

The Parbatiya Women of Bakundol - lynn bennett



**THE
STATUS OF WOMEN IN NEPAL**

volume II part 7

The Status of Women in Nepal
Volume II: FIELD STUDIES
PART 1

THE PARBATIYA WOMEN OF BAKUNDOL



The Status of Women in Nepal

Volume II: FIELD STUDIES

Part 7

THE PARBATIYA WOMEN OF BAKUNDOL

LYNN BENNETT



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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:

<u>Region/District</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Researcher</u>
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 (WSSC). 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

METHODOLOGICAL FOREWORD¹

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

¹For 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 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 stratum 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

¹Interestingly in 7 out of the eight villages this definition gave us the expected distribution between bottom, middle and top stratum households. In Kagbeni however, all but two of the households were found to be in the top strata. 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 villages¹ 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

¹The 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 Tibetan 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.

²The 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.

³For 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 village¹ 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 kitchen³ 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:

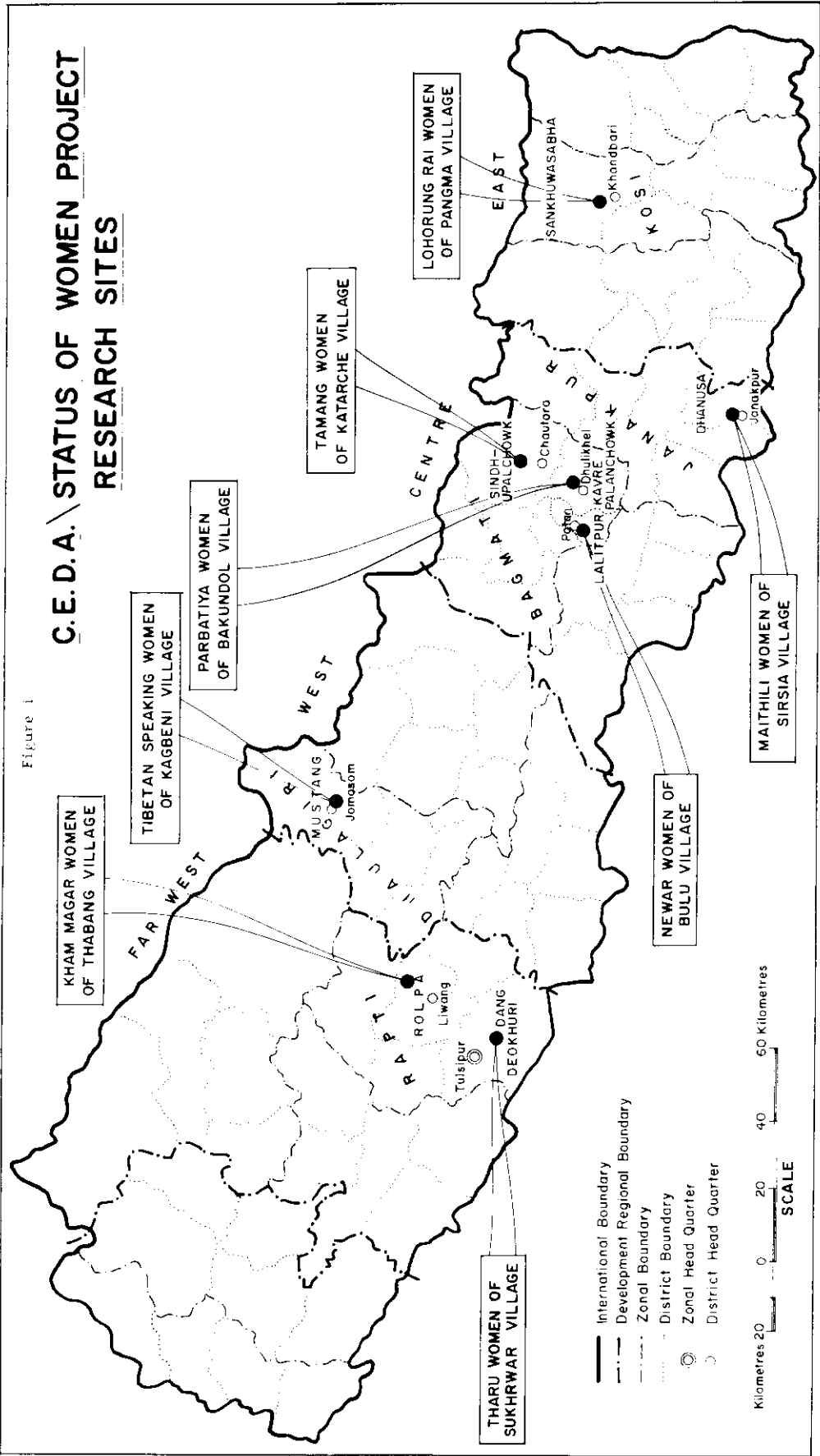
¹By "village" we refer to a traditional residential unit locally known and named as such rather than to the larger administrative unit or panchayat which generally consists of several villages and is usually too large and unwieldy to study in depth.

²A 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.

³In 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.

C.E.D.A. STATUS OF WOMEN PROJECT RESEARCH SITES

Figure 1



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.

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.

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

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

²For 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, Bulu 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 month¹ 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

¹This 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.

²In Kagbeni the researcher was unable to visit families before six a.m. because of the large Tibetan 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 Sukhravar 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.

¹As 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	RAKUNDOL	BULU	KATARCHF	SUKPAMAR	SIRSTIA	
Ethnic Group	Baragaonle	Lohorong Rai	Kham Magar	Parbatiya	Newar	Tamang	Tharu	Maithili	
1. 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
2. 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
3. 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	
4. Number of Sample households	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	192
5. Sample population for TAS study	110	123	133	146	115	119	307	168	1221
6. Observation points per week per household	3	3	3*	3	3	3	3	3	3 random times per week
7. Total observations per person in each village	(34x3) 102	(52x3) 156	(52x3) 156	(52x3) 156	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	(26x3) 78	Varies
8. 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.

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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graphs and charts and most important, coordinated the complex flow of data between monograph writers, tabulators and typists and kept track of all the computer outputs and hand tabulated tables.

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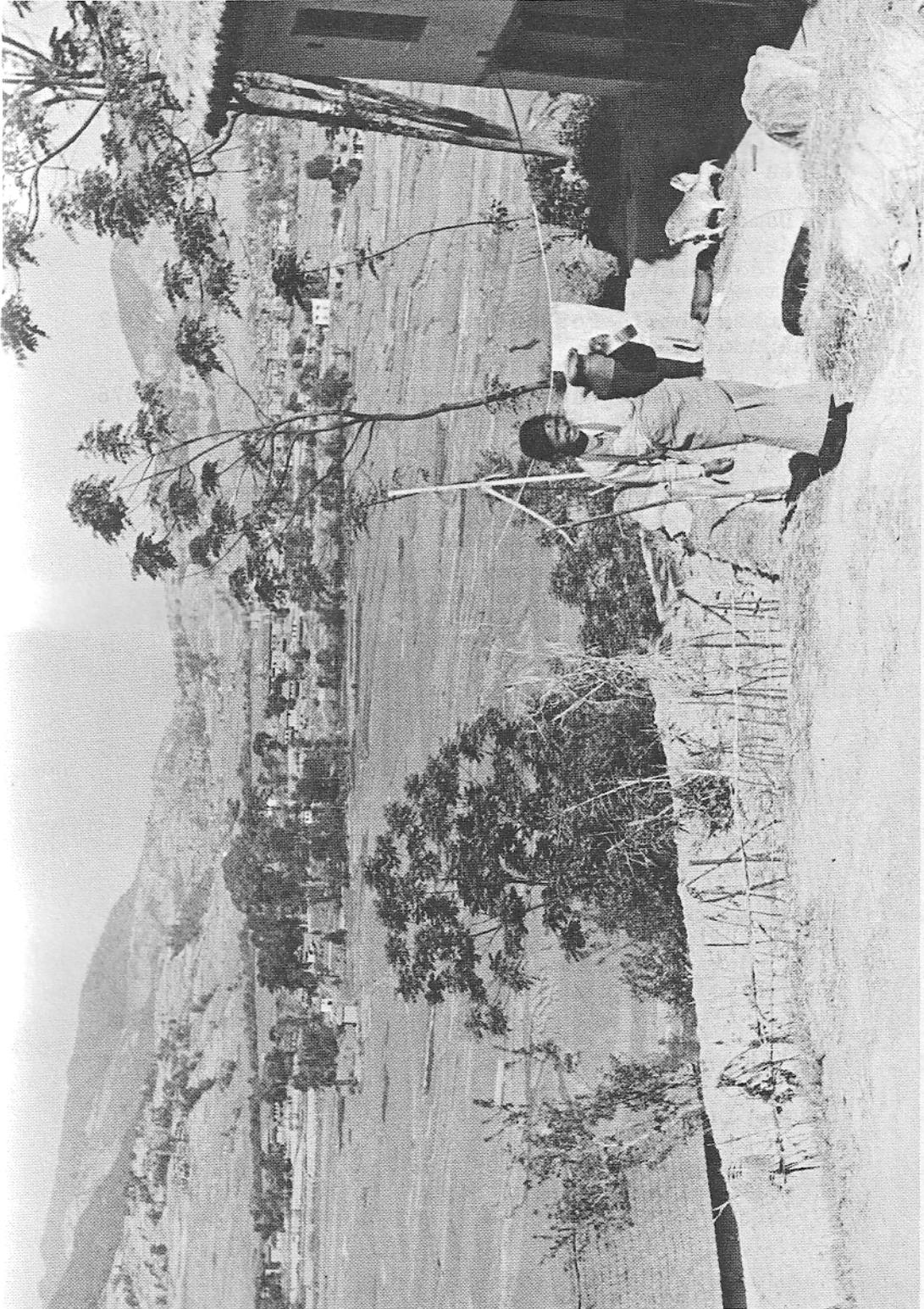
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The village looking outward: the nearby hamlet of Budol and the bazaar town of Banepa can be seen from the Sarki neighborhood.

CHAPTER I

VILLAGE SETTING

The Village : Looking Outward

The village of Bakundol is situated on a low ridge which rises from a fertile plateau at an altitude of about 4,750 feet in the middle Himalayas, some 45 kilometers from Kathmandu. About thirty minutes walk to the west of Bakundol is the thriving Newari bazaar town of Banepa. In Banepa, locally produced grain, vegetables and fruits are traded. Milk is sold in quantity and transported in refrigerated trucks to the Dairy Development Corporation in Kathmandu. Between 1,500 and 2,000 looms in Banepa, operated chiefly by Newari women, produce a substantial share of Nepal's handloom cloth. When they visit the bazaar the villagers of Bakundol can buy simple necessities like kerosene, salt, tobacco and much more in the well-stocked shops. For those who have cash there are, in addition to local handloom cloth, nylon saris and ready-made polyester shirts. There are flashlights, radios and even digital watches to be had. For those who need cash there are shopkeepers who will give loans. Buses and mini-buses leave every half hour for the two hour trip to the capital city of Kathmandu.

To the north east of the village about twenty-five minutes away in the opposite direction is the smaller hill town of Dhulikhel which is expanding now as the Administrative Center of Kavre Palanchok District. The offices of the District Panchayat, the CDO (Chief District Officer), the District Court and numerous other government institutions (see Table 1.1) are all located in Dhulikhel. Housed in recently built cement structures, these government offices are strung along the ridge outside the older tightly settled core of the original Newari town with its multi-storied temples and graceful brick and wood houses. In addition to being the government seat of Kavre Palanchok District, Dhulikhel is also a favorite spot for tourists who come daily, loaded on mini-buses, to see Mt. Everest and watch the sunrise over the Himalayas from the old parade ground.

At night from Bakundol where the only light is provided by cooking fires or kerosene wicks, villagers can see electric lights twinkling in both the nearby towns. On the recently made motor road which winds past the village, buses and cars can be heard as they strain their engines on the upward slope.

GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AROUND BAKUNDOL VILLAGE

In Dhulikhel - 25 minutes walk (East) from Bakundol Village

1. Chief District Office
2. District Panchayat Office
3. District Panchayat Secretariat Office
4. District Court
5. District Education Office
6. District Agriculture Office
7. Police Inspector's Office
8. Construction Branch Office
9. Land Reform Branch Office
10. District Jail
11. Cooperative Branch Office
12. District Post Office
13. Land Revenue Office
14. District Guthi Office (Land given to temple for which the original owner pays a nominal rent)
15. District Health Center
16. Veterinary Hospital
17. Telephone Exchange
18. National Commercial Bank
19. Land Survey Branch Office
20. Cottage Industry Branch Office
21. District Welfare & Health Branch Office
22. Nepal Family Planning Center
23. Ayurvedic Medical Dispensary
24. Guthi Revenue Branch Office
25. Malaria Prevention Center
26. Secondary School
27. Lower Secondary School
28. Primary School

In Banepa - 30 minutes walk (West) from Bakundol Village

1. Agriculture Development Bank
2. Nepal Family Planning Clinic
3. Cooperative Organization
4. Seer Memorial Hospital (Non-government)
5. Secondary School - 1
6. Lower Secondary School - 4
7. Primary School - 5

In Srikhandapur - 10 minutes walk (South) from Bakundol Village

1. Secondary School
2. Lower Secondary School
3. Primary School

In Budol - 10 minutes walk (West) from Bakundol Village

1. Primary School

In Basghari - 15 minutes walk (North/East) from Bakundol Village

1. Primary School

To the people of Bakundol, the road, the electrification, the numerous government institutions and the nearby bazaars stocked with expensive goods are all signs of bikas or "development". Yet many villagers expressed the feeling that this "development" which they witness all around them has somehow bypassed their village.

A glance at the Table 1.1 shows that Bakundol actually has greater access to facilities and services than most hill villages in Nepal and indeed, than most of the seven other villages in our study. There is a good 25-bed missionary hospital in Banepa which villagers do use in cases of severe illness or injury. There is a health post in Dhulikhel (though it is seldom frequented), several ayurvedic medicine shops and a large selection of western medicines available in both bazaars. Yet during the 18 month period over which this research was carried out*, two children from among our 35 sample households died of simple dehydration accompanying diarrheal disease. Likewise, though there are family planning clinics in both towns, several village women shyly approached me for family planning advice and pills.

Educational facilities are available, though the children of Bakundol have to walk several miles to attend classes. There are primary schools in two neighboring villages and schools through the 10th class in both nearby towns. Yet, only 33 percent of the children of school-going age are enrolled. (See Table 4.1.)

Most of the farmers in Bakundol have switched to improved varieties of wheat and rice in recent years (Jackie Ashby, personal communication). But besides a few of the more prosperous male farmers who have been invited on demonstration visits to the Khumaltar research laboratory in the Kathmandu Valley, few villagers (and none of the women farmers) have had any formal contact with the government agricultural extension services. They reported that Bakundol has never ever been visited by a JTA (Junior Technical Assistant) and certainly none were in evidence during my field work. The situation with regard to animal husbandry services is similar. Several years ago the old veterinary clinic which used to be located in a neighboring village was moved farther away to Dhulikhel. But what the villagers complain about is the fact that the services and medicines which are supposed to be free are not forthcoming

*January 1978-June 1979.



A Sarki girl waits while her Brahman neighbor draws water from the well. Due to her low caste status, the girl cannot touch the water source herself.

to those who do not pay something "under the table." Most of the farmers reported that (for servicing of their cows) they preferred to go to a private owner who has a Jersey bull because, unlike the veterinary clinic, the private owner only took his fee if the cow was successfully impregnated.

The most unanimous source of discontent for the villagers of Bakundol, however, is their drinking water situation. All of the women interviewed as to their perceived needs mentioned drinking water as their first priority. There are at present only seven shallow wells or kuwas in the village -- most of which virtually dry up for two months of the year in that only a limited amount of muddy water can be dipped from them each day. Significantly, all but two of these shallow wells belong to the high caste members of the village and are thus off limits to Bakundol's large low caste population. Since the high caste will not take water touched by these groups, the low caste villagers are confined to collecting their water during the dry season from a small, rather sluggish and extremely polluted stream at the bottom of the Bakundol ridge. At certain times of the year even the pools in this stream are not always deep enough to provide water all day long and more than once during the dry season last May I encountered a low caste woman trudging back up the hill with an empty water jar after her 15 minute walk down to the stream.

Working in Bakundol I came away with the sense of a village that was increasingly oriented outward beyond itself. For most villagers, the abstract idea of "participation" in development or in the "modern" world or on a more concrete and personal level, the chance to improve their own lives, are all perceived as lying beyond the village - beyond the unceasing seasonal round of subsistence agricultural production and animal husbandry which has traditionally been Bakundol's economic base. The harsh ecological reality is that Bakundol's land, water and forest resources, managed as they are at present, simply cannot support its population. Not only to better their lives, but in many cases merely to sustain themselves and their families, they must move out.

Bakundol villagers have adopted many strategies on a continuum from daily commuting to almost permanent migration. The "commuters" are those who still sleep every night in the village but go to Banepa or Dhulikhel each day. The low caste go to ply their trade as cobblers or tailors; the Brahman and Chetri to sell milk, teach school, work in a government office, or in one case to run a small ayurvedic medicine shop. One Newari man with secondary level education has a job as a bus

driver on the road to the Chinese border. Others less skilled find occasional work through the nearby Roads Department office as coolies repairing the same road for six rupees a day.* Most of the households in Bakundol have at least one member who commutes in this way to supplement the family's agricultural income.

In the next category are those who reside outside the village, working in Kathmandu or Hetauda and returning on Saturdays or perhaps only once every month or two to see their families and supervise the agricultural work. About 37 percent of the households in the village had at least one member in this category. Another group is comprised of those who migrate out of the village for four or five months at a time every year during the agricultural slack season. Approximately 26 percent of the households in the village had at least one member in this category. They usually work as laborers in the brick making industry in the Kathmandu Valley. Half of these households migrate as family units with women (who also participate in the brick making) and young children.

In the last category are those who have gone to India or the Terai on a long term basis and who return to their land and families in Bakundol only once a year or even less frequently. About 14 percent of the households in the village have at least one member in this category.

The salient point about those villagers who in differing degrees have moved out of Bakundol to seek their fortune is that they are predominantly male. This pattern is evident in data on the age/sex distribution of the sample population presented in Table 1.2. The overall sex ratio in Bakundol is 86.7 males per 100 females. During the prime working years in the 25-34 age group the sex ratio dips to 53.3 suggesting that nearly half of the male population is absent from the village. Despite the small sample size these findings are consistent with the national age/sex distribution found in the 1971 Census (HMG 1977:71). To explain why the female population is greater for this age group (despite the higher female death rate during these child bearing years) the Census analysts also point to the effect of male migration out of the villages in the search for employment. Interestingly, in both the national figures and in the Bakundol data the proportion of males to females is reversed for the older age group (except for the 12 individuals

*The current rate of exchange is Rs. 12 = US\$ 1.00.

TABLE 1.2

SAMPLE POPULATION BY SEX AND AGE GROUP

Age Group	Sex		Male		Female		Total		Males per 100 Females
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0 - 9	28	26.9	33	27.5	61	27.2	84.8		
10 - 14	12	11.5	17	14.2	29	12.9	70.6		
15 - 24	21	20.2	26	21.7	47	21.0	80.8		
25 - 34	8	7.7	15	12.5	23	10.3	53.3		
35 - 49	21	20.2	18	15.0	39	17.4	116.7		
50 - 59	9	8.7	4	3.3	13	5.8	225.0		
60 +	5	4.8	7	5.8	12	5.4	71.4		
Total	104	100.0	120	100.0	224	100.0	86.7		

over sixty) suggesting that men return to the village after retirement. With such a small sample it is difficult to draw conclusions about the effect of economic status or caste on the age/sex distribution. The data in Table 1.3, however, suggest that male out-migration during the prime working years increases as economic standing decreases.

Overwhelmingly, it is the women who remain in the village and work the land. It is they who are responsible for the daily effort necessary to produce the basic agricultural staples -- the corn, wheat and rice -- on which every household depends. This is not to say that the men of Bakundol have abandoned farming. Many of them are involved both as laborers and as managers and, as the time allocation data show, they too spend long hours in the fields. The difference is that almost every male is simultaneously engaged in some other income-generating strategy to supplement the family's agricultural income. And these strategies bring the men out of the village and into contact with an expanded world of opportunity and change. In each household it is the males who assume the role of broker between the family unit and the complexities of government bureaucracies and the commercial market place.

This is not a phenomenon unique to Bakundol or even Nepal. It has been widely noted (Ardner, 1975; Sanday, 1974) that in traditional cultures it is generally the males -- already dominant in the area of local politics and intra-group economic exchange -- who become the intermediaries between the group and "outsiders" in situations of culture contact or rapid social change. This is one manifestation of what has been referred to as the inside/outside or domestic/public dichotomy between the socially accorded spheres of females and males respectively. In Bakundol this dichotomy is far more evident in the relationship between the village as a whole and the outside world than it is vis-a-vis the members of household units within the village. For among the Parbatiya Hindus of Nepal, women are by no means confined to the household in a physical sense. As we have already noted they are active and very visible in the fields. In many ways, however, they are confined to the "inside" economically in that non-market household production absorbs most of their labor and intellectually in that they lack the knowledge and skills to deal with the world beyond the village. In the course of this monograph we will be investigating some of the economic, familial, legal, educational and ideological factors which have tended to limit women to their traditional roles in subsistence agricultural production within the village and have blocked their participation in the change and development they see going on around them.

TABLE 1.4

POPULATION BY CASTE AND AGE GROUP

(In number)

Caste/ Sex Age Group	HIGH			OTHER			LOW			ALL CASTES						
	Male	Female	Both	Sex Ratio	Male	Female	Both	Sex Ratio	Male	Female	Both	Sex Ratio				
0 - 14	32 (42.1)	33 (40.7)	65 (41.4)	97.0	3 (37.5)	5 (50.0)	8 (44.4)	60.0	5 (25.0)	12 (41.4)	17 (34.7)	41.7	40 (38.5)	50 (41.7)	90 (40.2)	80
15 - 59	41 (53.9)	42 (51.9)	83 (52.9)	97.6	3 (37.5)	4 (40.0)	7 (38.9)	75.0	15 (75.0)	17 (58.6)	32 (65.3)	88.2	59 (56.7)	63 (52.5)	122 (54.5)	93.7
60 +	3 (4.0)	6 (7.4)	9 (5.7)	50.0	2 (25.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (16.7)	200.0	-	-	-	-	5 (4.8)	7 (5.8)	12 (5.3)	71.4
Total	76 (100.0)	81 (100.0)	157 (100.0)	93.8	8 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	18 (100.0)	80	20 (100.0)	29 (100.0)	49 (100.0)	69.0	104 (100.0)	120 (100.0)	224 (100.0)	86.7

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

The Village : Looking Inward

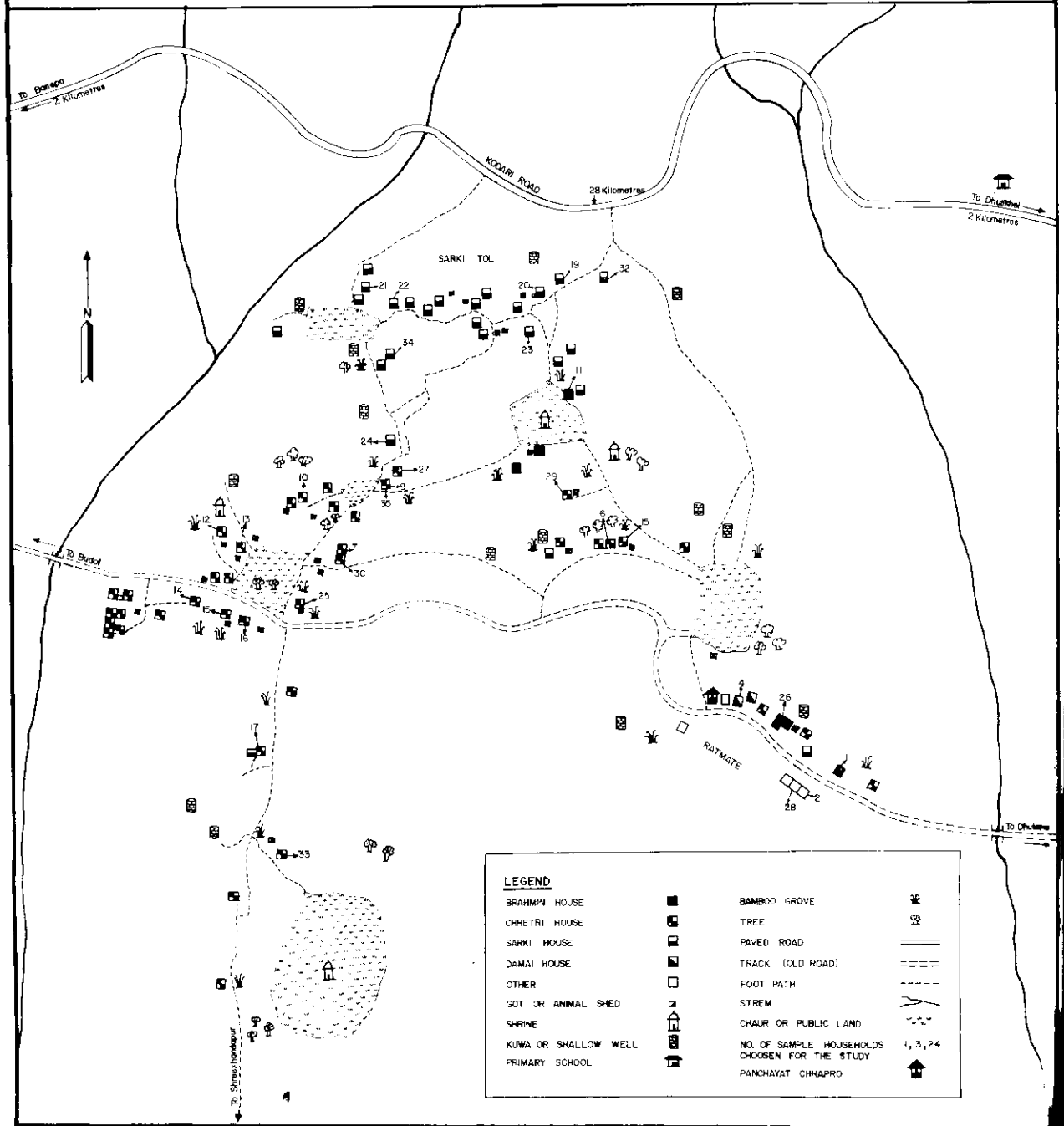
Bakundol has no single recognizable "center" where villagers can informally meet and exchange news. Probably because of the proximity to the Dhulikhel and Banepa bazaars, there is neither a teashop nor a store -- either of which often becomes a popular village meeting place. This was not always the case. Ten years ago, before the new motor road was put in, the main trade route out of Kathmandu toward the East ran through Bakundol. One of Bakundol's two Newari families used to run a retail shop at the eastern end of the village (see map in Figure 1.1) along the old road. This family are Ranjitkars (locally called by the name of "Chipa") -- a group who have traditionally made their living by dyeing and printing cloth. The family was quite prosperous as long as the communication route passed their house making it easy and cheap to bring in the raw cloth, thread and dyes and to transport the dyed thread and printed cloth back to the bazaar. They ran a small shop selling kerosene, matches, soap, etc., as a side line. But now that the old road has become nothing more than a village path it is no longer profitable to run the shop and even their traditional dyeing and printing trade has suffered. In fact, one of the ongoing disputes in Bakundol has arisen over the Ranjitkars' attempt to get the district government to put in a feeder road connecting the new motor road to the old Rana road which runs past their house and up to Dhulikhel. The Ranjitkars and a small following feel that such a road would put Bakundol back in the mainstream while the rest of the village -- led by the Chetri family whose land lies in the route of the proposed feeder road -- feel it would make no difference because no one would use the road in any case except the Ranjitkars.

About two years ago the villagers tried to establish a formal meeting place. On a small patch of waste land not far from the Ranjitkar neighborhood a small thatched shed was erected to serve as the panchayat ghar or village assembly meeting house (see map). The impetus for this rather unusual community action was a government decision to re-define the boundaries of Srikhandapur Panchayat, the administrative village into which the traditional village of Bakundol falls. Bakundol is ward number six of the nine wards which comprise the panchayat. Previously the panchayat ghar had been a two story cement structure (now being used as a school) located in the most prosperous ward where the Pradhan Panch, or chief of the village assembly, resides. However, after the change in boundaries his ward ended up on the far edge of the panchayat and it was decided that Bakundol would provide a more suitable

(BAGMATI ZONE)

BAKUNDOL VILLAGE

(KAVRE DISTRICT)



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|----------|
| BRAHMIN HOUSE | ■ | BAMBOO GROVE | ▨ |
| CHHETRI HOUSE | □ | TREE | ⊕ |
| SARKI HOUSE | ▣ | PAVED ROAD | ==== |
| DAMAI HOUSE | ▤ | TRACK (OLD ROAD) | ---- |
| OTHER | □ | FOOT PATH | - - - - |
| GOT OR ANIMAL SHED | ▧ | STREAM | ~~~~ |
| SHRINE | ⌂ | CHAIR OR PUBLIC LAND | ⊙ |
| KUWA OR SHALLOW WELL | ⊕ | NO. OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS CHOSEN FOR THE STUDY | 1, 3, 24 |
| PRIMARY SCHOOL | ⌂ | PANCHAYAT CHHAPRO | ⌂ |

site for a meeting place because of its central location. Approximately 70 percent of the sample households in Bakundol reported that they had actively supported the idea and over 80 percent said they had contributed straw, money or labor for the construction. In fact, for many of the respondents the thatched shed represented the only example of "development" or village improvement that they could think of when questioned. However, the shed was in use for monthly panchayat meetings for less than a year when it collapsed after a spring storm. It was never repaired and stands now as a forlorn monument to an unsuccessful attempt at community action.

The settlement itself expresses Bakundol's lack of cohesiveness as a socio-political unit. Houses are scattered, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups of three or four over the ridge. Families from the same lineage that have split from a common estate in recent generations often live near each other, sometimes sharing adjacent courtyards and occasionally even the same partitioned house. In such cases there is inevitably a good deal of casual social interaction since so many household tasks and rituals take place outside in the courtyards. Otherwise, however, there is little social visiting between non-related households and almost none across caste lines. As I have mentioned elsewhere (1977), most people who enter the courtyard of another household are perceived as having (and in fact usually do have) some motive in coming - whether it is to ask for a small loan or inquire about planting schedules. A person who comes for no reason -- especially if there are already tensions between the two families -- may even be suspected of practicing witchcraft. Like most Nepali villagers, the people of Bakundol have a sense of the importance of maintaining their personal and family izat (pride, honor, dignity). Rather than be seen as either begging from a neighbor or intending harm, most simply avoid unnecessary inter-household visiting.

Of course there are neighborly exchanges when people meet each other on village paths or at a water source. Men from different households also meet and talk to each other in tea shops or in the market on their frequent trips to the nearby bazaars. And there are agricultural labor exchange groups, probably one of the principal links between non-related families in the village, where people work together all day and have ample time to hear about what is going on in other courtyards.

Bakundol is culturally a relatively homogeneous village. In addition to the three Newari households mentioned earlier,

there is one Magar-Newari intermarriage household and a poor Thami family who migrated into the village about twenty years ago.* The rest of the 67 households in Bakundol are Parbatiya or literally "hill people". It was the Parbatiya group led by Prithivi Narayan Shah who invaded the Kathmandu Valley some 200 years ago, taking over political control from the original Newari rulers. The Parbatiya are of Indo-Aryan stock and speak Nepali as their mother tongue. According to their own traditions which are supported by the observation of various scholars, the Parbatiya migrated to the Himalayas from North India in successive waves over a long period beginning nearly one thousand years ago in the far west (Campbell, 1977). In terms of language, social structure and religious traditions the Parbatiya show considerable similarity to the Hindus of Northern India. One of the most important similarities in terms of both social structure and religious ideology is the caste system. The Parbatiya version of the caste system is but one of the many localized manifestations of the classical Varna system which appear throughout Hindu South Asia.** One of the most notable features of the Parbatiya version is the fact that only the highest and the lowest castes actually belong to the Parbatiya group while the middle ranking position in the hierarchy is held by the various autochthonous, Tibeto-Burman speaking peoples who are grouped together as matwali.

The topmost position in the hierarchy is accorded to the Upadhaya Brahman -- the traditional priestly caste. This group must maintain its superior ritual purity by strictly observing rules regarding commensality (i.e., interdining) and marriage. They may not take cooked rice from anyone but members of their own group and are permitted to marry only within their own caste. Offspring of those Brahman who disobey the injunctions against widow remarriage become Jaisi Brahman of lower rank who cannot serve as priests for other members of the community.

*These households constitute the group labelled "other" in the caste-wise tabulations and are represented by 3 households (2 Newar and one Thami) in the 35 household sample.

**In fact, two other variations of the same system are found in the organization of the Newari Hindu community and the Maithili community from Nepal's Terai region -- both of which have been studied by members of the Status of Women team and appear as monographs in this series.

Beneath the Brahman in the classical Hindu Varna system are the ksatriya, the traditional military and ruling group. In the Nepali Parbatiya caste system this position is held by two groups, the Thakuri who are said to be descendents of the ancient petty rulers of the hills and the more numerous Chetri who rank just beneath them. Both of these groups will take cooked rice only from Upadhaya Brahman and fellow caste members. They are also bound by rules of caste endogamy (i.e., they may marry only members of their own caste group) and they look down on widow remarriage. However, the fact that both cross-caste and widow marriage are tolerated within this group is evidenced by the existence of two types of Chetri: the jhara (literally, "pure bred") and the thimbu (literally, "mixed" or "hybrid"). The latter, being offspring of marriages between a Chetri man and a Brahman or Chetri widow or a woman from the middle ranking matwali castes, are ranked slightly below jhara Chetri, but this has little effect in daily interaction in the community where both types of Chetri receive similar treatment.

The Upadhaya Brahman, the Jaisi, the Thakuri and Chetri are all members of the highest "twice born" or tagadari group who wear the sacred thread. Traditionally they are forbidden to take liquor which distinguishes them from both the middle ranking matwali (literally, "liquor-drinking") group and the low caste Parbatiya, both of whom take alcohol. The tagadari or high caste are by far the largest group in Bakundol, representing 62.8 percent of the households and 70.1 percent of the population in the sample group. (Tables 1.5 and 1.6.) Although for the current analysis all high caste have been grouped together, in Bakundol the Chetri are most numerous, comprising 58 percent of the total village population, while Jaisi and Upadhaya Brahman each make up about six percent.

The internal hierarchy of the middle ranking matwali group need not concern us here since they represent only eight percent of Bakundol's population and since many of the diverse Tibeto-Burman speaking communities which comprise this group (i.e., the Newar, Tamang, Kham Magar, Baragaonle and Lohorung Rai) have been covered in detail in other monographs in this series. In any case there is no universally agreed upon rank order between these communities. What is important here is the way in which the groups interact with high caste and low caste Parbatiyas. Unlike the low castes, the matwali groups are considered "clean". Hence water and a certain category of pure (choko) foods (either raw or cooked in ghee) can be accepted by the high castes from the matwali. However, while all the matwali groups accept boiled rice and lentils from Upadhaya Brahman, some, like the Ranjitkar Newar in Bakundol,

TABLE 1.5

SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND CASTE

(In number)

Caste \ Economic Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
HIGH (Brahman and Chetri)	5 (22.7) (62.5)	13 (59.1) (65.0)	4 (18.2) (57.1)	22 (100.0) (62.8)
OTHER (Newar and Thami)	-	1 (33.3) (5.0)	2 (66.7) (28.6)	3 (100.0) (8.6)
LOW (Sarki and Damai)	3 (30.0) (37.5)	6 (60.0) (30.0)	1 (10.0) (14.3)	10 (100.0) (28.6)
ALL CASTES	8 (22.9) (100.0)	20 (57.1) (100.0)	7 (20.0) (100.0)	35 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.

TABLE 1.6

SAMPLE POPULATION BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND CASTE

(In number)

Caste	Economic Strata			
	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
HIGH (Brahman and Chetri)	43 (27.4) (74.1)	90 (57.3) (70.9)	24 (15.3) (61.5)	157 (100.0) (70.1)
OTHER (Newar and Thami)	-	7 (38.9) (5.5)	11 (61.1) (28.2)	18 (100.0) (8.0)
LOW (Sarki and Damai)	15 (30.6) (25.9)	30 (61.2) (23.6)	4 (8.2) (10.3)	49 (100.0) (21.9)
ALL CASTES	58 (25.9) (100.0)	127 (56.7) (100.0)	39 (17.4) (100.0)	224 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row and column percentages.



A Sarki man making shoes on his front porch.

refuse this food when cooked by Jaisi or Chetri. Though marriages between high caste and matwali groups are theoretically forbidden, they do occur as noted earlier and the sanctions are not very harsh as long as a high caste man is marrying a matwali woman and not vice versa. In their behavior toward the low caste, the matwali are very similar to the high castes to be described below.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are the low caste Parbatiya groups designated collectively as "pani na calne" or those from whom water cannot be accepted. Although they are all involved in agriculture either as cultivators or as wage laborers, the pani na calne castes are artisans as well. The Kami work as blacksmiths, the Sarki as cobblers and the Damai as tailor-musicians. There are no Kami in Bakundol and only two Damai families. There is, however, an unusually large community of Sarki - 20 out of the village's 67 households. If the Damai families are included, the low caste group represents 28.6 percent of all the households and 21.9 percent of the population.

In the old National Code all three castes were clearly designated as untouchable. Any high caste person who came into physical contact with a member of the pani na calne group had to undergo ritual purification* or risk loss of his or her caste standing. This law has been removed from the new Code and according to high caste informants and my own observation, is rapidly fading from practice in Bakundol. Yet a definite reserve and uncertainty regarding physical contact between the castes is still noticeable. For example, low castes still hold out both hands to receive an object expecting it to be dropped rather than handed to them. I also noted a marked warming in the Sarki's attitudes towards me (and my endless questions) when I made it a point to initiate physical contact with them and to use the respectful form of address. Though I was told that a Damai may enter the ground floor of a high caste person's home as long as the family has its kitchen on the upper floor, the Chetri woman who told me this hastened to add that no Damai had ever been allowed beyond the veranda in her house even though her kitchen was on the top floor. During my field work I never observed a low caste person entering the home of a high caste person. As one old Chetri man explained to me, "These days there is only caste at home in the village. Not in the bazaar. Why, in Banepa the Sarkis don't even rinse their own glasses any more."

*The ritual is called chito katne or simply sun pani. The "polluted" high caste person is merely sprinkled with pure water by a person of equal or higher status.

My findings regarding intercaste relations are similar in principle though different in specific detail to Bluestain's (1978) analysis of caste in Dumre where he found the economic dependency of low castes to be one of the key variables in determining the strictness with which pollution rules were enforced. Though of untouchable status, the Muslims of Dumre were allowed greater leeway in their observation of pollution rules than the Sarki, Damai and Kami because of the Muslims' relative economic independence from the dominant high castes. The same pattern can be observed in Bakundol. Though a detailed discussion of how each caste earns its livelihood must be deferred to the chapter on village economy, it can be noted here that the Sarki community, like the Muslim community in Dumre, is far less dependent economically on the high caste than the Damai who still earn a substantial portion of their income by serving as tailors to high caste patron families. Thus the Damai interact frequently with high caste, coming to work at their homes (where they receive a cooked meal as partial payment for each day's work), to play their instruments for a wedding procession, to collect their annual grain payments or to informally beg for a few vegetables or a small loan. In all these circumstances their behavior is deferential and the pollution rules are strictly observed. For example, unlike the situation reported earlier for the bazaar teashops, a Damai must rinse off his or her plate after eating a meal served by a high caste patron. The Sarki of Bakundol, on the other hand, tend to avoid situations (such as receiving a meal from an employer) where the traditional pollution rules would come into play. As we will see, their economic links are increasingly with the bazaars beyond the village where caste status, though still a factor, is less important in governing behavior.* In fact, interaction between the Sarki and the high caste is minimal. As is evident in the map in Figure 1.1, the Sarki are all clustered in a single neighborhood or tol of the village. Unless they are recruiting wage laborers, the Chetri and Brahman rarely wander into the Sarki neighborhood. Many high caste women I spoke to said they had never even walked through the Sarki tol though it is not more than ten minutes away from their own homes.

Within the pani na calne group, status is further differentiated with Kami and Sarki ranking above the Damai. Sarki

*Even beyond the village, caste is still a powerful institution. One Sarki reported that he had lost his job as a dishwasher for a hotel in Kathmandu when a registration requirement caused his employers to learn of his caste identity.

informants explained that they and the Kami could interdine but not intermarry. The Sarki of Bakundol will not accept boiled rice from the Damai though I was able to observe a Damai eating in a Sarki home. Thus in the internal ranking of the low caste Parbatiya group we encounter a puzzling incongruence between the attributional and interactional status of the Sarki. In terms of attributes or occupation the Sarki who eat cattle carrion and tan the hides for their shoe-making work, would seem to be lower or less pure than the Damai tailor-musicians. Yet by interactional analysis in terms of which group can take food cooked by another, it is the Damai who rank beneath the Sarki.

In economic terms Bakundol is a relatively homogeneous community. Although some of the families are well-off relative to their fellow villagers, none could be called wealthy by national standards and the highest annual per capita income recorded was 2761 rupees (or about 232 US dollars). As the data in Table 1.7 show, the top economic stratum households which constitutes 22.9 percent of the total sample households controls 37.3 percent of the village wealth. Each household in the top stratum owns, on an average, 4.7 percent of the total village assets as compared to two percent owned by each of the bottom stratum families. In terms of income, however, the gap between the top and bottom strata is more pronounced. Average income of top stratum households is 16,512 rupees which is slightly more than three times that of the income of 5,025 rupees for households in the bottom stratum (see Table 1.11).

As would be expected in a predominantly agricultural community, land is the major asset in all economic strata, comprising 88 and 93 percent respectively of the assets of the top and bottom strata households and 89.5 percent of the total village assets. According to Figure 1.2, the average (weighted) land holding in Bakundol is 10.4 ropani* and as shown in Table 1.8, only 40 percent of the households own more than the average. Nine percent of the households own more than 20 ropani.

The castewise distribution of land holdings depicted in Table 1.9 shows that high caste households have a fairly substantial lead in the ownership of land. As compared to the (unweighted) village average of 10.78 ropani per household, high caste families own 13.13 ropani while low caste Sarki families own an average of 8.44 or about two thirds the average high

*One hectare = 19.66 ropani.

TABLE 1.7

ASSET STRUCTURE BY ECONOMIC STRATA

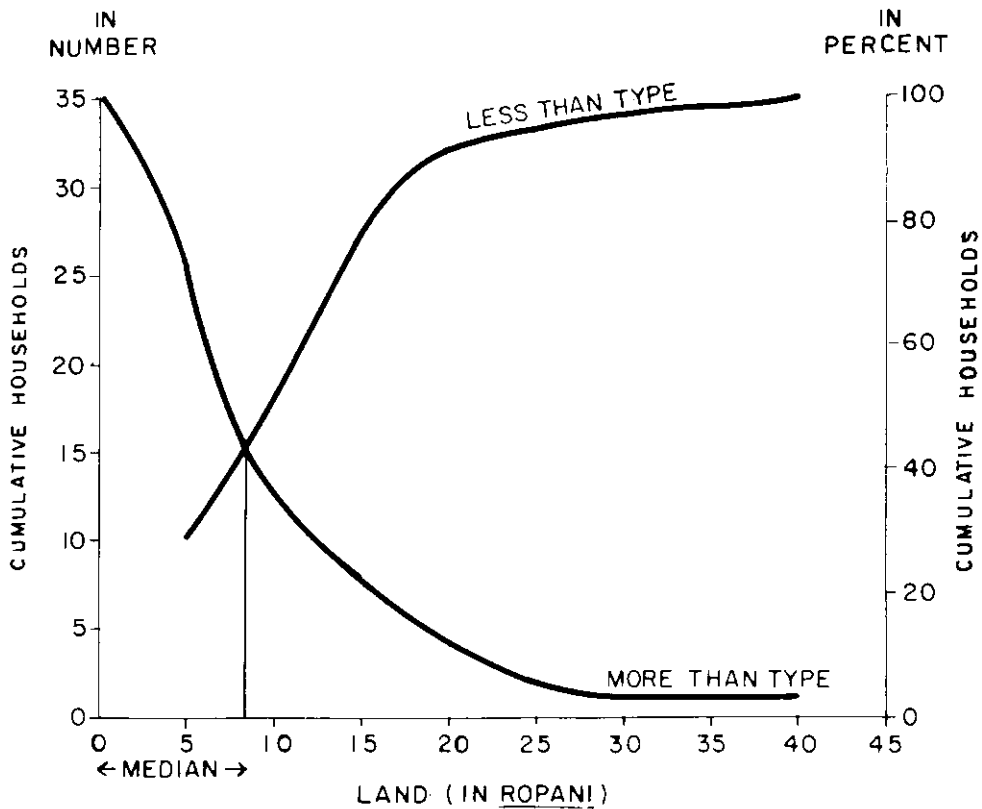
(In rupees)

No. of Households	Types of Asset Economic Strata		Land/Buildings	Livestock			Agricultural Equipment	Gold & Silver	Other Assets	Total
				Major	Minor	Total				
8	TOP	Total	635375 (36.7)	10490 (29.1)	2677 (32.3)	13167 (29.7)	1771 (30.7)	27935 (38.9)	43697 (53.9)	721945 (37.4)
		Per Household	79422 (4.6)	1311 (3.6)	335 (4.1)	1646 (3.7)	221 (3.8)	3492 (4.9)	5462 (6.7)	90243 (4.7)
20	MIDDLE	Total	844400 (48.8)	23235 (64.4)	4650 (56.1)	27885 (62.8)	3101 (53.8)	38280 (53.2)	28418 (35.1)	942084 (48.7)
		Per Household	42220 (2.4)	1162 (3.2)	232 (2.8)	1394 (3.1)	155 (2.7)	1914 (2.7)	1421 (1.8)	47104 (2.4)
7	BOTTOM	Total	250200 (14.5)	2350 (6.5)	961 (11.6)	3311 (7.5)	894 (15.5)	5700 (7.9)	8956 (11.0)	269061 (13.9)
		Per Household	35743 (2.1)	336 (0.9)	137 (1.7)	473 (1.1)	128 (2.2)	814 (1.1)	1279 (1.6)	38437 (2.0)
35	ALL STRATA	Total	1729975 (100.0)	36075 (100.0)	8288 (100.0)	44363 (100.0)	5766 (100.0)	71915 (100.0)	81071 (100.0)	1933090 (100.0)
		Per Household	49428	1031	237	1268	165	2055	2316	55231

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to the respective column total.

