraid to use birth control.

There are a number of improvements in health care needed in Magar villages. To meet the needs of village women there should be a female family planning officer as well as a male worker. A woman would have a better rapport than would a man and could, with proper training, also advise women on better prenatal and postnatal practices. One of the traditional midwives or a woman who has had children could be trained as a midwife to give women better delivery care and also advise them about pre and post-natal care. If family planning is to have any success there needs to be an effective system of health care to help reduce the high rate of child mortality. It is important that the health care provided be adequate. Where the health care introduced is inadequate, villagers are less ready to accept the ideas of preventive medicine. A good water supply would also alleviate some of the health problems. In addition to saving time required to fetch water from the river, a piped water supply would cut down on the rate of water-transmitted diseases.

TABLE 6.7

CHILD MORTALITY DATA BY ECONOMIC STRATA FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE CONCEIVED AT LEAST ONE CHILD

Economic Strata / Fertility Category	Top Stratum N = 13	Middle Stratum N = 12	Bottom Stratum N = 27	Total N = 52
Mean number of conceptions	3.4 (N=34)	3.9 (N=47)	3.2 (N = 84)	3.43 (N=165)
Mean number of children born alive	2.7 (N=27)	3.5 (N=39)	2.9 (N=77)	2.98 (N=143)
Mean number of children now alive	2.3 (N=23)	2.57 (N=27)	2.3 (N=61)	2.37 (N=111)
Percent of children born alive	79.4%	82.9%	91.6%	86.0%
Percent of children now alive	67.6%	57.4%	72.6%	67.2%

TABLE 6.8

Fertility Data

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONCEPTIONS AND BIRTHS PER ADULT FEMALE BY ECONOMIC STRATA

Conception/Birth / Economic Strata	Number of Respondents	Conception	Birth	Children Now-Alive		
				Male	Female	Total
TOP	10	3.60 (3.27)	2.70 (2.41)	1.10 (1.29)	1.20 (0.79)	2.30 (1.83)
MIDDLE	12	4.17 (3.19)	3.25 (3.22)	1.08 (1.56)	1.17 (1.27)	2.25 (2.14)
BOTTOM	27	3.44 (2.47)	2.85 (2.38)	1.37 (1.14)	0.89 (1.09)	2.26 (1.87)
Village Average	49	3.65 (2.78)	2.92 (2.56)	1.24 (1.27)	1.02 (1.07)	2.26 (1.89)

Figures within parentheses indicate standard deviations.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONCEPTIONS AND BIRTHS PER ADULT FEMALE BY FAMILY STRUCTURE

Conception/Birth / Family Structure	Number of Respondents	Conception	Birth	Children Now-Alive		
				Male	Female	Total
NUCLEAR	21	3.76 (2.61)	2.95 (2.25)	1.33 (1.11)	0.95 (0.92)	2.29 (1.55)
EXTENDED	19	3.95 (3.15)	3.10 (2.90)	1.37 (1.57)	1.05 (1.03)	2.42 (2.14)
OTHERS	9	2.78 (2.44)	2.44 (2.74)	0.78 (0.83)	1.11 (1.54)	1.89 (2.20)
Village Average	49	3.65 (2.78)	2.92 (2.56)	1.24 (1.27)	1.02 (1.07)	2.26 (1.89)

Figures within parentheses indicate standard deviations.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONCEPTIONS AND BIRTHS PER ADULT FEMALE BY AGE GROUP

Conception/Birth / Age Group	Number of Respondents	Conception	Birth	Children Now-Alive		
				Male	Female	Total
15 - 19	3	1.00 (0.00)	0	0	0	0
20 - 24	4	1.25 (0.50)	0.75 (0.96)	0	0.75 (0.00)	0.75 (0.96)
25 - 29	9	2.33 (0.87)	2.00 (1.00)	0.78 (0.67)	0.89 (0.96)	1.67 (1.12)
30 - 49	24	4.21 (3.01)	3.25 (2.57)	1.58 (1.28)	1.04 (1.05)	2.62 (1.91)
50 +	9	5.44 (2.74)	4.89 (2.80)	1.78 (1.48)	1.56 (1.08)	3.33 (2.06)
Village Average	49	3.65 (2.78)	2.92 (2.56)	1.24 (1.27)	1.02 (1.07)	2.26 (1.89)

Cleaning chickens after a ritual sacrifice at the family shrine of the ancestors.

Household responsibilities of school age girls are a major deterent to their education. Even when they attend school they are only allowed to study after chores are completed.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

With this brief examination of some of the aspects of women's participation in Kham Magar society it is now possible to extract some general principles structuring women's roles and status and present an outline of development needs in the light of these principles. This concluding chapter falls into two parts: first, an evaluation of women's status overall, and second, a list of suggestions of means to incorporate Magar women into the development process and recommendations for needed improvements in particular aspects of women's participation in Magar society.