Figure 1.2

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY LAND HOLDING



AVERAGE LAND HOLDING = 10.4 ROPANI

MEDIAN LAND HOLDING = 8.2 ROPANI

TABLE 1.8
DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY LAND HOLDING

Land (in <u>ropani</u>)	Households		Cumulative Households (Less than type)		Cumulative Households (More than type)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0 - 5	10	29	10	29	35	100
5.01 - 10	11	31	21	60	25	71
10.01 - 15	6	17	27	77	14	40
15.01 - 20	5	14	32	91	8	23
20.01 - 25	1	3	33	94	3	9
25.01 - 30	1	3	34	97	2	6
30.01 - 35	-	-	34	97	1	3
35.01 - 40	-	-	34	97	1	3
40.01 - 45	1	3	35	100	1	3
Total	35	100	-	-	-	-

TABLE 1.9

OWNERSHIP OF IRRIGATED AND UPLAND FIELDS BY CASTE

(In ropani)*

Number of Households	Caste		Type of Land	Irrigated Rice Land	Upland	All Land
22	HIGH		Total	166.25 (74.5)	122.75 (79.6)	289.00 (76.6)
			Per Household	7.55 (3.4)	5.57 (3.6)	13.13 (3.5)
3	OTHER		Total	3.75 (1.7)	8.00 (5.2)	11.75 (3.1)
			Per Household	1.25 (0.6)	2.66 (1.7)	3.91 (1.0)
9	LOW	Sarki	Total	53.00 (23.8)	23.00 (14.9)	76.00 (20.2)
			Per Household	5.88 (2.6)	2.55 (1.7)	8.44 (2.2)
1	LOW	Damai	Total	-	0.50 (0.3)	0.50 (0.1)
			Per Household	-	0.50 (0.3)	0.50 (0.1)
35	ALL CASTES		Total	223.00 (100.0)	154.25 (100.0)	377.25 (100.0)
			Per Household	6.37	4.41	10.78

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

* One ropani is equivalent to 0.051 hectare.



A Ranjitkar woman removes skeins of dyed thread which have been hung in the sun to dry.

caste holdings. In recent years, however, several Sarki families have purchased land from poorer high caste families so the overall distribution of land wealth is currently in flux. Clearly at the bottom of the scale of land wealth are the "other" castes and the low caste Damai -- all of whom survive by practicing their traditional occupations* rather than through agriculture alone. Table 1.10 shows that high caste households also have a larger average share of all other types of assets except for gold and silver where the low caste households lead.

Despite the greater average wealth of high caste households, a second look at Tables 1.5 and 1.6 indicate that in Bakundol there is no positive correlation between high caste rank and high economic status. Indeed percentagewise, there are more low caste than high caste households (and individuals) in the top economic strata. Only 8.2 percent of the low caste population is in the bottom stratum while 15.3 percent of the high caste group falls into this stratum. Both high and low castes are almost equally represented in the middle strata with 57.3 percent and 61.2 percent of their respective populations in the middle strata.

Although the findings on the relationship between caste and economic status do caution against the common assumption that high caste rank automatically indicates high economic status, this does not preclude the dominance of the high castes in village politics. With 70.1 percent of the total village population, the high caste group still constitutes the largest proportion (74.1 percent) of the population in the top economic stratum. It is from this group who are both high in ritual status and relatively well-off economically that the political leadership of Bakundol (and of Srihandapur Panchayat to which it belongs) emerges.

The data in Table 1.11 on the composition of household income by economic strata substantiate the overall importance of agriculture. On the whole, agricultural production is the most important source of income, accounting for 44.1 percent of the total income of 10,314 rupees. When income from kitchen gardening, hunting and gathering, animal husbandry, food processing and manufacturing are included, agriculture and

*For the "other" group composed of two Ranjitkar Newar households and a Thami household, their respective occupations are cloth dyeing and carpentry/masonry while the Damai are tailors.

TABLE 1.10
ASSET STRUCTURE BY CASTE

(In rupees)

No. of Households	Types of Asset		Land/ Buildings	Livestock			Agricultural Equipment	Gold & Silver	Other Assets	Total
	Caste	Total		Major	Minor	Total				
22	HIGH	Total	1271000 (73.5)	34495 (95.6)	6038 (72.9)	40533 (91.4)	4118 (71.4)	44615 (62.0)	58439 (72.1)	1418705 (73.4)
		Per Household	57773 (3.3)	1568 (4.3)	274 (3.3)	1842 (4.2)	187 (3.2)	2028 (2.8)	2656 (3.3)	64487 (3.3)
3	OTHER	Total	82700 (4.8)	90 (0.3)	490 (5.9)	580 (1.3)	280 (4.9)	4000 (5.6)	1583 (1.9)	89143 (4.6)
		Per Household	27567 (1.6)	30 (0.1)	163 (2.0)	193 (0.4)	93 (1.6)	1333 (1.9)	528 (0.6)	29714 (1.5)
10	LOW	Total	376275 (21.7)	1490 (4.1)	1760 (21.2)	3250 (7.3)	1368 (23.7)	23300 (32.4)	21049 (26.0)	425242 (22.0)
		Per Household	37628 (2.2)	149 (0.4)	176 (2.1)	325 (0.7)	137 (2.4)	2330 (3.2)	2105 (2.6)	42524 (2.2)
35	ALL CASTE	Total	1729975 (100.0)	36075 (100.0)	8288 (100.0)	44363 (100.0)	5766 (100.0)	71915 (100.0)	81071 (100.0)	1933090 (100.0)
		Per Household	49428	1031	237	1268	165	2055	2316	55231

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 1.11
COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME* BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In rupees)

Economic Strata	Sectors	HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION						OUTSIDE INCOME		Total Income
		Farm Production	Kitchen Gardening	Animal Husbandry	Hunting & Gathering	Manufacturing	Food Processing	Wage/Salary Income	Investment Income/Trading	
TOP N = 8	Total	59780	1476	17918	3780	1440	7595	32107	7999	132095
	Per Household	7473 (45.3)	185 (1.1)	2240 (13.6)	472 (2.9)	180 (1.1)	949 (5.7)	4013 (24.3)	1000 (6.0)	16512 (100.0)
MIDDLE N = 20	Total	82041	2632	25762	5959	3817	17291	54751	1450	193703
	Per Household	4102 (42.3)	132 (1.4)	1288 (13.3)	298 (3.1)	191 (2.0)	864 (8.9)	2738 (28.3)	72 (0.7)	9685 (100.0)
BOTTOM N = 7	Total	17413	736	1985	1513	2035	3420	8073	-	35175
	Per Household	2487 (49.5)	105 (2.1)	284 (5.7)	216 (4.3)	291 (5.8)	489 (9.7)	1153 (22.9)	-	5025 (100.0)
ALL STRATA N = 35	Total	159234	4844	45665	11252	7292	28306	94931	9449	360973
	Per Household	4550 (44.1)	139 (1.4)	1305 (12.7)	321 (3.1)	208 (2.0)	809 (7.8)	2712 (26.3)	270 (2.6)	10314 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Based on 35 sample households.

allied sectors taken together account for 71.1 percent of the total income. As would be expected, the percentage of income derived from trading and investment is much higher in the top stratum where it accounts for six percent of the income as opposed to 0.7 and 0 percent respectively in the middle and bottom strata. While both top and middle strata households earned just over 13 percent of their income from animal husbandry, households in the bottom stratum earned only 5.7 percent from this source. This is consistent with the data on asset structure in Table 1.7 which shows that ownership of livestock constitutes a much smaller proportion of the total assets for households in the bottom stratum (1.1 percent) as compared to those in the top and middle strata where livestock accounts for 3.7 and 3.1 percent respectively. In value terms the livestock holdings of bottom stratum households are only one fourth those of top stratum households. Manufacturing, on the other hand, was much more important for households in the bottom stratum, contributing 5.8 percent of their income and only 1.1 percent of the income of top stratum households.

Despite the importance of subsistence agriculture to the Bakundol economy, the data in Table 1.12 show that 48.3 percent of the household income in the village is generated through market intervention. This is the highest percentage encountered in all the eight villages studied and indicates the importance of Bakundol's economic links to the outside in providing employment and markets for local agricultural and craft production. Households in the top stratum are relatively more involved in the market economy, deriving 55.9 percent of their income from the combination of market sales, wages and salary, and investment and trading income. For households in the bottom stratum these sectors are much less important, contributing only 37.9 percent of the household income.

Consistent with their greater land assets, the high caste households in Bakundol earn a greater proportion of their household income from agricultural production than do the low caste. Table 1.13 shows that 49.2 percent of the income of high caste households is derived from agricultural production while the low caste households earn only 35.7 percent from this source. High caste earnings from animal husbandry are also substantially higher at 16 percent of the total income compared to 6 percent among the low caste. For low caste households, manufacturing and wage/salary income are more important sources of income than for high castes. While only 0.2 percent of the high caste households' income was derived from manufacturing, low caste households earned 6.9 percent of their income from this source. Likewise, wage/salary income

TABLE 1.12
HOUSEHOLD SUBSISTENCE INCOME AND PRODUCTION* BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In rupees)

Economic Strata	Composition of Income	Subsistence Production	MARKET INCOME				Total
			Production Sales	Wage/Salary	Investment Income/Trading	Total	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)=(3)+(4)+(5)	(7)=(2)+(6)
TOP N = 8	Total	58305	33684	32107	7999	73790	132095
	Per Household	7288 (44.1)	4211 (25.5)	4013 (24.3)	1000 (6.1)	9224 (55.9)	16512 (100.0)
MIDDLE N = 20	Total	106469	31033	54751	1450	87234	193703
	Per Household	5323 (55.0)	1552 (16.0)	2738 (28.3)	72 (0.7)	4362 (45.0)	9685 (100.0)
BOTTOM N = 7	Total	21857	5245	8073	-	13318	35175
	Per Household	3122 (62.1)	750 (14.9)	1153 (23.0)	-	1903 (37.9)	5025 (100.0)
ALL STRATA N = 35	Total	186631	69962	94931	9449	174342	360973
	Per Household	5333 (51.7)	1999 (19.4)	2712 (26.3)	270 (2.6)	4981 (48.3)	10314 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Based on 35 sample households.

TABLE 1.13
COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME* BY CASTE

(In rupees)

Caste	Sectors		HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION							OUTSIDE INCOME			Total Income
			Farm Production	Kitchen Gardening	Animal Husbandry	Hunting & Gathering	Manufacturing	Food Processing	Wage/Salary Income	Investment Income/Trading			
HIGH N = 22	Total		124083	3833	40212	7673	410	20237	46565	9149	252162		
	Per Household		5640 (49.2)	174 (1.5)	1828 (16.0)	349 (3.0)	19 (0.2)	920 (8.0)	2117 (18.5)	416 (3.6)	11462 (100.0)		
OTHER N = 3	Total		3584	120	156	339	756	791	14497	-	20243		
	Per Household		1195 (17.7)	40 (0.6)	52 (0.8)	113 (1.7)	252 (3.7)	264 (3.9)	4832 (71.6)	-	6748 (100.0)		
LOW N = 10	Total		31567	891	5297	3240	6126	7278	33869	300	88568		
	Per Household		3157 (35.7)	89 (1.0)	530 (6.0)	324 (3.7)	613 (6.9)	728 (8.2)	3387 (38.2)	30 (0.3)	8857 (100.0)		
ALL CASTE N = 35	Total		159234	4844	45665	11252	7292	28306	94931	9449	360973		
	Per Household		4550 (44.1)	139 (1.4)	1305 (12.7)	321 (3.1)	208 (2.0)	809 (7.8)	2712 (26.3)	270 (2.6)	10314 (100.0)		

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Based on 35 sample households.

accounted for only 18.5 percent of the high caste income and 38.2 percent of the income in low caste families.

The data in Table 1.14 show that despite the slightly higher proportion of farm production that is sold by high caste households (38.7 percent versus 35.6 percent), the low caste, because of their dependence on wage earning and sale of manufactured goods, still earn more of their total income through market intervention than high caste households do (54.7 versus 43.9 percent). The greatest dependency on the market economy, however, is seen amongst the "other" non-Parbatiya group whose meagre land holdings of 3.91 ropani per household leave them no choice but to earn the major part of their income (71.6 percent) through wage work.

TABLE I.14
HOUSEHOLD SUBSISTENCE INCOME & PRODUCTION* BY CASTE

(In rupees)

Caste	Composition of Income	Subsistence Production	MARKET INCOME				Total
			Production Sales	Wage/Salary	Investment Income/Trading	Total	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6) = (3)+(4)+(5)	(7) = (2)+(6)
HIGH N = 22	Total	141527	54921	46565	9149	110635	252162
	Per Household	6433 (56.1)	2496 (21.8)	2117 (18.5)	416 (3.6)	5029 (43.9)	11462 (100.0)
OTHER N = 3	Total	4990	756	14497	-	15253	20243
	Per Household	1663 (24.7)	252 (3.7)	4832 (71.6)	-	5084 (75.3)	6748 (100.0)
LOW N = 10	Total	40114	14285	33869	300	48454	88568
	Per Household	4011 (45.3)	1429 (16.1)	3387 (38.3)	30 (0.3)	4845 (54.7)	8857 (100.0)
ALL CASTE N = 35	Total	186631	69962	94931	9449	174342	360973
	Per Household	5332 (51.7)	1999 (19.4)	2712 (26.3)	270 (2.6)	4981 (48.3)	10314 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Based on 35 sample households.





CHAPTER II

THE FAMILIAL AND IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S STATUS IN A HINDU PARBATIYA COMMUNITY

Defining the Domestic

This chapter is concerned firstly with establishing women's place in the ideology and structure of Parbatiya kinship and secondly with understanding how this position affects women's roles within the family. This analysis will focus on the varying degrees and kinds of power that women exercise at different stages of the life cycle. It will also investigate the various types of family structures found in Bakundol as well as marriage and residence patterns, particularly as these affect women's power and status. We will also look at the phenomenon of divorce and attempt to analyze its different economic and social impact on men and women in the Parbatiya community.

However, this chapter will certainly not complete our analysis of this "familial dimension" of women's status. It is my contention that in rural Parbatiya society, as in many other peasant societies, the family is what Schlegel defines as a central institution, that is, "one that establishes priorities in the allocation of time, goods and personnel and legitimizes motivation and justification for action" (1977:19). This means that our analysis of the Parbatiya family and women's familial roles will not be limited to the consideration of kinship and marriage relations. The Bakundol data support Yanagisako's stance that, contrary to the ethnocentric Western view of the family which has unconsciously shaped most anthropological concepts about it, the functions of the family are not universally limited to reproduction and socialization (Yanagisako 1979:199). In Bakundol the family has important functions in the economic, political and legal spheres. Hence, subsequent consideration of women's status in these areas will continually refer back to and further explicate the familial dimension.

The centrality of the family as an institution in Parbatiya society has several important implications for our assessment of women's status and I believe for the kinds of development approaches likely to be most effective - not only for women but for the rural population as a whole. These development implications will be addressed in the

conclusion. What concerns us now is understanding the power relations within the rural Parbatiya family and how these affect women's status.

It has been common in anthropological discussions of women's status to employ the concept of a public/domestic or outside/inside dichotomy between the respective domains of men and women. Some scholars (Rosaldo, 1974) have used this concept to explain what they believe to be the universal subordination of the female sex. The argument is first, that women are cross culturally more closely associated than men with the familial or domestic sphere by virtue of their involvement with childbirth and child rearing. The second part of the argument is that this domestic sphere is itself limited and relatively unimportant vis-à-vis the public or political sphere which is dominated by men.

While this view has been challenged on several points and subsequently modified by other scholars, certainly the first part of the argument is supported by the findings from Bakundol where women are strongly identified with the domestic sphere. Of course there is no pardah or physical seclusion in Bakundol. As mentioned earlier, women are not confined within the walls of their homes or courtyards and veiling is not practiced.* Nevertheless women themselves -- and especially those from the high castes -- commonly expressed the view that their proper place is in the home and that men are more suited for the business of the bazaar and panchayat government.

The real issue revolves around the second part of the argument: how are we to define the 'domestic sphere' which women see to be their proper place and how do we assess its overall importance within rural Parbatiya society? As both Rogers (1975) and Nelson (1974) have pointed out, the assumption that the domestic sphere is necessarily restricted, isolated and economically dependent is rooted in the concept of the family as it functions in the modern industrialized West where indeed the locus of real power is largely removed

*A residual form of veiling is sometimes practiced in orthodox homes by junior daughters-in-law who pull the end of their sari up over their heads in the presence of their father-in-law or husband's elder brother as a sign of respect.

from the family. In traditional Nepalese society, however, this is not the case. I have already indicated my view that the family in Bakundol is a central institution with important political and economic ramifications in addition to its accepted nurturant, reproductive and ideological roles.

Our inability to recognize the economic and political aspects of the family -- and hence women's role within the family and community -- is in turn related to our own narrow definition of what is political and what is economic. Prevailing assumptions about what is 'economic' have already been challenged by Acharya (1979) during the first phase of the current research and this issue will be taken up again in our subsequent analysis of the village household economy. As to the definition of 'political,' Tiffany (1979) has forcefully demonstrated the need to broaden our concept of this term to encompass both formal and informal power. The distinction here is roughly parallel with that between authority and power which has been key in almost all of the more insightful analyses of the problem of women's status (Schlegel, 1976:87; Tiffany, 1979:44; Rogers, 1975:728). Schlegel defines power as "the legitimate right to control." There is a general consensus that in most societies men have predominated in the exercise of formal power and have held most of the positions of authority -- certainly those in the public sphere. Tiffany and others (Quinn, 1977; Rogers, 1978) have pointed out that since anthropologists have until recently concentrated their analytic attention on the formal structures of society, they have usually overlooked or deemed unimportant the informal areas where women often play an important part. The previously mentioned devaluation of the familial or domestic sphere is part of this tendency. As Tiffany points out:

"By emphasizing institutionalized distribution of formal power and authority, structural-functional models may restrict analysis to structural relations involving men and exclude informal roles and processes that often involve women. Moreover, by treating informal roles and processes as peripheral concerns, such models overlook the importance of women as intermediate links between formal and informal structures and women's informal and intermediate roles as both transmitters and evaluators of information" (Tiffany, 1977:38).

By seeking to understand women's informal power in the domestic realm, however, I do not mean to imply that the manifest dominance of Parbatiya men is merely an "appearance" or a "myth". Both Friedle (1967) and Rogers (1975) have presented ethnographic evidence indicating that in the peasant societies they studied, the formal political positions which are held by men often confer prestige but little actual power because they are bracketed within the centralized authority of the state. Instead, Rogers contends, the real power lies in the domestic realm "because there are few extra domestic decisions of real importance to community life which are within the power of peasants to make" (1975:146). But in Nepal this is not the case and participation in the public sphere bears significant consequences and opens up important new opportunities. The authority and dominance of Bakundol men is based on very real legal, economic and political power in both the public and the domestic spheres. Therefore, a balanced view of women's status in Parbatiya society requires not only an understanding of women's considerable informal power within the domestic realm, but also an analysis of how that power is ultimately limited by women's relative absence from the public sphere and their lack of certain kinds of formal legal, economic and political authority which men enjoy.

The Kinship System: Alternative Values and Organizational Principles

It is important to keep the formal/informal distinction well in mind as we consider women's place in the overall kinship organization of the Parbatiya Hindus. As in almost all Hindu groups the formal structure and dominant ideology -- which I have elsewhere described as the patrifocal model* -- of Parbatiya kinship is strongly male oriented. As its name suggests the patrifocal model is based on deference to the father or by extension, senior males. It stresses the ideal of solidarity among agnatic** males and both spiritual and economic continuity between the generations in the male line. Schematically the broad outlines

*For fuller discussion and analysis of this model see my Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters. Columbia University Press, forthcoming.

**Related through the male line of descent, i.e., patrilineally.

of Parbatiya kinship organization within a given caste could be represented in terms of discrete exogamous* groups of patrilineally related males. From the point of view of the patrifocal model women are important in the overall scheme principally in their affinal** roles, i.e., as wives who serve as links between groups and the means by which the groups perpetuate themselves. Nevertheless, in this role affinal women are accorded the lowest rank and must defer to everyone in their husband's family.

Within the agnatic group formal relations are hierarchically structured according to the organizational principles of the patrifocal model. The first principle is that males rank over females (of the same generation) and the second is that age ranks over youth***. This hierarchy is continually articulated through finely gradated forms of address and greeting, through the order of feeding**** and in a hundred other ways.

Of course this rather neat almost Euclidian set of principles describes only the ideal relations of authority among males and with in-married affinal women. The patrifocal model cannot by itself explain the special set of hierarchical relations which hold between consanguineally***** related men and women, i.e., between the males of a given patrilineal group and their sisters and daughters who must be married out. These relations point to an alternative set of values and organizational principles -- and a very different view of women -- simultaneously present within the formal structures and ideology of Parbatiya kinship. Moreover, the patrifocal model does not begin to describe

*An exogamous group is one whose members do not intermarry.

**Affinal pertains to kinship relations established through marriage.

***This second principle modifies the first such that senior females rank over junior males in expression of formal deference.

****Except that young children are fed before adults.

*****Those who are related by birth rather than through marriage.

the complex informal power relations within an actual family -- which depend on the political skills, economic resources and personal characteristics of the individuals involved rather than just their seniority and gender. These issues will be addressed in our discussion of women's roles within the family. At that juncture the simple structural outlines of male dominance which seem so clear now as we begin to examine the patrifocal model of Parbatiya kinship will be qualified by a) the existence of an alternative set of hierarchical principles based on the sacredness of consanguineal women and b) the play of individual personalities on the idealized structure.

The Dominant Patrifocal Model: An Image of Female Subsistence

There are several major festivals during the year when the principles of patrifocal hierarchy find ritual expression. One of the most important of these is the annual fall worship of the warrior goddess Durga when patrifocal seniors must place the auspicious red tika mark on the foreheads of those who rank beneath them. Another ritual occasion which celebrates the patrifocal ideal of agnatic solidarity is the annual Devali ceremony where all the male members of the lineage or kul gather to worship the lineage gods under the direction of the senior male.* It is, in my interpretation, a significant expression of the peripheral or submerged role of women within the patrifocal model that women are barred from participation in the blood sacrifice around which both the Durga Puja and the Devali** rituals center. Both male and female informants explained that women could not participate because women's monthly menses makes them

*For fuller description and analysis of the Dasai Durga Puja and the Devali rituals see my Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters. op cit.

**High caste women may not even witness the sacrifice; low caste Sarki women may see the sacrifice but must not enter the sacred enclosure where it is performed.

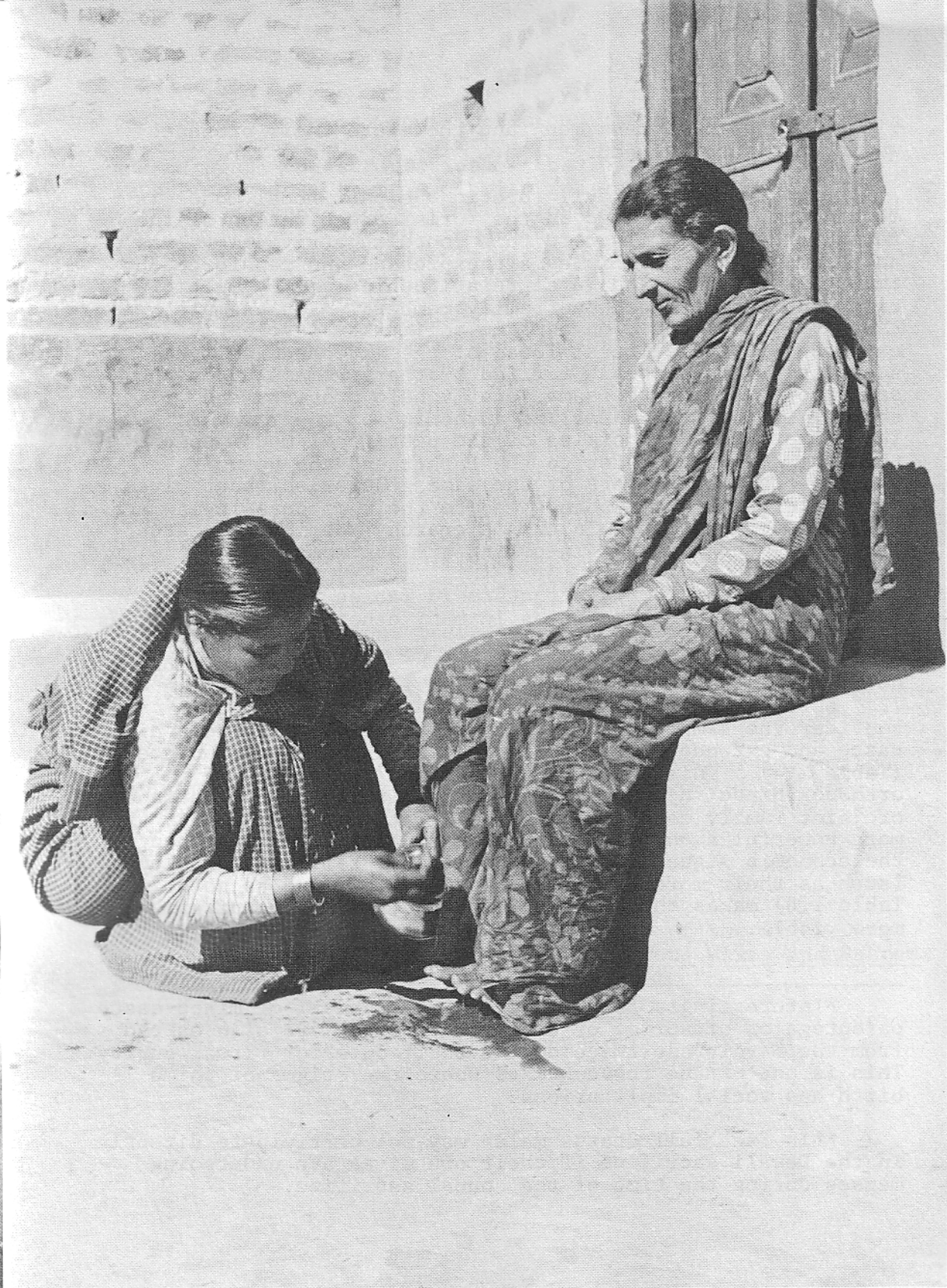
ritually less pure than men* and therefore their presence would displease the god.**

However, women's full role in the patrifocal model is more clearly articulated in the formal organization of the rural Parbatiya family. In this context patrifocal values and hierarchical principles are expressed and reinforced by important economic and jural relationships and by multiple ritual obligations between family members. For example, the high value placed on agnatic solidarity is clearly expressed in the cultural ideal of the extended family. According to this ideal, married brothers remain under the same roof, working the same jointly held property and sharing its produce under the authority of their father. The hierarchical principles of the patrifocal model specify that the sons will defer to the father and the younger brothers to their elders of the same generation; that wives will defer to their husbands and to their mothers-in-law and elder sisters-in-law. In this hierarchy the lowest status is that of the youngest in-coming affinal woman.

The data on family structure in Tables 2.1 through 2.4 indicate that in Bakundol, as in many other Hindu communities in South Asia, the ideal, at least in terms of family structure, is not the norm. Only 11 out of the 35 sample households are extended families (Table 2.1). Eight of these or 72.7 percent are from the high caste group. When we consider the sample population, the association between high caste and extended family structure is even more pronounced (Table 2.4). This suggests either that the effect of orthodox Hindu injunctions against splitting the co-parcenary or joint family estate during the lifetime of the father are more powerful among the high caste or that something about the economic situation of the high caste families in Bakundol (such as their more extensive ownership of land as noted in Table 1.8) makes this type of extended family organization more viable.

*Interestingly thimu Chetri (i.e., Chetri of mixed caste parentage or offspring of widow remarriage) are also barred from the Devali sacrifice due to their inferior ritual purity. This is one of the few contexts where the stigma of thimu birth has social implications.

**In fact full status males may not participate directly in the Devali sacrifice if their own wives are undergoing menses during the time of the annual sacrifice.



To show her deference, a young Chetri woman performs the daily ritual of washing the feet of her mother-in-law.

TABLE 2.1
HOUSEHOLDS BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND CASTE

(In number)

Caste	Family Structure	Nuclear	Extended	Other	Total
HIGH		12 (54.5)	8 (36.4)	2 (9.1)	22 (100.0)
OTHER		2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	-	3 (100.0)
LOW		7 (70.0)	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	10 (100.0)
ALL CASTES		21 (60.0)	11 (31.4)	3 (8.6)	35 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.2
HOUSEHOLDS BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Family Structure Economic Strata	Nuclear	Extended	Other	Total
TOP	⁶ (75.0)	² (25.0)	-	⁸ (100.0)
MIDDLE	⁸ (40.0)	⁹ (45.0)	³ (15.0)	²⁰ (100.0)
BOTTOM	⁷ (100.0)	-	-	⁷ (100.0)
ALL STRATA	²¹ (60.0)	¹¹ (31.4)	³ (8.6)	³⁵ (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.3
POPULATION BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Family Structure Economic Strata	Nuclear	Extended	Other	Total
TOP	34 (58.6)	24 (41.4)	-	58 (100.0)
MIDDLE	35 (27.6)	84 (66.1)	8 (6.3)	127 (100.0)
BOTTOM	39 (100.0)	-	-	39 (100.0)
ALL STRATA	108 (48.2)	108 (48.2)	8 (3.6)	224 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.4
POPULATION BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND CASTE

(In number)

Caste	Family Structure	Nuclear	Extended	Other	Total
HIGH		66 (42.0)	86 (54.8)	5 (3.2)	157 (100.0)
OTHER		11 (61.1)	7 (38.9)	-	18 (100.0)
LOW		31 (63.3)	15 (30.6)	3 (6.1)	49 (100.0)
ALL CASTES		108 (48.2)	108 (48.2)	8 (3.6)	224 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

A second look at the data on family structure, however, suggests that Bakundol may in fact be closer to the cultural ideal than it first appeared to be. For example, looking at the distribution of the population we find that exactly the same percentage (48.2 percent) live in nuclear as live in extended families. Moreover, six out of the 21 nuclear families (or roughly 28 percent) contain a single parent living with their married children. Since it is one of the cardinal principles of the joint family ideal that parents in their old age should be cared for by their sons,* these families which we have classified as nuclear because they contain only one conjugal unit, actually embody another important aspect of the joint family ideal which is security for the aged.

The same patrifocal ranking principles apply whether the family structure is nuclear or extended. As we will discover in our discussion of marriage and life stages, the type of family structure has definite implications for women's actual status in the family -- particularly that of young married women. Nevertheless, in both family types formal authority lies with the males and women are expected to show deference to men, especially and above all to their husbands. In formal greeting a woman must touch her husband's feet with her forehead. Before every meal she must drink gora pani or the water with which she has washed his feet. Also she will take her own meal after her husband using the unwashed plate from which he has eaten. All these are forms of what Harper (1964) has called respect pollution whereby even the impurities of the honored person (in this

*In one of the six cases a widow has come to live with her daughter. This is considered anomolous and almost certainly would not be possible if the daughter herself were living in an extended family under her parents-in-law. The belief that a son should care for his parents is reinforced by an almost equally strong ethic that it is wrong for a daughter-in-law to send any joint family resources out of her husband's agnatic group to support her parents. Hence, this old woman's position in her daughter's house is tenuous and, as the data on mobility indicate, she spends much of the year visiting the houses of other relatives to relieve the burden on her daughter's family. Also the time allocation data discussed in Chapter III show that this woman works long hours while in her daughter's home.

case the feet which are the most impure part of the body or the used plate which is considered to be jutho or polluted by saliva) are treated as pure vis-à-vis the inferior and therefore worthy of that person's deference. Symbolically, this behavior expresses the cultural ideal that the wife should view her husband as a god and that service to him is her highest dharma or religious duty.

Though the women of Bakundol have few illusions about the supposed divinity of their spouses, nevertheless most of the women I knew -- high caste and low caste alike -- told me that ritual deference toward the husband of the kind I have described is indeed the true duty of a wife. Though some of the women in poorer nuclear families dispensed with the gora pani khanne ritual, my observations were that most women do follow these deferential forms of behavior. In my interpretation, the spiritual merit a woman gains from this behavior is not perceived as being in any way dependent on the actual moral virtues of her husband; rather it derives from the fact that she is fulfilling her proper wifely role within the patrifocal ideal of social organization which itself is validated by the larger Hindu world view.

The economic and jural basis of the patrifocal model of kinship is truly evident only within the family: It is there that the ideal of agnatic solidarity and generational continuity in the male line is expressed through the joint management and inheritance of property. The family, whether nuclear or extended, functions as a 'corporation' under the control of the male household head. These corporations or coparcenary groups, as the major units of both production and consumption, are by far the most important economic institutions in rural Parbatiya society. However, male and female members have very different rights in the joint assets of the family co-parcenary group.* Most notably, the inheritance of landed property -- as well as almost all the movable property -- is through the male line from father to son. The implications of these facts for the status of women

*See my Tradition and Change in the Legal Status of Nepalese Women, Status of Women in Nepal, Volume I: Background Report, Part 2, Center for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA), Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu 1979, pages 29-45 for analysis of the differential rights of males and females in the Nepalese Hindu coparcenary.

in the Parbatiya community will be considered in subsequent chapters on the economic and legal basis of women's subordinate position in the patrifocal structure of the family.

Closely related to the son's right to inherit the patrilineal estate are his religious duties towards his parents. It is important for every couple to have at least one son because only the son can assure his parents' peaceful entry into the afterlife through his careful performance of their funeral ceremonies which are long and difficult. Moreover, it is the son who must continue as long as he lives to perform the annual ancestor feeding rituals known as shraddha without which the spirit of the deceased will wander the earth in acute hunger and misery.* This spiritual duty is seen as an extension of the son's obligation to care for his parents in their old age and is equally important to low caste and high caste Parbatiya alike.**

The Filiafocal Model: The Sacredness of Sisters and Daughters

Much of the strength of the patrifocal model rests upon the reciprocal relations which exist between the generations

*For detailed description of these rituals and discussion of their significance in the context of patrilineal ideology see my Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters, op cit.

**During field work for this study I had the opportunity to observe a major funeral or kirya ceremony which took place in the Sarki community. In both the overall structure of the ritual and the specific details of the symbolic idiom, the Sarki ceremony was very similar to the many kirya basne ceremonies I had observed during my previous field work with Brahman and Chetri. It was partly this ceremony which convinced me that high caste and low caste Parbatiya share the same essentially Hindu world view -- simply seen from different perspectives. The Sarki did show less emphasis on the absolute necessity that funeral rites be performed exclusively by males. Several low caste informants said that a woman would perform the ceremonies if there were no patrilineally related males present. One man stated that it was better to have a female than someone who is not related. This contrasts with the high caste position that a hired Brahman would be preferable to even the daughter or the wife of the deceased.

of the patrifocal family. The father passes on the economic assets of the family to his sons who in turn are morally responsible for their parents' spiritual peace. But what of the daughter's role in this scheme? In terms of patrifocal values she is an economic liability to the agnatic group. Although in fact she will begin to make substantial contributions to the family labor pool at a much earlier age than her brothers, the pattern of patrilocal* marriage decrees that her presence in her natal home or maiti is a temporary phenomenon. Unlike the son, who will not only spend his entire life working for the family, but will even bring in a bride who will add her labor to the household and produce its next generation, the daughter must leave her maiti at marriage. Her primary orientation must always be towards her ghar (husband's house) and she must put her efforts into the prosperity and continuity of his family.

Earlier we mentioned women's role in the overall kinship system as being the link between discreet patrilineal groups. The practical effect of women's intermediary position is that women are never really full members in their natal families and achieve full membership in their affinal families only after many years as the mothers of grown sons. Woman's low status in the patrifocal model is consistent with her marginal or peripheral position in the structure of the patrilineal groups in both her maiti and her ghar.

Yet the scheme outlined above does not present the woman's full role in her natal family; nor does it explain why she is actually worshipped by both male and female elders in her natal group who, according to the principles of the patrifocal model, rank above her. For, although daughters cannot normally care for their parents in old age, perform their funeral rituals, produce patrilineal heirs or maintain the ritual and economic continuity of their natal family, they have a unique spiritual value. They confer great religious merit upon their parents and other consanguineal relatives when they are given away to another lineage in orthodox kanyadan (literally 'virgin gift') marriage. It is in fact their role as virgins, as pure religious gifts, which gives all consanguineal women -- whether married or unmarried -- a special sacred status

*Patrilocal marriage (like viralocal marriage) refers to the practice whereby a married couple settles with the husband's family.

within their natal kin group. It also makes sisters and daughters the focus of a special affection tinged with sadness caused by the knowledge that they must eventually be sent away in marriage or if already married, be returned all too soon to their husband's family. This powerful combination of sacredness and affection which surrounds consanguineal women is the basis of what I have called the filiafocal* model of Parbatiya kinship. In this model the hierarchical principles of the patrifocal model are reversed and we find that females rank over males and youth over age.

Although the patrifocal model is decidedly dominant in that it structures those relationships which are economically and ideologically most central, the values of the filiafocal model permeate both ritual action and ordinary behavior within the family. Often, in fact, the two sets of mutually contradictory hierarchical principles can be seen to operate within a single ritual, as for example, in the giving of tika during the annual fall worship of Durga. In this ceremony one can observe the father placing the red tika mark on his daughter's forehead thus indicating that she owes deference to him (as a senior male) in the patrifocal system; then immediately following this he will give her a few coins as dakshina. Since dakshina is a ritual gift given only to Brahman and other ritual superiors, this gift signals that filiafocal principles are at work and the father is now showing his deference to his daughter.

Almost every ritual activity that takes place in a Parbatiya home -- be it a shraddha ceremony, a marriage or a calendrical festival in honor of some diety -- ends with the distribution of dakshina to all unmarried daughters and

*Since this set of relationships is focused on the female rather than the male and youth rather than age I have adopted the term 'filiafocal' based on the Latin filia or daughter thus stressing its presence as a kind of counterpoint to the dominant patrifocal model. While the latter emphasizes deference to the father or by extension males of the ascendant generation, the former stresses deference to the daughter and thus females of the descendant generations. For fuller analysis of the filiafocal model and its implications for the understanding of Hindu kinship and women's status see my Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters, op cit.



The sacredness of consanguineal women: a father ritually washes his daughter's feet upon completion of a religious ceremony.

those married daughters who happen to be visiting. In such ceremonies one often witnesses the grandfather touching the feet of his little granddaughter.

The values underlying these filiafocal principles, however, are most forcefully expressed in two rituals in particular. One is called Bhai Tika or Bhai Tihar and is devoted specifically to the recognition and celebration of the brother-sister bond. The sister prepares special foods for her brother and performs a ritual designed to protect him for the coming year from Yama, the god of death. In return, the brother gives his sister a gift of cash (or perhaps a blouse or a sari if he can afford it) and on presenting it he kneels to touch her feet. The other major expression of the filiafocal principle occurs during a daughter's wedding in the gora dhune ceremony when all the bride's natal relations come and offer her gifts and wash her feet just before she is given away in the kanyandan ceremony. Interestingly, the only members of the natal group who may not wash her feet are her younger sisters who (by the filiafocal principle of youth over age) are her ritual superiors and must not worship her.

How does a woman's filiafocal role affect her overall status as Schlegal defines it in terms of rewards, prestige and power (1977:6-9)? A woman does receive certain monetary or material rewards by virtue of this role, i.e., the small Sakshina gifts, the Tihar gifts from her brothers, the gorduwa gifts given at the time of the foot-washing ceremony and whatever dowry or daijo her parents send with her in marriage plus the periodic gifts she may receive from her parents on visits to her maiti. In comparison with the rewards which accrue to a male by virtue of his patrifocal position, however (especially in terms of property inheritance), the material benefits a woman receives from her filiafocal role are in most cases minor and principally symbolic in nature. In fact, as we will discover in the chapter on women's legal status, even a woman's control over the movable daijo and gorduwa gifts she receives at her wedding is far from secure. Nevertheless, these material benefits should not be discounted. They are significant in that they do indicate the possibility of future support in times of domestic crisis and thus figure in the analysis of women's overall economic and social status.

Clearly a woman does receive prestige from her filiafocal position. The question of power however, is more

complex. There is little authority, i.e., "socially recognized and legitimated right to make decisions concerning others," (Schlegel 1977:8) attached to women's filiafocal role. In fact, as mentioned earlier, the symbolic meaning of the role is based on the daughter's abnegation of control over even her own person. As a kanyadan or virgin gift she must relinquish all claim to autonomy regarding her marriage which is probably the single most important event in her life. Throughout the ceremony her role is that of a precious but utterly passive commodity being exchanged between two agnatic groups. The entire responsibility for the transaction rests with the elders of her natal group. It is this sense of responsibility on the part of her maiti, however, which can be an important source of informal power for a woman. If women as individuals are skilled at mobilizing the affection and sense of obligation created by their filiafocal role, they can usually count on important "political" support from the maiti should conflict arise or their position be threatened within their husband's family.

Beyond the Formal Structures: Women's Sources of Informal Power in the Family

We now confront what always appears to me to be the most intractable question and yet the one which must somehow be addressed before there can be any claim to have assessed the status of Parbatiya women: What is the extent of women's power in the family? How much control over her own life and the lives of others is a woman able to exercise within a family structure that is based on an ideology of male authority reinforced by male control over the key economic resources? Parbatiya women are decidedly not powerless. But what are the sources of their power? And how are we to assess the extent of power that must always to a certain extent efface itself and work covertly?

To address this set of related questions we must shift our focus from the structural features of the Parbatiya family -- from the explication of conceptual models -- to the consideration of actual Bakundol families through both individual case histories and aggregate village data. We will begin this section by considering the changing sources and magnitudes of women's power at successive stages of the life cycle. Then we will take up various aspects of the institution of marriage which emerge in the quantitative data and try to sort out some of the key variables which affect women's power within the family.

Power in the Family

Before Marriage

As we have indicated, the position of an unmarried girl in her natal home is greatly softened because of the filial values which surround her. As demonstrated by the time allocation data to be discussed subsequently, she must work hard for the family. However (especially if there is a daughter-in-law in the household), she will usually be spared the most unpleasant tasks such as cleaning up the pots and pans after a meal. There is in fact a ritual proscription against allowing daughters of the house to perform the early morning task of plastering the door posts and entry way with fresh mud and cow dung. This must be done by affinal women. According to my observations, unmarried daughters are given preference -- equally with sons -- in the allocation of food and clothing, though not necessarily in education (see Chapter IV).

More important, daughters have the right to express their wishes and opinions and (when they are young) even to whine and tease their parents to get what they want. They live in an atmosphere that is remarkably relaxed and tolerant in contrast to what they can expect after marriage. I recall sitting one evening with the Chetri family where I lived when we were paid a rather unusual visit by a neighboring uncle who apparently wanted to observe the anthropologist. Despite the fact that he was a pure caste Chetri, it seemed to me from his slightly slurred speech and erratic movements that he had in fact been drinking before he paid his social call. The mother and father of the house seemed embarrassed by his behavior and tried to ignore it. However their daughter, twelve year old Sumitra, noticed her uncle's state immediately and voiced her disapproval. She walked up to him, took off his *topi* and began to pound him on the back calling him "bigreko Chetri" (a fallen or spoiled Chetri) and telling him that his breath smelled. He tried to retain his composure and the family tried to suppress their laughter while he rapidly finished his cigarette and prepared to leave. But no one scolded Sumitra for her forthright and rather disparaging comments about her patrifocal elder.

An unmarried daughter in her teenage years is not only a focus of affection but she is an important worker for the family. Invariably both the girl and her family try to postpone sending her away in marriage. Yet the sense of

duty weighs heavily on her parents; they dare not wait too long or pass up a good match. Marriage with a family of higher economic status or one that lives closer to the city is seen as a woman's major chance to improve her lot. Most girls view their impending marriage with a feeling of dread mingled with faint hope. Rarely, however, can a hill agriculturalist family manage to give their daughter "upwards" in marriage. In fact several informants pointed out the increasing difficulty of even finding suitable husbands of the same general economic status for high caste girls. Interestingly, the situation appeared to be just the reverse among the low caste. One low caste woman noted with satisfaction that Chetri fathers have to search and search for a boy for their daughters while among the Sarki, the boy's family must search for a girl. Her explanation for this state of affairs was, somewhat ironically, that the Sarki adhere more strictly than the Chetri to the rule of caste endogomy (i.e., marriage only within a caste). "These days," she said, "Chetri men marry women from any caste, Tamangnis, Newarnis, what have you, while Sarki men marry only Sarki women. There aren't so many to choose from so Sarki girls have a better chance." Although increasing education and urban migration of high caste males probably also contribute to the situation, the old Sarki woman's explanation holds a certain amount of truth.

The data on age of first marriage in Table 2.5 show a marked association between high caste status and early marriage age -- especially among females. Of the eight women in the Bakundol sample who were married before the age of ten, seven were from the high castes. The breakdown of the same data for economic strata in Table 2.6 shows a similar though less pronounced association between wealth and early marriage.

As can be seen in Tables 2.7 and 2.8 there is a general trend in Bakundol toward marriage at a later age for both girls and boys. The orthodox Hindu ideal of pre-puberty marriage is less and less frequently observed; only two of the women in the under 30 age group were married before they reached 10 years of age as compared to six who married before age 10 in the group of women age 30 and above.

Despite the trend away from child marriage, the average age of marriage in Bakundol is still very low -- especially for women. Of the ever-married females, 74.1 percent had married before age 17 and 96.3 percent before age 21. In

TABLE 2.5

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY CASTE AND SEX
(for population of 10 years and above)

(In number)

Age at First Marriage	HIGH		OTHER		LOW		ALL CASTES	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1 - 9	1 (3.0)	7 (19.4)	-	-	-	1 (7.1)	1 (2.1)	8 (14.8)
10 - 13	5 (15.1)	3 (8.3)	-	-	1 (9.1)	2 (14.3)	6 (12.5)	5 (9.3)
14 - 16	6 (18.2)	16 (44.5)	2 (50.0)	3 (75.0)	4 (36.3)	8 (57.2)	12 (25.0)	27 (50.0)
17 - 20	9 (27.3)	10 (27.8)	1 (25.0)	-	2 (18.2)	2 (14.3)	12 (25.0)	12 (22.2)
21 +	12 (36.4)	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	4 (36.4)	1 (7.1)	17 (35.4)	2 (3.7)
Total	33 (100.0)	36 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.6

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(for population of 10 years and above)

(In number)

Age at First Marriage	TOP		MIDDLE		BOTTOM		ALL STRATA	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1 - 9	1 (7.7)	2 (16.7)	-	5 (14.7)	-	1 (12.5)	1 (2.1)	8 (14.8)
10 - 13	2 (15.4)	2 (16.7)	4 (14.3)	2 (5.9)	-	1 (12.5)	6 (12.5)	5 (9.3)
14 - 16	3 (23.1)	5 (41.6)	7 (25.0)	17 (50.0)	2 (28.6)	5 (62.5)	12 (25.0)	27 (50.0)
17 - 20	1 (7.7)	2 (16.7)	9 (32.1)	9 (26.5)	2 (28.6)	1 (12.5)	12 (25.0)	12 (22.2)
21 +	6 (46.1)	1 (8.3)	8 (28.6)	1 (2.9)	3 (42.8)	-	17 (35.4)	2 (3.7)
Total	13 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	28 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.7

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY AGE GROUP

(for males of 10 years and above)

Age at first marriage \ Age Group	10 - 29	30 +	Total
1 - 9	-	1 (2.5)	1 (2.1)
10 - 13	1 (12.5)	5 (12.5)	6 (12.5)
14 - 16	3 (37.5)	9 (22.5)	12 (25.0)
17 - 20	3 (37.5)	9 (22.5)	12 (25.0)
21 +	1 (12.5)	16 (40.0)	17 (35.4)
Total	8 (100.0)	40 (100.0)	48 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.8

AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY AGE GROUP

(for females of 10 years and above)

Age at first marriage \ Age Group	10 - 29	30 +	Total
1 - 9	2 (10.0)	6 (17.7)	8 (14.8)
10 - 13	-	5 (14.7)	5 (9.3)
14 - 16	9 (45.0)	18 (52.9)	27 (50.0)
17 - 20	7 (35.0)	5 (14.7)	12 (22.2)
21 +	2 (10.0)	-	2 (3.7)
Total	20 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

comparison, 39.6 percent of the ever-married males were married before age 17 and only 64.6 percent before age 21 (Table 2.9). Though the age groupings are slightly different, similar patterns emerge from the data on the marital status of the entire sample population: Table 2.10 shows that of the unmarried males, 91.1 percent were below 20 years of age and there were no unmarried males over 34. For the unmarried females 95.5 percent were below age 20 and likewise there were no unmarried women over 34.

In the course of my fieldwork I was able to observe an interesting exception to the general pattern presented by these statistics. Though an exception, it was nevertheless very revealing about the kind of role an unmarried daughter can play in her natal home. The daughter of a Chetri family struggling to maintain its perilous hold in the middle economic stratum, Urmila is twenty-three and unmarried. With smooth pink cheeks, a high forehead and big intelligent eyes, she is considered to be a very pretty girl. She is also very strong and extremely hard working. Though she does allow her little 16 year old sister-in-law, Nani, to do certain unpleasant chores like scrubbing the pots at night, Urmila is up before anyone else in the morning and out in the fields. Often she returns only late in the evening. She has four brothers, but none of them do any of the agricultural work. The two who are older than Urmila have left the family to work in Kathmandu. Nani's husband who is younger than Urmila recently completed his high school education (though he failed his SLC exams) and went off to join the army. The youngest brother is still in school and though he does help around the house more than many boys his age, he is frail in health and does not engage in heavy agricultural labor. Urmila's parents are getting older and her father is probably suffering from tuberculosis for he is wracked with coughing every night. Though both parents still work in the fields during the peak season, it is Urmila, assisted by the daughter-in-law Nani, who does the major share of the agricultural labor for the family.

What is more, I noticed that it was Urmila and not her father or mother who took charge of organizing the labor exchange or parma groups to work on the family fields. In this role she had the responsibility for working out the timing for the successive land preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting operations for the corn, millet and wheat crops. In addition, she actually managed large groups of 15 to 20 fellow villagers -- mostly women and girls from her own

TABLE 2.9
AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE BY SEX
(for population of 10 years and above)

Age at First Marriage	MALE			FEMALE		
	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percentage	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percentage
1 - 9	1	2.1	2.1	8	14.8	14.8
10 - 13	6	12.5	14.6	5	9.3	24.1
14 - 16	12	25.0	39.6	27	50.0	74.1
17 - 20	12	25.0	64.6	12	22.2	96.3
21 +	17	35.4	100.0	2	3.7	100.0
Total	48	100.0	-	54	100.0	-

TABLE 2.10

MARITAL STATUS BY AGE GROUP AND SEX
(for total sample population)

(In number)

Sex/Age Group	M A L E						F E M A L E							
	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-34	35-49	50+	All age group	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-34	35-49	50+	All age group
Marital Status														
Never Married	28 (50.0) (100.0)	12 (21.4) (100.0)	11 (19.7) (91.7)	5 (8.9) (29.4)	-	-	56 (100.0) (53.8)	33 (50.0) (100.0)	17 (25.8) (100.0)	13 (19.7) (86.7)	3 (4.5) (11.5)	-	-	66 (100.0) (55.0)
Presently Married	-	-	1 (2.2) (8.3)	12 (26.1) (70.6)	20 (43.5) (95.2)	13 (28.2) (92.9)	46 (100.0) (44.2)	-	-	2 (4.3) (13.3)	23 (48.9) (88.5)	17 (36.2) (94.4)	5 (10.6) (45.5)	47 (100.0) (39.2)
Widowed and Not Presently Married	-	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0) (7.1)	1 (100.0) (1.0)	-	-	-	-	1 (16.7) (5.6)	5 (83.3) (45.5)	6 (100.0) (5.0)
Divorced and Not Presently Married	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0) (4.8)	-	1 (100.0) (1.0)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0) (9.0)	1 (100.0) (0.8)
Total	28 (26.9) (100.0)	12 (11.5) (100.0)	12 (11.5) (100.0)	17 (16.4) (100.0)	21 (20.2) (100.0)	14 (13.5) (100.0)	104 (100.0) (190.0)	33 (27.5) (100.0)	17 (14.2) (100.0)	15 (12.5) (100.0)	26 (21.7) (100.0)	18 (15.0) (100.0)	11 (9.1) (100.0)	120 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages, first row-wise and second column-wise.

caste group whom she knows well. She was responsible for working out with them the schedule for rotating between the fields of the participating families in order to finish a particular operation on time. Only during the peak rice planting season when labor needs are high and time is short did her father become noticeably involved. He then took on the job of organizing the hired labor which involves visiting the low caste neighborhood and recruiting men. He and his wife and Urmila jointly made the decision about when to plant the rice seedlings and worried together at night when after 3 weeks the monsoon rains still hadn't arrived and the seedlings needed to be transplanted.

I have digressed here to issues which are perhaps more properly considered in the discussion of women's economic role and household decision making. Yet the digression has been necessary because obviously Urmila's labor is of major economic importance to her family. Both her parents and even her brothers comment on what a hard worker she is. Her mother told me that they were waiting until they could find a bride for her youngest brother before they would marry her off. Otherwise who would do the work? But there are, I think, other important factors involved in the parents' delay: the family's own pride and their genuine affection for Urmila. I believe that they really want to marry her off to a "good" family -- one where she could remain at home performing the more prestigious domestic chores like cooking and cleaning. They are reluctant to send her to an ordinary hill family to labor in the fields for the rest of her life. Their own fortunes have declined drastically in the past generation. The great four storey brick house built by Urmila's grandfather, the "Laftan" (lieutenant in the military) is in serious disrepair. It is shared now by three separate households of the grandfather's descendants. The land too has been divided many times and periodic weddings and other expenses have forced Urmila's father to sell part of what was his share. Urmila's father himself has neither the wealth nor the connections to realistically expect to be able to arrange a comfortable marriage for Urmila. But perhaps he is hoping that his sons' wider connections in the city, coupled with Urmila's attractiveness, her impeccable Chetri pedigree and her reputation as a hard worker will somehow make a good match possible.

Both parents and daughter are uneasy about the delay, but they are allies in their reluctance to submit to the inevitable. Urmila herself explained the situation to me as

resulting from the advise of an astrologer who told them that if Urmila should marry before her 24th year, it could be very unlucky and some harm would come to her husband.

But even in such cases as Urmila's where economic and affective factors -- and even the stars -- combine to postpone the event, the transfer from maiti to ghar is indeed inevitable in Bakundol. A second glance at Table 2.10 shows that not a single male or female in the sample population has remained unmarried after the age of 34.

Table 2.11 gives an indication of the relative number of females in various age groups who like Urmila, are still members of their natal household where the more lenient attitudes of the filiafocal model have greater sway. Only 25.7 percent of the adult women are consanguineally related to the household head (i.e., through blood ties such as sister, daughter, etc., rather than through marriage ties) while 64 percent are affinally related (i.e., through marriage). It is to this latter group of affinal women whose behavior and status is predominantly defined by the principles and values of the patrifocal model, that we now turn our attention.

Marriage

With marriage and the subsequent transfer to her husband's lineage and village, a woman's formal status undergoes an abrupt decline. It has been well documented that an incoming junior affinal woman ranks beneath everyone in her husband's family. However, there are a number of factors, family structure being chief among them, which can mitigate the lowly position of a young wife in the formal hierarchy. More importantly, regardless of the type of family structure, there are many sources of informal power open to the incoming wife through which she can attempt to influence family events and eventually secure considerable authority in her own right.

Despite the fact mentioned earlier that there are only 11 extended family households in Bakundol, other data suggest that in the majority of cases the bride begins her married life in an extended family under the control of not only her husband, but her mother-in-law and the other senior women in the family. This inference is made on the basis of the data in Tables 2.12 and 2.13 which indicate that 79.2 percent of the first marriages among ever-married men and



As part of the kanyadan ritual, the bride's family must adorn her with jewellery.



A bride seated in a sedan chair, awaiting the journey to her husband's village. Although child marriage is increasingly rare, it is still practiced in Bakundol.

TABLE 2.11

SAMPLE POPULATION BY RELATION TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD

(In number)

Relation to Household Head	Age Group			Total	
	Below 15	15-49	50+	Number	Percent
<u>MEN</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>46.4</u>
1. Head of the household	-	16	14	30	13.4
2. Brother-in-law	-	1	-	1	0.4
3. Brother unmarried	-	1	-	1	0.4
4. Son - Nephew	26	12	-	38	17.0
5. Son - Nephew married	-	15	-	15	6.7
6. Grandson unmarried	13	2	-	15	6.7
7. Grandson married	-	1	-	1	0.4
8. Other relatives	1	2	-	3	1.4
<u>WOMEN</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>53.6</u>
<u>Consanguinal</u>	(50)	(16)	(2)	(68)	(30.4)
9. Mother - Paternal Aunt	-	-	2	2	0.9
10. Daughter/Niece unmarried	40	13	-	53	23.7
11. Granddaughter/Niece unmarried	10	3	-	13	5.8
<u>Affinal</u>	(-)	(41)	(4)	(45)	(20.1)
12. Wife	-	24	4	28	12.5
13. Sister-in-law	-	2	-	2	0.9
14. Daughter-in-law	-	14	-	14	6.3
15. Granddaughter-in-law	-	1	-	1	0.4
<u>Other</u>	(-)	(2)	(5)	(7)	(3.1)
16. Mother-in-law	-	-	1	1	0.4
17. Female Head	-	2	3	5	2.3
18. Female relation	-	-	1	1	0.4
Total	90	109	25	224	100.0

TABLE 2.12
FORM OF MARRIAGE BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(for first marriage)

(In number)

Type of Marriage	Sex/Economic Strata	F E M A L E				M A L E			
		Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
OWN CHOICE	Own choice without parents' consent	-	2 (5.9)	-	2 (3.7)	-	4 (14.3)	2 (28.6)	6 (12.5)
	Own choice with parents' consent	-	2 (5.9)	1 (12.5)	3 (5.6)	1 (7.7)	2 (7.1)	1 (14.3)	4 (8.3)
	Sub-total own choice	-	4 (11.8)	1 (12.5)	5 (9.3)	1 (7.7)	6 (21.4)	3 (42.9)	10 (20.8)
ARRANGED	Arranged without own consent	8 (66.7)	15 (44.1)	5 (62.5)	28 (51.8)	6 (46.1)	4 (14.3)	1 (14.3)	11 (22.9)
	Arranged with own consent	4 (33.3)	15 (44.1)	2 (25.0)	21 (38.9)	6 (46.1)	18 (64.3)	3 (42.8)	27 (56.3)
	Sub-total arranged marriage	12 (100.0)	30 (88.2)	7 (87.5)	49 (90.7)	12 (92.3)	22 (78.6)	4 (57.1)	38 (79.2)
Grand Total for First Marriage	12 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	13 (100.0)	28 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.13
FORM OF MARRIAGE BY CASTE AND SEX
(for first marriage)

(In number)

Type of Marriage	Sex/Caste		F E M A L E				M A L E			
	Top	All Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
OWN CHOICE	Own choice without parents' consent	2 (5.5)	-	-	-	2 (3.7)	3 (9.1)	2 (50.0)	1 (9.1)	6 (12.5)
	Own choice with parents' consent	2 (5.5)	1 (25.0)	-	-	3 (5.5)	2 (6.1)	1 (25.0)	1 (9.1)	4 (8.3)
	Sub-total own choice	4 (11.1)	1 (25.0)	-	-	5 (9.2)	5 (15.2)	3 (75.0)	2 (18.2)	10 (20.8)
ARRANGED	Arranged without own consent	19 (52.8)	2 (50.0)	7 (50.0)	28 (51.9)	8 (24.2)	-	-	3 (27.3)	11 (22.9)
	Arranged with own consent	13 (36.1)	1 (25.0)	7 (50.0)	21 (38.9)	20 (60.6)	1 (25.0)	6 (54.5)	27 (56.3)	
	Sub-total arranged marriage	32 (88.9)	3 (75.0)	14 (100.0)	49 (90.8)	28 (84.8)	1 (25.0)	9 (81.8)	38 (79.2)	
Grand Total for First Marriage	36 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	33 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	48 (100.0)		

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

90.7 percent of the first marriages among the women fall in the category of "arranged marriage". An arranged marriage is a transaction undertaken by the families of the couple rather than on the initiative of the couple themselves. Therefore he was still a member of his parents' household at the time. His parents expected that the expense and effort involved in their son's marriage would pay off through the addition of a new member -- the bride -- to their own household labor force. I have not encountered a single case where parents arranged a marriage for a son who had already separated from the joint family. A young man in that situation would have to find his own bride and therefore his marriage would fall into the "own choice" category.*

Looking at the data on the form of first marriage by economic strata in Table 2.12 it is clear that arranged marriages are much more common in wealthier families. While all the women in the top stratum had arranged marriages according to the orthodox Hindu tradition, approximately 12 percent of the women in both the middle and bottom strata found their own partners. Among the men, 92.3 percent in the top stratum reported that their parents had arranged their first marriage while only 78.6 from the middle stratum and 57.1 percent from the bottom stratum reported arranged marriages. The castewise breakdown of the data in Table 2.13 shows that high caste women actually have more "own choice" first marriages than low caste women.

Although girls are often consulted and in fact consent to their parents' choice in 42.8 percent of the cases of arranged marriage, active participation of the girl in the search for her own marriage partner goes against the whole spirit and meaning of orthodox kanyadan marriage where above all the bride must be passive and obedient. Hence it is understandable that according to Table 2.14 only two of the five women who chose their own partners in their first marriage were given the maximum kanyadan ritual while the others were married with minimal or no ritual at all.

*It is of course possible that he might negotiate the marriage with the girl's parents rather than the girl herself -- hence for her such a marriage (into a nuclear family) would be labelled "arranged" for the girl. This could explain the higher number of women reporting arranged marriages.

TABLE 2.14
 FORM OF MARRIAGE AND TYPE OF CEREMONY BY SEX
 (For Marriage I)

Form of Marriage & Sex Type of Ceremony	Own Choice		Arranged		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
No Ritual	4 (40.0)	3 (60.0)	1 (2.6)	2 (4.1)	5 (10.4)	5 (9.3)
Minimum Ritual	2 (20.0)	-	1 (2.6)	4 (8.2)	3 (6.3)	4 (7.4)
Maximum Ritual	4 (40.0)	2 (40.0)	36 (94.8)	43 (87.7)	40 (83.3)	45 (83.3)
Total	10 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	38 (100.0)	49 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

The position of the young wife in a Hindu patrilineal extended family is too well documented to need much further description here. (Jacobson, 1970; Mandlebaum, 1970; Madan, 1965). She is the outsider coming from another lineage and almost always another village into the tight knit agnatic unit of her husband's family. So everything about her prescribed behavior is meant to minimize the intrusion and the potential threat of her presence: her deference to her in-laws and her husband, her modest obedience and retiring demeanor and above all the public downplaying of her relationship with her husband. For as welcome as the new bride may be as a family worker and source of grandsons to carry on the lineage, she is also feared and mistrusted as a potential source of disharmony in the extended family. She is easily suspected of trying to convince her husband to force a partition of the joint estate so she and her husband can live separately. In fact, the relationship between brothers in the joint family -- sometimes even between father and son -- is often strained. The husband may be just as interested in becoming head of his own household as the wife is to escape the domination of her mother-in-law or elder sister-in-law. But because of the strength of the ideal of agnatic solidarity, it is more acceptable to place the responsibility for disunity upon the incoming affinal woman.

And of course it is true that becoming mistress of her own household through partition of the extended family is one of the major turning points in a woman's life. It marks not only an increase in her formal authority, but opens the way for much broader and more overt use of her various sources of informal power. According to the cultural ideal this point should only come after the death of her husband's father. In the interim the only legitimate route to power and authority within the extended family is through bearing children -- especially sons. Once she has borne a son then it becomes only a matter of patience -- of waiting until she herself can become a mother-in-law and eventually mistress of the household.

The Bakundol data seem to indicate that most women decide not to wait. The role of daughter-in-law in an extended family often occupies a fairly short period in a woman's life. Table 2.11 shows that only 25.4 percent of the female population in the 15-49 year age group are currently daughters or grand daughters-in-law in an extended family. In contrast 40.7 percent of the women in the 15-40

year age group are wives of the household head. As such these women are either mistresses of their own nuclear family household or mothers-in-law in an extended family. In terms of both formal authority and informal power within the household, the position of both sets of women is similar. The major differences would appear to be, for example, that the latter group (i.e., senior women in extended families) have authority over other women in the household and often spend more time in female company. Also the public reserve between the senior couple of an extended family may be somewhat greater than would be the case between the same two in a nuclear family. Most significant, however, is the fact that women in nuclear family achieve their position of formal authority while they are much younger.

As the wife of the household head in a nuclear family, a woman can become openly involved in a working relationship with her husband almost as soon as they establish their own household. Without the family elders as a continual audience there is no longer any need to ignore each other in public. The relationship moves out of the narrow sphere of the bedroom into the practicalities of managing the family farm. Of course this transformation also occurs in the extended family as well and the senior couple usually has the same kind of practical and open relationship. It simply takes more time to develop such a relationship in the extended family context.

A woman's age and her current stage in the life cycle do to a certain extent determine which sources of informal power are most appropriate and available to her. Also it would appear that women in nuclear families are in a better position to use certain varieties of power and may be able to take more direct and overt action in some spheres than women in extended families. Nevertheless, most generalizations about the effect of variables such as family structure, age and relation to household head on the husband-wife relationship and women's status in the family are ultimately of limited use. In my view, of at least equal importance in determining the actual distribution of power between the sexes in any given family are the personalities -- or more precisely, the "political skills" -- of the individuals involved. Here I have implicitly accepted Tiffany's definition of political action to include not only "administrative decisions and policy making involving the authority component" but also "expressions of power such as manipulation, bluff, influence, gossip, possession, threats of ritual pollution, witchcraft,



As senior women in the groom's family, these two Chetri grandmothers enjoy a joke after the men have departed to fetch the new daughter-in-law.

sorcery or suicide" (1978:44, emphasis mine). These "expressions of power" or political strategies, though of course not exclusively limited to women's use, are particularly important to their position within the family. These strategies constitute the means through which women can improve their own de facto status within a formal structure which limits both their access to positions of authority and their de jure control over major economic resources. But what are the sources of informal power behind these strategies which women use? A partial, but by no means exhaustive list would include:

1. Women's continuing relationship to their maiti or natal home
2. Women's sexuality which encompasses both their ability to bear children and to give (or withhold) pleasure to their husband. Women's power here is also connected in certain important ways to (3) below
3. Women's ability (through gossip or through their own behavior) to uphold or tarnish the honor/reputation (izat) of the family in the community at large
4. Women's own labor and their ability to contribute to the productivity of the affinal family

Almost all married Parbatiya women have these sources of informal power at their disposal. The strength of a particular source, however (as well as a woman's ability to use it), varies with the individual case. For example, a woman from a wealthy family with several brothers in influential positions would be able to mobilize stronger support from her maiti than a woman from a poor family. Likewise, a woman in a small nuclear family which depended on her agricultural labor to meet its basic subsistence needs might, other things being equal, have more say than a woman in a large, fairly well-off extended family where her agricultural labor was either not required or could be replaced by the wage labor of others.

The full significance of the last mentioned source of women's informal power (i.e., her labor) will become clearer in the chapter dealing with women's economic role in the family. At present we will briefly examine the strengths and limitations of maiti relationship and female sexuality as sources of women's power.

Support from the Maiti

Especially in the early years of her marriage, before she has children and while her children are young, a woman's maiti is important as a source of emotional solace and sometimes as a "political resource" in her struggle to establish herself in her affinal family. The kind of assistance provided by a woman's natal home is varied. It is common for a woman to send one or two of her children to stay in their mama ghar (i.e., mamali or mother's brother's house which is the mother's maiti) for several months or even years at a time if her affinal family is short of caretakers or too poor to feed and clothe the child properly -- or perhaps if there is a better school available in the mama ghar. Though there is great affection for the children of consanguineal women and in ritual situations they are treated with the same filiafocal reverence as their mothers, the cases I observed in Bakundol of extended visits in the mama ghar appeared to be chiefly offered as a form of economic assistance to the daughter.

Aside from the woman's daijo or dowry sent with her at the time of her wedding and the occasional gifts or koseli, which the maiti sends with their daughter when she returns to her ghar after a visit, I have observed many other less conventional forms of economic assistance from the maiti. Some assistance is given secretly to the girl herself, such as a small sum of cash, or a milk-giving cow to be kept in the maiti where part of the earning it produces are set aside for her. She may be given some new clothes for herself or her child. Other kinds of economic assistance may be offered directly to the daughter's husband or parents-in-law as a means of influencing their behavior towards the girl. I know of several cases where a girl's family was able to get her husband or one of her brothers-in-law a salaried job. In another rather exceptional instance a woman's cousin-brother tried to dissuade her husband from taking another wife by offering him a share of the first wife's father's land (since the father had no sons).* In another instance, a

*This particular plan, however, backfired because of the low status of the ghar juain (i.e., a man who comes to live in his wife's village and inherit his father-in-law's property in the absence of the latter's son) in Parbatiya society which is strongly patrilineal and patrilocal. The woman's husband found the offer insulting and went ahead with his second marriage.

brother regularly gives one muri* of his corn harvest and one muri of his rice harvest each year to his middle-aged sister who lives in the city with her accountant husband.

Even more important than whatever her maiti may be able to give her or her affinal family is the woman's right to visit her maiti. On such visits she finds not only physical relief from her heavy work load but the emotional relief of a relaxed, familiar and uncritical environment. This is especially true if she has married into in a joint family where she must try always to react with silent passive obedience to the criticism and commands of her mother-in-law and senior sisters-in-law. There are many occasions during the year when a married woman should return to her maiti to partake in certain rituals. For some festivals like Bhai Tika mentioned earlier, a woman in her filiafocal role as a daughter or sister is essential for the celebration of the ritual. A Parbatiya woman is also entitled to a long (two to three month) stay in her maiti after the birth of a child. After one or two children, however, these visits tend to shorten as the woman's other child care and domestic responsibilities are usually too great to permit such an extended absence (see Table 2.17).

Beyond their significance as ritual events and occasions for an extended "holiday" (otherwise almost unknown in rural areas), visits to the maiti can have "political" implications. A woman who feels she has been mistreated by her husband's family can protest by leaving for her maiti and thereby withdrawing her labor from the family work force and her sexual favors from her husband. This strategy draws her father and her brothers into her dispute because usually among the high castes, they feel compelled after a certain amount of time to approach the in-laws and try to mediate the situation. This is an extremely humiliating task for a woman's father and brothers because the hierarchical relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers (Dumont 1961; 1964; 1966) dictates that they must approach her husband's family with great deference and even servility in this context even though they may feel that their daughter or sister has been wronged.

*One muri is equal to about two and a half bushels.

The situation seems to be at least partially reversed among the low castes. Although members of the husband's family still rank above members of the wife's natal family (and by virtue of this can even serve as priests for the latter group), I have observed several instances where the husband of a dissatisfied Sarki woman humbled himself by going to her maiti to try and mend the situation and bring her back. Though such cases are not unknown among high caste families they are far more unusual.

The data for Bakundol on time spent in natal home (Table 2.15) show that 40.7 percent of the married women in the sample had spent at least one day to two weeks in their maiti during the past year while 11.1 percent had spent more than three months in their parents' home. Only 16.7 percent of the married women had been unable to visit their maiti at all. Most of these (88.9 percent) were high caste women who apparently tend to make fewer short visits but who had the largest percentage (13.9) of women making extended visits over 3 months. In terms of economic status, no clear pattern emerges although a slightly larger percentage (25 percent) of bottom stratum women than middle and top strata women (14.7 and 16.7 percent respectively) were unable to visit their parents' home (Table 2.16).

There seems to be more of a pattern evident when the same data is considered by age group (Table 2.17). Women in the early years of marriage spend more time in their parents' home with 91 percent of the married women age 24 and under making at least one visit and 27.3 percent remaining in their parents' home for more than three months. The amount of time decreases in the 25 to 44 year age group with more visits being of short duration. The rather remarkable jump in the number of days spent in maiti by women above 45 is probably due to the fact that a protracted return to the maiti is - especially among high caste women - the most common form of informal divorce or marital separation (see Chapter IV). We may conjecture that at this stage in her life a woman has either secured her position in her affinal home and has little time for maiti visits or is in the process of separation. Another possible explanation for the protracted visits of a few older women is that they are widows who are afraid of overtaxing their welcome in their adult son's household.

Table 2.18 shows the same data arranged with reference to the type of family structure. Not surprisingly, married women in extended families appear to spend more time in their

TABLE 2.15

TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY CASTE
(for adult married women)

(In number)

Caste	Number of days						Total
	None	1-14	15-30	31-90	91 & Above		
High	8 (22.2)	13 (36.1)	6 (16.7)	4 (11.1)	5 (13.9)	36 (100.0)	
Other	-	2 (50.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	-	4 (100.0)	
Low	1 (7.1)	6 (50.0)	3 (21.5)	2 (14.3)	1 (7.1)	14 (100.0)	
All Caste	9 (16.7)	22 (40.7)	10 (18.5)	7 (13.0)	6 (11.1)	54 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.16
 TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA
 (for adult married women)

(In number)

Economic Strata	Number of days						Total
	None	1-14	15-30	31-90	91 & Above		
Top	2 (16.7)	3 (25.0)	4 (33.3)	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3)	12 (100.0)	
Middle	5 (14.7)	16 (47.0)	4 (11.8)	5 (14.7)	4 (11.8)	34 (100.0)	
Bottom	2 (25.0)	3 (37.5)	2 (25.0)	-	1 (12.5)	8 (100.0)	
All Strata	9 (16.7)	22 (40.7)	10 (18.5)	7 (13.0)	6 (11.1)	54 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.17

TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY AGE GROUP

(for adult married women)

(In number)

Age-Group	Number of days	None	1-14	15-30	31-90	91 & Above	Total
15 - 24		1 (9.0)	3 (27.3)	2 (18.2)	2 (18.2)	3 (27.3)	11 (100.0)
25 - 44		4 (13.3)	14 (46.7)	8 (26.7)	4 (13.3)	-	30 (100.0)
45 +		4 (30.8)	5 (38.5)	-	1 (7.7)	3 (23.0)	13 (100.0)
Total		9 (16.7)	22 (40.7)	10 (18.5)	7 (13.0)	6 (11.1)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.18
 TIME SPENT IN NATAL HOME BY FAMILY STRUCTURE
 (for adult married women)

Family Structure	Number of days					Total
	None	1-14	15-30	31-90	91 & Above	
Nuclear	6 (23.1)	11 (42.3)	4 (15.4)	3 (11.5)	2 (7.7)	26 (100.0)
Extended	3 (11.5)	10 (38.5)	6 (23.1)	4 (15.4)	3 (11.5)	26 (100.0)
Others	-	1 (50.0)	-	-	1 (50.0)	2 (100.0)
Total	9 (16.7)	22 (40.7)	10 (18.5)	7 (13.0)	6 (11.1)	54 (100.0)

(In number)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

maiti than women in nuclear families. While 23.1 percent of the women in nuclear families were unable to visit their natal homes, only 11.5 percent of the women in extended families were unable to visit theirs. Furthermore, the visits of women in the latter group were generally for more extended periods. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is the presence of other adult females in an extended family to carry on the farm work and take over child care and domestic responsibilities.

It has been widely noted in the anthropological literature on women that residence pattern is one of the key variables affecting their status. As Quinn has written, "women in patrilineal virilocal societies, residing with their husband's kin are unlikely to have their own patrilineal relatives nearby to support them in times of stress" (1977:213). Parbatiya society as we have noted earlier is both patrilineal in descent and virilocal in its residence pattern. This means that a married woman is almost always isolated from the daily support of her maiti. In Bakundol, for example, only 3.7 percent of the women married members of the same village. However, as the data in Tables 2.19 and 2.20 indicate, there is considerable variation in the distance separating married women from their natal group and consequently in the time and expense involved in maintaining relations and eliciting their support. About 74 percent of the women were married at a distance ranging from less than one to six hours away from their maiti. Marriages at closer range, while considered lucky for the girl, are less prestigious for both families. It is difficult to maintain the required deference to a daughter's in-laws if meetings with them are frequent. Also, as villagers point out, it is hard for parents to be daily witnesses of their daughter's trials as a new wife when convention dictates that they must refrain from direct intervention with her in-laws. Linda Stone (personal communication) reports that among the Parbatiya villagers she studied, informants expressed their preference to marry a daughter into a village some distance away but where a close relative from the girl's family (preferably the father's sister or phuphu) was resident. This individual, they explained, would be able to watch the girl's situation and report any serious crisis to her parents without keeping them in a constant state of agitation about her daily troubles. Despite the higher prestige attached to marriage with more distant families, Table 2.19 does not reveal any relationship between economic status and distance to maiti.

TABLE 2.19
 DISTANCE TO NATAL HOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA

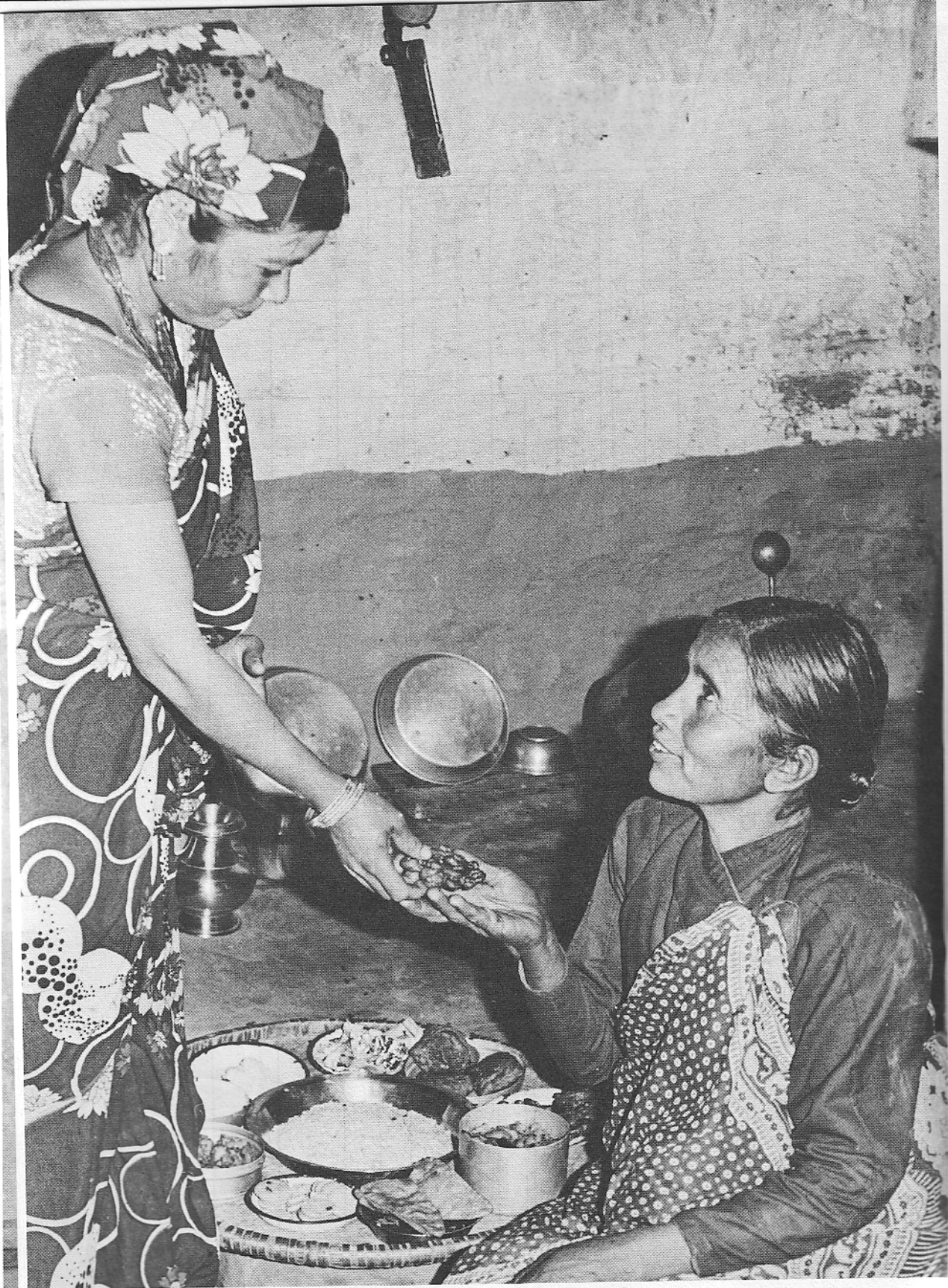
(In number)

Economic Strata Distance	Top		Middle		Bottom		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Same village	-	-	2	5.9	-	-	2	3.7
Less than one hour to 6 hours	10	83.4	23	67.6	7	87.5	40	74.1
6 hours - one day	1	8.3	4	11.8	-	-	5	9.3
Two or more days	1	8.3	5	14.7	1	12.5	7	12.9
Total	12	100.0	34	100.0	8	100.0	54	100.0

TABLE 2.20
DISTANCE TO NATAL HOME BY CASTE

(In number)

Caste Distance	High		Other		Low		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Same village	2	5.6	-	-	-	-	2	3.7
Less than one hour to 6 hours	23	63.9	4	100.0	13	92.9	40	74.1
6 hours - one day	4	11.1	-	-	1	7.1	5	9.3
Two or more days	7	19.4	-	-	-	-	7	12.9
Total	36	100.0	4	100.0	14	100.0	54	100.0



Upon returning to her maiti for "Mother's Day" an out-married daughter offers the traditional gift of sweets to her mother.

To be married at a great distance from one's maiti is considered very unfortunate for a girl and would certainly reduce the importance of her natal relatives as a source of informal power in her affinal home. Interestingly, Table 2.20 shows that no low caste women were married to villages more than a day's journey from their maiti while 12.9 percent of the high caste women were. This could be related to the previously mentioned difficulty in finding suitable husbands for high caste girls. Sarki and Damai parents may be able to reject a suitor who comes from too great a distance while Brahman and Chetri parents may have to search farther afield than they would like. Whatever its cause, this phenomenon of marriage at closer proximity for low caste girls would seem to be consistent with other evidence that the relation between the sexes among the low caste Parbatiya is somewhat more egalitarian than among the high castes.

The Husband/Wife Relationship

Far more important than the influence of the maiti in determining a woman's status in her affinal family are the two aspects of her sexuality mentioned earlier: her ability to have children and to please her husband. Success in the first area is essential to establishing her legitimate place and her future security to her affinal family.* Success in the second is important in securing her most powerful potential ally in the family -- her husband. Women themselves are well aware that their sexuality is an important means of winning influence over their husbands. This is evident in the first hand narrative of a woman from Bakundol which I have quoted elsewhere (1977) in which the narrator candidly

*This is perhaps the reasons for the high mean number of conceptions at 6.09 per woman over age 50 in Bakundol. However, despite the high number of conceptions, the number of live births per woman in the over fifty age group was 5.45 or somewhat less than the 5.7 completed fertility rate for women in the 45-49 age group reported in the National Fertility Survey. This may have been due to the fact that Bakundol had the highest fetal waste rate (10.51 percent) encountered in the eight village study. Of the children born alive to Bakundol women, only 64.9 percent or 3.54 per woman were still alive at the time of the survey. This means that statistically speaking in order to have at least two living children when she reaches the age of fifty a woman must bear at least three children. (Acharya and Bennett, 1981)

tells how both she and her co-wife used their sexuality in the battle to try to achieve dominance in the household through control of the husband's affection.*

Of course sexual attractiveness is not by any means the only basis for a strong, mutually supportive husband-wife relationship. In fact, the data on "Characteristics of the Ideal Wife" presented in Table 2.21 indicate that, at least in terms of what Parbatiya men are willing to reveal in public, the attractiveness of the wife is far less important to a man than her ability to work hard and get along with his parents.** But whatever the degree to which a woman's attractiveness actually determines marital compatibility and enables a woman to exercise indirect power over her spouse, the point I wish to make here is that the strength of the husband-wife relationship is probably the single most important factor in determining the extent of a woman's power within the family.

As we have emphasized, most of women's power is of an informal nature. It works indirectly, most often through influence on the husband. During the early years of marriage in an extended family he is the principal vehicle through which a young wife is able to have some say in the affairs of the family -- particularly in the allocation of resources. Later when the couple forms their own nuclear family or themselves head an extended family, a pattern of shared responsibility between the husband and wife emerges. But even at this stage women tend to exercise their power indirectly through influence and suggestion leaving the direct, public action to men.

As one way of gaining access and hopefully some insight into the internal power relations between men and women in the family we collected detailed data on the household

*For an insightful discussion of marriage and sexuality among high caste Parbatiya women see also Elaine Shroeder's "Sexual Behavior and Attitudes Among Brahman and Chetri Women in Nepal," M.A. thesis, University of Washington, 1975.

**Interestingly, not a single man referred to "ability to have many children" as one of the most important characteristics sought in a wife.

TABLE 2.21

OPINIONS ABOUT IDEAL WIFE BY MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

(In number of responses)

Opinion	Sex of Respondent		
	Male	Female	Both
Should help the family by working outside	3 (3.5)	-	3 (1.6)
Should be pretty	9 (10.3)	4 (4.1)	13 (7.0)
Should be able to bear many children	-	-	-
Should be hard working	21 (24.1)	28 (28.6)	49 (26.5)
Should be from a reputable family	12 (13.8)	17 (17.3)	29 (15.7)
Should be respectful towards in-laws	17 (19.5)	28 (28.6)	45 (24.3)
Should take care of her children	8 (9.2)	6 (6.1)	14 (7.6)
Should be respectful of her husband	7 (8.1)	7 (7.1)	14 (7.6)
Other	10 (11.5)	8 (8.2)	18 (9.7)
Total	87 (100.0)	98 (100.0)	185 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.22

OPINIONS ABOUT IDEAL HUSBAND BY MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

(In number of responses)

Opinion	Sex of Respondent		
	Male	Female	Both
Should be wealthy and provide well for family	26 (29.2)	28 (30.1)	54 (29.7)
Should be good looking	2 (2.2)	5 (5.4)	7 (3.9)
Should be educated	15 (16.9)	14 (15.1)	29 (15.9)
Should be from a reputable family	17 (19.1)	14 (15.1)	31 (17.0)
Should love his wife	10 (11.2)	16 (17.2)	26 (14.3)
Should have a good reputation in the village	12 (13.5)	11 (11.8)	23 (12.6)
Should be hard working	4 (4.5)	2 (2.1)	6 (3.3)
Should be respectful of his parents	-	-	-
Other	3 (3.4)	3 (3.2)	6 (3.3)
Total	89 (100.0)	93 (100.0)	182 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

decision making process.* Three major areas of decision making were identified each with many sub-areas. Where feasible, data were collected on the relative male/female input into the following stages of the decision making process: 1) the initiating stage where the purchase of action is suggested; 2) the consulting stage where the advice of other household members is sought; 3) the actual executing stage where the decision is made and acted on; and finally at least in some cases 4) the dissent stage where some members of the household may express their disagreement with the decision made.

The Bakundol data on family decision making show that within an overall pattern of male pre-eminence, men and women each take the lead in different areas of decision making and different stages of the decision making process. Of the three major areas of decision making, women have the greatest input into the area of Farm Management where the data in Table 2.23 show they made 45 percent of the decisions as compared to 48.9 percent made by men.** A more detailed examination of this data reveals areas of Farm Management where women have major responsibility. One such area is in the arrangement of parma or exchange labor groups. Women handle this important management task on their own in 50 percent of the households and share the task jointly with men in another 14.7 percent of the cases. This would seem to indicate that the household discussed earlier where the unmarried adult daughter took responsibility for parma arrangements was the rule rather than the exception in Bakundol. However, the fact that the male household head stepped in during the peak planting and harvesting season to handle the arrangements for wage labor also seems to be fairly typical. About 47 percent of the households reported that this task was performed solely by men while only 20.6 percent reported that women made wage labor arrangements on their own. The 26.4 percent of the households reporting that wage labor decisions were based on "Tradition" were probably high caste families who had more or less hereditary patron-

*See Methodological Introduction for description of how decision making data were collected.

**Data on the stages of Farm Management decisions were not collected.

TABLE 2.23

MALE/FEMALE DECISION MAKING ROLES IN FARM MANAGEMENT

(Labor and Agricultural Decisions)

(In number of decisions)

Area of Decision \ Decision Makers	Male	Female	Both	Traditional/ No One	Total
I. Labor Allocation	88 (54.7)	55 (34.2)	7 (4.3)	11 (6.8)	161 (100.0)
a. Arrange Exchange Labor	10 (29.4)	17 (50.0)	5 (14.7)	2 (5.9)	34 (100.0)
b. Arrange Wage Labor	16 (47.1)	7 (20.6)	2 (5.9)	9 (26.4)	34 (100.0)
c. Decide on Other's Labor Outside the Home	30 (63.8)	17 (36.2)	-	-	47 (100.0)
d. Decide on Own Labor Outside the Home	32 (69.6)	14 (30.4)	-	-	46 (100.0)
II. Agricultural Decisions	397 (47.8)	391 (47.2)	41 (5.0)	-	829 (100.0)
A. Food Grains	345 (57.6)	219 (36.6)	35 (5.8)	-	599 (100.0)
a) What <u>Crops</u> to Plant	77 (49.1)	76 (48.4)	4 (2.5)	-	157 (100.0)
b) Whether to use own or Improved <u>Seed</u>	71 (45.5)	74 (47.4)	11 (7.1)	-	156 (100.0)
c) Amount and kind of <u>Fertilizer</u>	197 (68.9)	69 (24.1)	20 (7.0)	-	286 (100.0)
B. Kitchen Garden	52 (22.6)	172 (74.8)	6 (2.6)	-	230 (100.0)
a) What <u>Crops</u> to Plant	13 (19.1)	53 (77.9)	2 (3.0)	-	68 (100.0)
b) Whether to use own or Improved <u>Seed</u>	14 (20.3)	52 (75.4)	3 (4.3)	-	69 (100.0)
c) Amount and kind of <u>Fertilizer</u>	25 (26.9)	67 (72.0)	1 (1.1)	-	93 (100.0)
FARM MANAGEMENT (I + II)	485 (49.0)	446 (45.1)	48 (4.8)	11 (1.1)	990 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages to the total.

client or jajmani relationships with low caste families (some from other neighboring villages) who traditionally give priority to their high caste patrons during the peak agricultural season.