Evaluation of Women's Status

The status of women in Magar society has been shown in this monograph to be complex and one that varies in different spheres of activity and from different perspectives. There are, however, a number of general principles that are of importance in evaluating women's status and roles. One is the complementarity that characterizes roles and authority/power assumed by men and women. The traditional division of labor accords complementary tasks to men and women. Men are the primary herders, housebuilders, and ploughers, while women perform most of the tasks related to child care, cooking and other daily household chores, and daily agricultural tasks. Each sex assumes responsibility for decisions regarding the allocation of labor and resources related to these tasks, consulting each other as necessary. While men have the final authority in decisions regarding family property and major household expenditures, both sexes participate in and influence such decisions. Men have huk in land and angsa as male members of the dajyu-bhai, yet women also retain important rights over personal property, both self-earned and daijo (dowry).

Another principle is flexibility. Men do not attach a negative value to tasks usually undertaken by women, but will also help in agricultural tasks, cooking, and carrying water, or in childcare when necessary. Women will assume important decision-making roles in the absence of their husbands and be given the authority to act as household head. While women are denied huk in land, as widows they can control property during their lifetime. If a man has no sons, his daughters can be given control over part or all of his estate. While traditionally men

assume public positions of authority in village decision-making, women are able to enter public power channels as the case in Chapter V demonstrates.

Women's participation in household and village channels depends upon factors of age, marital status, residence and motherhood. As an unmarried girl in her natal household, a woman is subordinate to her parents and other senior family members. When a girl first marries and lives jointly with her in-laws, she is subordinate to her parents-in-law and defers to them in daily decision-making, although she may participate in discussions regarding household affairs. As a married woman, sons become important to legitimate a woman's position in the household. After a woman bears sons, her authority in the household and her influence in extra-household affairs is considerable. When she and her husband set up a separate residence, her power and authority is increased in her role as female household head. This can be mitigated, however, if her husband takes a second wife, who can compete for household resources and power. When older, a woman retains her position as female household head, exerting authority over her sons' wives. If she has sons, as a widow she controls the family estate vis-a-vis her sons until her death. If she does not have sons, a widow retains rights of control over a tijara share of her husband's estate.

Magar society provides women alternatives if she does not assume the expected roles of wife and mother. She can return to her natal home if her marriage is an unhappy one. She can divorce and remarry without loss of ritual status and remarry if widowed without issue. Control over personal property and access to entrepreneurial activities give women who stay single the option to support themselves. Entrepreneurial activities also allow them to earn extra cash so that they are less of a burden on their own or their husband's lineage. The roles of wife and mother are the ideal, and most women seek to fulfill these roles. There are alternatives, however, that give women other viable options. The presence of women who live alone provides women unhappy with their situation with female relatives to whom they can turn if necessary.

Suggestions and Recommendations

It is important that development incorporate women in a way that retains this complementarity and flexibility. It is also important that women's options increase as

changes occur and that they have access to government services, such as health and education and new employment opportunities. The following list is far from exhaustive or definitive. It provides, however, some crucial considerations for planning of both women-related and more general development programs.

Economy and Employment

1. Women as well as men should be participants in agricultural training programs.

2. Both men and women should be made aware of new agricultural methods and techniques as well as inputs such as new seed or fertilizers.

3. Technology that at present restricts women's time for other activities should be improved. This includes methods of grain processing and provision of a clean, nearby water supply.

4. Introduction of cottage industry programs could increase village and household income. Such programs need to be flexible, so that women can also meet the other responsibilities, and financially viable so that women will want to participate.

5. Since women are traditionally involved in borrowing and lending, they, as well as men, should have access to new forms of credit.

Legal Rights

1. As the National Code becomes more important in more remote hill areas like that settled by the Kham Magar, women need to be made aware of their legal rights under this code.

2. Changes made in the National Code should account for the existing flexibility in Magar customary law, so that women do not lose the security they have traditionally been provided in Magar society when widowed, divorced, or single.

Political Sphere

1. Programs designed to organize women as a group need to recognize the traditional grouping of women, in work groups and as kin. Women will not automatically ally as women unless there is an issue that involves a common subsistence need.

2. Women officials can play an important role in promoting changes useful to village women and can act as important information brokers. This role depends, however, on their own authority and awareness and their contacts with other village women.

Health and Education

1. Modern health care should be introduced effectively to instill confidence. Since women assume primary responsibility for child care, the use of modern versus traditional methods of care and curing depends largely upon them.