The remaining data on labor allocation concern first, the authority to assign other family members to do wage or parma work outside the household and second, the right of the individual to decide on their own whether to do parma or wage work outside the home. In both areas men showed a definite predominance. They made 63.8 percent of the decisions regarding whether or not other members of the household should take wage or parma work and in 69.6 percent of the cases where the individuals made their own decision about where to work the decision maker was a male.

While the overall decisions on agriculture show almost exactly equal male and female input (47.8 percent by males versus 47.2 percent by females), examination of the data by type of crop reveals that men lead in decisions regarding major food grain crops while women lead in the area of kitchen garden crops. Even with the overall male lead in decisions regarding food grain crops we find that for decisions about what crops to plant and what kind of seed to use, male and female input is very close. In fact if we consider the data in Table 2.24 on who actually does the seed selection (for all types of crops) in cases where households have decided to use their own seed, it is clear that seed selection is definitely a female task done solely by women in 88.1 percent of the households. It is only in the decisions about the amount and kind of fertilizer to use for food grain crops that the male lead is strongly evident (Table 2.23). The chief reason for this appears to be the recently emerged* sexual division of labor whereby women

*Although longitudinal data on the sexual division of labor for fertilizer application is not available for Bakundol, the data from other village studies in the series show that men are more involved with the preparation and application of organic fertilizer in communities where chemical fertilizer is not yet in common use. In all those communities where chemical fertilizer has been introduced the polarization of the task and the exclusive association of men with chemical and women with organic is noted. (Acharya and Bennett 1981:260.)



Women in Bakundol are solely responsible for the preparation and application of organic fertilizer in 84% of the households.

TABLE 2.24

SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOR FOR SEED SELECTION

(In number)

Sex	Male	Female	Both	Total
Who does seed selection ?	21 (10.0)	184 (88.1)	4 (1.9)	209 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages to the total.

TABLE 2.25

SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOR FOR FERTILIZER APPLICATION

(by type of fertilizer)

(In number)

Type of Fertilizer \ Sex	Male	Female	Both	Total
Traditional	1 (2.9)	28 (82.4)	5 (14.7)	34 (100.0)
Chemical	12 (63.1)	5 (26.3)	2 (10.5)	19 (100.0)
Mixture	15 (11.3)	56 (42.1)	62 (46.6)	133 (100.0)
Total	28 (15.1)	89 (47.8)	69 (37.1)	186 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages to the total.

take most of the responsibility for the preparation and application of traditional manure and men handle the purchase and application of the new chemical fertilizer. Unfortunately the decision making data weren't broken down as to the type of fertilizer so we do not know if the male predominance in this area is mostly due to their input in decisions regarding chemical fertilizer. The data in Table 2.25 on the sexual division of labor for the task of fertilizer application, however, show that women in Bakundol do the manure application on their own in 82.4 percent of the households while only 2.9 percent reported that this task was done by men. The application of chemical fertilizer, on the other hand, was done exclusively by males in 63.1 percent of the cases.

The next major area of decision making is one where we would expect women to predominate, i.e., in expenditures for the traditional female realm of the domestic sphere. The summary data in Table 2.26, however, show that in fact it is men who make and execute most of the decisions on Domestic Expenditures in Bakundol. Men were solely responsible for 62 percent of the decisions in this area while only 31.5 percent were made by women on their own. Within the general pattern of male predominance there were a few areas where women took the lead. One of these was in the daily decision about which foodgrain to cook. Not surprisingly, women made all of these decisions. More interesting was women's strong lead in the area of small gifts and loans. My own observation of inter-family visiting patterns had revealed the existence of two types of informal exchange networks between neighbor women: one among women of the same caste and another between high caste women and the women in the low caste Damai tailor families who work for them. This latter relationship is characterized by a one way flow of small amounts of grain, vegetables or milk which the Damai women request at periodic intervals from their various patron families. Although not considered part of their formal payment system, these small gifts are expected and high caste women explained that if they were withheld, their family's clothes would be poorly sewn and probably delivered too late for the annual Durga Puja festival.

The network of small gifts and loans between neighbor women within a single caste group (i.e., among the Sarki or among the high caste) is more of a reciprocal nature and represents an important informal support system for women. The cash loans (interest-free) are rarely more than ten or fifteen rupees, but if a young daughter-in-law feels she

TABLE 2.26

MALE/FEMALE DECISION MAKING ROLES FOR DOMESTIC EXPENDITURES

(In number)

Decision Stage & Sex	Suggested				Consulted				Decided				Disagreed			
	Male	Female	Both	Traditional	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Total	
Area of Decision																
I. Food & Small Household Necessities	6 (3.6)	161 (96.4)	-	-	167 (100.0)	128 (76.6)	-	-	25 (15.0)	167 (100.0)	113 (56.2)	87 (43.3)	-	1 (0.5)	201 (100.0)	
a. To Cook a Particular Food	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34 (100.0)	-	-	34 (100.0)	
b. Food & Small Household Necessities	6 (3.6)	161 (96.4)	-	-	167 (100.0)	128 (76.6)	-	-	25 (15.0)	167 (100.0)	113 (67.7)	53 (31.7)	-	1 (0.6)	167 (100.0)	
II. Clothing/Household Durables	101 (65.6)	53 (34.4)	-	-	154 (100.0)	60 (39.0)	63 (40.9)	4 (2.6)	27 (17.5)	154 (100.0)	135 (87.7)	9 (5.8)	10 (6.5)	-	154 (100.0)	
a. Clothing	86 (64.7)	47 (35.3)	-	-	133 (100.0)	53 (39.8)	54 (40.6)	4 (3.0)	22 (16.6)	133 (100.0)	115 (86.5)	8 (6.0)	10 (7.5)	-	133 (100.0)	
b. Household Durables	15 (71.4)	6 (28.6)	-	-	21 (100.0)	7 (33.3)	9 (42.9)	-	5 (23.8)	21 (100.0)	20 (95.2)	1 (4.8)	-	-	21 (100.0)	
III. Education & Health	42 (35.6)	72 (61.0)	4 (3.4)	-	118 (100.0)	77 (65.2)	12 (10.2)	17 (14.4)	12 (10.2)	118 (100.0)	93 (78.8)	15 (13.6)	4 (3.4)	5 (4.2)	118 (100.0)	
a. Medical Treatment	28 (31.8)	59 (67.1)	1 (1.1)	-	88 (100.0)	61 (69.3)	9 (10.2)	6 (6.8)	12 (13.7)	88 (100.0)	71 (80.7)	14 (15.9)	1 (1.1)	2 (2.3)	88 (100.0)	
b. Education	14 (46.7)	13 (43.3)	3 (10.0)	-	30 (100.0)	16 (53.3)	3 (10.0)	11 (36.7)	-	30 (100.0)	22 (73.3)	2 (6.7)	3 (10.0)	3 (10.0)	30 (100.0)	
IV. Small Gifts, Social Religious & Travel	72 (24.6)	164 (56.2)	6 (2.1)	6 (17.1)	292 (100.0)	59 (20.2)	62 (21.2)	19 (6.5)	152 (52.1)	292 (100.0)	133 (44.5)	129 (44.2)	4 (1.4)	26 (8.9)	292 (100.0)	
a. Small Gifts & Loans	8 (6.7)	108 (90.0)	4 (3.3)	-	120 (100.0)	9 (7.5)	13 (10.8)	-	98 (81.7)	120 (100.0)	8 (6.7)	100 (83.3)	-	12 (10.0)	120 (100.0)	
b. Social/Religious Obligations	15 (18.1)	15 (19.3)	2 (2.4)	50 (60.2)	83 (100.0)	14 (16.9)	8 (9.6)	11 (13.3)	50 (60.2)	83 (100.0)	60 (72.3)	11 (13.3)	4 (4.8)	8 (9.6)	83 (100.0)	
c. Travel	49 (55.1)	40 (44.9)	-	-	89 (100.0)	36 (40.4)	41 (46.1)	8 (9.0)	4 (4.5)	89 (100.0)	65 (73.0)	18 (20.2)	-	6 (6.8)	89 (100.0)	
DOMESTIC EXPENDITURE Grand Total (I-IV)	221 (30.2)	450 (61.6)	10 (1.4)	50 (6.8)	731 (100.0)	324 (44.3)	137 (18.7)	54 (7.4)	216 (29.6)	731 (100.0)	474 (62.0)	241 (31.5)	18 (2.4)	32 (4.1)	731 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages to the total.

needs to consult a local healer or send a small gift to her parents this may be her only source of cash -- especially if her husband is out of the village and she does not want to ask her mother-in-law or any one in her husband's family. She would be able to repay such a loan after she has been to her parents' place and perhaps received a small dakshina gift or after her husband has returned from the city with a little cash. The data on more formal credit use, to be discussed subsequently, show that it is men who have the major access to these systems. In the informal network of small cash and kind exchanges, however, it is women who handle 83 percent of these transactions on their own.

For almost all the remaining areas of domestic expenditure including decisions on medical treatment, education, travel, purchase of small household necessities and food, clothing and durables (like pots and pans and bedding) -- even in the area of religious and social obligations -- men showed a substantial lead over women. Interestingly, Table 2.27 shows that in about 71 percent of the households women keep the household money. However, in 61.8 percent of the households the actual shopping and purchase of items was always done by men.

The final major area of decision making to be considered is probably the most important as an indicator of the distribution of power within the family. It includes decisions on the "Disposal of Household Production" as well as "Major Capital Transactions" such as sale of land, securing credit, etc. In short it encompasses the major financial decisions which the household must make and, as the data in Table 2.28 clearly reveal, these matters are by and large the preserve of men who make the decisions on their own in 84.8 percent of the cases.

Given the previously mentioned fact that landed property is inherited in the male line, it is hardly surprising that only 3.8 percent of the decisions involving the sale or purchase of land or major animals were made by women on their own. However, the data on entrepreneurial decisions, e.g., to open a tea shop or hotel, start or improve a cottage industry, engage in trade, sell family jewellery, etc., are also predominantly made by men in Bakundol and the reasons for this will become clearer after our analysis of the village economy. Decisions to take out a loan are made by men on their own in 84.3 percent of the cases and men handle the disposal of household agricultural and animal husbandry production on their own in 81.7 percent of the cases.

TABLE 2.27
KEEPING THE MONEY AND GOING TO THE BAZAAR BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Question Economic Strata	Who keeps household money?			Who goes to the bazaar?			
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Total
Top	3 (37.5)	5 (62.5)	-	5 (62.5)	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	8 (100.0)
Middle	5 (26.3)	14 (73.7)	-	14 (73.7)	2 (10.5)	3 (15.8)	19 (100.0)
Bottom	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)	-	2 (28.6)	4 (57.1)	1 (14.3)	7 (100.0)
All Strata	10 (29.4)	24 (70.6)	-	21 (61.8)	8 (23.5)	5 (14.7)	34 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages to the total.

TABLE 2.28

MALE/FEMALE DECISION MAKING ROLES FOR DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION AND MAJOR CAPITAL TRANSACTIONS
(In number)

Decision Stage & Sex Categories	Suggested			Consulted				Decided				Disagreed					
	Male	Female	Both	Traditional	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Traditional	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Total	
I. Major Capital Transactions	113 (78.5)	30 (20.8)	1 (0.7)	-	144 (100.0)	31 (21.5)	35 (24.3)	24 (16.7)	54 (37.5)	144 (100.0)	126 (87.5)	11 (7.6)	7 (4.9)	7 (4.9)	5 (3.5)	10 (6.9)	144 (100.0)
a. Buy or Sell Land, Buildings and Major Animals	63 (80.8)	15 (19.2)	-	-	78 (100.0)	17 (21.8)	22 (28.2)	23 (29.5)	16 (20.5)	78 (100.0)	71 (91.1)	3 (3.8)	4 (5.1)	4 (5.1)	5 (6.4)	5 (6.4)	78 (100.0)
b. Entrepreneurial	50 (75.8)	15 (22.7)	1 (1.5)	-	66 (100.0)	14 (21.2)	13 (19.7)	1 (1.5)	38 (57.6)	66 (100.0)	55 (83.3)	8 (12.1)	3 (4.6)	3 (4.6)	5 (7.6)	5 (7.6)	66 (100.0)
II. Borrowing	41 (80.4)	9 (17.6)	1 (2.0)	-	51 (100.0)	12 (23.5)	20 (39.2)	8 (15.7)	11 (21.6)	51 (100.0)	43 (84.3)	6 (11.7)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	5 (9.8)	5 (9.8)	51 (100.0)
III. Disposal of Household Production	65 (74.7)	22 (25.3)	-	-	87 (100.0)	16 (18.4)	51 (58.6)	11 (12.6)	9 (10.4)	87 (100.0)	98 (81.7)	15 (12.5)	7 (5.8)	7 (5.8)	2 (2.3)	8 (9.2)	87 (100.0)
a. Food Grains	38 (97.4)	1 (2.6)	-	-	39 (100.0)	1 (2.6)	29 (74.3)	8 (20.5)	1 (2.6)	39 (100.0)	62 (86.1)	5 (6.9)	5 (7.0)	5 (7.0)	2 (5.1)	3 (7.7)	39 (100.0)
b. Vegetables	3 (100.0)	-	-	-	3 (100.0)	-	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	-	3 (100.0)	2 (66.7)	-	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	-	-	3 (100.0)
c. Small Animals	24 (53.3)	21 (46.7)	-	-	45 (100.0)	15 (33.3)	20 (44.5)	2 (4.4)	8 (17.8)	45 (100.0)	34 (75.6)	10 (22.2)	1 (2.2)	1 (2.2)	2 (4.4)	5 (11.1)	45 (100.0)
Grand Total (I-III)	219 (77.7)	61 (21.6)	2 (0.7)	-	282 (100.0)	59 (20.9)	106 (37.6)	43 (15.3)	74 (26.2)	282 (100.0)	267 (84.8)	32 (10.1)	15 (4.8)	15 (4.8)	7 (2.5)	23 (8.2)	282 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

In sum we can say that in terms of the three major areas of decision making, men and women are roughly on a par in the area of farm management but that in domestic expenditures and particularly in the major household financial decisions men are clearly dominant.

The data in Table 2.29 reveal some interesting variations in the overall pattern of female participation by economic strata. In general, the women from the middle economic stratum seem to have a consistently lower input in household decision making than women from either the top or the bottom strata. This somewhat puzzling phenomenon is evident in entrepreneurial decisions and shopping responsibility, in decisions about household labor allocation, small purchases of food and household necessities, clothing -- even decisions on education and health.

There are also notable differences in the pattern of decision making between women from the top stratum and those from the bottom. The former have a more substantial role not only in farm management decisions but in the disposal of household agricultural and animal husbandry production. Women from the top stratum make 47.5 percent of the labor allocation decisions and 54.8 percent of the agricultural decisions compared to 36.7 and 48.2 percent in the same areas for women in the bottom stratum. Moreover top stratum women decide on the disposal of household production on their own in 22.5 percent of the cases while women from the bottom stratum make only 4.8 percent of these decisions on their own. Part of this difference may be explained by the fact evident in Table 1.12 that top stratum households have much more surplus production to dispose of. Another reason for the greater participation of top stratum women in the whole area of farm management may be the fact that better educated top stratum males are often absent from the village pursuing careers in the urban centers, thus leaving more of the day-to-day responsibility for farm management to the women.

In other areas of decision making, however, women from poorer households seem to play a greater role. A larger percentage of households in the bottom stratum reported that women kept the household money (71.4 percent versus 62.5 percent for the top stratum) and that family shopping was done by women (57.1 percent versus 25 percent for the top stratum). Particularly striking was the greater involvement of poor women in family entrepreneurial decisions (35.7 percent for bottom stratum versus 10 percent for the top stratum)

TABLE 2.29

MALE/FEMALE DECISION MAKING ROLES BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number)

Decision Categories	Economic Strata/ Sex										TOP					MIDDLE					BOTTOM									
	Male		Female		Both		Traditional		Total		Male		Female		Both		Traditional		Total		Male		Female		Both		Traditional		Total	
I.	18 (45.0)	19 (47.5)	3 (7.5)	-	40 (100.0)	58 (63.7)	25 (27.5)	2 (2.2)	6 (6.6)	91 (100.0)	12 (40.0)	11 (36.7)	2 (6.7)	5 (16.6)	30 (100.0)	90 (42.9)	115 (54.8)	3 (1.4)	2 (0.9)	210 (100.0)	241 (52.5)	196 (42.7)	21 (4.6)	1 (0.2)	459 (100.0)	66 (39.8)	80 (48.2)	18 (10.8)	2 (1.2)	166 (100.0)
	108 (43.2)	134 (53.6)	6 (2.4)	2 (0.8)	250 (100.0)	299 (54.3)	221 (40.2)	23 (4.2)	7 (1.3)	550 (100.0)	78 (39.8)	91 (46.4)	20 (10.2)	7 (3.6)	196 (100.0)	108 (43.2)	134 (53.6)	6 (2.4)	2 (0.8)	250 (100.0)	299 (54.3)	221 (40.2)	23 (4.2)	7 (1.3)	550 (100.0)	78 (39.8)	91 (46.4)	20 (10.2)	7 (3.6)	196 (100.0)
	3 (37.5)	5 (62.5)	-	-	8 (100.0)	5 (26.3)	14 (73.7)	-	8 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	-	-	7 (100.0)	3 (37.5)	5 (62.5)	-	-	8 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	-	-	19 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	-	-	7 (100.0)
	5 (62.5)	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	-	8 (100.0)	73.7 (73.7)	10.5 (10.5)	3 (15.8)	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	1 (4.3)	-	7 (100.0)	5 (62.5)	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	-	8 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	1 (4.3)	-	19 (100.0)	2 (8.6)	4 (21.1)	1 (4.3)	-	7 (100.0)
	24 (50.0)	24 (50.0)	-	-	48 (100.0)	70 (61.9)	42 (37.2)	-	48 (100.0)	113 (100.0)	19 (47.5)	21 (52.5)	-	-	40 (100.0)	24 (50.0)	24 (50.0)	-	-	48 (100.0)	70 (61.9)	42 (37.2)	-	-	113 (100.0)	19 (47.5)	21 (52.5)	-	-	40 (100.0)
II.	29 (78.4)	6 (16.2)	2 (5.4)	-	37 (100.0)	82 (94.3)	2 (2.3)	3 (3.4)	37 (100.0)	87 (100.0)	24 (80.0)	1 (3.3)	5 (16.7)	-	30 (100.0)	29 (78.4)	6 (16.2)	2 (5.4)	-	37 (100.0)	82 (94.3)	2 (2.3)	3 (3.4)	-	87 (100.0)	24 (80.0)	1 (3.3)	5 (16.7)	-	30 (100.0)
	22 (78.6)	3 (10.7)	-	3 (10.7)	28 (100.0)	54 (87.1)	4 (6.5)	2 (3.2)	28 (100.0)	62 (100.0)	17 (60.7)	9 (32.2)	2 (7.1)	-	28 (100.0)	22 (78.6)	3 (10.7)	-	3 (10.7)	28 (100.0)	54 (87.1)	4 (6.5)	2 (3.2)	-	62 (100.0)	17 (60.7)	9 (32.2)	2 (7.1)	-	28 (100.0)
	39 (50.6)	30 (39.0)	1 (1.3)	7 (9.1)	77 (100.0)	68 (47.0)	79 (47.0)	2 (1.2)	77 (100.0)	168 (100.0)	26 (55.3)	20 (42.6)	1 (2.1)	-	47 (100.0)	39 (50.6)	30 (39.0)	1 (1.3)	7 (9.1)	77 (100.0)	68 (47.0)	79 (47.0)	2 (1.2)	-	168 (100.0)	26 (55.3)	20 (42.6)	1 (2.1)	-	47 (100.0)
	122 (59.2)	70 (34.0)	4 (1.9)	10 (4.9)	206 (100.0)	293 (62.6)	143 (30.6)	10 (2.1)	206 (100.0)	468 (100.0)	90 (56.6)	60 (37.7)	9 (5.7)	-	159 (100.0)	122 (59.2)	70 (34.0)	4 (1.9)	10 (4.9)	206 (100.0)	293 (62.6)	143 (30.6)	10 (2.1)	-	468 (100.0)	90 (56.6)	60 (37.7)	9 (5.7)	-	159 (100.0)
	29 (72.5)	9 (22.5)	2 (5.0)	-	40 (100.0)	52 (88.1)	5 (8.5)	2 (3.4)	40 (100.0)	59 (100.0)	17 (80.9)	1 (4.8)	3 (14.3)	-	21 (100.0)	29 (72.5)	9 (22.5)	2 (5.0)	-	40 (100.0)	52 (88.1)	5 (8.5)	2 (3.4)	-	59 (100.0)	17 (80.9)	1 (4.8)	3 (14.3)	-	21 (100.0)
	8 (72.7)	2 (18.2)	1 (9.1)	-	11 (100.0)	24 (82.8)	4 (13.8)	-	11 (100.0)	29 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	-	-	-	11 (100.0)	8 (72.7)	2 (18.2)	1 (9.1)	-	11 (100.0)	24 (82.8)	4 (13.8)	-	-	29 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	-	-	-	11 (100.0)
III.	15 (88.2)	-	2 (11.8)	-	17 (100.0)	47 (90.4)	3 (5.8)	2 (3.8)	17 (100.0)	52 (100.0)	7 (57.1)	-	-	-	7 (100.0)	15 (88.2)	-	2 (11.8)	-	17 (100.0)	47 (90.4)	3 (5.8)	2 (3.8)	-	52 (100.0)	7 (57.1)	-	-	-	7 (100.0)
	9 (90.0)	1 (10.0)	-	-	10 (100.0)	40 (90.0)	2 (4.5)	2 (4.5)	10 (100.0)	44 (100.0)	8 (57.1)	5 (35.7)	1 (7.2)	-	14 (100.0)	9 (90.0)	1 (10.0)	-	-	10 (100.0)	40 (90.0)	2 (4.5)	2 (4.5)	-	44 (100.0)	8 (57.1)	5 (35.7)	1 (7.2)	-	14 (100.0)
	61 (78.2)	12 (15.4)	5 (6.4)	-	78 (100.0)	163 (88.6)	14 (7.6)	6 (3.3)	78 (100.0)	184 (100.0)	43 (81.1)	6 (11.3)	4 (7.6)	-	53 (100.0)	61 (78.2)	12 (15.4)	5 (6.4)	-	78 (100.0)	163 (88.6)	14 (7.6)	6 (3.3)	-	184 (100.0)	43 (81.1)	6 (11.3)	4 (7.6)	-	53 (100.0)
	291 (54.5)	216 (40.4)	15 (2.8)	12 (2.3)	534 (100.0)	755 (62.8)	378 (31.5)	39 (3.2)	534 (100.0)	1202 (100.0)	211 (51.7)	157 (38.5)	33 (8.1)	7 (1.7)	408 (100.0)	291 (54.5)	216 (40.4)	15 (2.8)	12 (2.3)	534 (100.0)	755 (62.8)	378 (31.5)	39 (3.2)	-	1202 (100.0)	211 (51.7)	157 (38.5)	33 (8.1)	7 (1.7)	408 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

and in health and education decisions (32.2 percent versus 10.7 percent for the top stratum).

Turning to the stages of the decision making process, in the summary data in Table 2.30 we see that women take the lead in initiating decisions. Their initiating role is particularly strong in the area of domestic expenditures. Women made the initial suggestion for the purchase of small food items and household necessities in 96.4 percent of the cases. They were also responsible for initiating decisions on education and health in 61 percent of the cases, and on small gifts and loans in 90 percent of the cases (Table 2.26). Here women's role as the behind-the-scene "influencer" of family events is evident. Their initiating role drops sharply, however, in the area of "Disposal of Household Production and Major Capital Transactions" where only 21.6 percent of the transactions were suggested by women.

Another way in which women can influence family decisions is by giving advice. The data in Table 2.30, however, show that in 28 percent of the cases no one is consulted about decisions and when advice is sought it is more often male members of the household who are consulted (37.6 percent for males versus 23.8 percent for women). Women are consulted for certain kinds of decisions -- especially in the disposal of household (agricultural and animal husbandry) production where the advice of female household members is sought in 58.6 percent of the cases.

Nevertheless, the final responsibility for making and executing the decision (which in the case of a purchase or sale means deciding how much to spend or what the final selling price should be) is, as we have seen, predominantly in the hands of males. Once a decision has been taken the only power that is left is that of expressing disagreement or disapproval of that decision in the hope of influencing future decisions. All in all the level of dissent -- or at least dissent which could be openly expressed to the researcher -- was quite low. Disagreement with a decision taken was reported in only 8.6 percent of the cases. Interestingly, the number of women who disagreed with decisions was nearly twice the number of men. Furthermore, the highest levels of female dissent are found in the areas where women's actual decision making input was lowest, i.e., in borrowing, disposal of household production and the general area of major household financial decisions.

Despite the overall pattern of complementarity which emerges from the decision making data, Parbatiya men still

TABLE 2.30

MALE/FEMALE INPUT INTO HOUSEHOLD DECISIONS BY CATEGORY AND STAGE OF DECISION MAKING PROCESS
(Summary for All Decision Making Categories)

(In number)

Decision Categories	Suggested		Consulted				Decided				Disagreed							
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Male	Female	Both	Traditional	Total	Male	Female	Both	No one	Total	
I.																		
1. Labor Allocation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88 (54.7)	55 (34.2)	7 (4.3)	11 (6.8)	161 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Agricultural Decisions	6 (100.0)	-	6 (100.0)	-	-	1 (16.7)	5 (83.3)	397 (47.8)	391 (47.2)	41 (5.0)	41 (5.0)	829 (100.0)	-	-	-	6 (100.0)	6 (100.0)	6 (100.0)
FARM MANAGEMENT (1+2)	6 (100.0)	-	6 (100.0)	-	-	1 (16.7)	5 (83.3)	485 (49.0)	446 (45.1)	48 (4.8)	11 (1.1)	990 (100.0)	-	-	-	6 (100.0)	6 (100.0)	6 (100.0)
3. Who keeps money?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 (29.4)	24 (70.6)	-	-	34 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Who goes to the Bazaar?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21 (61.8)	8 (23.5)	5 (14.7)	-	34 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Small food items and Household Necessities	6 (3.6)	161 (96.4)	167 (100.0)	128 (76.6)	-	14 (8.4)	25 (15.0)	113 (66.2)	87 (43.3)	-	1 (0.5)	201 (100.0)	-	6 (3.6)	-	161 (96.4)	167 (100.0)	
6. Clothing and household durables	101 (65.6)	53 (34.4)	154 (100.0)	60 (39.0)	63 (40.9)	4 (2.6)	27 (17.5)	135 (87.7)	9 (5.8)	10 (6.5)	10 (6.5)	154 (100.0)	8 (5.2)	10 (6.5)	-	136 (88.3)	154 (100.0)	
7. Education and Health	42 (35.6)	72 (61.0)	118 (100.0)	77 (65.2)	12 (10.2)	17 (14.4)	12 (10.2)	93 (78.8)	16 (13.6)	4 (3.4)	5 (4.2)	118 (100.0)	6 (5.1)	2 (1.7)	1 (0.8)	109 (92.4)	118 (100.0)	
8. Gifts, Religious, Social and Travel	72 (24.6)	164 (56.2)	232 (100.0)	59 (20.2)	62 (21.2)	19 (6.5)	152 (52.1)	133 (45.5)	129 (44.2)	4 (1.4)	4 (1.4)	292 (100.0)	7 (2.4)	9 (3.1)	-	276 (94.5)	292 (100.0)	
DOMESTIC EXPENDITURES (3+4+5+6+7+8)	221 (30.2)	450 (61.6)	731 (100.0)	324 (44.3)	137 (18.7)	34 (7.4)	216 (29.6)	505 (60.6)	273 (32.8)	23 (2.8)	32 (3.8)	833 (100.0)	21 (2.9)	27 (3.7)	1 (0.1)	682 (93.3)	731 (100.0)	
9. Disposal of Household production	65 (74.7)	22 (25.3)	87 (100.0)	16 (18.4)	51 (58.6)	11 (12.6)	9 (10.4)	98 (81.2)	15 (12.5)	7 (5.8)	-	120 (100.0)	2 (2.3)	8 (9.2)	2 (2.3)	75 (86.2)	87 (100.0)	
10. Borrowing	41 (80.4)	9 (17.6)	51 (100.0)	12 (23.5)	20 (39.2)	8 (15.7)	11 (21.6)	43 (84.3)	6 (11.7)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	51 (100.0)	-	5 (9.8)	2 (2.0)	45 (88.2)	51 (100.0)	
11. Land and Major Animals	62 (81.6)	14 (18.4)	76 (100.0)	17 (22.4)	22 (28.9)	21 (27.6)	16 (21.1)	69 (90.8)	3 (3.9)	4 (5.3)	4 (5.3)	76 (100.0)	4 (5.2)	5 (6.6)	5 (6.6)	62 (81.6)	76 (100.0)	
12. Entrepreneurial	51 (75.0)	16 (23.5)	68 (100.0)	14 (20.6)	13 (19.1)	3 (4.4)	38 (55.9)	57 (83.8)	8 (11.8)	3 (4.4)	3 (4.4)	68 (100.0)	1 (1.5)	5 (7.3)	-	62 (91.2)	68 (100.0)	
DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION & CAPITAL TRANSACTIONS (9+10+11+12)	219 (77.7)	61 (21.6)	282 (100.0)	59 (20.9)	106 (37.6)	43 (15.3)	74 (26.2)	267 (84.8)	32 (10.1)	15 (4.8)	15 (4.8)	315 (100.0)	7 (2.5)	23 (8.2)	8 (2.8)	244 (86.5)	282 (100.0)	
IV. ALL DECISIONS (I-III)	446 (43.8)	511 (50.1)	1019 (100.0)	383 (37.6)	243 (23.8)	98 (9.6)	295 (29.0)	1257 (58.8)	751 (35.1)	86 (4.0)	44 (2.1)	2138 (100.0)	28 (2.8)	50 (4.9)	9 (0.9)	932 (91.4)	1019 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

retain the responsibility for most direct dealings with the world beyond the family and maintain control over almost all the major -- and many of the minor -- economic decisions of the household. The complementarity of the husband-wife roles in the Parbatiya family should not be mistaken for equality between the sexes. There is, I maintain, a definite disparity in male and female access to power -- in the relative ability of men and women to control their own lives and the lives of others. This observation is not based solely on the fact that men predominate in the more important aspect of decision making, though this indeed appears to be the case.

Rather, this observation emerges from a deeper level of analysis involving the fundamental concept of orthodox Hindu marriage which sets the parameters for male-female interaction in the family and society. I would suggest that much of the disparity in male and female power derives from the economic fact of patrilineal inheritance and the ideological stress on female sexual purity which are so clearly and forcefully embodied in the institution of marriage as it prevails in Bakundol. These economic and ideological forces combine to make women far more dependent than men on the stability of the marital relationship. And this in turn sets definite limits on almost all the strategies we have been discussing by which women attain informal power in the family.

Divorce and Remarriage

According to the orthodox Hindu ideal, marriage is indissoluble for both men and women. Yet, it is clear from the Bakundol data that divorce and informal separation actually occur quite frequently. What I want to emphasize here is that when a marriage does break up, the socio-religious and economic implications are much harsher for women than for men.

If a Parbatiya woman is to retain her ritual purity and maintain her reputation in the community, she may marry and have sexual relations with only one man in her life. Among the high caste this rule holds even if she should be widowed

TABLE 2.31
PRESENT MARITAL STATUS BY CASTE AND SEX
(for ever married population)

(In number)

Sex/Caste	M A L E				F E M A L E			
	High	Other	Low	All Castes	High	Other	Low	All Castes
1. Presently Married	31 (67.4)	4 (8.7)	11 (23.9)	46 (100.0)	31 (66.0)	4 (8.5)	12 (25.5)	47 (100.0)
(a) First Time	20 (74.1)	-	7 (25.9)	27 (100.0)	31 (70.5)	2 (4.5)	11 (25.0)	44 (100.0)
(b) Second Time	10 (71.4)	2 (14.3)	2 (14.3)	14 (100.0)	-	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	3 (100.0)
(c) Third Time	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	1 (25.0)	4 (100.0)	-	-	-	-
(d) Fourth Time	-	-	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-
2. Widowed and not remarried	1 (100.0)	-	-	1 (100.0)	5 (83.3)	-	1 (16.7)	6 (100.0)
3. Divorced and not remarried	1 (100.0)	-	-	1 (100.0)	-	-	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)
Total	33 (68.8)	4 (8.3)	11 (22.9)	48 (100.0)	36 (66.7)	4 (7.4)	14 (25.9)	54 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

at an early age.* The kanyadan or "virgin gift" marriage described earlier is the only religiously sanctioned form of marriage and its very name declares that for a woman it can occur only once. Men, however, as the receivers of the "virgin gift" can undergo full status kanyadan marriage more than once and this fact is evident in Table 2.32. Nearly 46 percent of the second marriages of men in Bakundol were sanctified by kanyadan rituals and one man even underwent three such rituals. In contrast, of all the women who married for a second time (and there are only five reported), only one had even minimum rituals while the rest had no ceremony at all. All these women therefore were liyate wives, i.e., women who are merely "brought" to their husband's home and not biyate or ceremonially "married" wives. Until recently such liyate wives and their offspring stood to inherit only one fourth the normal share of the husband's ancestral property which would be given to a full status biyate wife and her offspring. Though this legal discrimination has been removed, the liyate wife still suffers a loss of social and ritual status. This is especially true among the high caste where, as mentioned previously, such a woman and her offspring both fall in caste standing.

The data in Tables 2.33 and 2.34 reveal that eight women or 14.8 percent of the ever-married female population in Bakundol have lost their ritual status** due to marriage and that women from the high caste group and the middle and bottom economic strata appear to be the most vulnerable. Loss of ritual status for these women could have occurred because 1) no ceremonies were performed for their first marriage, 2) they married a man of lower caste standing than their own or most commonly, 3) they underwent a second marriage. Significantly, none of these factors affect a

*Although the sample is too small to allow us to draw definite conclusions, it is interesting to note in Table 2.31 that of the six women who are widowed and not remarried, five are members of the high caste.

**In the case of the low caste Sarki woman reporting loss of ritual status, the issue was not loss of caste status, for her husband could eat rice cooked by her and her children would still be Sarki. Rather, the woman reported loss of ritual status because she could not perform certain rituals in her second husband's household.

TABLE 2.32
TYPE OF CEREMONY BY NUMBER OF MARITAL UNIONS AND SEX

(In number)

Type of Ceremony Number of Marital Unions	No Ritual		Minimum Ritual		Maximum Ritual (Kanyadan)		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
First Marriage	5 (10.4)	5 (9.3)	3 (6.3)	4 (7.4)	40 (83.3)	45 (83.3)	48 (100.0)	54 (100.0)
Second Marriage	10 (45.5)	4 (80.0)	2 (9.0)	1 (20.0)	10 (45.5)	-	22 (100.0)	5 (100.0)
Third Marriage	5 (83.3)	-	-	-	1 (16.7)	-	6 (100.0)	-
All Marriages	20 (26.3)	9 (15.2)	5 (6.6)	5 (8.5)	51 (67.1)	45 (76.3)	76 (100.0)	59 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.33

LOSS OF RITUAL STATUS THROUGH MARRIAGE
BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number)

Sex	Economic Strata	Loss of Status	No Loss of Status	Total
Females	TOP	-	12 (100.0)	12 (100.0)
	MIDDLE	5 (14.7)	29 (85.3)	34 (100.0)
	BOTTOM	3 (37.5)	5 (62.5)	8 (100.0)
	ALL FEMALES	8 (14.8)	46 (85.2)	54 (100.0)
Males	TOP	-	13 (100.0)	13 (100.0)
	MIDDLE	-	28 (100.0)	28 (100.0)
	BOTTOM	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)
	ALL MALES	-	48 (100.0)	48 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.34

LOSS OF RITUAL STATUS THROUGH MARRIAGE BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number)

Sex	Caste	Loss of Status	No Loss of Status	Total
Females	HIGH	5 (19.2)	21 (80.8)	26 (100.0)
	OTHER	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)
	LOW	1 (7.1)	13 (92.9)	14 (100.0)
	ALL FEMALES	8 (18.2)	36 (81.8)	44 (100.0)
Males	HIGH	-	33 (100.0)	33 (100.0)
	OTHER	-	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)
	LOW	-	11 (100.0)	11 (100.0)
	ALL MALES	-	48 (100.0)	48 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

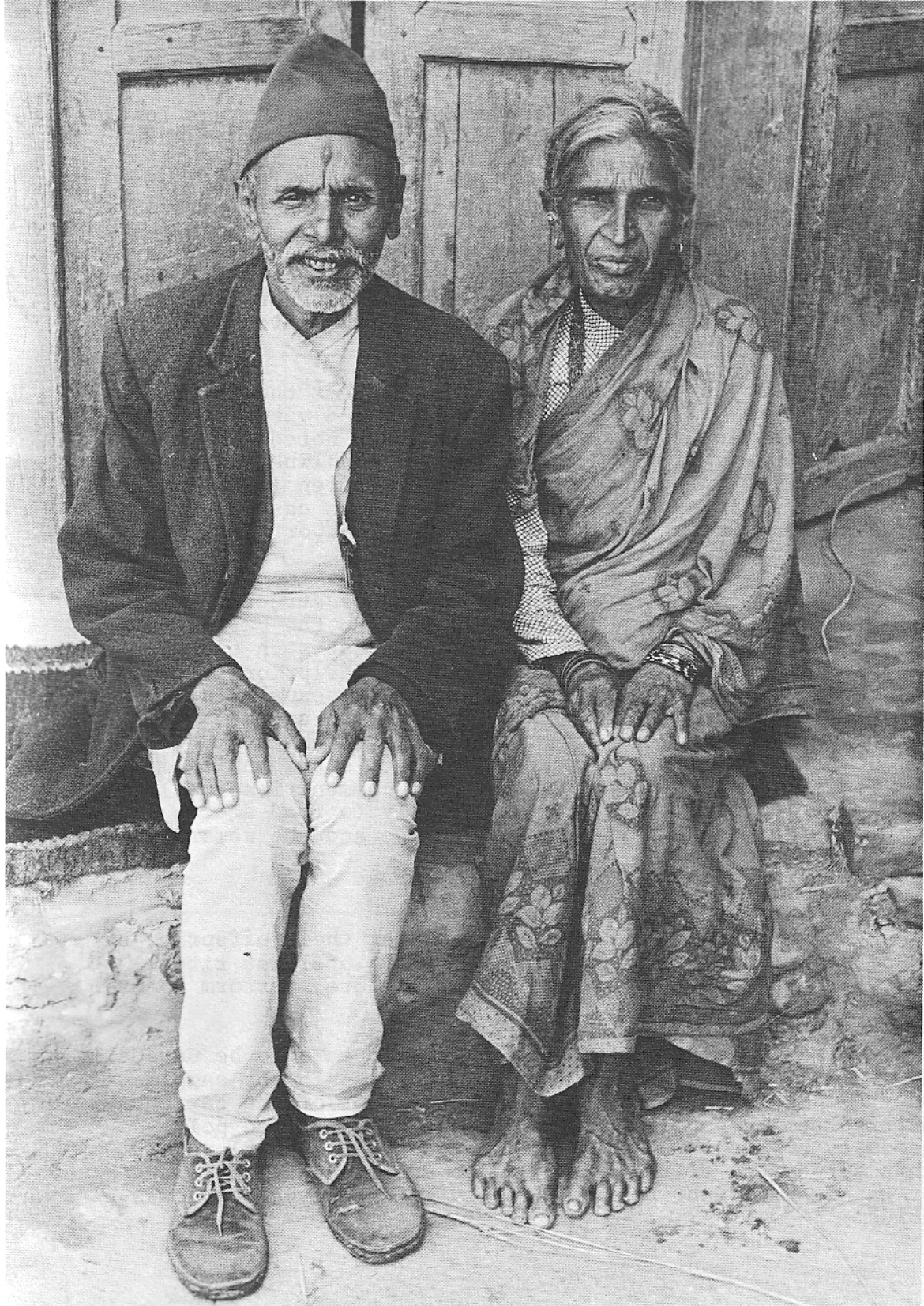
man's ritual status.* The Tables show that no man has lost his ritual status through marriage even though out of the sample of 48 ever-married males, eight did not have full ceremonies for their first marriage (Table 2.32), 22 were married more than once (Table 2.35) and one man is married polygamously.** In fact, one Chetri man who is not in the sample even married a Kasai (member of the low caste Newar butcher community) woman, but he has not been expelled from his lineage or caste group since he keeps her outside the village and has a high caste Chetri wife who lives with his parents.

The data presented above clearly reflect the concern with female sexual purity in the Hindu world view which many scholars (Yalman, 1963; Dumont, 1970) have noted and which I have elsewhere (1977) analyzed as closely linked with the maintenance of the caste system itself. Allen (1977) has gone on to posit a relationship between high caste rank which he associates with greater Brahmanical orthodoxy and stricter control of female sexuality.

"The more any given community is caste structured and the more any given caste subscribes to the purity ideal, the greater the probability that such extreme institutions (i.e., betrothal of girls prior to first menstruation, the absolute control of sexually active women by their husbands and prohibition against widow remarriage) control the sexual life of women. Contrarywise, where commitment to this Brahmanical ideal is least, as amongst tribal communities (and) many low castes, one is more likely to find adult marriage, socially approved divorce and the remarriage of widows" (Allen, 1977:29).

*Men are affected indirectly in that their offspring by a woman married under such conditions are of lower ritual status than themselves and cannot, therefore, perform funeral ceremonies or sradha for them.

**The number of polygamous unions appears to be unusually low in Bakundol for a Parbatiya community. In the sample only 2 women who are sisters or 4.3 percent of the currently married female population are presently in married polygamously to the same man. The Schrodgers (1979:185) report that 16 percent of the women in the Brahman Chetri village of Batulechaur near Pokhara are living in polygamous households.



An old Brahman couple. The strength of the husband-wife relationship is probably the single most important factor in determining the extent of a woman's power within the family.

One would expect then, that the Brahman and Chetri women of Bakundol, in addition to being married at an earlier age, would have a much lower rate of divorce and remarriage than the low caste Sarki women. Certainly there is greater stress placed on proper female comportment among the high castes, i.e., restrictions on where and when a woman can go out alone and with whom she can talk. And one hears the issue of marital chastity and the scandal of elopement discussed by high caste women more frequently. Moreover, the high caste's stereotype of Sarki women portrays them as fond of liquor and ready to run off with other men. The reputation of Damai women who, it is said, used to dance before wedding crowds when their husbands served as musicians, is even lower.

Although low caste women in Bakundol do tend to marry slightly later than high caste women (Table 2.5), the data on remarriage indicate that contrary to the stereotype described above, caste is not a highly significant variable in the rate of female remarriage. Table 2.35 shows that for the ever-married women in the sample there is not much difference in the proportion of second marriages among high caste women (5.6 percent) and low caste women (7.1 percent). If the entire ever-married sample population is considered, the low castes actually have a slightly lower percentage of individuals married more than once -- probably because more high caste males than low castes males have had second or third marriages.

However, because of the small sample size, these findings must be interpreted with caution. For example, when the presently married female population is considered in Table 2.36, the proportion of second marriage goes to 8.3 percent among the low caste female population and drops to zero among high caste females. Another incentive to caution is the data on "Reason for Marriage Termination" in Tables 2.37 and 2.38. By comparing total number of recorded marriages to the total number of marriages terminated through desertion, etc., it is possible to arrive at a tentative "divorce rate" for the ever-married male and female population. In these Tables both low caste men and women show a higher divorce rate than members of the high caste. The divorce rate for high caste women is nil. However, before we draw any conclusions about the greater marital fidelity of high caste women, we should note the fact that five high caste men reported that their wives had eloped with other men. This could mean that the absence of divorce reported by high caste females reflects the respondent's greater reluctance to

TABLE 2.35
 NUMBER OF MARITAL UNIONS BY CASTE AND SEX
 (for ever married population)

(In number)

Sex Number of Marital Unions Caste	M A L E			F E M A L E			B O T H			S E X E S		
	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total
HIGH	19 (57.6)	14 (42.4)	33 (100.0)	34 (94.4)	2 (5.6)	36 (100.0)	53 (76.8)	16 (23.2)	69 (100.0)			
OTHER	-	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)	2 (25.0)	6 (75.0)	8 (100.0)			
LOW	7 (63.6)	4 (36.4)	11 (100.0)	13 (92.9)	1 (7.1)	14 (100.0)	20 (80.0)	5 (20.0)	25 (100.0)			
ALL CASTES	26 (54.2)	22 (45.8)	48 (100.0)	49 (90.7)	5 (9.3)	54 (100.0)	75 (73.5)	27 (26.5)	102 (100.0)			

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

divulge what they consider to be a shameful past rather than the absence of the phenomenon itself.

Clearly, the relationship between caste status and divorce in the Parbatiya community is an issue that needs more extensive study before any conclusive statements can be made. Nevertheless, I believe that these tentative (and somewhat contradictory) findings do cast doubt on some of the commonly held notions about the greater sexual freedom of low caste Parbatiya women.

Aside from the potential loss of social and ritual status which we have thus far considered, the dissolution of marriage also has serious economic implications for Parbatiya women. In cases of formal divorce a woman loses all rights in her husband's property.* An informally separated woman, whether she left her husband on her own or was abandoned or forced out of her husband's home, retains her claim to a share in the marital estate, but only if she refrains from taking another husband. Even then, her claim is extremely tenuous and few women are able to realize their rights unless they have an adult son who will force a partition of the estate and claim his mother's share along with his own.

Since most rural Parbatiya women do not themselves own any land or dwellings, there are usually only two options open to them when a marriage breaks up: They can seek another husband and suffer the consequent loss of social and ritual standing or they can return to their maiti. Given the special filiafocal status which a woman has in her maiti, the second option might appear very attractive. But in fact, much of the indulgence and honor given to married women when they return to their maiti is contingent upon the temporary nature of their stay. An extended stay or permanent residence in the maiti usually causes severe strains on the filiafocal relationship. In particular, the wives of the returning woman's brothers are likely to resent the resources channeled to her and to feel she is not doing her fair share

*There are no reported cases of formal divorce among the individuals in the Bakundol sample. See Chapter IV on the legal dimension for a discussion of the difference between formal or court divorce and customary or informal divorce and their respective advantages and disadvantages as perceived by the women of Bakundol.

of the household and field work. The women I know who had to return to their maiti when their marriages failed reported that they felt very uncomfortable and insecure about their position. Although they actually worked very hard according to my observations, all said they would not be able to stay on after their own parents died when the land was partitioned amongst their brothers. Hence, although return to the maiti is an important alternative, for most women it is not generally a viable long term solution to marital problems.

In Batulechaur, a Brahman-Chetri community just outside Pokhara, a divorced woman without land apparently has a third option. According to the Schrodgers' recent findings, such a woman "can earn enough to support herself from the labor alone" (1979:185). This does not appear to be true for women in Bakundol unless it is assumed that the woman is receiving at least shelter and some minimal assistance from her natal relatives or unless we are speaking of survival well below the poverty line.*

It would appear then, that women's greater social and economic dependence on maintaining marital stability gives them less freedom than men to end an unsatisfactory marriage and also less informal "bargaining power" within the marriage. Except perhaps for the decision-making data which gives us some insight, it is really not possible to collect valid quantitative data on something so subtle, variable and intimate as the balance of power within marriages. We do have reliable statistics, however, on marriage stability which seem to indicate rather conclusively that men do have more freedom than women to terminate an unsatisfactory marriage and seek another spouse.

Table 2.36 reveals that of the presently married males, 41.3 percent have been married more than once while only 6.4 percent of the presently married females have been married more than once. The same pattern is evident for the ever-married population in Table 2.39 which shows that 45.8 percent of the men have married more than once as opposed to only 9.3 percent of the women.

When we look at the same data on the ever-married population arranged by economic strata in Table 2.39 a very

*See Table 3.29 in Chapter III on differential male and female wage rates.

TABLE 2.36
 NUMBER OF MARITAL UNIONS BY CASTE AND SEX
 (for presently married population)

(In number)

Sex	M A L E			F E M A L E			B O T H S E X E S		
	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total
Caste									
HIGH	20 (64.5)	11 (35.5)	31 (100.0)	31 (100.0)	-	31 (100.0)	51 (82.3)	11 (17.7)	62 (100.0)
OTHER	-	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)	2 (25.0)	6 (75.0)	8 (100.0)
LOW	7 (63.6)	4 (36.4)	11 (100.0)	11 (91.7)	1 (8.3)	12 (100.0)	18 (78.3)	5 (21.7)	23 (100.0)
ALL CASTES	27 (58.7)	19 (41.3)	46 (100.0)	44 (93.6)	3 (6.4)	47 (100.0)	71 (76.3)	22 (23.7)	93 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 2.37
REASON FOR MARRIAGE TERMINATION BY CASTE
(for ever married males)

(In number)

Status of Marriage	Reason	Caste	High	Other	Low	All Castes
INFORMAL DIVORCE	1. Desertion by Wife		2 (4.1)	-	-	2 (2.6)
	2. Wife Eloped		5 (10.2)	4 (40.0)	1 (5.9)	10 (13.2)
	3. Wife left when husband brought new wife		-	1 (10.0)	-	1 (1.3)
	4. Family Dispute		-	-	2 (11.8)	2 (2.6)
I. Sub-total for Informal Divorce (1+2+3+4)			7 (14.3)	5 (50.0)	3 (17.6)	15 (19.7)
II. Marriages that did <u>not</u> end in Divorce			42 (85.7)	5 (50.0)	14 (82.4)	61 (80.3)
III. Total Marriages Recorded (I + II)			49 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	76 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.38
 REASON FOR MARRIAGE TERMINATION BY CASTE
 (for ever married females)

Status of Marriage	Reason		Caste	High	Other	Low	All Castes
	Reason	Caste					
Informal Divorce	1. Desertion by Husband	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2. Self Eloped	-	-	1 (6.7)	1 (1.7)	1 (6.7)	1 (1.7)
	3. Left when husband brought new wife	-	-	2 (33.3)	1 (6.7)	3 (5.1)	3 (5.1)
	4. Family Dispute	-	-	-	-	-	-
I. Sub-total for Informal Divorce (1+2+3+4)	-	-	-	2 (33.3)	2 (13.3)	4 (6.8)	4 (6.8)
II. Marriages that did <u>not</u> end in Divorce	-	-	38 (100.0)	4 (66.7)	13 (86.7)	55 (93.2)	55 (93.2)
III. Total Marriages Recorded (I + II)	-	-	38 (100.0)	6 (100.0)	15 (100.0)	59 (100.0)	59 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.39
 NUMBER OF MARITAL UNIONS BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
 (for ever married population)

(In number)

Sex Number of Marital Unions Economic Strata	M A L E			F E M A L E			B O T H			S E X E S		
	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total	Married Once	Married More than Once	Total
TOP	9 (69.2)	4 (30.8)	13 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	-	12 (100.0)	21 (84.0)	4 (16.0)	25 (100.0)			
MIDDLE	15 (53.6)	13 (46.4)	28 (100.0)	31 (91.2)	3 (8.8)	34 (100.0)	46 (74.2)	16 (25.8)	62 (100.0)			
BOTTOM	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)	7 (100.0)	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)	8 (100.0)	8 (53.3)	7 (46.7)	15 (100.0)			
ALL STRATA	26 (54.2)	22 (45.8)	48 (100.0)	49 (90.7)	5 (9.3)	54 (100.0)	75 (73.5)	27 (26.5)	102 (100.0)			

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

interesting pattern emerges. There appears to be a positive correlation between low economic status and high marital instability. While 71.4 percent of ever-married males from the bottom stratum have married more than once, only 46.4 percent of the middle stratum males and 30.8 percent of the top stratum males have done so. Among females, 25 percent of the bottom stratum and 8.8 percent of the middle stratum had second marriages, while in the top stratum no women had married more than once.* Similarly the data on marriage termination in Tables 2.40 and 2.41 also show a much higher informal divorce rate for both males and females in the bottom economic stratum. In my interpretation, both these data sets indicate that women's economic dependency is a major force in the maintenance of marital stability in the Parbatiya community. In the lower strata where the husband's inherited ancestral property is likely to be minimal, men appear to have greater difficulty in retaining their wives. The high (71.4 percent) remarriage rate among men in the bottom stratum cannot be satisfactorily explained solely on the basis of a posited higher female mortality among the poor (which would leave more men in this group as widowers who had to seek a second or third spouse). Obviously, as the female remarriage figure indicates, a fairly high proportion of lower economic stratum women leave their husbands, probably in many instances to seek a more economically viable marital situation. If this is indeed the case, we must recognize that women in the poorest stratum of society may have an option open to them that is not open to men in similar circumstances: to seek a higher economic standard through remarriage.

Looking at the data from the other direction one can say that perhaps women in the lower economic stratum are more willing than those in the top stratum to terminate an unhappy marriage -- perhaps because they have relatively little to lose economically. Wives in wealthier households, on the other hand, apparently prefer to endure an unhappy marriage than to face economic insecurity and risk losing their potential share in their husband's ancestral property.

*When the presently married population is considered, the same pattern emerges with 71.4 percent of the bottom, 40.7 percent of the middle and 27.2 percent of the top strata males married more than once. For the female cohort, 28 percent of the bottom stratum, 3.4 percent of the middle stratum and 0 percent of the top stratum married more than once.



With four daughters and no sons, this high caste Chetri woman has strong economic and social motives to keep her marriage intact.

TABLE 2.40
 REASON FOR MARRIAGE TERMINATION BY ECONOMIC STRATA
 (for ever married males)

(In number)

Status of Marriage	Reason	Economic Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Informal Divorce	1. Desertion by Wife		1 (5.6)	1 (2.3)	-	2 (2.6)
	2. Wife Eloped		1 (5.6)	6 (13.6)	3 (21.4)	10 (13.2)
	3. Wife left when husband brought new wife		-	-	1 (7.1)	1 (1.3)
	4. Family Dispute		-	2 (4.5)	-	2 (2.6)
I. Sub-total for Informal Divorce (1+2+3+4)		2 (11.1)	9 (20.5)	4 (28.6)	15 (19.7)	
II. Marriage that did <u>not</u> end in Divorce		16 (88.9)	35 (79.5)	10 (71.4)	61 (80.3)	
III. Total Marriages Recorded (I + II)		18 (100.0)	44 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	76 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 2.41
 REASON FOR MARRIAGE TERMINATION BY ECONOMIC STRATA
 (for ever married females)

(In number)

Status of Marriage	Reason	Economic Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Informal Divorce	1. Desertion by Husband		-	-	-	-
	2. Self Eloped		-	-	1 (10.0)	1 (1.7)
	3. Left when husband brought new wife		-	2 (5.4)	1 (10.0)	3 (5.1)
	4. Family Dispute		-	-	-	-
I. Sub-total for Informal Divorce (1+2+3+4)		-	2 (5.4)	2 (20.0)	4 (6.8)	
II. Marriages that did <u>not</u> end in Divorce		12 (100.0)	35 (94.6)	8 (80.0)	55 (93.2)	
III. Total Marriages Recorded (I + II)		12 (100.0)	37 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	59 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

Therefore, it appears that the economic position of top stratum males give them considerably greater control over their wives (vis-à-vis the latter's options to divorce and remarry) than is enjoyed by males of the lower economic strata. Nevertheless, all males, regardless of economic status, enjoy greater freedom than women regarding their own ability to divorce and remarry.

In concluding our examination of the familial dimension of women's status, we can say that as long as a Parbatiya woman is able to maintain a viable marriage, she has the opportunity to exercise a considerable degree of control over her own life and the lives of others. Her actual status within the family is usually quite a bit higher than her formal position within the patrifocal model would lead us to suspect. This is especially true when she is either the senior female in an extended family or the wife of the household head in a nuclear family. However, this status is tenuous because it is based to such a large extent on her ability to influence the men -- her father, her brothers and, above all, her husband -- who actually control the economic resources upon which she and her children depend.



Through the value-added created by their grain processing tasks, women produce 8% of the household income.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMY OF BAKUNDOL: ANOTHER VIEW OF THE INSIDE/OUTSIDE DICHOTOMY

Our exploration of the sources and limitations of women's power in the family in the preceding chapter has already demonstrated that while economic roles and resources are important determinants of women's overall status, these very roles and resources are in turn closely bound up with how the female sex is viewed in the symbolic and conceptual structures of Hindu Parbatiya society and with women's strategic position in the matrix of the family and wider kinship group. In other words, so many non-economic factors come into play in determining women's economic status in a traditional society like that of the Bakundol Parbatiya that despite the manifest importance of economic factors, we could not justifiably isolate them as the primary cause or sole explanation for the overall status of women vis-à-vis men in Parbatiya society.

However, if we turn from the theoretical complexities of explaining the causes of women's status to our central concern in this monograph with the practical development issues involved in bringing about a positive change in women's status, then the economic dimension can be unhesitatingly singled out as primary. It is my belief that development interventions which seek to improve women's ability to make an identifiable contribution to family income are the most direct and reliable way to improve their overall status in society.

There is, in addition, the larger issue discussed in the introduction to this volume which arises when we look at women's actual economic role and compare our findings with conventional macro-economic measures. The Bakundol data (as well as the data from the other village studies in the series) on time allocation and household production call into question not only the accuracy of existing labor force and employment statistics as a reflection of women's economic participation, but more generally, the adequacy of such statistics as a reliable basis for analyzing Nepal's rural economy. The consistent under-estimation of women's economic role not only in Nepal, but throughout the Third World, is embedded in the larger failure to understand the centrality

of the household in the traditional, largely subsistence economies of many developing countries. And this failure has meant that neither statistical measures nor development strategies responsive to the structure and dynamics of the rural household have been formulated. Essentially then, the data to be analyzed in this chapter are not about women per se but about women as key members of household production units. It is my belief that once the true dynamics of the rural household economy are understood by planners and project designers, the importance of women and the need to incorporate them as specific target groups in all rural development projects will be self evident.

Time Allocation and the Definition of "Work"

In the preceding chapter, as a step toward understanding women in the context of the household, we began the process of expanding our definition of the family and the "domestic sphere" to encompass more than the functions of reproduction, consumption and socialization which it fulfills in the industrialized West. In the present chapter we will attempt to more fully explore the important economic functions of the family unit in Bakundol which were earlier touched on. As mentioned in the introduction to this volume, the approach used here in studying the household economy owes much to the work of Becker (1965) and other proponents of the "new household economics." Most important for the present analysis is the conceptualization of the time of household members as a valuable resource and the expansion of time-use categories beyond the rigid division between "work" and "leisure".

In this study, the concept of work is enlarged to include not only participation in the market economy, but a wide range of activities related to the subsistence and welfare of the family. The approach taken here is an attempt to free the definition of "economic activity" from the ubiquitous inside/outside dichotomy which pervades the conventional "labor force" concept. This concept excludes most activities which take place within the home in the "domestic sphere" (and are usually associated with women) from the category of economically productive work and tends to associate such work primarily with the "market economy" or the "public sphere" inhabited primarily by men.

The results of the year long time allocation study conducted in Bakundol, together with the information on household production and income, provide a data base for

reconsideration of what is meant by "work" or "productive activity" in a traditional agricultural economy as well as an analysis of where this work takes place and who performs it. A summary of the time use patterns of adult males and females is presented in Table 3.1 organized according to major activity categories. The first major sub-category, which is "Conventional Economic Activities," represents the most narrow definition of work and is confined to those activities which would qualify as "labor force participation" according to the definition employed by the Nepal Census of 1971 (Acharya 1979:45). Figure 3.1 shows us that even according to this strict definition, the women of Bakundol spend nearly as much time as men (5.52 hours per day as compared to 6.38 hours per day for men) in "economic" or directly productive activity.

The next category of activities has been classified as "Expanded Economic," because the kinds of essential goods (such as fuel, water, shelter, processed food stuffs, etc.) which these activities produce are secured through market intervention in Western industrialized countries; hence, the individuals who produce these goods are classified as economically active. If we consider time spent in the home production of these same essential goods in Bakundol along with time spent in conventional economic activities, we find that men and women are both contributing the same amount of time (7.22 hours).

However, when the third category of "Domestic Activities," such as cooking, cleaning, child care, etc., is added, women's work burden increases to a staggering 12.52 hours per day while men's total work burden remains at 8.16 hours per day.

It should be noted that the daily per capita time allocation figures given in the tables in this chapter do not represent the actual time budgets of particular individuals on any particular day. Like any averages they mask considerable variation, such as that caused by seasonality (see Figures 3.8, 3.11 and 3.13). Moreover, they conceal important variations related to differences in economic strata, caste and family structure as well as differences associated with age group and position in the family hierarchy. We will be studying how these factors affect the time allocation patterns of various groups. But our major interest is in seeing how the sexual division of labor manifests itself in each of the different categories of

TABLE 3.1

TIME-USE PATTERN BY SEX - A SUMMARY

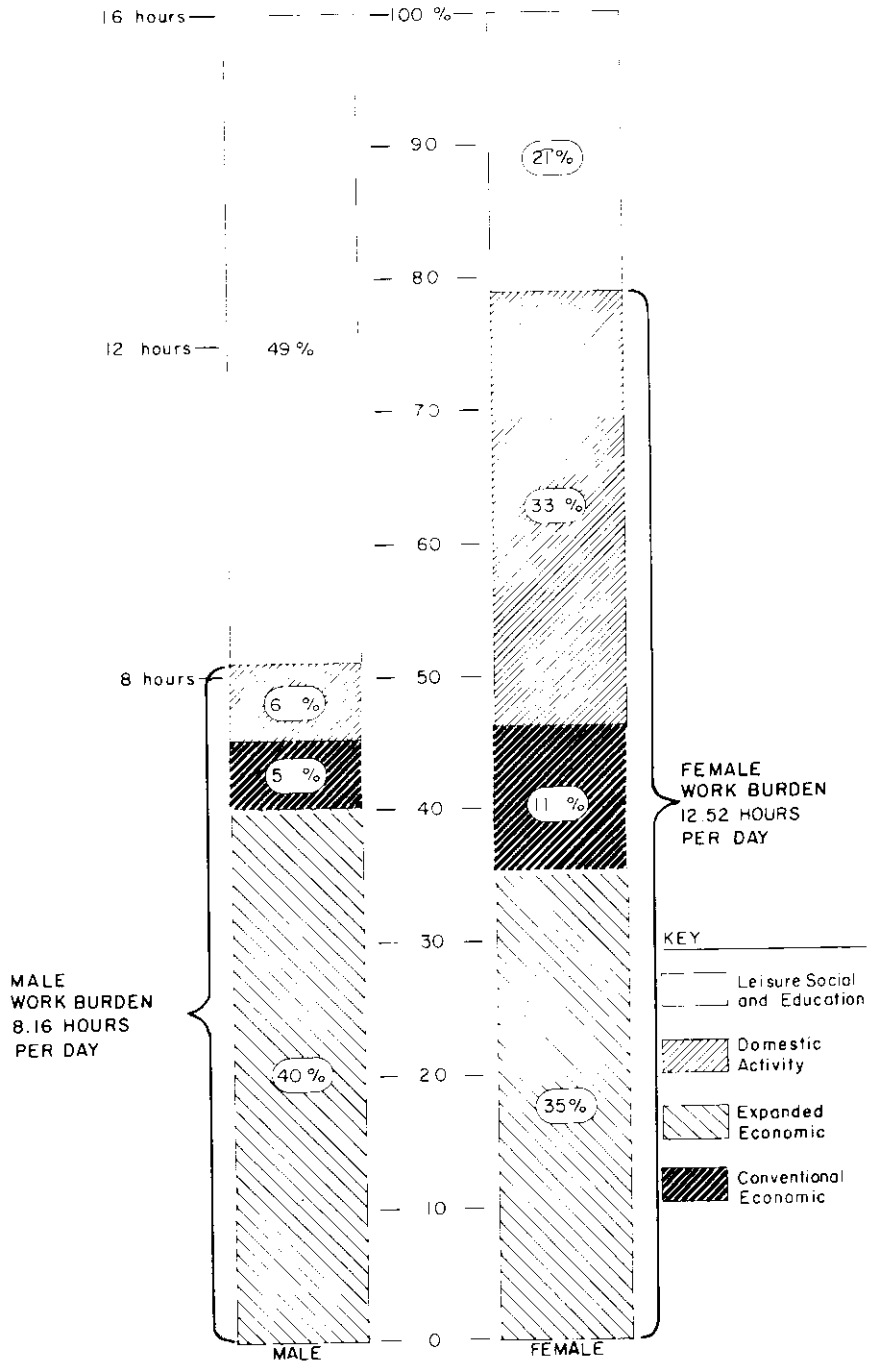
(for adult males and females)

(In hours per day)

Activities		Sex	Male	Female	Both
W O R K B U R D E N	Conventional Economic	Animal Husbandry	1.39	1.59	1.50
		Agriculture	1.86	2.72	2.32
		Manufacturing	0.82	0.30	0.54
		Outside Income Earning Activities (In-Village)	2.31	0.91	1.57
		1. Sub-total for Conventional Economic Activities	6.38	5.52	5.93
	Expanded Economic	Hunting and Gathering	0.31	0.04	0.17
		Fuel Collection	0.06	0.19	0.12
		Fetching Water	0.03	0.82	0.45
		Food Processing	0.15	0.53	0.35
		Household Construction	0.29	0.12	0.20
	2. Sub-total for Expanded Economic Activities	0.84	1.70	1.29	
	Domestic	Cooking and Serving	0.29	3.00	1.72
		Washing Dishes	0.01	0.49	0.27
Cleaning House		0.02	0.52	0.29	
Laundry		0.01	0.25	0.13	
Shopping		0.37	0.10	0.23	
Other Domestic		0.02	0.03	0.02	
Child Care and Rearing		0.22	0.91	0.59	
3. Sub-total for Domestic Activities	0.94	5.30	3.25		
1. Sub-total for Work Burden Activities (1+2+3)	8.16	12.52	10.47		
4. Education	0.40	-	0.19		
5. Personal Maintenance	1.77	1.23	1.48		
6. Social Activities	0.29	0.26	0.27		
7. Leisure	5.38	1.99	3.59		
II. Sub-total for Social Maintenance/Leisure (4+5+6+7)	7.84	3.48	5.53		
III. Total In-Village Activities (I+II)	16.00	16.00	16.00		

Figure 3.1

MALE/FEMALE DISTRIBUTION OF TIME BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL ECONOMIC, EXPANDED ECONOMIC, DOMESTIC & LEISURE ACTIVITIES (Population 15 Years & Above)



activities and how it is affected by the household and individual variables mentioned above. In other words, we want in this chapter to understand the different economic strategies of various types of households with particular reference to how they affect -- or are affected by -- the relative work input of women into conventional economic, expanded economic and domestic activities.

Economic Strata

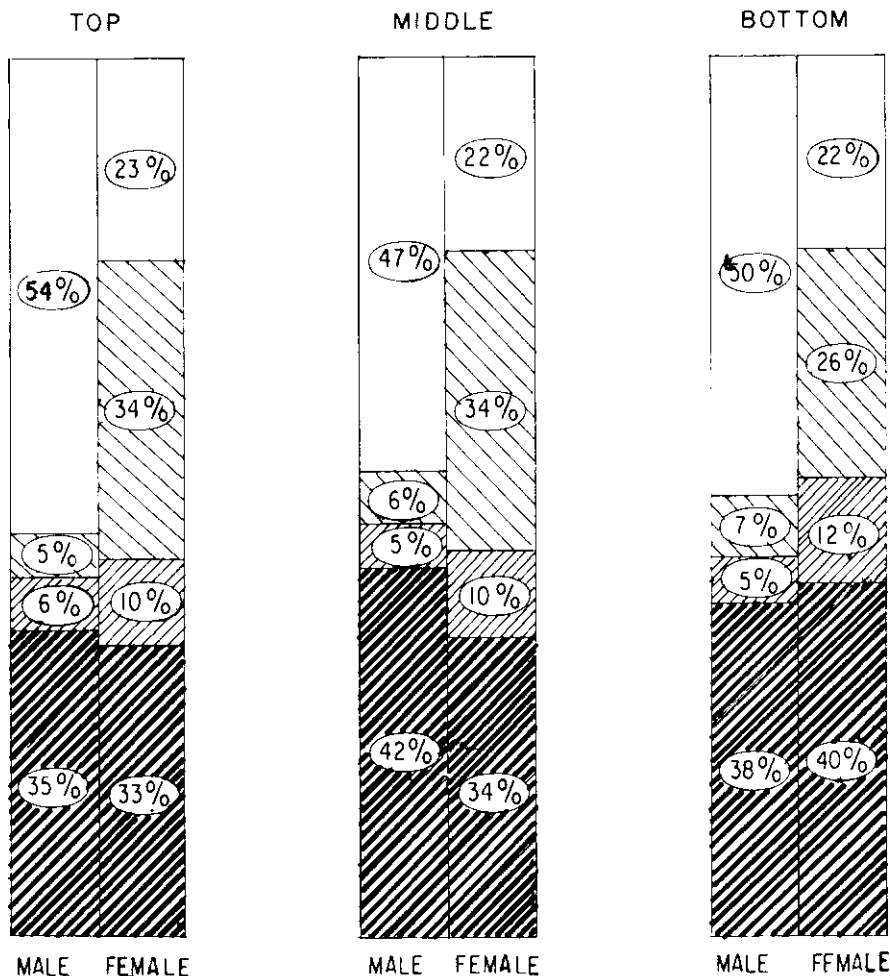
As mentioned in Chapter I, there are no really wealthy "landlord" families in Bakundol. Nevertheless, as shown in Tables 1.7 and 1.9, there are differences between the assets and income levels of households in the community which allow us to speak of three distinct economic strata. Table 3.2 shows that economic strata does have some effect on time allocation patterns and that poorer people spend longer hours earning a living. Thus, while adults in top stratum spend 5.50 hours a day in conventional economic activities, middle stratum adults spend 5.99 hours and members of the bottom stratum spend 6.30 hours a day. The same pattern is also evident in expanded economic activities with the lowest stratum group spending slightly more time than either the middle or top stratum.





When sub-activities under the heading of conventional economic activities are examined separately, more marked variation appears between the time allocation patterns of individuals in different strata. For example, adults in the top stratum spend more time than either the middle or bottom stratum adults in animal husbandry -- a fact which may well be related to greater livestock assets they hold. Also, as might be expected, a greater proportion of the time of adults in the lowest economic stratum is devoted to outside economic earning activities which include wage labor. Poor villagers spend 2.06 hours a day working to earn outside income while villagers from wealthier households (top economic stratum) spend only 1.17 hours a day in this activity. The relationship between economic class and participation in the local market economy is more complex than it appears. This aspect will be discussed in greater detail subsequently.

When the data in Table 3.2 are disaggregated by sex, an interesting pattern appears in the relative male/female input into "conventional economic activities." Figure 3.2 shows that while among the top two economic strata men spend more time than women in conventional economic activities, in the

Figure 3.2

TIME USE PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA & SEX



-  LEISURE, EDUCATION, SOCIAL, MAINTENANCE
-  DOMESTIC ACTIVITY
-  EXPANDED ECONOMIC ACTIVITY
-  CONVENTIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

bottom stratum the situation is just the reverse. Poorer women spend 6.37 hours per day in conventional economic activities while women in the top stratum spend 5.36 hours per day. Women in the bottom stratum also devote more time (1.93 hours per day) to activities such as fuel and water collection and food processing in the "expanded economic" category than women in either the middle or top stratum (who spend 1.68 hours and 1.61 hours respectively in expanded economic activities). Significantly however, there is very little difference among the strata in women's total "work burden." For women in wealthier homes, domestic work increases to 5.39 and 5.48 for the top and middle strata respectively as compared to 4.17 hours per day for women in the bottom stratum. The extra time devoted by the wealthier women to domestic work may result in such intangible things as better meals, cleaner clothes and home or more attention to child care* which raise the family's general welfare or standard of living but do not contribute to the household income in the conventional sense. Table 3.2 shows that in fact women in the top stratum have significantly less leisure time than women in the bottom stratum (1.45 hours per day versus 2.32 hours per day). However, most of the extra leisure time of poor women seems to come from the time they would have devoted to the category of personal maintenance (which includes personal hygiene, eating, recuperation from illness) or social activities (which include religious observations and community service) and the amount of time devoted to non-work activities (the "Social, Maintenance/Leisure" heading) is almost equal for women of all economic strata.

Caste

Although, as mentioned in Chapter I, there does not appear to be any correlation between caste and economic strata, caste membership does seem to have an effect on both the combination of activities household members undertake to earn a living and the total amount of time devoted to work. Table 3.3 shows that there is considerable variation in time

*In the area of child care the middle stratum women spend more than twice the time than women in the bottom stratum (1.07 hours per day versus .36 hours per day) and significantly more than even women in the top stratum who spend .69 hours per day.

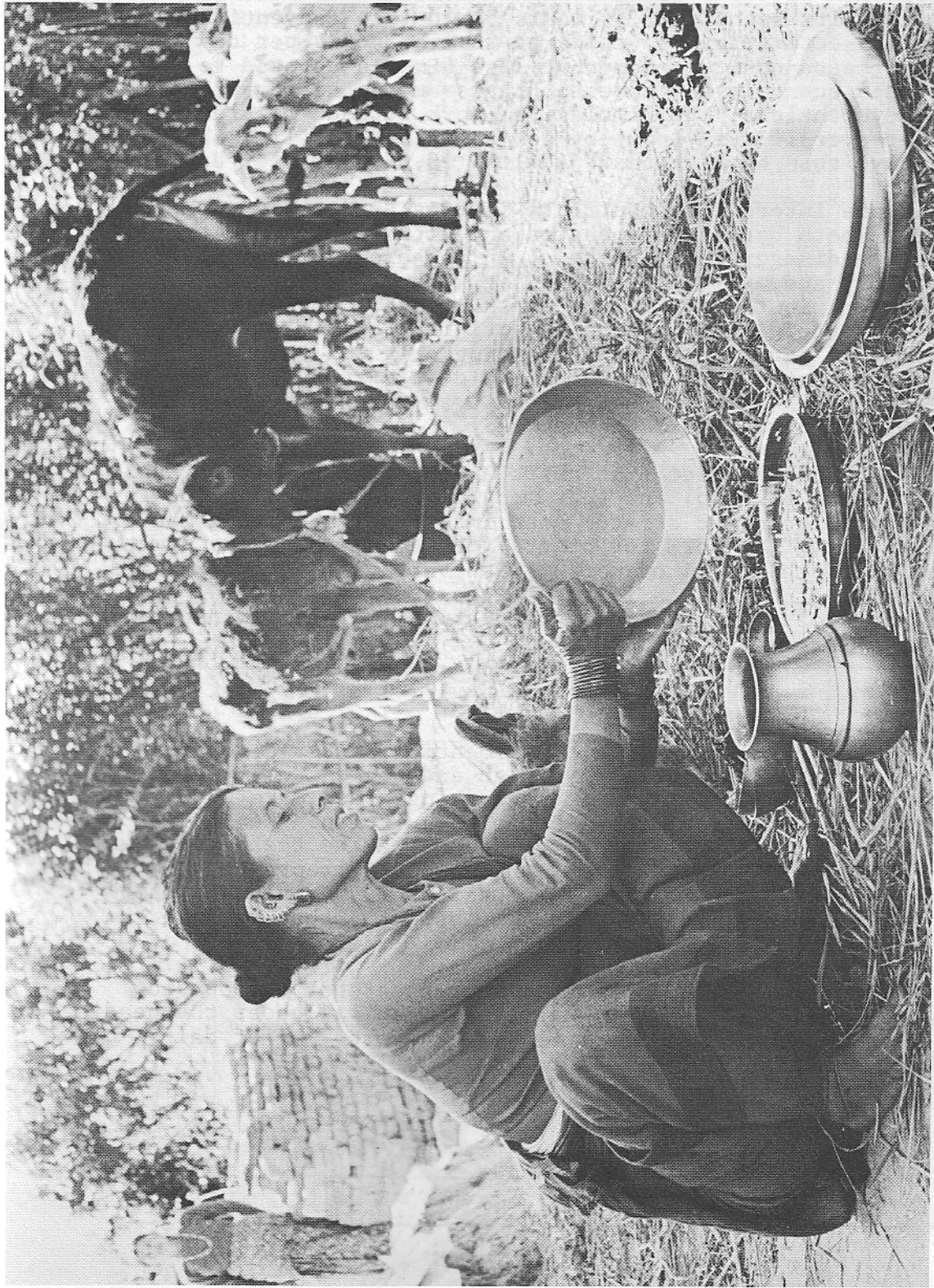
allocation patterns between high and low caste* with high caste adults spending 5.54 hours per day in conventional economic activities as compared to 7.05 hours per day spent by low caste adults. Somewhat less time is devoted to expanded economic and domestic tasks among the low caste, but nevertheless, the cumulative "work burden" figures show higher overall work input by low caste adults (11.42 hours per day) than by high caste adults (10.02 hours per day).

Some interesting contrasts in time allocation patterns emerge, both between the castes and within them when the data are disaggregated by sex. In the areas of animal husbandry and agriculture both high caste and low caste women contribute more time than their men. However, in the area of outside income earning activity, high caste women are hardly involved at all, spending only 0.22 hours a day as compared to low caste women who devote 2.43 hours per day to this area -- mostly as agricultural wage laborers (see discussion of Tables 3.18 and 3.23).

Despite the fact that there are periods of severe labor shortage in Bakundol and that many high caste households in the bottom economic stratum need income, high caste women are reluctant to work for others for wages. High caste men also avoid this form of work** whenever possible for reasons of prestige, but it is felt to be especially demeaning to a family's izat (price, honor, reputation) if their women have to work for wages.

*This discussion of time allocation patterns refers only to the data on Parbatiya high and low castes. The "other" or non-Parbatiya middle ranking group make up only a small percentage of the Bakundol population. Hence, in the stratified random sample of 24 households that was drawn for the time allocation study, this group is represented by only 3 households containing a total of 18 individuals which is too small a sample to allow inclusion of that data in the analysis.

**Most of the time devoted to the category of outside income earning activity by high caste men was under the heading of trade and business and involved the marketing of dairy products rather than wage labor (see Table 3.21).



Despite the fact that women from top economic stratum households spend less time working in the fields, their overall work burden does not decrease since they spend more time in domestic tasks.

When we look at domestic and child rearing activities, we find that the time allocation pattern of high caste as composed to low caste women is similar to the pattern involving women of the top and bottom (economic) strata. Both high caste and top stratum women have somewhat lower input into conventional economic activities than low caste and bottom stratum women. But, high caste women end up with a slightly higher overall work burden than low caste women (12.60 hours a day versus 12.39 hours a day) perhaps because high caste women spend relatively more time in domestic and child care activities. Like women in the bottom economic stratum, low caste women enjoy more leisure time than high caste women (2.25 hours per day versus 1.79 hours per day). Interestingly, as is evident in Figure 3.3, the low caste group appears to be the most egalitarian in terms of the distribution of the overall work burden between the sexes.

Family Structure

The data presented in Table 3.4 show some effect of family structure* on the overall time allocation patterns of household members. The major variation appears in the area of conventional economic activity where both men and women in extended families spend more time. What is interesting is the difference between the two family types in the sexual distribution of labor within the category of economic activities. Men in extended families spend the least time in agricultural activities of any group (1.59 hours per day) while the input of women in extended families in this area is the highest of any group (2.96 hours per day). Women in extended families, however, spend very little time in outside income earning activities (0.67 hours as compared to 2.53 hours put in by men in extended families). While women in nuclear families still have a higher agricultural time input than their male family members (2.62 versus 2.07 for males), the discrepancy is not so marked as in extended families. Moreover, the input of women in nuclear families into outside income earning activities (1.22 hours per day) is nearly twice that of women in extended families.

*The number of individuals represented in the "other" family structure category (i.e., people living alone, brothers or sisters living together) is too small to allow meaningful comparisons of the time allocation patterns in this category.

Figure 3.3

WORK/LEISURE DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN MEN & WOMEN
OF
TOP & BOTTOM ECONOMIC STRATA & HIGH & LOW CASTE

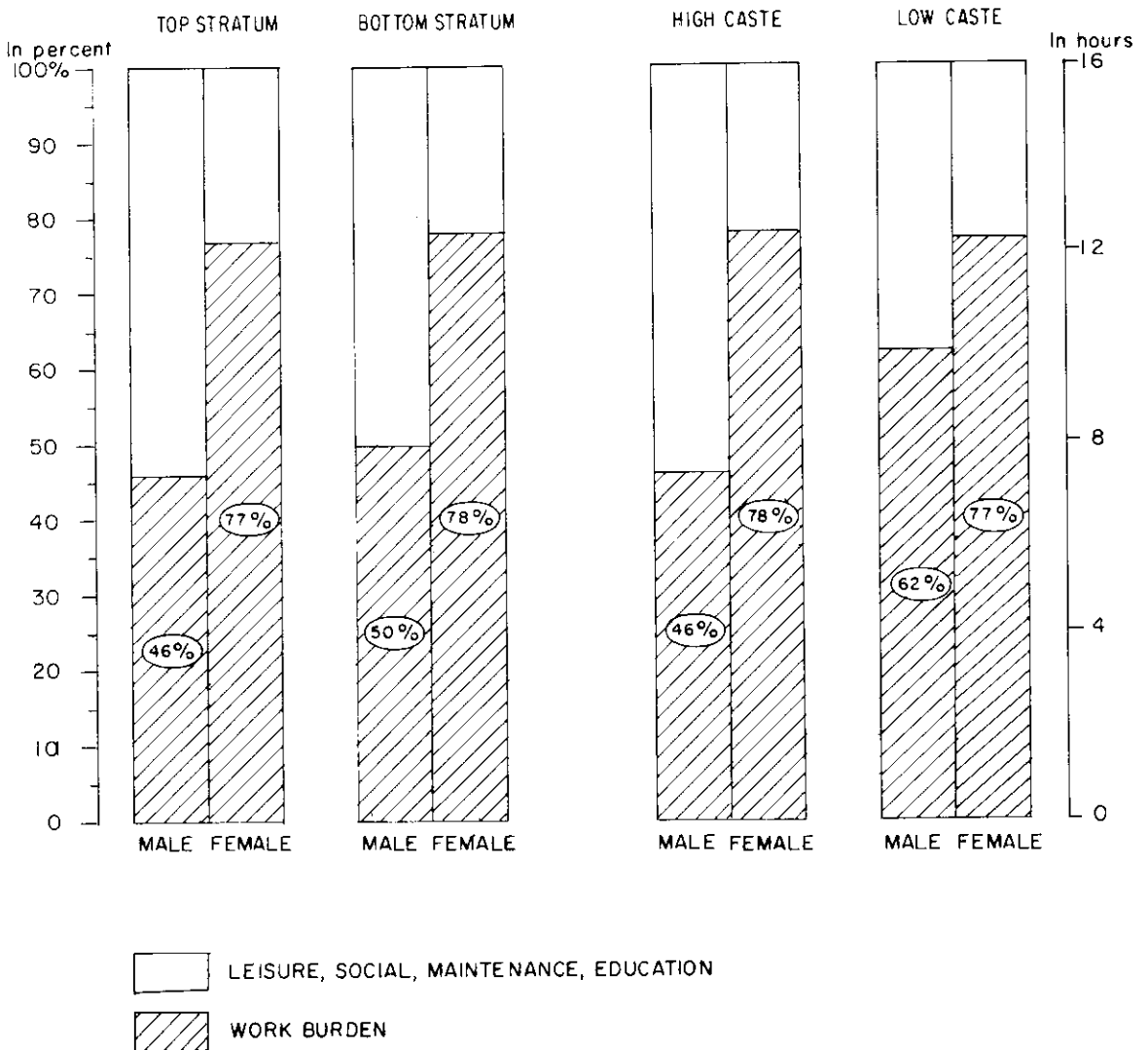


TABLE 3.4

TIME ALLOCATION BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND SEX
(for population of 15 years and above)

(In hours per day)

Activity	Family Structure		NUCLEAR			EXTENDED			OTHER		
	Sex		N=19 Male	N=22 Female	N=41 Both	N=23 Male	N=22 Female	N=45 Both	N=3 Male	N=2 Female	N=5 Both
CONVENTIONAL ECONOMIC	Animal Husbandry		0.92	1.47	1.21	1.69	1.75	1.72	2.82	1.67	2.20
	Agriculture		2.07	2.62	2.36	1.59	2.96	2.30	2.27	1.94	2.09
	Manufacturing		1.02	0.08	0.52	0.69	0.57	0.63	0.12	0.21	0.17
	Outside Income-Earning Activities (In-Village)		2.07	1.22	1.62	2.53	0.67	1.57	2.94	0.32	1.52
EXPANDED ECONOMIC*	1. Sub-total for Conventional Economic Activities		6.08	5.39	5.71	6.50	5.95	6.22	8.15	4.14	5.98
	Hunting and Gathering (including fuel collection)		0.55	0.32	0.43	0.23	0.19	0.21	0.37	0.05	0.20
	Food Processing		0.22	0.55	0.39	0.11	0.47	0.30	0.18	0.99	0.62
	Household Construction		0.21	0.12	0.16	0.34	0.15	0.24	0.74	0.05	0.37
DOMESTIC	2. Sub-total for Expanded Economic Activities		0.98	0.98	0.98	0.68	0.81	0.75	1.29	1.09	1.19
	Domestic		0.68	4.65	2.77	0.53	5.66	3.18	0.31	6.02	3.39
	Child Care & Rearing		0.35	1.19	0.80	0.17	0.50	0.34	-	0.05	0.03
	3. Sub-total for Domestic Activities		1.03	5.84	3.57	0.70	6.16	3.52	0.31	6.07	3.42
WORK	1. Sub-total for Work Burden Activities (1+2+3)		8.09	12.21	10.26	7.88	12.92	10.49	9.75	11.30	10.59
	4. Education		0.28	-	0.13	0.58	-	0.28	-	-	-
	5. Personal Maintenance		1.69	1.41	1.54	1.88	1.00	1.42	2.02	1.66	1.83
	6. Social Activities		0.34	0.24	0.29	0.27	0.27	0.49	0.49	0.53	0.51
	7. Leisure		5.60	2.13	3.78	5.39	1.81	3.54	3.74	2.51	3.07
	II. Sub-total for Social, Mainte- nance, Leisure (4+5+6+7)		7.91	3.79	5.74	8.12	3.08	5.51	6.25	4.70	5.41
	III. Total In-Village Activities (I+II)		16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00

* Due to tape format constraints the sub-category "water collection" which is included in all other calculations of "expanded economic activities" had to be included with "domestic activities."

In the area of expanded economic activity, both types of families have fairly similar time allocation patterns though it is interesting to note that as in the area of conventional economic activity, there is more variation between male and female input in the extended family. In the area of domestic activities there is considerable difference between the two family types. Women in nuclear families spend more than twice the time on child care (1.19 hours per day versus 0.50 hours per day) than do women in extended families. This finding seems to indicate that women in extended families share the burden of child care, leaving more time for involvement in economic activities outside the family compound. Interestingly, however, this sharing effect does not seem to lighten other household tasks for women in extended families. They spend one hour a day more than women in nuclear families in cooking, cleaning, laundry and other domestic chores.

Age and Relation to Household Head

Besides the variable of sex, which we have of course been considering, there are two other important individual-level variables, i.e., age and relation to household head, both of which operate within households and are associated with significant differences in time allocation patterns.

Age Group

Looking briefly at the comparative time allocation patterns of young children (5-9), older children (10-14), and adults (15 years and above) in Table 3.5, we find the expected progressive increase in both income-earning and domestic work as children get older. In Bakundol, as with Peet's (1978:295) findings on children's time allocation in the Nepalese village he studied, girls in all age groups spend more time working than boys and contribute substantially more in the area of domestic activities than boys. However, it appears that children in Bakundol as a group are less hard working than the children observed by Peet whose village was more remote and was inhabited mainly by Thami, a group of Tibeto-Burman stock.* For example, although the age groups are broken in slightly different ways for the two studies,

*There is one Thami family in Bakundol as noted earlier.

boys in the 6-8 age group in Peet's village are reported as spending 3.7 hours per day in work activities while in Bakundol boys from 5-9 years of age spend only 1.08 hours per day in work activities.*

One possible explanation for this difference is the very restricted definition of "child care" which was employed in the Bakundol study.** However, careful examination of the two data sets shows that the difference is more than a matter of definitions. Table 3.6 reveals that the time spent by children in agriculture, gathering and domestic activities is roughly the same in both villages -- though boys in Bakundol do much less agricultural work and very little domestic work at all. The slightly lower overall figures for Bakundol in these areas could be partially the result of the fact that the Bakundol averages contain observations on younger children who do less work. In the areas of animal husbandry and wage labor, however, major differences occur between the two villages. Children from the Thami village spend nearly one and a half hours more per day in animal husbandry.*** Girls in the 12-14 age group from the Thami village spend 1.2 hours per day working for wages while Bakundol girls in the 10-14 age group spend practically no time in wage labor and apparently do not

*"Work" here includes conventional economic, expanded economic and domestic activities.

**As noted by Hull in his comments on the White and Nag article (Current Anthropology Vol. 19, No. 2 June 1980, p. 302), "child care involves everything from breast feeding infants to minding youngsters" and it is not clear how much of this range is encompassed under the child care category in Peet's study. In the Bakundol study a child was not recorded as engaged in child care unless he or she was actively tending the child by holding or feeding it. Simply playing with a younger sibling -- even in the absence of any adult -- was counted as a leisure activity. This strict definition perhaps does not reflect the contribution children make by "minding" their younger sisters and brothers while parents are absent in the fields as well as the Peet study does.

***An even higher input into animal husbandry activity by children than that reported by Peet was found in the Tamang village of Katarche. (Indira Shrestha, Personal Communication).

TABLE 3.6

COMPARATIVE TIME ALLOCATION PATTERNS FOR TWO
HILL VILLAGES IN NEPAL

(In hours per day)

Activity	Thami Village (Age 12-14)		Bakundol Village (Age 10-12)**	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1. Animal Husbandry/ Animal Care (5)*	3.7	3.5	2.3	2.2
2. Agriculture/*Agricul- tural Work (10) & Agri- cultural Labor (11)	1.4	1.5	0.4	1.0
3. Hunting & Gathering/ *Fire Wood Collection(3)	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
4. Manufacturing/*Handi- crafts (8) and *Produc- tion of Articles for Sale (11)	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1
5. Food Processing	-	-	0.1	0.3
6. Local Economic Acti- vities/*Wage Labor (6+7)	0.3	1.2	0.1	0.1
7. Construction	-	-	0.1	-
8. Productive Activities/ *Directly Productive Activities (1+7)	5.9	6.8	3.3	3.8
9. Cooking, Serving + Dishes/*Household Food Preparation	0.9	1.5	0.3	1.4
10. Child Care (1)	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.4
11. Cleaning, Laundry, Water Collection, Shopping and Other Domestic/*Other Household Maintenance (4)	0.5	1.0	0.2	1.1
12. Domestic	1.6	3.1	0.6	2.9
13. Work Burden/*All Work (1-12)	7.5	9.9	4.0	6.7

Source for data on Thami children: "An Anthropological Approach to the Study of the Economic Value of Children in Java and Nepal" by Moni Nag, Benjamin White and Creighton Peet, Current Anthropology Vol. 19, No. 2. June 1978.