2. Family planning programs to limit fertility will not be effective unless there is a drop in infant and child mortality. Supportive health care for mothers and pregnant women as well as preventive measures to lower the rate of childhood diseases is central to lowering fertility rates.

3. It is important that there be female as well as male health and family planning workers. There are a number of traditional and educated women that could be recruited locally.

4. Women's participation in education depends not upon attitudes towards female education per se, but upon the economic stratum and labor requirements of the particular household. Improvements in the economic sector are thus important to increase access to female education.

GLOSSARY OF KHAM MAGAR AND NEPALI TERMS

K = Kham Magar
N = Nepali

1. adālat (N) = court (legal)
2. angsa (N) = ancestral estate
3. bena (N,K) = father's sister's son
4. Bhaitika (N) - ceremony performed as part of Tihar/Dasain festivities in which brothers are given a ritual mark of blessing (tika)
5. bhanja (K) = son-in-law; bride-taking lineage
6. bobo (K) = father's sister's husband; groom's father
7. changey (K) = amaranth
8. cheli mannu (K) = system of honoring outmarried women of the lineage.
9. chokora (K) = a local beer
10. chuta mi lie yen da ne (K) = form of exchange labor between households
11. daijo (N) = dowry; copper, brass, jewelry, or animals given to daughter at marraige
12. dajyu-bhai (N) = lineage
13. dapa-dami (K) = teenage boys and girls
14. darni (N) = Nepali measure that is approximately 7 lbs.
15. dur (K) = seed; also man's semen
16. ghar (N) = husband's house
17. ghutta (N) = water-driven mill (grain)
18. got (N) = shepherd's hut; simple house built in pasture area
19. gum (N) = goat's hair blanket used as a raincoat by herders
20. hing (N) = asefoetida
21. huk (N) = authority; rights in property
22. jainshi (K) = astrologer
23. jajmani (N) = traditional system of payment to artisan castes
24. jhankri (N) = shaman; local medical practitioner
25. ji (K) = blood; also menstrual blood
26. jimi jagga (K) = landed property
27. jiuni (N) = portion of ancestral estate reserved for parent(s)
28. jyela (N) = wage labor
29. jyotishi (N) = astrologer
30. kalo pahard (K) = local name for black mountains of Simla, India
31. koi (K) = large copper pot used to make liquor
32. kuwa (N) = natural pool
33. lahori (K) = local name for soldier
34. lapata (K) = flail for threshing grain
35. maiju (K) = mother's brother's wife; bride's mother
36. maiti (N) = husband's house
37. mama (K) = mother's brother; bride's father; bride-giving lineage

38. mana (N) = Nepali measure equal to about 2 cups
39. manjur (N) = signed permission
40. matwali (N) = literally 'liquor-drinking' caste; those castes below Brahman and Chetri, mostly hill tribes
41. mawa (N) = fruit of tree of same name used to make liquor
42. muri (N) = Nepali grain measure equal to 20 pathi (about 18 cups)
43. mudda (K) = distilled liquor
44. nachune (N) = untouchable; used for artisan castes
45. nokkan (K) - beer mash
46. pakha (K) = marginal land; also unirrigated land
47. palle, paincha (K) = exchange labor that entails strict accounting
48. parma (N) = exchange labor for agricultural tasks
49. papar (N) = bitter buckwheat
50. pathi (N) = Nepali measure equal to 8 mana (about 18 cups)
51. phuphu (K) = father's sister; groom's mother
52. pradhan panch (N) = village council leader
53. puwa (K) = a thistle fiber
54. ra (K) = ghost of dead child
55. rai shu biha (K) = marriage by choice
56. ram (K) - local fair
57. rangil (K) = sickle
58. rantai (K) = hand-driven stone mill
59. rihp (K) = spindle
60. rodi (N) = Gurung teenager association
61. sagaine (K) = to give help in an agricultural task
62. sali (K) = mother's brother's daughter
63. sampatti (N) = moveable property
64. sasu-sasura (N) = mother and father-in-law
65. sauta (N) = co-wife
66. sho (K) = household contribution of liquor for a funeral ceremony
67. Sojoza yen da ne (K) = unaccounted exchange labor between households
68. surelni (K) = midwife
69. tana (K) = loom
70. thar (K) = clan or sub-clan
71. thola (N) = Nepali weight equal to 11.2 grams
72. tijara (K) = portion of husband's estate given to widow for use
73. tika (N) = ritual mark of blessing
74. udale ba ne (K) = marriage by elopement
75. upa-pradhan (N) = vice council leader of village council (panchayat)
76. uwa (N) - naked barley
77. wang shu biha (K) = arranged marriage

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