* Heading used in Peet and White study.

** Figures of Bakundol data have been rounded to one decimal point for this table to correspond with Peet's data.

enter the labor market until they are adults. The gap between the wage work input of boys from the two villages in this area is much smaller.

Relation to Household Head

To a considerable degree, the variables of age and relation to household head overlap and reinforce each other. In other words, certain age groups are associated with certain relationships to the household and hence with an individual's "rank" in the family hierarchy. For example, most of the "unmarried daughters" in Bakundol are under fifteen and all but a few are under twenty (see Table 2.10), while the category of "mother" of the head of household would tend to contain only older women. However, there is certainly not a direct congruence between the two variables. Other factors, such as type of family structure, the usual age of marriage and post marital residence patterns in a given community may be important in determining the age range of certain positions in the family hierarchy. For example, in nuclear families, a man of twenty-five may be "household head" and his twenty-year old wife classified as "spouse" whereas the same age couple in an extended family would be classified as "married son" and "daughter-in-law." In short, there are certain categories of relation to household head which contain a wide range of ages and others which are heavily concentrated in one age group. For the latter, it is difficult to say whether the particular time allocation patterns observed are due to the position in the family (hierarchy) or simply the fact that they belong to a certain age group. To minimize this problem, the data for time allocation by relation to household head in Tables 3.7 and 3.8 have been presented for the adult population only.

In Table 3.7 we see that married sons (who are all younger men in their prime) work the hardest of any group.* Married sons devote substantially more of their time (3.50 hours a day) to income earning activity than either unmarried sons or household heads who spend 1.70 and 2.70 hours a day respectively engaged in outside income earning work. Also, since the household head category includes a number of older

*Except the anomolous "other relatives" category which in this case includes only two landless and extremely poor individuals who essentially work for their keep with the family.

men who have more or less "retired" from active work in the fields, etc., the data show this group devoting more time to domestic activities than any other group of males.

Looking at the data for the female population in Table 3.8, a different and rather surprising pattern emerges. Adult unmarried daughters spend more time in conventional economic activity (7.14 hours per day) than any other female group* and have a work burden of 12.77 hours a day which is almost exactly equal to that of daughters-in-law who spend 12.76 hours per day at work. It is clear that the sacred filiofocal status of unmarried daughters which we discussed earlier does not prevent them from making a substantial contribution to the economic well-being of their natal home. The same pattern emerged in Figure 3.4 when the female population is grouped according to whether they are related consanguineally (by blood)** or affinally (by marriage)*** to their family of residence. When only the adult population is considered it would appear that the work burden of in-marrying affinal women is only slightly higher than that of consanguineal women. Does this mean then that consanguineal women are not in fact indulged by their natal families and that the Parbatiya's own perceptions of their behavior do not tally with reality? No, rather it would appear that this indulgence and the release from the usual heavy workload of Parbatiya women is granted only to returning consanguineal women -- to married daughters and sisters on brief visits to their natal home. Unfortunately, no time allocation data could be collected on the married daughters and sisters returning for short visits to their maiti as these women were not considered members of the household.***

*Except again for "other female relatives" who in this case like the males in this category are all dependent relatives who work for their keep with the family.

**Includes sisters, daughters, granddaughters, nieces and mothers of the (male) household head.

***Includes wives, daughters-in-law, granddaughters-in-law and sisters-in-law of the (male) household head.

****Only married daughters who had spent more than six months of the year previous to the year during which time allocation data were collected could be considered family members. Such an extended stay would have signaled an informal divorce or at least a trial separation.

Informal observation indicates, however, that the time allocation patterns of married women in their maiti would have been very different from what appears in Figure 3.4. Especially during short visits, what little work consanguineal women do is usually in the preferred area of domestic work and child care rather than farm work and other income earning or productive activities.

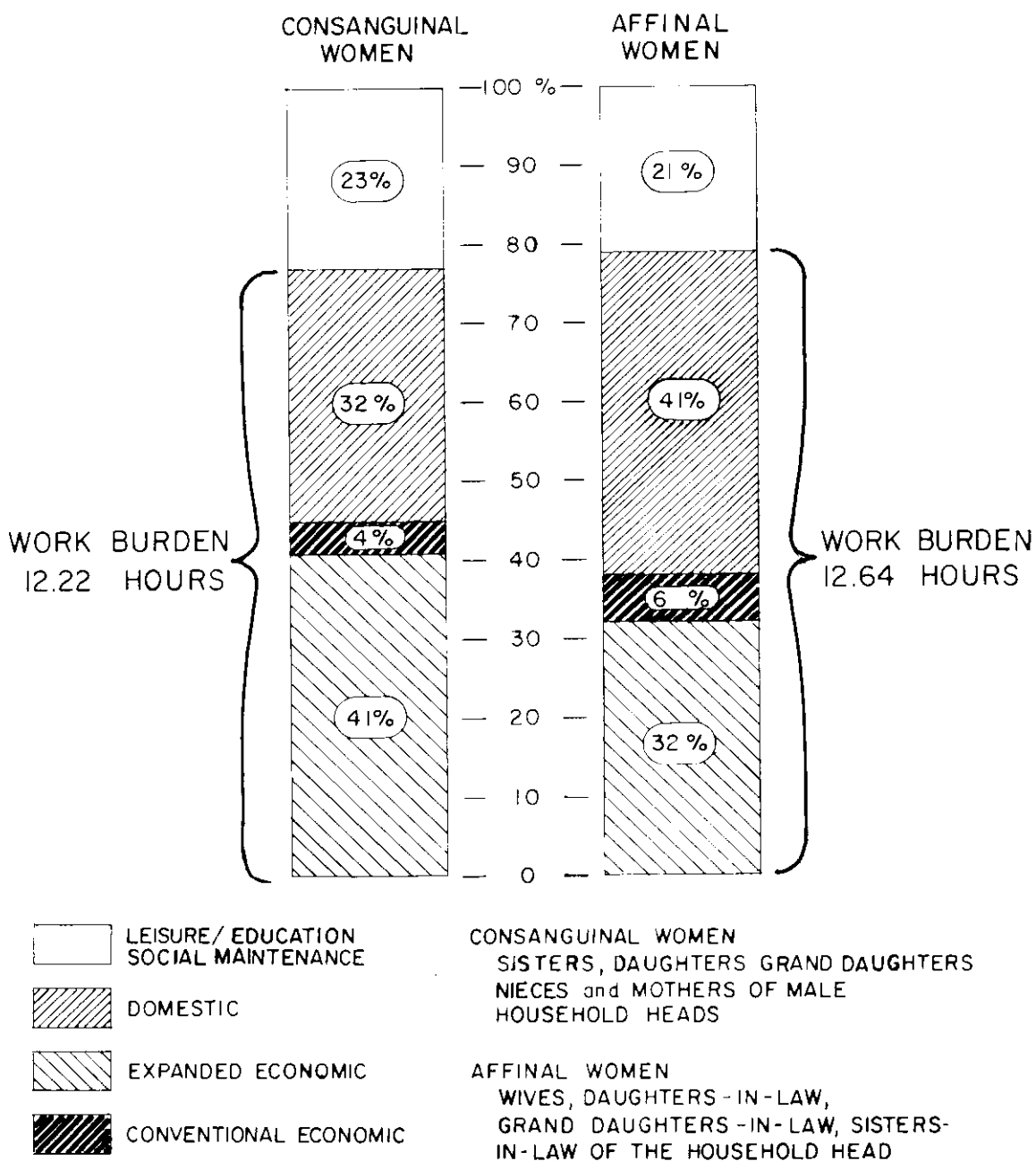
The data on unmarried daughters, together with that on daughters-in-law, wives of household heads and female household heads in Table 3.8, reveal that there is little variation in the overall work load of adult women in these four categories despite the different "ranks" of each in the family hierarchy. There are, however, important differences in the kinds of work performed by women in these different groups. For example, unmarried daughters and daughters-in-law lead in the area of conventional economic activity, spending 7.14 hours and 6.44 hours per day respectively in this area compared to 5.16 hours for female heads of household and 4.51 for wives. The same pattern is maintained for input into agricultural activity -- the single most important sub-category of productive activity for Bakundol women. Adult unmarried daughters and daughters-in-law put in 3.89 and 3.29 hours per day respectively in the fields while female household heads contribute only 1.82 hours and wives 2.12 hours per day. Within the sub-category of outside income earning activity, however, it is the female household heads who lead, devoting 1.70 hours per day to this area as compared to only 0.59 hours per day for adult unmarried daughters.

The Bakundol findings on the work burden of female household heads, though based on only four cases, are similar to Mueller's for Botswana. Mueller found that "overall, women in female-headed households show about the same time allocation to work as women in male-headed households. The main difference is that they do less work in agriculture and more in wage labor, but they do not work longer hours because the male head is absent (or non-existent)" (1979:11).* In fact, the female household head in Bakundol has a lower total work burden than women in any

*Mueller is of course describing the entire adult female population in female headed households while the Bakundol data is only on the female heads themselves.

Figure 3.4

TIME ALLOCATION PATTERNS OF CONSANGUINAL & AFFINAL WOMEN (FOR ADULTS)



of the prime age groups under discussion. For example, although we have seen that she spends more time in productive activities than women whose husbands are heads of household (i.e., "wives"), the female head of household saves nearly an hour a day on household tasks so her overall work burden is actually slightly less than that of women whose husbands are present.

Since the remaining kinship categories in Table 3.8 are represented by only one individual each, the data must be interpreted as simply case study profiles. Nevertheless they are interesting. The one mother of the household head in our sample has a very low work burden -- of only 6.25 hours a day -- more than half of which was spent in child care activities. This pattern is consistent with the cultural ideal of receiving support in old age from one's son. Another woman in the sample related to the household head as "mother-in-law" presents a marked contrast. Since she is living with her daughter rather than her son, her position in the family is not as secure. Perhaps that is the reason she carries a much heavier work burden. She spends 4.53 hours per day in conventional economic activities while the mother of the head of household spends less than an hour. The mother-in-law's total work burden is 10.67 hours a day -- nearly as much as that of the prime age women. The weekly breakdown of the data shows that she did not reside permanently with her daughter for the whole of the study. Of the 156 visits the surveyor made to her house she was present in the village only 60 days or 38 percent of the time. When interviewed, the old woman explained that she has no son and does not like to stay in the home of her Bakundol son-in-law for too many months during the year, so she goes to visit another married daughter.

Spheres of Economic Activity and the Sexual Division of Labor Within and Between Them

From the time allocation and other household economic survey data as well as from extended observation of village life, it is possible to discern three distinct yet inter-related spheres of economic activity in Bakundol. These spheres begin with the household and move outward to the village and local bazaar and finally through short and long term migration to the world beyond the village. Sphere I is the Family Farm Enterprise -- the rural household as a unit of production and consumption considered for the purposes of analysis as anterior to its involvement with the market

economy. We are concerned here with two interrelated -- and indeed in many ways overlapping -- functions of the family farm: directly productive activities and what we might call maintenance or support activities. In terms of the time allocation activities encompassed, the directly productive activities of the family farm include agriculture and animal husbandry from the "conventional economic" category. The maintenance activities are seen as supporting or "reproducing" the farm family unit itself and include, in addition to domestic work and child care, such tasks as fuel and water collection, home construction and food processing. As explained earlier, this latter set of activities has been classified as "expanded economic" because although performed by family members, they are in fact directly productive and go far beyond the scope of domestic work as it is defined in the industrial West.

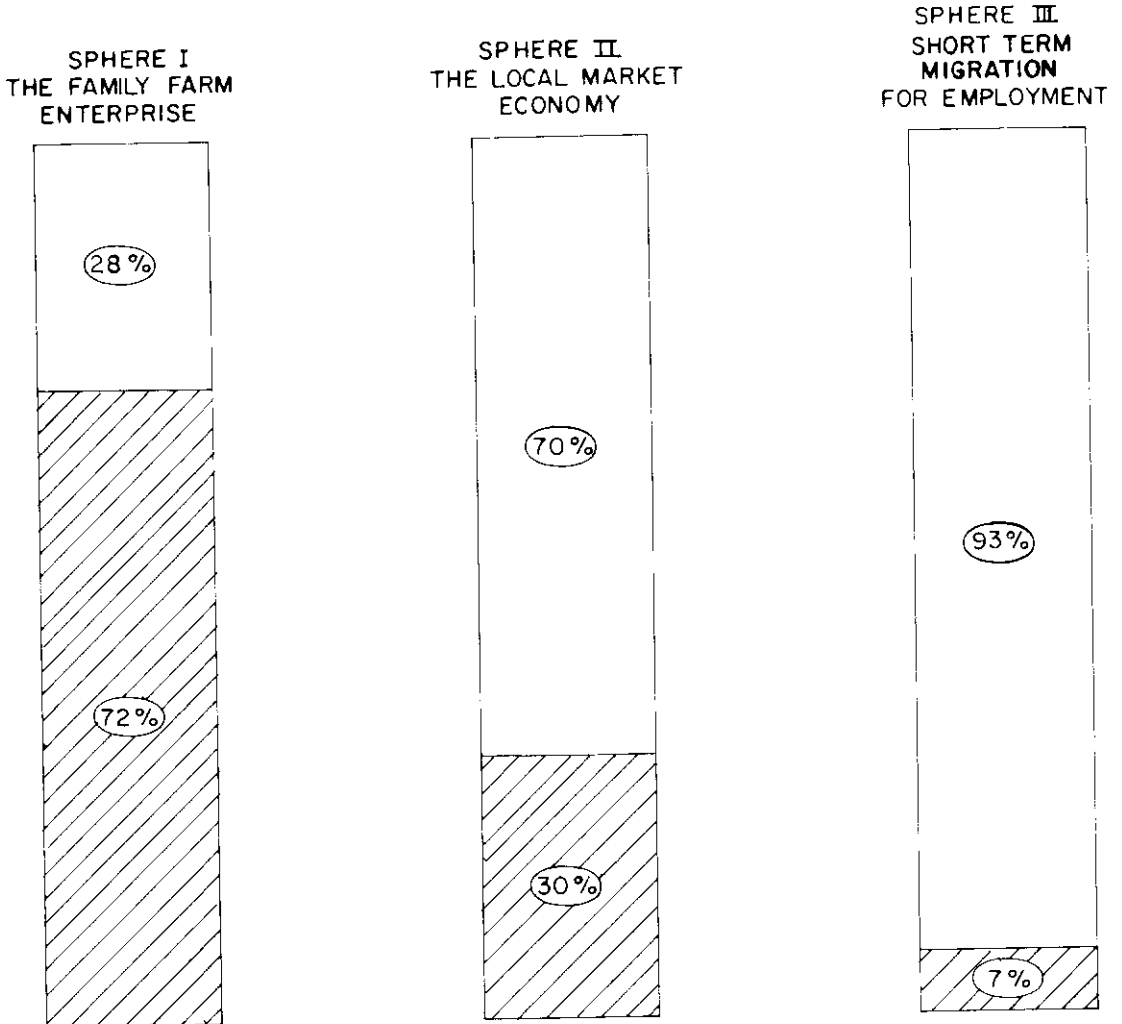
Sphere II is the Local Market Economy which includes any work performed in the village or nearby bazaars for wages either in cash or in kind. The time allocation categories it covers are manufacturing (since 92.8 percent of the home manufacture production in Bakundol reaches the market) and outside income-earning activities.

Finally, Sphere III refers to short term Migration for Employment in the wider market economy beyond the village. Any employment or work including agricultural labor, road work, construction, army service, trading, etc., that requires a householdmember to spend the night out of the village is included as participation in Sphere III.

Every household in Bakundol is involved to varying degrees in the first two spheres and about one third of the households combine activities from all three in their overall economic strategy. But what is significant for our analysis is the marked difference in the extent to which women participate in these three spheres. Figure 3.5 shows us that women put in 72 percent of the unpaid labor absorbed by the family farm enterprise, but only 30 percent of the paid labor in Sphere II or the local market economy. In Sphere III, short term migration for employment, women put in only seven percent of the total person-days. Because of the different skills required, kinds of rewards offered and options opened by participation in each respective sphere, this fact has important implications for women's status vis-a-vis men in the household and village community. It can, in fact, be viewed as an economic manifestation of the

Figure 3.5

MALE/FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE THREE SPHERES OF THE VILLAGE ECONOMY



KEY



MEN



WOMEN

inside/outside dichotomy discussed earlier. In Bakundol it is the land and the women who work it that provide the relatively stable but always insufficient economic base from which the men can reach out to take risks and try to earn cash income that will increase their own and their family's welfare. The concentration of female labor in subsistence production for the family farm enterprise, together with the fact that women rarely own the land or exert much control over the sale of what it produces, means that they are to a large extent cut off from interaction with the market economy and other wider spheres of society beyond the household and village. It is the men who not only have control over the land resources upon which Sphere I is based, but whose socialization and better education have equipped them to move out into Spheres II and III and to deal with the increasingly complex and sophisticated structures associated with the market economy and the development process in general. The judiciary, the market place, institutional credit, the health system, the extension service: all these systems exist on the "outside" beyond women's proper domain. In the following chapter we will be discussing some of these important structures and assessing the degrees to which the women of Bakundol have access to them. At the moment, however, we are focusing on the structure of women's economic participation in the village. To understand that, we must begin by examining Sphere I, the family farm enterprise where women make their major economic contribution.

Sphere I: The Family Farm Enterprise

Like that of most of rural Nepal, the economy of Bakundol is based on subsistence agricultural production. What this means is that managing the family farm to try to produce and process enough food to feed themselves is for most households the first and most important part of their economic strategy. From the villager's viewpoint, a household that produces enough grains to feed its members would never be considered "poor" and by the same token, one that must buy even a portion of its annual foodgrain requirement from the bazaar would probably not be considered well-off -- even though the family may earn a larger actual income through participation in Spheres II and III.

As evident from the data in Table 1.12, only 37.4 percent of Bakundol's total farm production (including not only grain production but also animal products, vegetables, fruits and gathered forest production, etc.) reaches the



A parma group preparing the dry upland fields for the spring corn planting.

market. The rest is consumed by the family that produces it. In terms of time, when both production and maintenance activities are included, the family farm in Bakundol absorbs 80 percent of the in-village work time (Figure 3.6). Considering only the conventional economic and expanded economic activities associated with the family farm, we find that it absorbs 49 percent of the work time and produces 71.1 percent of the household income (Figure 3.6 and Table 1.11). Figure 3.6 shows the detailed breakdown of the various components of the family farm enterprise, the amount of time absorbed by each and the relative time input of adult males and females into each activity.

Agriculture

The most important component of family farm enterprise is of course agriculture which together with kitchen gardening produces 45.5 percent of the household income and absorbs 22 percent of the adult work time. Women are responsible for 62 percent of the unpaid family labor input into agriculture. Table 3.9 gives the actual time input of males and females into the various sub-categories of agricultural activity while Figure 3.7 shows the proportion of male to female input into each activity. It is interesting to note that although land preparation is generally considered a male task women actually spend more time at it than men. This is because in fact men specialize in the preparation of fields for wet rice plantation which takes place once a year, while the task of breaking the dry earth with hoes which is done by both sexes and the "female" task of dalla phorne or beating the clods of dry earth to smooth the upland fields for corn or barley planting or to prepare the lowland fields for winter wheat must be done intermittently throughout the year. Among the rest of the agricultural tasks the only ones where men put in more time than women are terrace upkeep and the preparation and application of chemical fertilizer. The most time consuming agricultural tasks for women appear to be the harvesting and post harvest operations (which include threshing, drying and storing the grain) and weeding. These two tasks absorb 0.74 and 0.67 hours per day respectively for adult women.

As shown in Figure 3.8 the time input into agricultural activities varies considerably at different seasons of the year. There are two major peak periods. The first is between May and August, during which wheat harvest, threshing and rice plantation take place. During mid-summer there continues to be a high agricultural work load for women due to the continuous need to weed the rice and corn crops and

Figure 3.6

DISTRIBUTION OF MALE/FEMALE IN-VILLAGE WORK BURDEN BY ACTIVITY

		MALE	FEMALE	Percent of Total Work Burden	Average Hours per Day					
					Male	Female	Both			
I. Family Farm Enterprise (Sphere I)	a.	Animal Husbandry	44%	56%	15%	1.39	1.58	1.49		
	1. Farm Production (Conventional Economic)	b.	Agriculture	38%	62%	22%	1.86	2.72	2.32	
			Farm Production	40%	60%	37%	3.25	4.30	3.81	
	2. Expanded Economic	c.	Fuel Collection	22%	78%	1%	0.06	0.18	0.12	
			Hunting + Gathering	14	86%	2%	0.31	0.05	0.17	
		e.	Food Processing	20%	80%	3%	0.15	0.53	0.35	
			Home Construction	32%	68%	2%	0.29	0.13	0.19	
		g.	Water Collection	3	97%	4%	0.03	0.82	0.45	
			Expanded Economic	31%	69%	12%	0.84	1.71	1.28	
		3. Domestic	h.	Cooking and Serving	8	92%	16%	0.29	3.01	1.73
Cleaning Dishes / Pots				2	98%	3%	0.01	0.48	0.27	
j.			Cleaning House	4	96%	3%	0.02	0.51	0.29	
			Laundry	4	96%	1%	0.01	0.24	0.13	
l.	Shopping		23%	77%	2%	0.37	0.10	0.23		
	Child Care		18%	82%	6%	0.22	0.91	0.59		
h-m	Domestic		14%	86%	3%	0.93	5.28	3.26		
	Family Farm Enterprise		28%	72%	80%	5.02	11.29	8.35		
Total Sphere I				a-m.	28%	72%	80%	5.02	11.29	8.35
II. Local Market Economy (Sphere II)	n.	Manufacturing	29%	71%	5%	0.82	0.30	0.54		
		Outside Income Earning Act.	31%	69%	15%	2.31	0.91	1.57		
	Total Sphere II	n-o	70%	30%	20%	3.13	1.21	2.11		
III. Total In-Village Work Burden	a-o	37%	63%	100%	8.15	12.50	10.46			

0 20 40 60 80 100

TABLE 3.9

DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF TIME ALLOCATION WITHIN THE
AGRICULTURAL SECTOR BY SEX

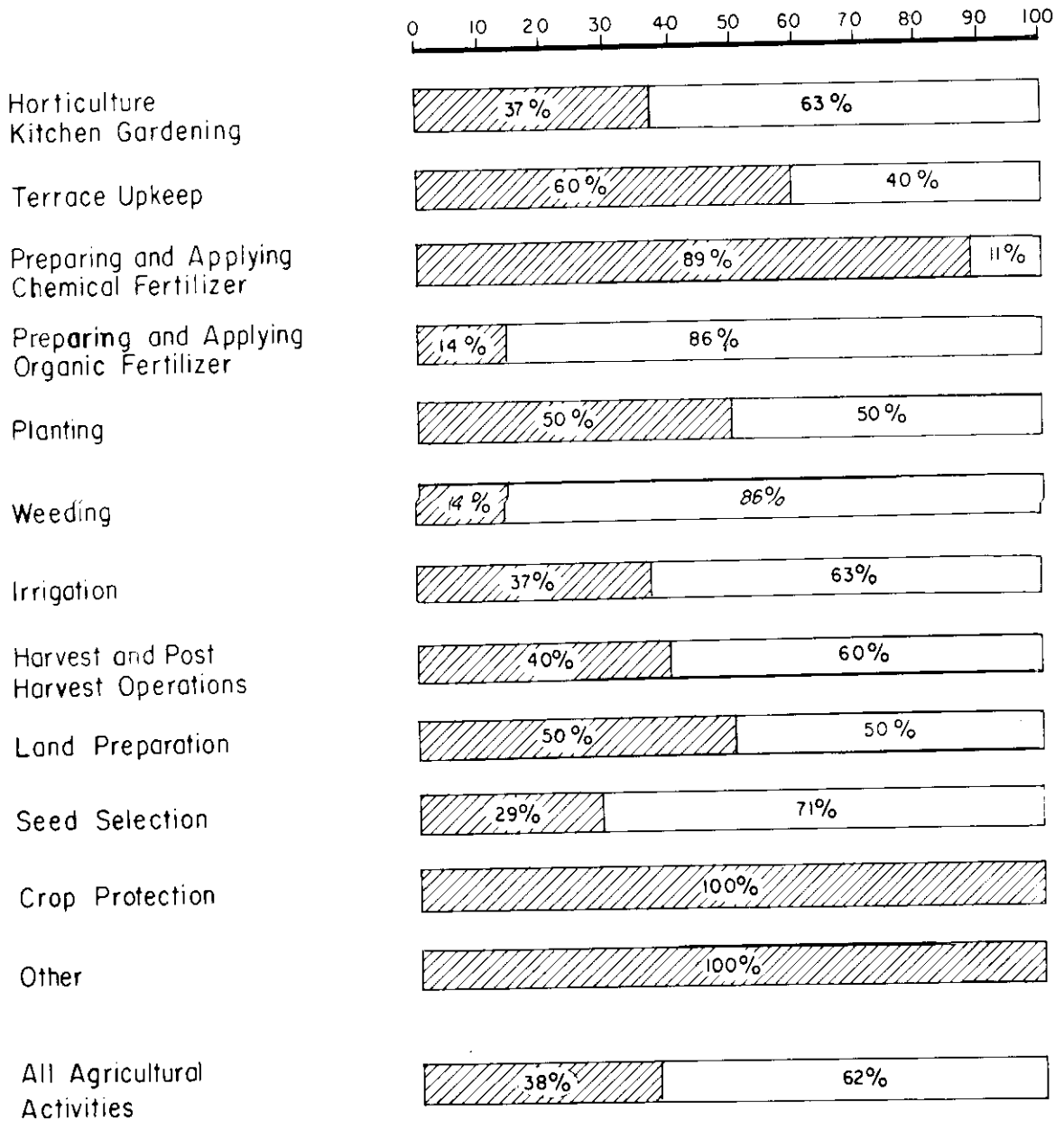
(for adult population)

(In hours per day)

Operation	Sex	Male	Female	Both
	Land Preparation		0.21	0.32
Terrace Upkeep		0.59	0.36	0.47
Preparing + Applying Chemical Fertilizer		0.07	0.01	0.04
Preparing and Applying Organic Fertilizer		0.04	0.24	0.15
Planting		0.03	0.02	0.03
Weeding		0.14	0.72	0.44
Irrigation		0.19	0.29	0.24
Harvesting + Post Harvest Operations		0.51	0.69	0.60
Horticulture/Kitchen Gardening		0.01	0.01	0.01
Seed Selection		0.03	0.06	0.05
Crop Protection		0.01	-	0.01
Other		0.03	-	0.01
All Agricultural Activities		1.86	2.72	2.32

Figure 3.7

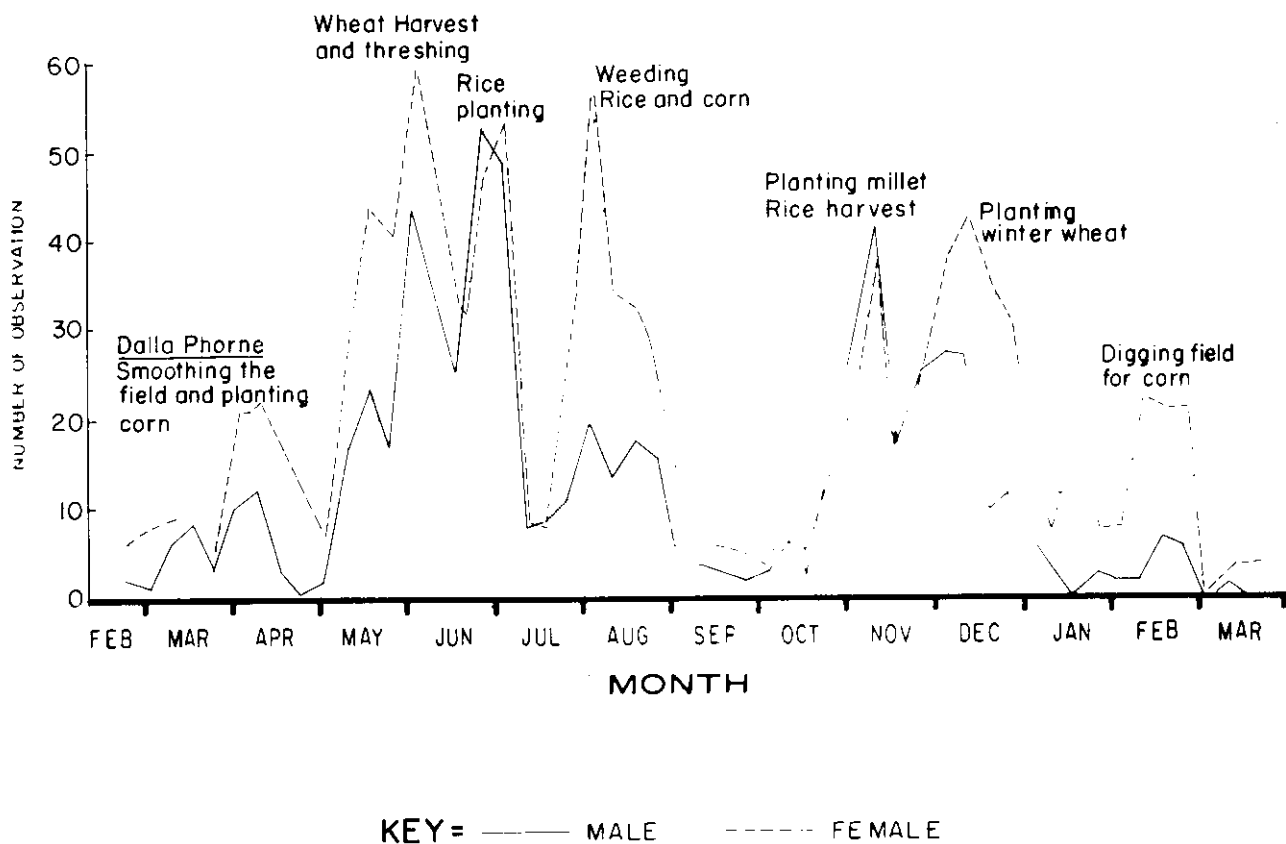
MALE/FEMALE TIME INPUT INTO VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS FOR UNPAID FAMILY LABOR



KEY =  MALE  FEMALE

Figure 3.8

WEEKLY ACTIVITY PATTERN-AGRICULTURE (For Adult Population)



to plant millet. The second peak period comes between October and December. During this period rice harvest, threshing, storing and field preparation for the winter wheat crop take place. A third "semi-peak" period for women occurs in spring with the two stage operation of first turning the fields and later (after the spring rains) smoothing them out in preparation for corn planting.

Another set of data on agricultural labor input by crop and type of operation is presented in Table 3.10. These data presented graphically in Figure 3.9 show that it is really only in the cultivation of rice that men's share of the labor input approaches that of women (46 percent male versus 54 percent female). Men are responsible for one third the labor input into the wheat crop and only 12 percent for millet and 6 percent for corn.

Although the data collected for this purpose are based on informant recall rather than observation (which was the basis for the time allocation data), the pattern of labor input by sex to the various agricultural operations is quite consistent with the findings from the time allocation study. The higher proportion of overall female input which appears in the recall data (69 percent versus 62 percent for the time allocation data) is probably due to the fact that only unpaid work in one's own field or as exchange labor was counted as time spent in agriculture for the time allocation study. Agricultural wage work for others, however (which would appear in the calculation of total labor days in Table 3.10), was included under "outside income earning activity."

In Bakundol, as in most Nepalese hill villages, there are three types of agricultural labor: 1) the unpaid work of family member, 2) parma or exchange labor, and 3) daily wage work.* As mentioned earlier, working for wages is felt to be slightly demeaning -- especially for women. This attitude can be understood as a relatively mild manifestation

*All wage labor in Bakundol is on a daily basis. In many hill villages, however, wealthier food surplus families may have a long term servant or "farm hand" who works for food, shelter, clothing and a small monthly or yearly payment. See Acharya (1981) and Pradhan (1981) in this series for discussion of contract labor which occurs in the Maithili and Newari communities they studied.

TABLE 3.10

MALE/FEMALE LABOR INPUT BY CROP AND TYPE OF OPERATION
(for both unpaid family labor and wage labor)

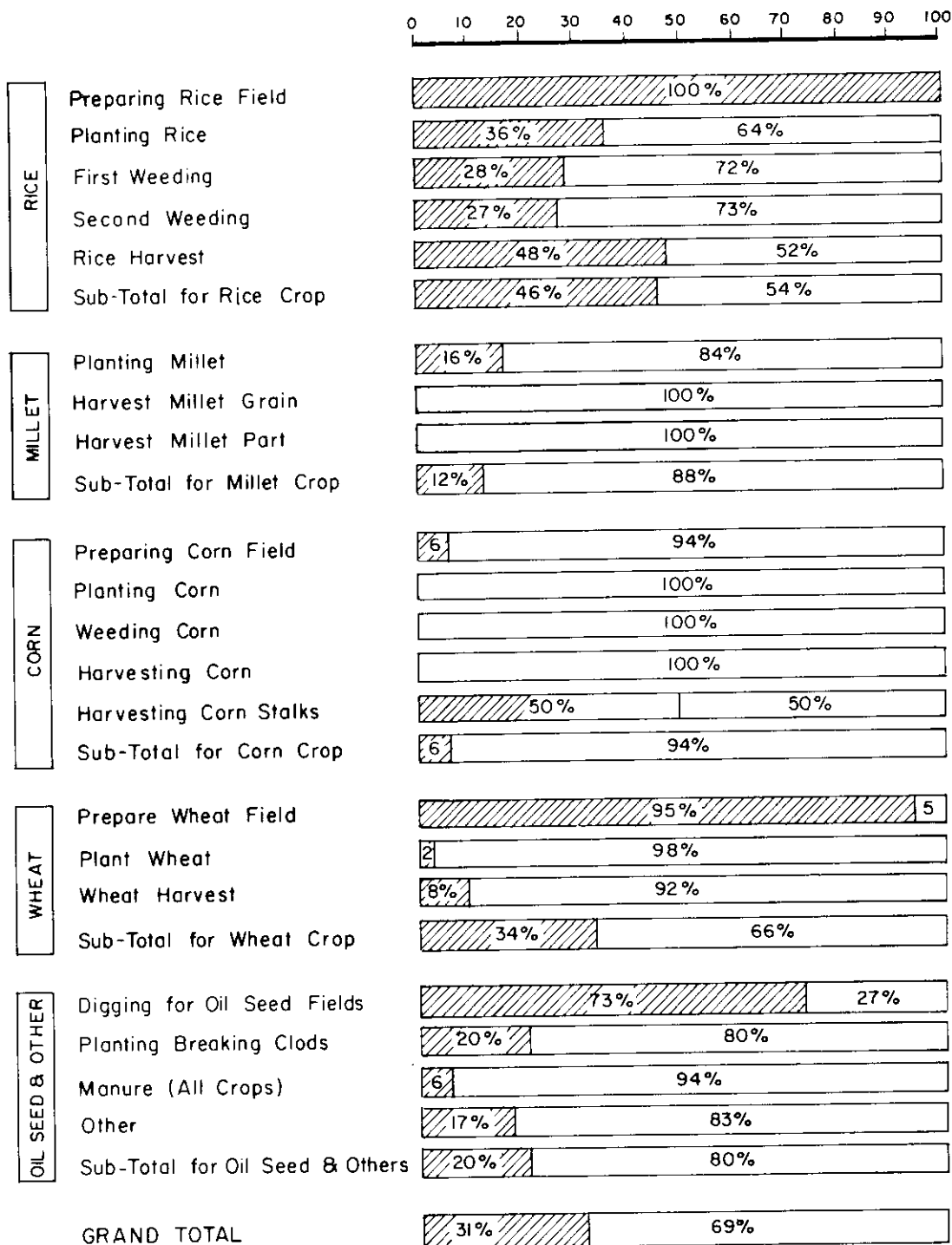
(In labor days)

Crop & Operation		Sex		
		Male	Female	Both Sexes
RICE	Field Preparation	413(100.0)	-	413(100.0)
	Transplantation	405(35.6)	733(64.4)	1138(100.0)
	First Weeding	35(27.8)	91(72.2)	126(100.0)
	Second Weeding	152(27.3)	404(72.7)	556(100.0)
	Harvesting	320(48.0)	346(52.0)	666(100.0)
	Sub-total for Rice Crop	1325(45.7)	1574(54.3)	2899(100.0)
MILLET	Transplantation	112(16.0)	587(84.0)	699(100.0)
	Grain Harvesting	-	188(100.0)	188(100.0)
	Plant Harvesting	-	23(100.0)	23(100.0)
	Sub-total for Millet Crop	112(12.3)	798(87.7)	910(100.0)
CORN	Field Preparation	33(6.3)	494(93.7)	527(100.0)
	Sowing	-	205(100.0)	205(100.0)
	Weeding	-	154(100.0)	154(100.0)
	Corn Harvesting	-	14(100.0)	14(100.0)
	Corn Stalk Harvesting	25(50.0)	25(50.0)	50(100.0)
	Sub-total for Corn Crop	58(6.1)	892(93.9)	950(100.0)
WHEAT	Field Preparation	394(94.9)	21(5.1)	415(100.0)
	Sowing	14(2.3)	589(97.7)	603(100.0)
	Harvesting	21(8.4)	228(91.6)	249(100.0)
	Sub-total for Wheat Crop	429(33.9)	838(66.1)	1267(100.0)
OILSEED & OTHER	Field Preparation	63(73.3)	23(26.7)	86(100.0)
	Planting & Breaking Clods	16(19.8)	65(80.2)	81(100.0)
	Manuring (all crops)	20(6.4)	293(93.6)	313(100.0)
	Other	5(16.7)	25(83.3)	30(100.0)
	Sub-total for Oilseed and Other	104(20.4)	406(79.6)	510(100.0)
Grand Total		2028(31.0)	4508(69.0)	6536(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figure 3.9

MALE FEMALE LABOR INPUT INTO VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS BY CROP (For Both Unpaid Family Labor + Wage Labor)*



KEY =  MALE  FEMALE

of the purdah ideology which pervades much of the Indian sub-continent.* In Bangladesh and many parts of India this ideology restricts women in all but the very lowest social and economic strata of society from participating in agricultural production outside the family compound.** It is overwhelmingly clear from the time allocation data that there is no such restriction in the hills of Nepal. Though it is considered prestigious for women to devote themselves entirely to domestic chores or ghar ko kam, very few families can afford this luxury and in fact even the women in the wealthiest family in Bakundol put in substantial time in the fields. The most meaningful status distinctions for women in the Nepal hills are between those who work only in the family fields, those who also participate in parma labor exchange groups and finally, those who must enter Sphere II and do agricultural work for wages in the local market economy. We are concerned here primarily with parma and family labor rather than with agricultural wage work since the latter goes beyond the family farm enterprise (Sphere I) and its basic subsistence production role and involves monetary exchange and the wider village and bazaar economy of Sphere II.

The Schroeders (1978:178-192) have aptly characterized parma groups as "female solidarity groups." Of course men also participate in parma groups and moreover, the membership of these groups is constantly shifting from season to season and with each type of operation*** so parma groups have no clear continuity or self identity. Hence the parma group as an institution lacks some of the characteristics which would make it powerful as a solidarity group. Yet

*And of course, the Arab world. In Muslim culture, however, the purdah complex often takes on very different contours. See Dweyer, Image and Self Image, Columbia University Press, New York 1978.

**See Abdullah & Ziedenstein, "Women's Reality: Critical Issues for Program Design" Studies in Family Planning, Vol. 10, No. 11/12, Nov. Dev. 1979, pp. 344-352; Development Review, Vol. 5 (3): 405-438, 1979.

***For example, a large group of 20 or 25 individuals may be most efficient for rice transplantation while the task of weeding the corn is best done in small groups of 5 or 6 people.

participation in parma does provide an important social outlet for Parbatiya women who are otherwise, as I have mentioned, rather isolated from one another. In Bakundol the parma groups I observed were (except for a few teenage boys) composed of women of all age groups -- unmarried girls born in the village and women who had married into the village. However, because it is customary for the household in whose fields the group is working that day to provide khaja or mid-afternoon snack for the group, parma groups were always composed of members of castes who could interdine with each other. This does not mean that low caste men and women don't work alongside high caste villagers in the fields. They do, but as wage laborers who receive their khaja as part of their wage and therefore have no obligation to reciprocate in kind.

It is interesting to note that women not only participate in parma labor exchange more than men but also (according to data on labor allocation decisions in Table 2.22 and my own observations), take the major share of the responsibility for arranging the groups and scheduling their work so that each member's fields are tended during the proper season. I was left with the distinct impression that women are in charge of organizing most of the agricultural work in Bakundol. The only time when men seem to take over is where it is crucial to complete an operation within a specified time and labor is short such as during rice transplantation and harvesting period. For these operations, organizing the required labor at the right time becomes a political issue -- a matter of one's power and prestige in the community and who owes one favors.

Moreover, at these key periods in the agricultural cycle the population of Bakundol cannot meet its own labor requirements. The situation has become even more acute in the last eight years -- after the last pair of bullocks was sold because the lack of fodder had made them too expensive to support. Five or six men are needed to replace one pair of bullocks and their driver in the difficult work of preparing the flooded fields for transplantation. So, particularly during the crucial rice planting season, outsiders come to the village to work as wage laborers. They are mostly Tamang men and women from further back in the hills whose own fields are not yet ready for transplanting. As shown in Table 2.22, in most households it is the men who handle the arrangements for wage labor.

Another "political area" which is primarily the responsibility of men is water management. Like labor, water is a scarce resource during the planting season -- especially in Bakundol where many of the rice fields are not irrigated but depend on channeling rainfall -- and so securing a timely water supply often depends on negotiating with other households.

The finding that 77.1 percent of the person days devoted to parma labor exchange in Bakundol was put in by women (Table 3.11) is consistent with the pattern revealed earlier in the time allocation data showing the concentration of women's input in the non-monetized subsistence production sector of Sphere I. Somewhat unexpected, however, is the finding (Table 3.12) that women are responsible for 46.6 percent of the person days devoted to agricultural wage labor which of course counts as participation in Sphere II, the local market economy. Even more surprising is the fact that the proportion of female input into agricultural wage labor remained at about 50 percent for both the bottom and the top strata since generally better off families do not send their women to work as wage laborers. We will examine these data again more thoroughly in our subsequent analysis of Sphere II.

The same data arranged by caste in Table 3.13 reveal a more expected pattern with high caste women contributing only half the number of labor days put in by men while among the low caste the input of women is actually slightly higher than that of men. Moreover, if we look at the relative input of high and low caste we see that despite the fact that they represent only 21.9 percent of the population (Table 1.6), the low caste put in 61.3 percent of the wage labor days as compared to the high caste who represent 70.1 percent of the population but put in only 29.9 percent of the wage labor days. In the area of parma labor the proportion of male input remains roughly the same in all caste groups (Table 3.14). However, it is the high caste who put in the largest share (76.9 percent) of person days into parma labor.

Most of the preceding discussion of agricultural labor relates to the major grain crops where, as we have seen, male and female decision making input is almost exactly equal. Before leaving the subject of agriculture we should also look briefly at vegetable gardening and horticulture where women have the major decision making responsibility (74.8 percent versus 22.6 percent for men according to Table 2.23). In general, vegetable gardening received very low

TABLE 3.11
ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL EXCHANGE LABOR INPUT BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(In labor days)

Economic Strata \ Sex	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Male	202 (26.2) (25.3)	470 (61.0) (22.4)	98 (12.7) (20.6)	770 (100.0) (22.9)
Female	595 (22.9) (74.7)	1627 (62.6) (77.6)	377 (14.5) (79.4)	2599 (100.0) (77.1)
Both Sexes	797 (23.7) (100.0)	2097 (62.2) (100.0)	475 (14.1) (100.0)	3369 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures beneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.12
ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL WAGE LABOR INPUT BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(In labor days)

Sex \ Economic Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Male	124 (17.5) (49.2)	450 (63.6) (57.2)	134 (18.9) (46.7)	708 (100.0) (53.4)
Female	128 (20.7) (50.8)	337 (54.5) (42.8)	153 (24.8) (53.3)	618 (100.0) (46.6)
Both Sexes	252 (19.0) (100.0)	787 (59.4) (100.0)	287 (21.6) (100.0)	1326 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures beneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.13
ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL WAGE LABOR INPUT BY SEX AND CASTE

(In labor days)

Sex \ Caste	High Caste	Other Caste	Low Caste	All Caste
Male	261 (37.1) (66.1)	48 (6.8) (41.4)	394 (56.1) (48.6)	703 (100.0) (53.2)
Female	134 (21.7) (33.9)	68 (11.0) (58.6)	416 (67.3) (51.4)	618 (100.0) (46.8)
Both Sexes	395 (29.9) (100.0)	116 (8.8) (100.0)	810 (61.3) (100.0)	1321 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures beneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.14
ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL EXCHANGE LABOR INPUT BY SEX AND CASTE

(In labor days)

Sex \ Caste	High Caste	Other Caste	Low Caste	All Caste
Male	571 (74.2) (22.0)	28 (3.6) (32.2)	171 (22.2) (24.8)	770 (100.0) (22.9)
Female	2021 (77.7) (78.0)	59 (2.3) (67.8)	519 (20.0) (75.2)	2599 (100.0) (77.1)
Both Sexes	2592 (76.9) (100.0)	87 (2.6) (100.0)	690 (20.5) (100.0)	3369 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures beneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

priority in Bakundol and is responsible for only 1.4 percent of the average household income.

I have noticed that this is the case in other middle hill villages and the phenomenon has always been puzzling since vegetables provide the only source of variety in an otherwise monotonous diet of lentil gruel and rice (for the wealthier families) or corn or wheat mush.* Since they were always greatly appreciated when available, I wondered why little effort was made to grow vegetables -- beyond a few chilli plants and perhaps some pumpkins and beans. When questioned, several Bakundol people said they had insufficient water or that the soil around their house was too hard. These points are valid and would need to be addressed by extension workers seeking to expand the villager's horticulture production. Yet during my period of fieldwork I observed certain behaviors centering around the growing of fruits and vegetables which lead me to suspect that part of the reluctance to grow these crops stems from another source. The problem appears to be one of definitions coupled with the pressure for distribution in an economy of scarcity like that of Bakundol. Grain or staple crops are defined as "food". No Nepali villager has "eaten" unless he has consumed rice, corn, wheat or millet -- i.e., some staple grain. In fact, this used to confuse me when women who were observing a religious fast would say they had not eaten all day though they had consumed considerable quantities of fruit, curd, etc. One's rice, wheat or corn crops then, are fundamental to survival. There would be severe sanctions from the village community on any one who pilfered from the standing grain crop and likewise the "borrowing" of grain from another household incurs serious obligation.

Fruits and vegetables, on the other hand, do not fall into the same category as the staple grains. They are somehow "extra". They are luxuries. Moreover, like flowers, they are considered appropriate offerings for the gods. Hence, there is intense social pressure on villagers to distribute these crops to anyone who asks, especially if the person is going to make a religious offering. By the same token, villagers must tolerate heavy pilfering of fruit and vegetables crops by young children. There is no question of

*See Peter Caulkin's Shiva's Trident, Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University. 1976.

expecting a child's parents to discipline him or her for stealing fruit. It may be annoying that it is in the category of a child's prank rather than a theft (as grain stealing would be). In fact, there is a special festival in celebration of the young Lord Krishna's fruit stealing when even grown men raid their neighbor's garden at night.

As an example of how this attitude discourages horticulture, there is the case of Jagat Man Thapa, the head of one of our sample households. Eleven years ago he took a loan for Rs. 10,000 from the Agriculture Bank to start an orange orchard. Since the Bakundol climate is apparently good for citrus growing and there are nearby markets where oranges fetch a rupee apiece, the venture should have brought good returns. Part of the problem has been the lack of good extension service to teach him how to prune and fertilize the trees which are now mature. But Jagat Man explains that his main problem is the local children who steal the fruit while it is still green, coupled with his obligation to give fruit to his neighbors for their religious worship. By the time the neighbors have taken their "share" he hardly has any fruit to sell and has actually had to sell land to pay back part of the loan.

This is a rather extreme case -- and in fact the women in Jagat Man's household voiced the opinion that he should simply be less charitable -- but it does suggest that one of the major constraints to more active interest in kitchen gardening and orchards may be the prevailing social attitudes. In order for horticulture to reach its full potential in villages like Bakundol it may be necessary to expand the conceptual categories of both "food" (to include fruits and vegetables) and "theft" (to include raids on the orchard or vegetable patch)!

Animal Husbandry

The other major component of family farm production in Bakundol is animal husbandry which on the average contributes 12.7 percent to the total household income. The close proximity of two bazaar towns means that milk production is especially profitable in Bakundol as there is no need to process the milk into ghee to preserve it for distant markets. Slightly more than 47 percent of the animal husbandry production in Bakundol is sold commercially.

Although most households in Bakundol raise a few chickens and goats for their own consumption and several low caste



84% of the time spent on fodder collection is put in by women and girls.

households also keep pigs,* keeping dairy cows -- at least on a commercial basis -- is mainly confined to the high caste. This is principally because the hotels and tea shops which buy Bakundol's milk would not be willing to accept dairy products from low caste people. Hence this group cannot enter the dairy business on a commercial basis but can only produce for home or local neighborhood consumption. Table 1.13 reveals that animal husbandry (including pig and poultry raising) is responsible for only six percent of the household income of low caste households while it constitutes 16 percent of the income of high caste households. Moreover, according to Table 3.15, high caste households own 95.6 percent of the milch animals in Bakundol.

One Sarki woman whom I asked about milk selling used the most orthodox Hindu imagery to rationalize the exclusion of her own caste group from this lucrative business:

"It is a sin if you sell another's blood. Won't it be a sin if you sell Laxmi's (the goddess of prosperity, identified with the cow which is often called by her name) blood? We worship Laxmi. Selling her blood is like accepting wages for keeping and feeding her. So if we go selling her blood won't we be cursed? Those who sell her milk may continue doing so, but no, we can't do it."

Table 3.16 shows the detailed breakdown of animal husbandry activities and the sexual division of labor within each type of activity. Since Bakundol has practically no usable public (or private) grazing areas, all the livestock must be stall fed. Fodder collection is by far the most time consuming aspect of animal husbandry and females of all ages perform 84 percent of this work. Adult women spend 1.25 hours per day gathering fodder as compared to 0.27 hours per day devoted by adult men. Children make a substantial

*Goat meat can be eaten by all castes among the Parbatiya Hindus. Although high caste adults are not supposed to eat either eggs or chicken meat, many high caste households now keep chickens in order to sell poultry products on a small scale. Eggs are sometimes given to nourish young children who do not yet have to obey the caste food restrictions. No high caste household, however, would think of raising pigs.

TABLE 3.15
OWNERSHIP OF LIVESTOCK BY CASTE
(In rupees)

Caste	Type of Animal		Total			Per Household		
	Number of Households	Milch Animals	Minor Animals	All	Milch Animals	Minor Animals	All	
High	22	34495 (95.6)	6038 (72.9)	40533 (91.4)	1567.95 (89.8)	274.45 (44.7)	1842.41 (78.0)	
Other	3	90 (0.3)	490 (5.9)	580 (1.3)	30 (1.7)	163.33 (26.6)	193.33 (8.2)	
Low	Sarki	1490 (4.1)	1640 (19.8)	3130 (7.0)	165.55 (9.5)	182.22 (29.7)	347.78 (14.7)	
	Damai	-	120 (1.4)	120 (0.3)	-	120 (19.5)	120 (5.1)	
Sub-total for Low Caste	10	1490 (4.1)	1760 (21.2)	3250 (7.3)	149 (8.5)	176 (28.7)	325 (13.8)	
All Castes	35	36075 (100.0)	8288 (100.0)	44363 (100.0)	1746.95 (100.0)	613.78 (100.0)	2360.73 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.16
SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOR IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY BY AGE GROUP

(In hours per day)

Sub- Activity	Age Group/ Sex		Adults			10 - 14			5 - 9			4 and Under			Total for All Age Groups			
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
1. Herding	0.26	0.05	0.15	1.58	0.36	0.81	0.37	0.03	0.21	-	-	-	0.37	0.09	0.22			
2. Care + Feeding in Compound	0.69	0.25	0.46	0.21	0.04	0.10	-	0.01	0.01	-	-	-	0.41	0.15	0.27			
3. Fodder Collection	0.27	1.25	0.78	0.51	1.82	1.34	-	0.43	0.20	-	0.40	0.20	0.21	1.10	0.68			
4. Milking	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.01	-	0.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.08	0.02	0.05			
5. Other	0.03	0.01	0.02	-	0.02	0.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.02	0.01	0.01			
Total	1.39	1.60	1.49	2.31	2.24	2.27	0.37	0.47	0.42	-	0.40	0.20	1.09	1.37	1.24			

contribution in this area. Figure 3.10 shows that children under 15 were responsible for about 36 percent of the time input into fodder collection. In fact girls in the 10 to 14 age group spend 1.82 hours a day as compared to 1.25 hours by adult women in fodder gathering. Boys in this age group contribute as much as twice the time of adult men, spending approximately 0.50 hours or 30 minutes a day (Table 3.16).

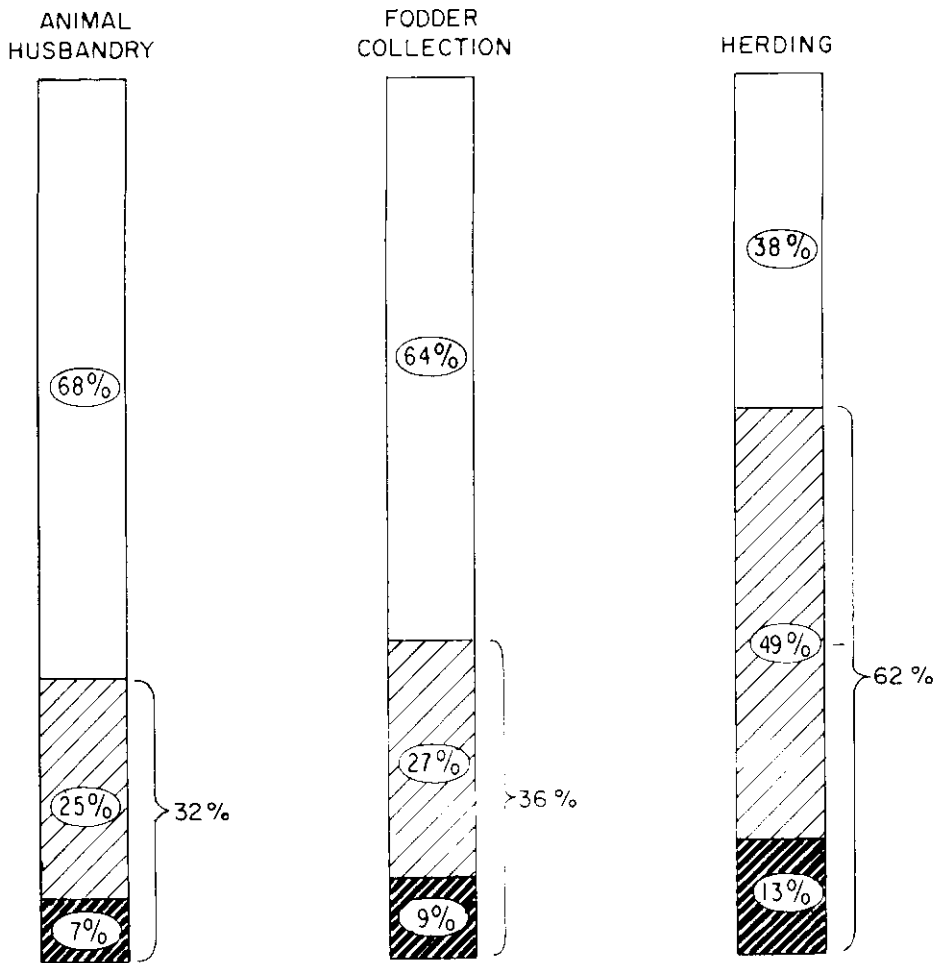
In general children play an important role in all aspects of animal husbandry, contributing 32 percent of the total time input in this area (Figure 3.10). By far the largest input that children make in conventional economic activities goes into animal husbandry (Table 3.5). Children in the 10-14 age group spend 2.27 hours daily in animal husbandry and children in the 5-9 age group spend 0.42 hours per day. Except for domestic activities (which take up 2.1 hours daily among the 10-14 age group), no other work activity comes close in importance. In the sub-category of "Herding" under animal husbandry, children's input is about 62 percent of the total time -- more than that of adults (Figure 3.10). Figure 3.11 shows the seasonal variation in male and female input into animal husbandry. The first peak in female input comes in late April when women collect grass from the ripening wheat fields thereby weeding the crop as well as gathering fodder. Then during the monsoons which start in June women spend long hours cutting green grass for fodder. Their animal husbandry work load drops sharply after the harvest and remains low throughout the winter. During this period the animals are fed on chopped rice straw and oil seed husk which is often prepared by men.

Despite the fact that females dominate in fodder collection and in their overall contribution to animal husbandry, Table 3.16 shows that males do put in more time than women in the other sub-categories such as herding, care and feeding in the compound, milking, etc. Moreover, Table 3.16 does not reveal the time men devote to category of "local economic activity related to animal husbandry." Though the exact time devoted to dairy marketing cannot be disaggregated, personal observation confirms that in Bakundol men clearly dominate that aspect of animal husbandry while women dominate the production aspects.

Strictly speaking of course, the whole commercial side of animal husbandry -- as well as the sale of surplus food grains and other agricultural products -- does not fit

Figure 3.10

TIME INPUT INTO "ANIMAL HUSBANDRY" AND THE SUB-CATEGORIES OF "FODDER COLLECTION" & "HERDING" BY AGE GROUP



KEY

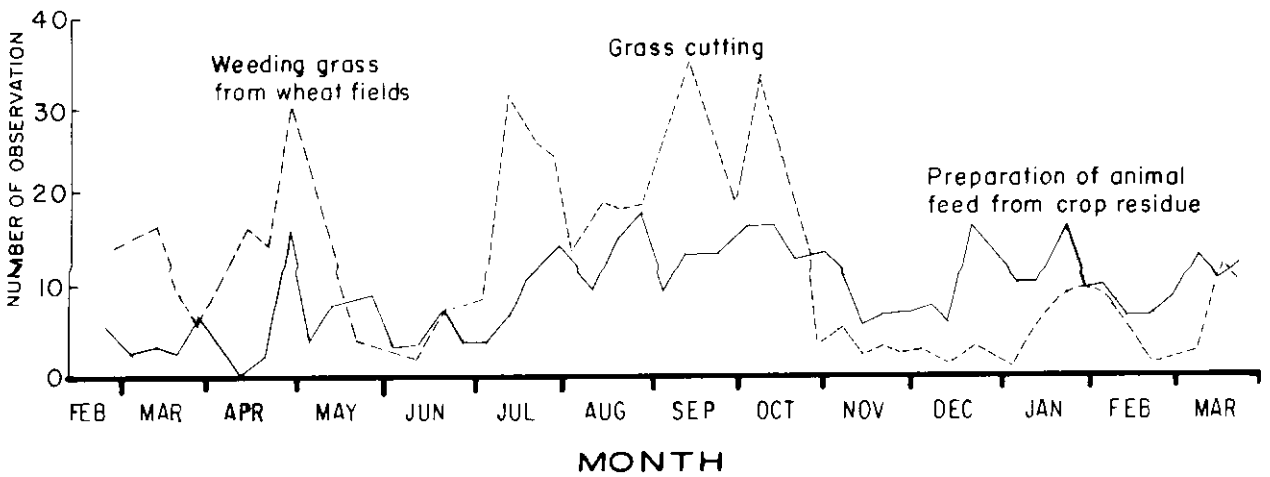
ADULT

10-14

9 and UNDER

Figure 3.11

WEEKLY ACTIVITY PATTERN-ANIMAL HUSBANDRY (For Adult Population)



KEY MALE ———
FEMALE - - - -

logically into our concern here with Sphere I and the family farm as primarily a subsistence production unit. Even though the marketing aspect has not been included in our analysis of time use in the family farm, it is true that a certain proportion of the time devoted to both animal husbandry and agriculture as well as food processing may in fact be contributing not to household subsistence production but to household commercial production. In other words, the farm household unit, which we have designated as the first sphere of economic activity, overlaps to a certain extent with the second sphere, which involves the market economy. A rough estimate of the proportion of time devoted to Sphere I and subsistence production versus Sphere II and market production could be obtained by applying the percentage of farm production which reached the market (26.8 percent in Bakundol) to the time input figures for the family farm enterprise. However, since our main interest in using the three sphere model to analyze village economy was to reveal the extent to which women participate in the market economy, the crucial factor here is whether or not women participate in the marketing of household farm production. Since the data in Table 2.27 and the subsequent discussion in Chapter II show that women have little input into decisions about the disposal of household production, the fact that a certain proportion of what the family farm produces is sold appears to make very little difference in the extent of women's participation in the wider economy.

Expanded Economic and Domestic Activities

The issue which confronts us in this section is one that has been a major concern in the field of women in development: What is the work of the "housewife" in the Third World? Where does one draw the line between "economically productive" and "domestic" work -- between the "outside" and the "inside"? This issue is controversial enough in the West when the distinction between home and work place is sharply maintained, but becomes ever more problematic in a developing country like Nepal where the household is the principal economic unit and its major efforts are devoted to its own subsistence production. In this context is it valid to view domestic work as non-economic activity: -- especially since much of the work of the Third World housewife such as fetching water, gathering fuel, husking grain, etc., is performed by the service or utility sector of the economy in industrialized nations? Moreover, as Acharya has pointed out, these and many other

tasks performed by the farm wife are considered economic participation when they are performed for wages. "There is no reason to consider rice pounding an economic activity when performed for others or carried out in a rice mill and a domestic activity when performed in the home for family consumption" (Acharya 1979:46).

One attempt to capture the economic value of home production was the concept of "full income" developed by Becker (1965) and Gronau (1976) and used by Quizon (1978) in her study of rural households in the Philippines. According to their definition, full income includes not only market income, but an estimation of the value of home production based on the time spent in domestic activities multiplied by the prevailing market wage for those activities. This approach, however, was not adopted in the current study, first because of the difficulties of establishing wage rates for domestic work in rural Nepal and second, because of the conviction that it is not possible to determine an adequate economic value for certain qualitative aspects of domestic work done by family members -- such as a mother's care of her own children. Instead, a more conservative approach* was used, based on detailed household income data including not only wage/salary income and farm production but also value-added calculations for items such as processed food and manufactured goods produced at home.** This income was then distributed between household members of different sex and age groups on the basis of the proportion of time spent by each group in the various activities which produced the income.

The results of these calculations for Bakundol, presented in Table 3.17 and graphically depicted in Figure 3.11, show that when only market income is considered (i.e., wages,

*See Field Manual: Guidelines for Collection and Analysis of Data on the Status of Women in Rural Nepalese Communities, Appendix III, (CEDA, 1979, bound mimeo) for detailed account of the procedure developed by Acharya for estimating the contribution of different group of family members to the household economy.

**See the methodological notes of the present volume for the method used to compute value added.

TABLE 3.17

MALE/FEMALE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS HOUSEHOLD INCOME*

(In percent)

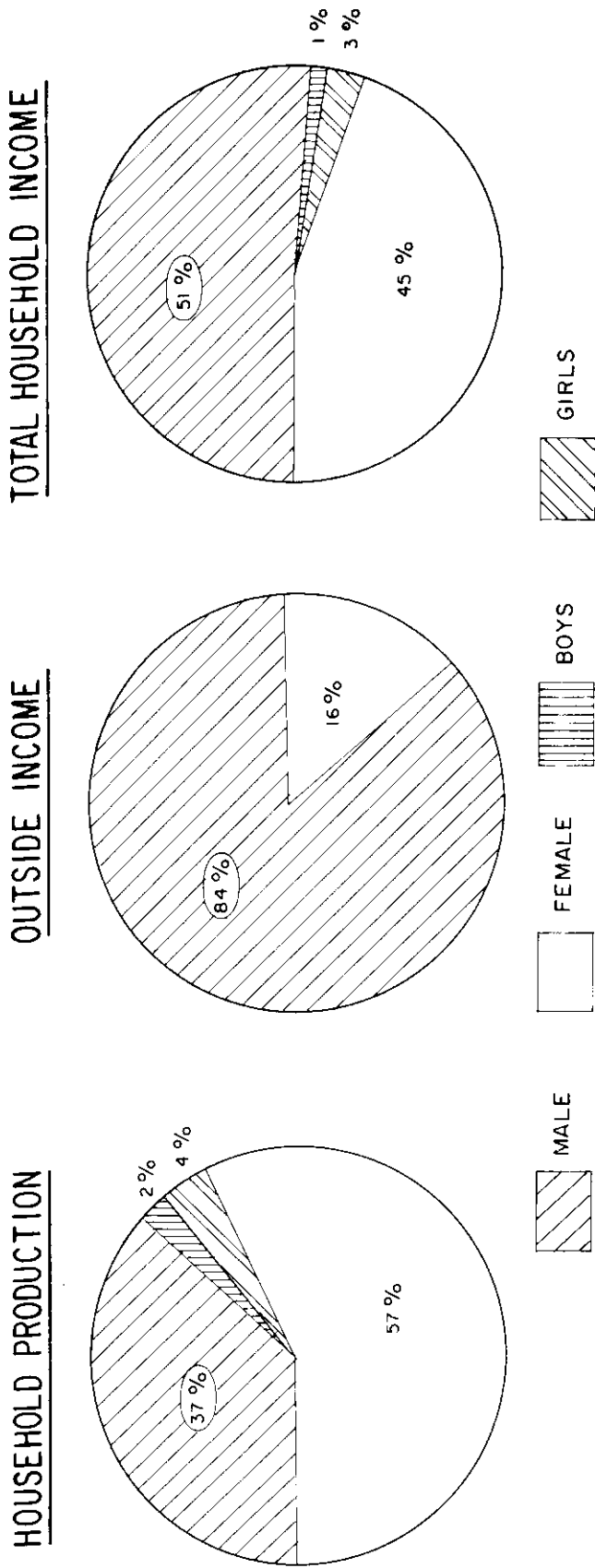
Sex & Age Group Source of Income	Male 15+	Female 15+	Male Child (10-14)	Female Child (10-14)	Total
1. Animal Husbandry	37.19 (10915)	47.42 (13917)	5.82 (1708)	9.57 (2809)	100.00 (29349)
2. Agriculture	36.32 (38438)	59.74 (63225)	0.73 (773)	3.21 (3397)	100.00 (105833)
2.1. Agriculture (exclusive of Kitchen Gardening)	36.34 (37192)	59.72 (61119)	0.73 (747)	3.21 (3285)	100.00 (102343)
2.2. Kitchen Gardening	-	100.00 (3490)	-	-	100.00 (3490)
3. Hunting and Gathering	55.15 (4484)	38.68 (3145)	2.88 (234)	3.29 (268)	100.00 (8131)
4. Manufacturing	79.69 (4503)	18.63 (1053)	0.61 (34)	1.07 (60)	100.00 (5650)
4.1. Rope Basketry	59.26 (483)	37.04 (302)	-	3.70 (30)	100.00 (815)
4.2. Leather Work	97.51 (4159)	1.81 (77)	0.68 (29)	-	100.00 (4265)
4.3. Sewing	30.91 (149)	67.27 (323)	0.91 (4)	0.91 (4)	100.00 (480)
4.4. Others	52.00 (47)	40.00 (36)	-	8.00 (7)	100.00 (90)
5. Food Processing	18.62 (3281)	73.79 (13002)	1.04 (183)	6.55 (1154)	100.00 (17620)
5.1. Husking/Drying	18.97 (1649)	74.64 (6488)	0.82 (71)	5.57 (484)	100.00 (8692)
5.2. Roasting/Grinding	18.46 (1367)	61.54 (4555)	3.08 (228)	16.92 (1252)	100.00 (7402)
5.3. Food Preservation	7.69 (112)	92.31 (1344)	-	-	100.00 (1456)
5.4. Dairy Products	50.00 (35)	50.00 (35)	-	-	100.00 (70)
I. Sub-total for Household Production (1+2+3+4+5)	36.99 (61621)	56.63 (94342)	1.76 (2932)	4.62 (7688)	100.00 (166583)
II. Wages and Salary	84.10 (52641)	15.90 (9953)	-	-	100.00 (62594)
III. Trading	100.00 (2429)	-	-	-	100.00 (2429)
IV. Total Household Income (I+II+III)	50.38 (116691)	45.03 (104295)	1.27 (2932)	3.32 (7688)	100.00 (231606)

Figures in parentheses indicate contribution in value terms (rupees).

* Based on the 24 sample households included in the Time Allocation Study.

Figure 3.12

MALE/FEMALE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS HOUSEHOLD INCOME



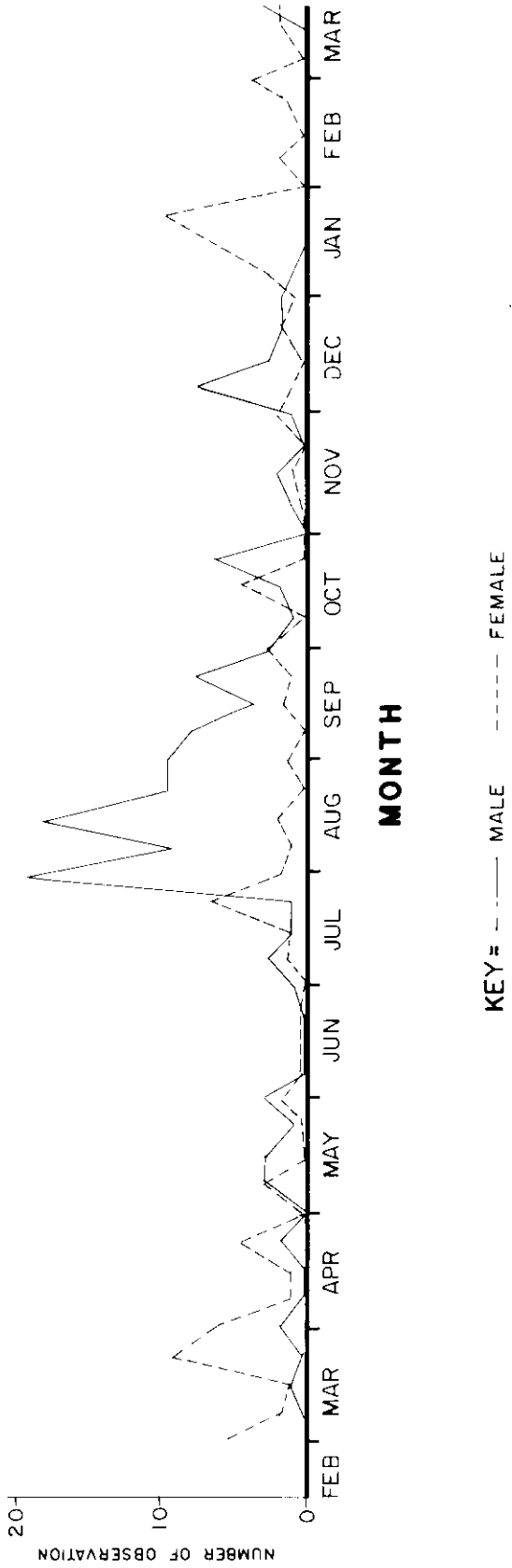
salary and trading) women's contribution to the household income is about 16 percent of the total. Looking at household production, however, we see that women's contribution jumps to nearly 57 percent of the total while men contribute only about 37 percent of household production income and male and female children contribute about 2 and 4 percent respectively. When both home production and market income are considered together women contribute about 45 percent of the total household income compared to the 51 percent contributed by men.

To return again to the time allocation data on the various categories of home production, in Figure 3.6 we find that women put in 69 percent of the household labor absorbed by "expanded economic" activities and 86 percent of the time spent in domestic activity. The category of "expanded economic" itself accounts for 12 percent of the work time of Bakundol adults. This figure would probably be higher were it not for the fact that much of the fuel gathering in the village must be done clandestinely -- often at night during the period between 8 p.m. and 4 a.m. when time allocation data were not collected. The non-restricted forests which are within about an hour to an hour and a half walk from the village are severely depleted and consist mostly of scrub rather than trees. One or two wealthier houses have small patches of forest from which they harvest fuel wood occasionally. But by and large most of the fuel burned in Bakundol comes either from animal manure or from the government forest on the nearby ridge. This forest is officially opened to the villagers several times a year for one day at a time during which they may take any fallen wood or dead branches. As is amply demonstrated by several sharp peaks in the seasonality graph on "hunting and gathering," almost every family in Bakundol mobilizes its forces on those days to avail of the opportunity (Figure 3.13). However, several village informants explained that like most other Bakundol residents, they were forced to supplement this supply by evening and early morning trips into the restricted forest.

One interesting fact which emerged from an examination of the time allocation data on fuel gathering is that women from the lower economic stratum spend much more time gathering fuel than those from the top and middle strata. They spend about a half an hour a day while women from the top and middle strata spend only about 8 and 9 minutes respectively in this activity. Since the energy needs of the upper strata households are certainly equal to or greater than those of the bottom stratum, this suggests either that

Figure 3.13

WEEKLY ACTIVITY PATTERN-FUEL COLLECTION, GATHERING FOREST PRODUCTS & HUNTING (For Adult Population)



wealthier households pay others to gather their fuel for them or (Jeff Fox, personal communication) that they have access to privately owned tree lots which can be harvested much more efficiently.

The same pattern is evident in the area of food processing where women from wealthier households are spending less time than women in households from the lower economic stratum. Despite the fact (evident from the production data in Table 1.11) that their households have more grain to process, women from the top stratum spend only 0.39 hours per day in food processing work while women from the middle and bottom strata spend 0.56 and 0.55 hours respectively. This pattern indicates that once again wealthier households have sought substitutes for family labor, in this case probably with commercial mills. This substitution for female labor through commercial milling of foodgrains has recently become much more expensive in Bakundol. During the field research period (1978-79) the price of processing one muri* of chiura or beaten rice in the mill went up from one rupee fifty paise to three rupees and twelve paise. This abrupt rise in prices was partially due to the increased price of diesel fuel used to power the generators, and more directly to a new government tax of 2,500 rupees on machines over 15 horsepower. All the mill owners in both nearby bazaar towns and the one in Bakundol itself got together and agreed that they would raise their prices and pass on the cost of the tax to their customers. Hence, many families reported that they no longer regularly used the mills and had actually returned to more home processing of foodgrains. From the time allocation data we can deduce that more middle and bottom strata households were affected while top stratum households continued to use the mills.

As shown in Figure 3.6, women do 97 percent of the water collection as compared to 3 percent by men.** Adult women devote 0.82 hours (or about 50 minutes) a day to this task while girls in the 10-14 age group spend nearly the same amount of time (0.80 hours a day). Even girls in the 5-9 age group spend about 0.06 hours or four minutes a day in

*One muri equals 2.50 bushels or 90.92 liters.

**When the entire population over age five is considered, females do 95.5 percent of the water collection. Of that, 76.9 percent is done by adult women; 21 percent by girls between the age of 10 and 14 and 1.3 percent by girls in the 5-9 age group.

water collection* which is twice the time devoted to this task by adult men. In contrast to the situation for fuel collection and food processing women in the top stratum work longer collecting water than women in the bottom stratum, spending 0.98 hours (or about 59 minutes) a day as compared to 0.63 hours (or about 37 minutes) a day at this task.

The pattern for water collection is similar to that noted earlier for all domestic activities where women from wealthier homes spend more time than women from the poorer classes. While the overall work burden of women in various strata -- and castes -- was found to be fairly constant, the distribution of women's work burden between domestic and conventional economic activities did vary: women in the bottom economic stratum and low caste put in more time in conventional economic activities and less in domestic work. In the context of village values, women who are able to spend most of their time in domestic chores rather than the strenuous and less prestigious work in the fields are considered fortunate. But in terms of their status vis-a-vis men, such women may be more dependent and have less control over the products of their labor. This at any rate is the hypothesis put forward by Acharya who suggest that women

"as members of upwardly mobile households found themselves in no enviable position because they turned from economically and socially independent members of the family into dependent ones. A household moving from a propertyless status to propertied status, at the same time undergoes a fundamental change in the relation between the sexes within the family. The wife moves from a status of equality with her husband to a status of dependency"(Acharya, 1978:37).

In this view, the women in Bakundol who enjoy the highest status in the family may in fact be those from the poorest economic stratum -- and the low castes -- who must engage in the least prestigious work as wage laborers. The fundamental

*Since a single trip to the water source and back can take anywhere from 15 minutes to 45 minutes in Bakundol, this means about one trip a week for little girls.

question here is the relationship between women's status in the family and their input into different types of work -- inside the home and in the family fields of Sphere I and outside in the market economy of Spheres II and III.

Sphere II: The Local Market Economy

As shown in Figure 3.6 the people of Bakundol spend approximately 20 percent of their in-village work time engaged in either manufacturing or outside income earning activity which we have classified as participation in Sphere II or the local market economy. This means that the market economy, though far less important than the family farm enterprise, is nevertheless a significant component in the economic strategy of many Bakundol households. While manufacturing accounts for only two percent of the average household income, wage/salary and trading income together account for 28.9 percent.

According to the time allocation data displayed in Figure 3.14, economic strata and caste standing are both important variables in determining the distribution of time between the family farm enterprise and the local market economy. Adults from the bottom stratum spend 28 percent of their work time (or 2.69 hours a day) employed in Sphere II activities as compared to only 13 percent (1.23 hours) for adults in the top stratum. The gap between high and low caste participation is even more distinct with high caste adults spending 10 percent of their time (0.99 hours per day) in the local market economy as compared to 39 percent (or 4.47 hours per day) for low caste adults.

When the sex variable is added as in Figures 3.15 and 3.16 we find that in every economic stratum and caste group the female input into Sphere II is significantly lower than that of men. Once again caste seems to make more of a difference than economic status. While women in the bottom stratum put in approximately twice the amount of time in Sphere II as those in the top stratum, the gap between high and low caste female input is much larger with low caste women devoting 22 percent of their in-village work time (or 2.75 hours a day) to Sphere II compared to only two percent (0.30 hours per day) for high caste women.

In terms of the proportion of household income contributed by Sphere II activities, the data in Table 1.11 show us that economic level makes no significant difference.

Figure 3.14

DISTRIBUTION OF WORK TIME BETWEEN FAMILY
FARM SECTOR & LOCAL MARKET SECTOR
BY ECONOMIC STRATA & CASTE
FOR ADULTS

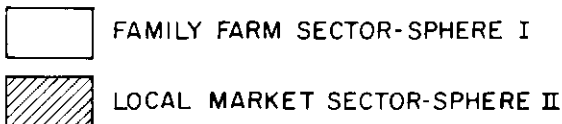
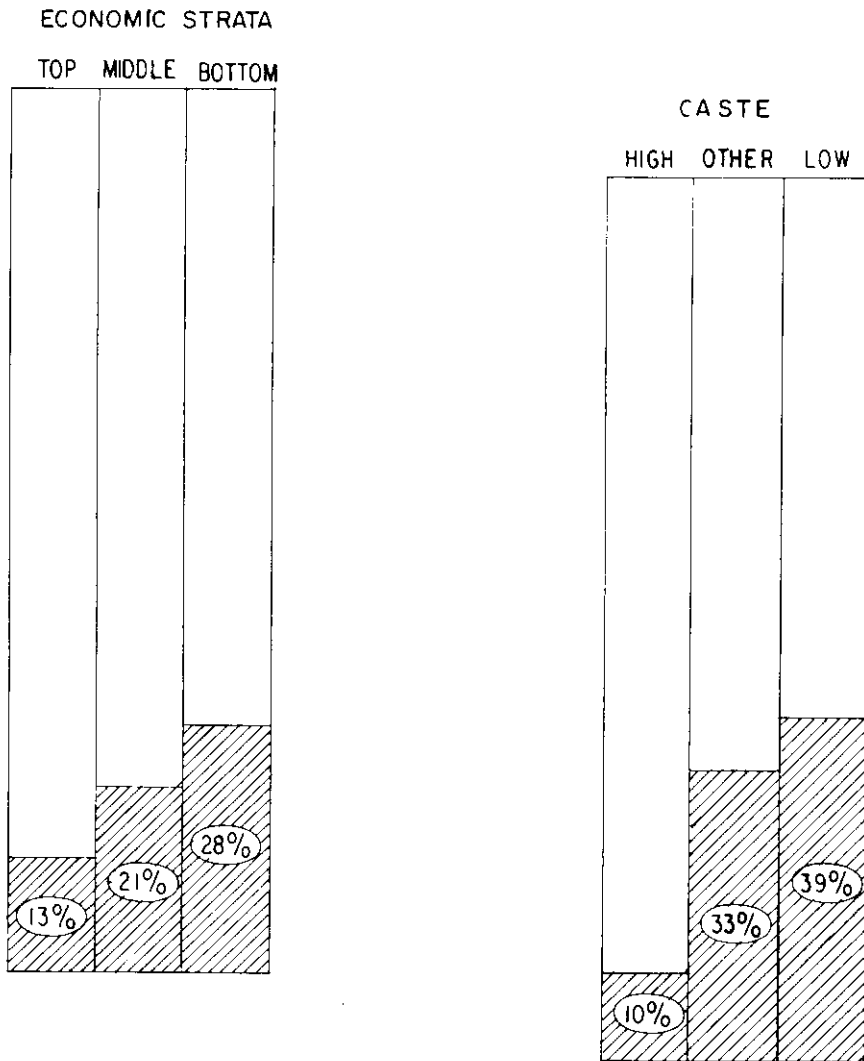
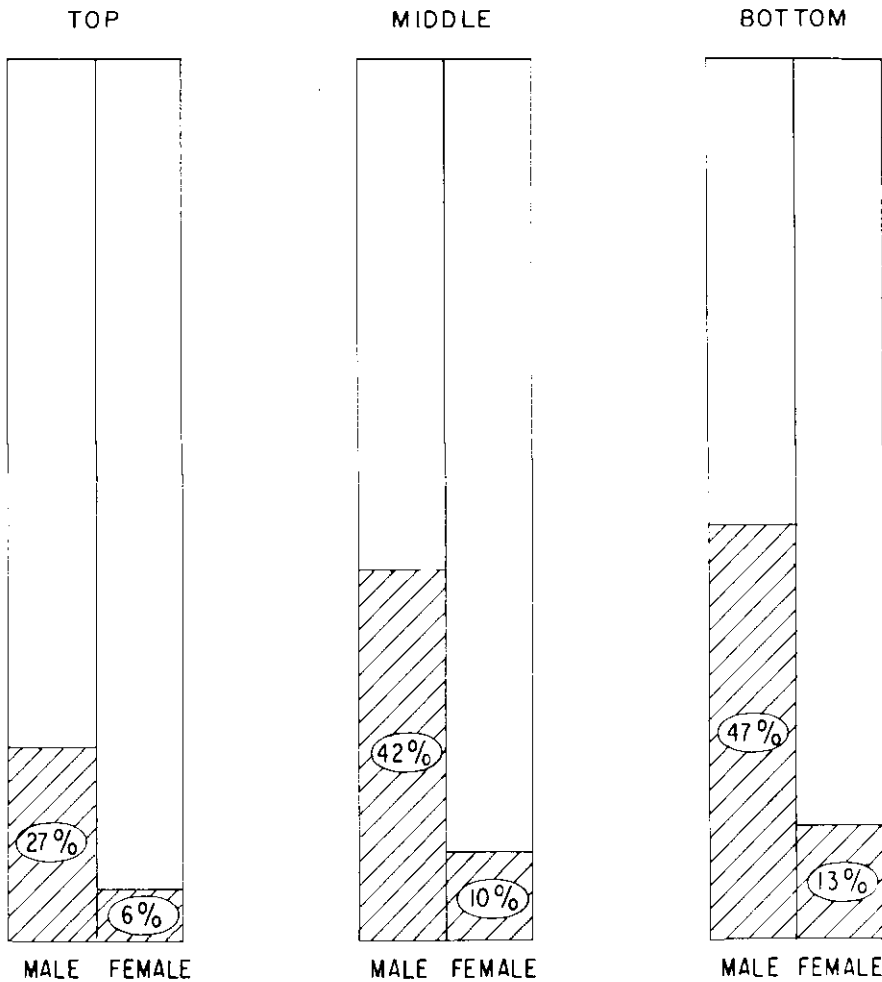


Figure 3.15

RELATIVE MALE/FEMALE TIME INPUT INTO SPHERE I & SPHERE II BY ECONOMIC STRATA



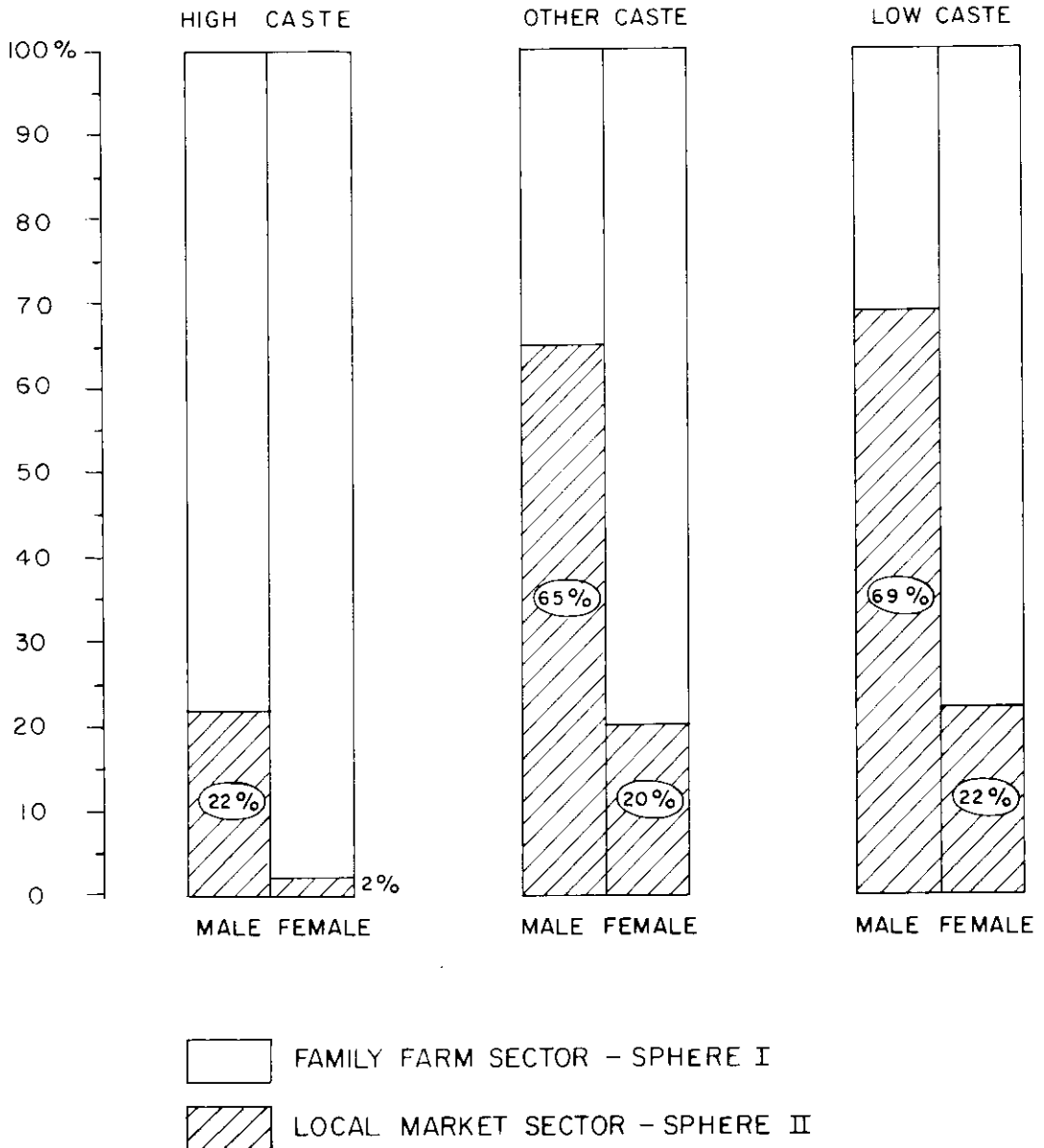
FAMILY FARM SECTOR - SPHERE I



LOCAL MARKET SECTOR - SPHERE II

Figure 3.16

RELATIVE MALE / FEMALE TIME INPUT INTO SPHERE I & SPHERE II BY CASTE



About 31 percent of the income of both top and bottom strata households is derived from Sphere II. However, within Sphere II there is an important sectoral difference in the origin of the income between the economic strata. In top stratum households, wage/salary and investment income accounts for 30.3 percent of the household income while manufacturing accounts for only 1.1 percent. For the bottom stratum 5.8 percent of the household income is derived from manufacturing and only 22.9 percent from wage and salary income.

When the income data is examined by caste we find, however, that there is a marked variation between high and low caste households in the degree of dependence on Sphere II as a whole as well as sectorial variation in origin of income within Sphere II. While the high caste derive only 22.3 percent of their household income from Sphere II activities, low caste households derive 45.4 percent from this source.* Among the "other" caste group who have so little land, the level of dependency on Sphere II -- mostly wage/salary income -- soars to 75.3 percent of their household income.

Since the low caste group in Bakundol is mainly composed of Sarki (whose traditional occupation is shoe making) along with a few Damai tailors, it is not surprising that they earn nearly 7 percent of the household income from manufacturing while the high caste households earn only 0.2 percent. Table 3.18 which shows the breakdown of the various sub-activities within Sphere II indicates that Sarki men spend more than two and a half hours a day in leather work and that no other group engages in that activity.**

*Sphere II includes income from manufacturing, wages, salaries, investments and trading.

**It should be noted that the time allocation figures for low caste input into manufacturing do not include the considerable time devoted by the Damai family in the sample to sewing for their high caste patron families or to work done in their tiny tailoring stall in the Dhulikhel bazaar. Both of these activities (which are their major source of livelihood and earned them 3,405 rupees and 1,246 rupees per year respectively) were counted as wage work and hence appear in the "outside income earning" category. The only time that was counted as "manufacturing" was that devoted to the home production of sewn items like topis, etc., for sale.



As her only direct contribution to her husband's shoemaking craft, this Sarki woman works the footmill to pulverize the dheuro leaves used in the tanning process.

The sex breakdown of the data on manufacturing reveals that the leather working craft among the Sarki is almost exclusively a male pursuit. The Sarki villager who explained the steps of the tanning and curing process to me said that women are involved only in the collection and preparation of an herb called dheuro which is used in the tanning process. Otherwise Sarki women have nothing to do with either tanning or shoe making. This is in marked contrast to the Damai women who assist their husbands in all aspects of their traditional tailoring work for patrons. In addition they make and sell locally small items like men's caps, baby bonnets and coin purses out of leftover cloth scraps. However, since only one Damai family was observed in the time allocation study, the figures on female input in manufacturing among the low castes remain very low. High caste men and women do very little manufacturing work and what they do consists almost entirely of rope making and occasionally weaving straw mats for family use. The only other significant time input in the area of manufacturing is the Ranjitkar families' traditional cloth dyeing and printing work which appears in the data on the "other" caste group. Interestingly, Table 3.19 shows that Sarki households in the top economic stratum have abandoned their traditional caste occupation -- linked as it is with low ritual and social status. While Sarki men from the middle and bottom strata spent 0.72 hours and 1.02 hours per day respectively engaged in leather work, top stratum Sarki men spent only 0.01 hours per day in this activity.

Earlier in this chapter it was noted that wealthier households are less involved in outside income earning activity than those in the bottom economic stratum. The gap between high and low caste time input in this area is even greater. As we know, this category includes local wage labor which is a very important source of income for low caste households. It also involves local trade and business which for the high castes generally means time devoted to marketing milk and for the low castes either selling shoes or tending a small roadside shoe repair or tailoring business in the local bazaar. Low caste adults spend 3.10 hours per day engaged in local economic activity as compared to only 0.91 hours per day devoted to this category by high caste adults (Table 3.18).

Looking at the relative participation of women and men, we find that women's input into outside income earning work is 31 percent of the total, but it is all concentrated in

the category of wage work where women actually contribute slightly more time than men. Interestingly, in the top economic stratum the relative female time input into wage labor is greater than that of men while men take the lead in the middle and bottom strata (Table 3.19). Moreover, the relative input of men and women is about equal amongst both the high and low castes -- though as shown in Table 3.18 in absolute terms low caste women spend much more time in wage work (2.41 hours per day) than high caste women (0.22 hours per day). Tables 3.20 and 3.21 show that the relative contribution of women to the household outside earnings is significantly less among women from the high caste and top economic stratum. While low caste women earn 16.5 percent of the family income from wages, salaries and pensions, high caste women earn only 4.7 percent (Table 3.20). Likewise, bottom stratum women earn 14.4 percent compared to 3.1 percent contributed by top stratum women. On the whole, women contribute 27.5 percent of the wage income, but they earn none of the substantial salary income which accounts for 65.9 percent of the outside earnings.

Another set of data on women's participation in outside income earning activity is presented in Tables 3.22 and 3.23 which show the sectorwise distribution of male and female labor according to economic strata and caste. Most striking is the fact that 17.2 percent of the male employment was in the more prestigious and better paying organized sector while no women found employment in that sector. Instead, women were concentrated in agriculture which absorbed 61.6 percent of the employed females and only 29.3 percent of the males. No clear pattern emerged in terms of either economic status or caste regarding female employment in the agricultural sector. It is interesting to note, however, that for both the top and bottom strata 96.2 percent of the female labor days were in agriculture while for the middle stratum, agricultural wage labor accounted for only 27.6 percent of the female labor days. Similarly both high and low caste women devoted roughly equal proportions of their labor days to agriculture (53.2 percent and 56.9 percent respectively) while for women in the small "other" caste group agriculture labor absorbed only 12.8 percent of their labor days.

The other sectors in which Bakundol women find paid employment are cottage industry, construction and services in non-organized sector which absorb 30.6, 16.3, and 15.1 percent respectively of the paid female labor days. In terms of economic status it is clear from Table 3.22 that women

TABLE 3.20
OUTSIDE EARNINGS BY SEX AND CASTE
(Based on 35 sample households)

Caste	Source of Outside Income		Salary	Pension	Wage	Total
	Sex					
High	Male		32559 (73.4) (100.0)	-	11814 (26.6) (84.3)	44373 (100.0) (95.3)
	Female		-	-	2192 (100.0) (15.7)	2192 (100.0) (4.7)
	Both		32559 (69.9) (100.0)	-	14006 (30.1) (100.0)	46565 (100.0) (100.0)
Other	Male		5652 (48.4) (100.0)	-	6015 (51.6) (68.0)	11667 (100.0) (80.5)
	Female		-	-	2830 (100.0) (32.0)	2830 (100.0) (19.5)
	Both		5652 (39.0) (100.0)	-	8845 (61.0) (100.0)	14497 (100.0) (100.0)
Low	Male		17343 (61.3) (100.0)	759 (2.7) (100.0)	10177 (36.0) (64.5)	28279 (100.0) (83.5)
	Female		-	-	5590 (100.0) (35.5)	5590 (100.0) (16.5)
	Both		17374 (51.2) (100.0)	759 (2.2) (100.0)	15767 (46.6) (100.0)	33869 (100.0) (100.0)
All Caste	Male		55554 (65.9) (100.0)	759 (0.9) (100.0)	28006 (33.2) (72.5)	84319 (100.0) (88.8)
	Female		-	-	10612 (100.0) (27.5)	10612 (100.0) (11.2)
	Both		55554 (58.5) (100.0)	759 (0.8) (100.0)	38618 (40.7) (100.0)	94931 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures underneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.21
 OUTSIDE EARNINGS BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA
 (Based on 35 sample households)

(In rupees)

Economic Strata	Source of Outside Income		Salary	Pension	Wage	Total
	Sex					
Top	Male		29913 (96.2) (100.0)	-	1197 (3.8) (54.6)	31110 (100.0) (96.9)
	Female		-	-	997 (100.0) (45.4)	997 (100.0) (3.1)
	Both		29913 (93.2) (100.0)	-	2194 (6.8) (100.0)	32107 (100.0) (100.0)
Middle	Male		25641 (55.4) (100.0)	759 (1.6) (100.0)	19895 (43.0) (70.2)	46295 (100.0) (84.6)
	Female		-	-	8456 (100.0) (29.8)	8456 (100.0) (15.4)
	Both		25641 (46.8) (100.0)	759 (1.4) (100.0)	28351 (51.8) (100.0)	54751 (100.0) (100.0)
Bottom	Male		-	-	6914 (100.0) (85.6)	6914 (100.0) (85.6)
	Female		-	-	1159 (100.0) (14.4)	1159 (100.0) (14.4)
	Both		-	-	8073 (100.0) (100.0)	8073 (100.0) (100.0)
All Strata	Male		55554 (65.9) (100.0)	759 (0.9) (100.0)	28006 (33.2) (72.5)	84319 (100.0) (88.8)
	Female		-	-	10612 (100.0) (27.5)	10612 (100.0) (11.2)
	Both		55554 (58.5) (100.0)	759 (0.8) (100.0)	38618 (40.7) (100.0)	94931 (100.0) (100.0)

Figures to the right in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Figures underneath in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.7.
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

Economic Strata & Sex Sector/Sex		TOP		MIDDLE		BOTTOM		ALL STRATA	
		Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed
Agricultural Labor	Male	124 (8.2)	3 (30.0)	450 (10.5)	10 (26.3)	134 (25.1)	4 (40.0)	708 (11.2)	17 (29.3)
	Female	128 (96.2)	2 (66.7)	337 (27.6)	8 (50.0)	153 (96.2)	6 (85.7)	618 (40.8)	16 (61.6)
Cottage Industry	Male	7 (0.5)	1 (10.0)	938 (21.9)	5 (13.2)	25 (4.7)	1 (10.0)	970 (15.4)	7 (12.1)
	Female	-	-	464 (37.9)	3 (18.7)	-	-	464 (30.6)	3 (11.5)
Construction Labor	Male	12 (0.8)	1 (10.0)	642 (15.0)	11 (28.9)	375 (70.2)	5 (50.0)	1029 (16.3)	17 (29.3)
	Female	5 (3.8)	1 (33.3)	193 (15.8)	3 (18.7)	6 (3.8)	1 (14.3)	204 (13.5)	5 (19.2)
Service in Non-organised Sector	Male	270 (17.9)	1 (10.0)	904 (21.2)	4 (10.5)	-	-	1174 (18.6)	5 (8.6)
	Female	-	-	229 (18.7)	2 (12.5)	-	-	229 (15.1)	2 (7.7)
Service in Organised Sector	Male	1094 (72.6)	4 (40.0)	1319 (30.9)	6 (15.8)	-	-	2413 (38.2)	10 (17.2)
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	Male	-	-	22 (0.5)	2 (5.3)	-	-	22 (0.3)	2 (3.5)
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All Types of Paid Employment	Male	1507 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	4275 (100.0)	38 (100.0)	534 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	6316 (100.0)	58 (100.0)
	Female	133 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	1223 (100.0)	16 (100.0)	159 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	1515 (100.0)	26 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.23

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number)

Sector and Sex	Caste		HIGH		OTHER		LOW		ALL CASTES	
	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed	Person days worked	No. of people employed
Agricultural Labor	Male	266 (9.4)	8 (30.8)	48 (5.1)	2 (25.0)	394 (15.5)	7 (29.2)	708 (11.2)	17 (29.3)	
	Female	134 (53.2)	6 (75.0)	68 (12.8)	1 (25.0)	416 (56.9)	9 (64.3)	618 (40.8)	16 (61.5)	
Cottage Industry	Male	-	-	245 (26.1)	2 (25.0)	725 (28.6)	5 (20.8)	970 (15.4)	7 (12.1)	
	Female	-	-	464 (87.2)	3 (75.0)	-	-	464 (30.6)	3 (11.6)	
Construction Labor	Male	422 (14.9)	9 (34.6)	345 (36.8)	3 (37.5)	262 (10.3)	5 (20.8)	1029 (16.3)	17 (29.3)	
	Female	118 (46.8)	2 (25.0)	-	-	86 (11.8)	3 (21.4)	204 (13.5)	5 (19.2)	
Service in Non-organised Sector	Male	734 (25.8)	3 (11.5)	-	-	440 (17.3)	2 (8.3)	1174 (18.6)	5 (8.6)	
	Female	-	-	-	-	229 (31.3)	2 (14.3)	229 (15.1)	2 (7.7)	
Service in Organised Sector	Male	1417 (49.9)	6 (23.1)	300 (32.0)	1 (12.5)	696 (27.4)	3 (12.5)	2413 (38.2)	10 (17.2)	
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	Male	-	-	-	-	22 (0.9)	2 (8.4)	22 (0.3)	2 (3.5)	
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
All Types of Paid Employment	Male	2839 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	938 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	2539 (100.0)	24 (100.0)	6316 (100.0)	58 (100.0)	
	Female	252 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	532 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	731 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	1515 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

from middle stratum are most involved in these non-agricultural sectors. In terms of caste the pattern is more variable. For example only the Newar Ranjitkar women were involved in cottage industry which accounted for 87.2 percent of the paid female work days of the "other" caste group to which they belong.

The findings on female construction labor are quite surprising in that this sector, despite its low status, accounted for 46.8 percent of the paid labor days worked by high caste women. Although only two high caste women were involved, they put in more days of construction labor than low caste women. Except for a very few days of local house construction work* all the construction labor recorded in the survey refers to seasonal work in the brick making industry. Since this involves migration out of the village for several months at a time during the winter it falls under Sphere III which will be discussed subsequently.

Before leaving the subject of caste and female wage labor in the local economy, however, I would like to look briefly into the cases of the six high caste women who reported that they had engaged in agricultural wage labor. Earlier we noted that among the high caste especially, a family loses prestige if its women must work for wages. Yet the data Table 3.23 show that high caste women were responsible for 22 percent of the female agricultural wage labor days and Table 3.18 shows that they put in 0.22 hours per day of wage labor -- almost the same amount as high caste men. In five out of the six cases the women came from the lowest economic stratum and sheer economic necessity forced them to take wage work. In fact, the woman who put in by far the highest number of days (75) into agricultural wage work among the high castes is the same woman who also migrated with her husband for brick making and put in 112 days in construction work. Not only was this couple landless, they did not even have a house of their own and were living in the household of the husband's paternal aunt in Bakundol. The aunt and her husband were in the middle stratum so the couple worked their "host's" land to help pay their keep. When the

*The five days of construction labor recorded for a top stratum woman in Table 3.22 were for local house construction building a neighbor's house.

land did not need attention they worked for others to earn money in hopes of building a small mud-brick house on a tiny plot of land the aunt's husband had given them.

Another high caste woman who reported 17 days of agricultural wage labor said that she had taken the work because her husband who worked in Kathmandu hadn't sent any money for several months. The only cases where high caste women took on wage work other than as a last resort were two unmarried teenage sisters who each worked for six days to earn spending money for themselves. Although they were from the bottom economic stratum, the girls' parents emphasized that they had not sent their daughters out to work and that they would never use the income earned by the girls for household expenses. It is interesting -- and important in terms of the possibility of introducing income generating programs among high caste women -- that the parents did not feel they lost prestige by allowing their daughters to work for wages as long as the household did not use their income. This is consistent with the strong feelings expressed among the high caste against parents ever keeping for their own use any of the gorduwa gifts that are given to the bride. To do so -- or to take any money from one's daughter -- is associated with "bride price" marriage practiced among some groups in Nepal where the groom's family must give gifts to the bride's family as "payment" for their daughter. This is perceived as the opposite of kanyadan marriage where the daughter is given as a religious gift to the groom and as such it goes against the daughter's sacred filiafocal status in her parents' home.

Despite the somewhat higher concern for family prestige among the high caste Table 3.24 shows that for 81.4 high caste women the major reason for not taking employment outside the home is simply a matter of time. Like women of all castes in Bakundol, they are simply too busy with Sphere I activities, i.e., farm production and maintenance of the family unit, to participate in the market economy. Only 4.6 percent of the high caste female respondents gave "social custom" as their primary reason for not taking outside employment.

Even when women do leave Sphere I to take up paid employment, they face significantly lower wage rates. Table 3.26 shows that for every type of work available in Bakundol women are paid between 20 and 50 percent less than men.

An additional perspective on women's involvement in outside income earning activities is provided by the data in

TABLE 3.24

REASONS FOR NOT TAKING EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE HOME BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number)

Respondents/ Caste	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
	High	Other	Low	All Caste	High	Other	Low	All Caste	High	Other	Low	All Caste
Reasons for not working	5 (20.0)	-	1 (100.0)	6 (23.1)	6 (14.0)	-	2 (20.0)	8 (14.8)	11 (16.2)	-	3 (27.3)	14 (17.5)
Too old, poor health	12 (48.0)	-	-	12 (46.1)	29 (67.4)	-	6 (60.0)	35 (64.8)	41 (60.3)	-	6 (54.5)	47 (58.8)
Too much work at home	-	-	-	-	6 (14.0)	1 (100.0)	2 (20.0)	9 (16.7)	6 (8.8)	1 (100.0)	2 (18.2)	9 (11.2)
Child care responsibilities, lactation	6 (24.0)	-	-	6 (23.1)	-	-	-	-	6 (8.8)	-	-	6 (7.5)
Studying, no time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not qualified for work available	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social custom	-	-	-	-	2 (4.6)	-	-	2 (3.7)	2 (3.0)	-	-	2 (2.5)
Husband/brother/father/son does not approve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mother-in-law or female member of household disapproves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Requires moving out of family or village	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No suitable employment available	2 (8.0)	-	-	2 (7.7)	-	-	-	-	2 (2.9)	-	-	2 (2.5)
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	25 (100.0)	-	1 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	43 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	68 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	80 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.25
REASONS FOR NOT TAKING EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE HOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number)

Reasons for not working	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata	Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
Too old, poor health	3 (37.5)	2 (14.3)	1 (25.0)	6 (23.1)	2 (16.7)	4 (11.1)	2 (33.3)	8 (14.8)	5 (25.0)	6 (12.0)	3 (30.0)	15 (17.5)
Too much work at home	5 (62.5)	5 (35.7)	2 (50.0)	12 (46.1)	6 (50.0)	26 (72.2)	3 (50.0)	35 (64.8)	11 (55.0)	31 (62.0)	5 (50.0)	47 (58.8)
Child care responsibilities, lactation	-	-	-	-	3 (25.0)	5 (13.9)	1 (16.7)	9 (16.7)	3 (15.0)	5 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	9 (11.2)
Studying, no time	-	6 (42.9)	-	6 (23.1)	-	-	-	-	-	6 (12.0)	-	6 (7.5)
Social custom	-	-	-	-	1 (8.3)	1 (2.8)	-	2 (3.7)	1 (5.0)	1 (2.0)	-	2 (2.5)
No suitable employment available	-	1 (7.1)	1 (25.0)	2 (7.7)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (2.0)	1 (10.0)	2 (2.5)
Total	8 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	36 (100.0)	6 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	20 (100.0)	50 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	80 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.26

PREVAILING MALE AND FEMALE DAILY WAGE RATES*
FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF WORK
IN 1978-79

(In rupees)

Sex & Season Type of Work	Male		Female	
	Busy Season	Slack Season	Busy Season	Slack Season
Rice planting	14.00	-	8.50	-
Land preparation with hoe (for wet rice)	15.00	-	10.00	-
Land preparation with oxen	13.00 (for men) + 15.50 (for oxen)	-	-	-
Land preparation (beating dry earth for corn crop)	-	7.50	-	6.00
Carrying Manure	10.00	9.00	7.25	6.00
Average wage for Miscellaneous Agriculture	10.50	8.50	7.50	7.00
Portering**	9.00	9.00	7.75	7.75
Construction Labor/ Carrying Stone	10.50	8.00	7.25	6.00
Skilled Construction:				
Carpenter	16.50	16.50	-	-
Mason	14.50	14.50	-	-
Government Road Work (Coolie)	6.00	6.00	5.00	5.00
Husking Grain	-	10.50	-	9.25

* Includes Rupees equivalent of food, cigarettes and beer provided by employer.

** Not done by local people.



Unlike the Sarki, Damai women are able to contribute to all phases of their husbands' trade. A Damai woman sews small caps and bags from leftover scraps of cloth.

Tables 3.27 and 3.28 on "Women's Disposal of Personal Income" by economic strata and caste. Table 3.27 shows that while women from the top stratum households are much more likely to have personal income at their disposal, they are also more likely to have received that income as a gift rather than earned it themselves. Indeed, the data show clearly that it is only in wealthier families that such gifts are given to women. Husbands in middle and bottom strata households are unlikely to have any surplus resources that can be diverted from day to day family subsistence to provide long term security for the wife.

When the data are considered by caste in Table 3.28 we see that only 38.1 percent of the high caste women had personal income as compared to 80 percent of the low caste women. However, low caste women, like those from the bottom stratum, tended to earn their own personal income rather than receiving it as gifts. About 75 percent of the low caste women reporting personal income said they had earned it themselves through wage labor or cottage industry production as compared to 37.5 percent of the high caste women.

Sphere III: Short Term Migration for Employment

As we saw in Figure 3.4, women's participation in the market economy beyond the village is extremely low and accounts for only 7 percent of the total person days devoted to Sphere III. According to Table 3.29 a little more than 95 percent of this was wage labor - probably in the brick making industry in the Kathmandu Valley.

During the survey year, 28 people out of Bakundol's population of 508 were employed for at least one month in the brick industry. Of this, 19 were men and 9 were women; 16 were low caste and 12 were high caste. Every year a Bakundol villager who has become the foreman for one Newari factory owner in the Kathmandu Valley recruits a group of around 60 individuals from the local area. The workers are given free transportation by truck to the factory site at the beginning of the season in early November and back home again in mid-April -- if they stay that long. They are allowed to use the unbaked bricks to construct small shoulder high huts in which they live at the factory site.

There are many types of jobs associated with brick making, ranging from the skilled work of the Newari Jyapu masons (Dakarmi) who build the ovens to semi-skilled work

TABLE 3.27
WOMEN'S DISPOSAL OF PERSONAL INCOME BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Question	Economic Strata		Top	Middle	Bottom	All Strata
	Answer	Yes No				
1. Have you got an independent source of income ?			6 (75.0) 2 (25.0)	8 (42.1) 11 (57.9)	3 (42.9) 4 (57.1)	17 (50.0) 17 (50.0)
	Total		8 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	34 (100.0)
2. From what source ?						
a. Land			-	-	-	-
b. Wage Labor or Salary			2 (33.3)	4 (50.0)	3 (100.0)	9 (52.9)
c. Cottage Industry			-	1 (12.5)	-	1 (5.9)
d. Gifts from <u>Maiti</u>			-	-	-	-
e. Gifts from <u>Husband</u>			4 (66.7)	-	-	4 (23.5)
f. Others			-	3 (37.5)	-	3 (17.7)
	Total		6 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	17 (100.0)
3. If yes, to what use you put it ?						
a. Contribute to household expenditure			4 (44.5)	5 (45.4)	2 (50.0)	11 (45.8)
b. For children			1 (11.1)	2 (18.2)	-	3 (12.5)
c. Save for future			1 (11.1)	1 (9.1)	-	2 (8.3)
d. To buy jewellery			-	1 (9.1)	-	1 (4.2)
e. To buy small things for myself			2 (22.2)	2 (18.2)	1 (25.0)	5 (20.9)
f. Others			1 (11.1)	-	1 (25.0)	2 (8.3)
	Total		9 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	24 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.28

WOMEN'S DISPOSAL OF PERSONAL INCOME BY CASTE

(In number)

Question	Caste		High	Other	Low	All Castes
	Answer	Yes No				
1. Have you got an independent source of income ?		Yes	8 (38.1)	1 (33.3)	8 (80.0)	17 (50.0)
		No	13 (61.9)	2 (66.7)	2 (20.0)	17 (50.0)
	Total		21 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	34 (100.0)
2. From what source ?						
	a. Land					
	b. Wage Labor or Salary		3 (37.5)	1 (100.0)	5 (62.5)	9 (52.9)
	c. Cottage Industry				1 (12.5)	1 (5.9)
	d. Gifts from <u>Maiti</u>					
	e. Gifts from Husband		3 (37.5)		1 (12.5)	4 (23.5)
	f. Others		2 (25.0)		1 (12.5)	3 (17.7)
	Total		8 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	17 (100.0)
3. If yes, to what use you put it ?						
	a. Contribute to household expenditure		4 (36.4)	1 (100.0)	6 (50.0)	11 (45.8)
	b. For children		2 (18.2)		1 (8.3)	3 (12.5)
	c. Save for future		2 (18.2)			2 (8.3)
	d. To buy jewellery		1 (9.0)			1 (4.2)
	e. To buy small things for myself		2 (18.2)		3 (25.0)	5 (20.9)
	f. Others				2 (16.7)	2 (8.3)
	Total		11 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	24 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 3.29

REASONS FOR BEING OUT OF VILLAGE BY SEX AND ECONOMIC STRATA

(for all age groups)

(In person days)

Activities	TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
1. Army Service	113 (61.7)	-	113 (37.5)	120 (8.3)	-	120 (5.1)	233 (14.1)	-	-	233 (14.1)	-	233 (8.4)
2. Salaried employment/ other employment	1 (0.6)	-	1 (0.3)	402 (27.7)	-	402 (17.2)	403 (24.4)	-	-	403 (24.4)	-	403 (14.6)
3. Wage Work	-	-	-	217 (15.0)	95 (10.7)	312 (13.4)	217 (13.1)	95 (8.5)	-	217 (13.1)	95 (8.5)	312 (11.3)
4. Business Trade	15 (8.2)	-	15 (5.0)	6 (0.4)	-	6 (0.2)	21 (1.3)	-	-	21 (1.3)	-	21 (0.7)
5. Other Work*	15 (0.2)	2 (1.7)	17 (5.7)	413 (28.5)	2 (0.2)	415 (17.8)	439 (26.6)	4 (0.4)	11 (8.4)	439 (26.6)	4 (0.4)	443 (16.0)
I. Sub-total:"Out for employment"	144 (78.7)	2 (1.7)	146 (48.5)	1158 (79.9)	97 (10.9)	1255 (53.7)	1313 (79.5)	99 (8.9)	11 (8.4)	1313 (79.5)	99 (8.9)	1412 (51.0)
6. School	-	-	-	60 (4.1)	-	60 (2.6)	60 (3.6)	-	-	60 (3.6)	-	60 (2.2)
7. Visit to Relatives	18 (9.8)	112 (94.9)	130 (43.2)	43 (3.0)	271 (30.6)	314 (13.5)	64 (3.9)	109 (44.1)	112 (85.5)	64 (3.9)	492 (44.1)	556 (20.1)
8. Other reasons**	21 (11.5)	4 (3.4)	25 (8.3)	188 (13.0)	518 (58.5)	706 (30.2)	215 (13.0)	2 (1.8)	8 (6.1)	215 (13.0)	524 (47.0)	739 (26.7)
II. Sub-total: "Out for Social/Educational"	39 (21.3)	116 (98.3)	155 (51.5)	291 (20.1)	789 (89.1)	1080 (46.3)	339 (20.5)	111 (100.0)	120 (91.6)	339 (20.5)	1016 (91.1)	1355 (49.0)
III. Total:"Out of Village"	183 (100.0)	118 (100.0)	301 (100.0)	1449 (100.0)	886 (100.0)	2335 (100.0)	1652 (100.0)	1115 (100.0)	131 (100.0)	1652 (100.0)	1115 (100.0)	2767 (100.0)
IV. Total: Number of days observed	1573 (100.0)	1258 (100.0)	2831 (100.0)	5089 (100.0)	5409 (100.0)	10498 (100.0)	7448 (100.0)	947 (100.0)	1733 (100.0)	7448 (100.0)	7614 (100.0)	15062 (100.0)
V. Percent of days observed out of village to total days observed	(11.6)	(9.4)	(10.6)	(28.5)	(16.4)	(22.2)	(2.5)	(11.7)	(7.6)	(22.2)	(14.6)	(18.4)
Percent of days observed out VI. for employment to total days observed	(9.2)	(0.2)	(5.2)	(22.8)	(1.8)	(12.0)	(1.4)	-	(0.6)	(17.6)	(1.3)	(9.4)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to the total observed days.

* Includes those who have gone to seek employment but relatives do not yet know whether they have found work.

** Includes those accompanying migrant family members.

such as that of loading the ovens, feeding coal into the many small holes in the brick oven (which is usually done by Indian migrants) to unskilled work such as stacking and carrying bricks, unloading the ovens, chopping wood, carrying wood and coal, etc. Most of the people from Bakundol are employed in pressing raw bricks from clay. Although some people do work on their own and sometimes larger groups are formed, generally people work in pairs -- often a husband and wife. The factory owner provides the workers with a mold or sancho, and a bucket to carry water for mixing with the raw clay. The rate of payment during the survey year was twenty rupees and fifty paisa per 1,000 bricks which was a raise of one rupee over the previous year's wage. The owner comes once or twice a week and brings a man to count the finished bricks and pay the workers. If it should rain before the bricks are counted and turned over to the owner, several days work may be lost as the unbaked bricks disintegrate in the rain. Fortunately, however, there is little rainfall during the winter months.

Villagers say that the months they spend making bricks, living and cooking in tiny huts, are very hard. Some said the work was so exhausting that they had to eat three rice meals a day instead of the customary two. No one goes who can make enough from his own land or has any other source of employment that will provide enough to last through the agricultural slack season. But for a growing number of villagers it is the only source of steady work they can find at that time of year. In fact, the phenomenon of group migration for brick making is of fairly recent origin in Bakundol and began only in 1966 -- 13 years before the survey year. It is difficult to know whether to interpret this new source of employment as a positive opportunity and a sign of development or simply as a sign of increased population pressure on Bakundol's limited land resources.

What is clear is that it provides a much needed source of off-farm employment for the marginal families in Bakundol -- families like the landless Chetri couple mentioned earlier and several untouchable households. Given that only marginal families send members to work in the brick making industry, it is somewhat puzzling that no bottom stratum households in the 24 sample households surveyed for time allocation study participated in this seasonal work outside the village (Table 3.29). In fact, a case by case breakdown of the construction labor recorded for bottom stratum households of entire 35 sample households included in Table 3.22

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reveals that none of the households in the bottom economic stratum sent members to work in the brick factory and all of the 381 days of construction labor recorded for this group were local employment. Most of this construction labor was put in by a very poor Thami family whose household head works locally as a carpenter and mason (132 days) and a poor Newar Ranjitkar family whose members worked 213 days in local construction. Although this explains the apparent discrepancy between the employment data in Table 3.22 and the time allocation data in Table 3.29, it does not shed any light on why the poorest households in the village do not participate in the brick making industry or, for that matter, other Sphere III activities. This is an area which needs further investigation.

Long Term Migration for Employment

An aspect of Bakundol's economic relations with the outside world which does not appear in the time allocation data is the phenomenon of long term migration. Since the definition of the household used in the time allocation study excluded members who were absent at the time of the survey and who had been absent for more than six months the previous year, the time allocation does not reflect the activities of members who had more or less permanent employment which kept them out of the village. In Bakundol, however, nine out of the total of 67 households had at least one member who had taken long term employment either in India or in a distant part of Nepal which enabled them to visit the village only about once or twice a year. In addition, although such members would have been included in the time allocation study, 23 households had at least one male member who had permanent employment outside the village and returned about once a month. It is the wives of these men who experience the inside/outside dichotomy most directly -- though its effects vary greatly with their economic and social situations.

For a woman living in a joint family, the absence of her husband removes her best potential ally and spokesman and may well render her -- at least in the early years of marriage -- even more powerless in the family hierarchy than an ordinary daughter-in-law whose husband is present. If her husband stays away for many years and doesn't remit much money back to the family, as in the case recorded below, the woman and her children may be resented by the other members of the family.

For women in nuclear families of course, the husband's absence allows her much more independence. Although major agricultural and economic decisions are usually deferred until the husband's return, the daily responsibility for farm management decisions and other household matters falls to the woman. Such women, however, often face difficulties in organizing certain crucial aspects of agricultural production -- such as arranging for wage labor during the peak season and assuring that their fields receive an adequate share of water for irrigation. Since the matters are usually arranged by men amongst themselves in Bakundol, several women who are de facto household heads said they felt uncomfortable and sometimes ineffective managing these aspects of the agricultural production process.

The case of Chanti Tolange illustrates the kind of difficulties such women face and the strong, independent character they must develop to manage on their own. Chanti is a Sarki woman who lives alone in a small mud brick house which she built herself with the assistance of the local mason in a rather isolated corner of the low caste neighborhood. The house has two rooms, one below where she cooks and keeps her cow and several goats and her sleeping quarters in a loft above the animals. Her husband is a driver in Calcutta and her grown up son left several years ago to join him there. Chanti says that her husband would be ashamed to show his friends in Calcutta the house where she lives.

Chanti was married at the age of fourteen and when she was 16 her husband went to India to seek work. She was pregnant when he left and the baby boy she had didn't see his father until he was seven years old. During those years Chanti lived in her in-laws' house and worked on their land. Her husband had found a job as a driver in Calcutta and although he sent her no money, he did write letters occasionally (which someone else had to read to her) telling her not to run away and marry someone else. However, when it became apparent that he would not return to the village to settle down, Chanti says her in-laws began to pressure her to move out of the house. Finally an open quarrel erupted:

"They accused me of staying in their house and said I should build one of my own. They said that because of me they didn't have enough space. Then five of them got together and beat me up. I went to stay with someone in the village. I didn't even tell my

husband. He was in India and after all those who beat me are his brothers and he is one of them.

I built this house myself. My husband didn't know where I was, whether I was in my parents' house or with his parents or what. Of course he wasn't bothered. His friends must have told him that his wife had built a "cave" and was living in it. He must have come to know about it (laughs), that I suffered and lived in the forest like Sita (laughs). Now I've shown them that I can earn my living alone. They probably thought I'd be finished.

So my husband came with his friends. I didn't force him to stay when he went off to be a driver. He can go or stay, I thought. He wasn't by my side when I went through hardship in my in-laws' house and I wasn't going to ask him to stay with me in my better days. He's been gone for 21 years now. He's come to visit about nine or ten times. He doesn't tell me when his driver's job will be over and I don't ask him.

We don't tell them about our work, they don't tell us about theirs (laughs). He keeps his feelings to himself. I keep mine to myself. He's never in the house for me to talk to him and I'm not there in India to listen to him. We live apart.

When he becomes old he'll come home I suppose. My husband doesn't stay here in the village like the others ... doesn't go around with a hoe and doesn't care about the house. They don't care about the house ... It doesn't strike my husband that he is needed at home. He doesn't even come once in a year. He only comes every two or four years. It's up to me whether anything turns out well or badly. Whatever I do I've got to use my own head. He just comes home once in a while like a guest, knows nothing about the farm, doesn't know what's where, what's to be told and to whom. He knows absolutely nothing! He comes, stays for 10 or 15 days, isn't bothered about anything and then escapes (laughs)!

Now, though I have a husband, it is the same as not having one. It's up to me to do everything. I have to be both husband and wife rolled into one. Even

though other women must obey their husbands it is easier for them than for me. All the family members stay in the house; they work collectively and so everything turns out well. In my case, I live alone and also have to do a man's work which doesn't turn out right. If it's a woman's work, I do it no matter how hard it is, but if it's a man's work I must turn to others."

Chanti's case is, of course, an extreme one. Most women in Bakundol, even those whose husbands are permanently employed outside the village have much more contact and support from their husbands than she does. But it does dramatize the inside/outside dichotomy. Chanti is well aware that she and her husband live in separate worlds. Interestingly, what she expresses is not the desire to leave the village and her endless labor in the field so much as a certain bitterness that she has been left to do alone what she feels should be a shared enterprise.







A Chetri girl returns home from school. Bakundol's female literacy rate of 18.9% is exceptionally high compared to the national rate.

CHAPTER IV

ACCESS TO THE OUTSIDE

The preceding chapter documents the fact that the labor of Parbatiya women is concentrated within the "inside" sphere of the village economy -- in household subsistence production and the maintenance or reproduction of the family unit. Concomitant with this economic fact, as both a cause and an effect of women's relative exclusion from the wider market economy, is the social and ideological fact that Parbatiya women also lack anything approaching equal access to -- and sometimes even equal status within -- other more encompassing structures of society beyond the domestic sphere. Although our first concern has been to analyse women's confinement to the "inside" from an economic point of view, we also need to examine the other, more conventional aspects of the inside/outside dichotomy which often relate in important ways to the economic manifestation of that dichotomy.

Women and Education

There is a general consensus among planners and decision makers in Nepal that one of the major constraints to women's participation in the wider spheres of society is their lower level of literacy and education. According to National Education Committee estimates in 1977 there has been an increase in the national female literacy rate from 3.9 percent reported in the 1971 Census to 5.2 percent. Nevertheless, women still lag far behind men whose most recent reported literacy rate according to the National Education Committee estimate of 1977 is 33.2 percent, up from 23.5 in the 1971 Census. A similar gap exists between male and female access to formal schooling. Acharya (1979:31) reports that in 1976 only 20 percent of the students enrolled in primary schools were girls. Moreover, according to recent studies carried out by the Institute of Education (1976) and the Ministry of Education (1978), between 62 percent and 54 percent of the girls enrolled in first grade dropped out of school before completing the third grade.

Besides the fact that it closes off important avenues of cultural expression and intellectual growth, high female illiteracy has a twofold negative effect on women's participation in the development process. First, it is obvious that illiteracy is a distinct disadvantage in dealing with the

bureaucratic structures of development which range from the judiciary to the health post to the agricultural bank. To even approach these structures for service it may be necessary to read instructions, fill in forms or write petitions and this intimidates many women -- and illiterate men -- from becoming clients of these institutions. The second effect of high illiteracy and lack of schooling among women is that it prevents women from becoming part of the development machinery because generally the level of education required for employment is far beyond that attained by the vast majority of village women. This in turn makes the development structures even more alien to potential female clients and reinforces the belief that these structures are not the proper domain of women.

As is shown in Table 4.1, the female literacy rate in Bakundol of 18.9 percent for the population above 5 is actually well above the national average of 3.9 percent. Yet the level of female literacy is still much lower than that of men, 70.2 percent of whom can read and write. The educational pattern is similar with 43.6 percent of the male population over age five reporting that they had received some schooling as compared to only 16 percent of the female population.

In both the literacy rate and schooling patterns, the percentage increase among females in the younger age group is greater than for males. In fact, the proportion of literate males actually drops from 79.7 percent among adults to only 50 percent for the 5-14 age group while for females there was an increase from a 15.7 percent literacy rate among adult females to 25 percent among females age 5-14. Regarding the educational pattern, the proportion of males who had been to school remained the same in both age groups while among the females there was an increase from 11.4 percent among adult women to 25 percent among girls in the 5-14 age group.

Both economic status and caste factors appear to have an effect on female literacy rates. While 31.2 percent of the adult women from top stratum households are literate, none of the adult women from the lowest stratum can read or write (Table 4.2). Among the current school-going population in the 5-14 age group the percentage of girls who can read

TABLE 4.1
LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

(In number)

Literacy/ Educational Level	POPULATION		LITERACY PATTERN						EDUCATIONAL PATTERN												
			MALE			FEMALE			BOTH			MALE			FEMALE			BOTH			
			Liter- ate	Illit- erate	Total	Liter- ate	Illit- erate	Total	Liter- ate	Illit- erate	Total	School- ing	No School- ing	Total	School- ing	No School- ing	Total	School- ing	No School- ing	Total	
Age Group	Male	Female	Total																		
5 - 14	30	36	66	15 (50.0)	15 (50.0)	30 (50.0)	9 (25.0)	27 (75.0)	36 (60.0)	24 (36.4)	42 (63.6)	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)	9 (25.0)	27 (75.0)	36 (60.0)	22 (33.3)	44 (66.7)	66 (100.0)	22 (33.3)	44 (66.7)
15 +	64	70	134	51 (79.7)	13 (20.3)	64 (79.7)	11 (15.7)	59 (84.3)	70 (84.3)	62 (46.3)	72 (53.7)	28 (43.8)	36 (56.2)	8 (11.4)	62 (88.6)	98 (73.1)	36 (26.9)	98 (73.1)	134 (100.0)	36 (26.9)	98 (73.1)
5 +	94	106	200	66 (70.2)	28 (29.8)	94 (70.2)	20 (18.9)	86 (81.1)	114 (43.0)	86 (43.0)	114 (57.0)	41 (43.6)	53 (56.4)	17 (16.0)	89 (84.0)	142 (71.0)	58 (29.0)	142 (71.0)	200 (100.0)	58 (29.0)	142 (71.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to the respective sex totals.

TABLE 4.2
LITERACY PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(For population 15 years and above)

Eco- nomic Strata	Sex		MALE			FEMALE			BOTH		
	Literacy Status		Literate	Illit- erate	Total	Literate	Illit- erate	Total	Literate	Illit- erate	Total
Top			17 (94.4)	1 (5.6)	18 (100.0)	5 (31.2)	11 (68.8)	16 (100.0)	22 (64.7)	12 (35.3)	34 (100.0)
Middle			29 (78.4)	8 (21.6)	37 (100.0)	6 (14.0)	37 (86.0)	43 (100.0)	35 (43.8)	45 (56.2)	80 (100.0)
Bottom			5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)	9 (100.0)	-	11 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	5 (25.0)	15 (75.0)	20 (100.0)
All Strata			51 (79.7)	13 (20.3)	64 (100.0)	11 (15.7)	59 (84.3)	70 (100.0)	62 (46.3)	72 (53.7)	134 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.3
LITERACY PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
(For population 5 to 14 years)

(In number)

Sex Economic Strata	MALE			FEMALE			BOTH		
	Literate	Illit- erate	Total	Literate	Illit- erate	Total	Literate	Illit- erate	Total
Top	8 (61.5)	5 (38.5)	13 (100.0)	2 (33.3)	4 (66.7)	6 (100.0)	10 (52.6)	9 (47.4)	19 (100.0)
Middle	5 (41.7)	7 (58.3)	12 (100.0)	6 (30.0)	14 (70.0)	20 (100.0)	11 (34.4)	21 (65.6)	32 (100.0)
Bottom	2 (40.0)	3 (60.0)	5 (100.0)	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	10 (100.0)	3 (20.0)	12 (80.0)	15 (100.0)
All Strata	15 (50.0)	15 (50.0)	30 (100.0)	9 (25.0)	27 (75.0)	36 (100.0)	24 (36.4)	42 (63.6)	66 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.4
LITERACY PATTERN BY CASTE AND SEX
(For population 15 years and above)

Caste	Sex		M A L E			F E M A L E			B O T H		
	Literacy Status		Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total
HIGH			37 (84.1)	7 (15.9)	44 (100.0)	11 (22.9)	37 (77.1)	48 (100.0)	48 (52.2)	44 (47.8)	92 (100.0)
OTHER			4 (80.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100.0)	-	5 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	4 (40.0)	6 (60.0)	10 (100.0)
LOW			10 (66.7)	5 (33.3)	15 (100.0)	-	17 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	10 (31.2)	22 (68.8)	32 (100.0)
ALL CASTES			51 (79.7)	13 (20.3)	64 (100.0)	11 (15.7)	59 (84.3)	70 (100.0)	62 (46.3)	72 (53.7)	134 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.5
LITERACY PATTERN BY CASTE AND SEX
(For population 5 to 14 years)

Caste	Sex		M A L E				F E M A L E				B O T H			
	Literacy Status		Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total
	Literate	Illiterate												
HIGH	15 (65.2)	8 (34.8)	23 (100.0)	7 (28.0)	18 (72.0)	25 (100.0)	22 (45.8)	26 (54.2)	48 (100.0)					
OTHER	-	2 (100.0)	2 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	5 (100.0)	5 (100.0)					
LOW		5 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	2 (25.0)	6 (75.0)	8 (100.0)	2 (15.4)	11 (84.6)	13 (100.0)					
ALL CASTES	15 (50.0)	15 (50.0)	30 (100.0)	9 (25.0)	27 (75.0)	36 (100.0)	24 (36.4)	42 (63.6)	66 (100.0)					

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

and write is 10 in the bottom stratum, 30 in the middle stratum and 33.3 in the top stratum.*

For adult men, caste membership appears to have less effect on literacy status than economic standing. The gap between rich and poor men in terms of literacy status (94.4 percent versus 55.6 percent) is much greater than the gap between high caste and low caste men (84.1 percent versus 66.7 percent). For adult low caste women, however, as for poor women, literacy appears to have been out of reach and all the adult women who can read and write are from the high caste. Although two low caste girls have now learned to read and write, it now appears, somewhat inexplicably, that low caste boys are not attaining literacy and that the percentage of literate high caste boys has also dropped.

The data on educational patterns by economic strata in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 and by caste in Tables 4.8 and 4.9 show essentially the same pattern as the data on literacy status. In addition, they show that high caste males in the top and middle economic strata have much greater access to secondary and higher levels of education which prepare them for salaried employment. In the entire sample population of Bakundol only one woman has completed secondary education and, not surprisingly, she was from both the high caste group and the top economic stratum.

Despite the notable progress in female education in Bakundol, there is still a marked difference both in practice and in expressed attitudes between the relative importance villagers attach to education for girls as opposed to boys. Only one respondent out of the 64 questioned felt that it was not important to send boys to school while 15 (or 23.4

*For males, literacy appears to be much less the exclusive preserve of the wealthy households in recent times and the gap between the percentage of literate males in top and bottom strata families is much lower among the current school-going population than among adults. However, in the context of the puzzling general drop in male literacy rates for all strata in the current school-going age group, coupled with the small sample size, it is difficult to make a conclusive statement that economic status is less of a determinant of access to literacy than in the past.

TABLE 4.6

EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(For population 15 years and above)

(In number)

Sex/Schooling Level	M A L E					F E M A L E					B O I H				
	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total
TOP	7 (38.9)	4 (22.2)	6 (33.3)	1 (5.6)	18 (100.0)	13 (81.3)	2 (12.5)	1 (6.2)	-	16 (100.0)	20 (58.8)	6 (17.7)	7 (20.6)	1 (2.9)	34 (100.0)
MIDDLE	22 (59.5)	5 (13.5)	8 (21.6)	2 (5.4)	37 (100.0)	38 (88.4)	5 (11.6)	-	-	43 (100.0)	60 (75.0)	10 (12.5)	8 (10.0)	2 (2.5)	80 (100.0)
BOTTOM	7 (77.8)	2 (22.2)	-	-	9 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	-	-	-	11 (100.0)	18 (90.0)	2 (10.0)	-	-	20 (100.0)
ALL STRATA	36 (56.2)	11 (17.2)	14 (21.9)	3 (4.7)	64 (100.0)	62 (88.6)	7 (10.0)	1 (1.4)	-	70 (100.0)	98 (73.1)	18 (13.4)	15 (11.2)	3 (2.3)	134 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.7
 EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX
 (For population 5 to 14 years)

(In number)

Sex/Schooling Level	M A L E				F E M A L E				B O T H			
	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Total
TOP	7 (53.8)	6 (46.2)	-	13 (100.0)	4 (66.7)	2 (33.3)	-	6 (100.0)	11 (57.9)	8 (42.1)	-	19 (100.0)
MIDDLE	7 (58.3)	5 (41.7)	-	12 (100.0)	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	-	20 (100.0)	21 (65.6)	11 (34.4)	-	32 (100.0)
BOTTOM	3 (60.0)	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100.0)	9 (90.0)	1 (10.0)	-	10 (100.0)	12 (80.0)	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)	15 (100.0)
ALL STRATA	17 (56.7)	12 (40.0)	1 (3.3)	30 (100.0)	27 (75.0)	9 (25.0)	-	36 (100.0)	44 (66.7)	21 (31.8)	1 (1.5)	66 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.8
EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY CASTE AND SEX
(For population 15 years and above)

Caste	Sex	M A L E					F E M A L E				
		No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total
HIGH		22 (50.0)	7 (15.9)	12 (27.3)	3 (6.8)	44 (100.0)	40 (83.3)	7 (14.6)	1 (2.1)	-	48 (100.0)
OTHER		3 (60.0)	2 (40.0)	-	-	5 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	-	-	-	5 (100.0)
LOW		11 (73.4)	2 (13.3)	2 (13.3)	-	15 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	-	-	-	17 (100.0)
ALL CASTES		36 (56.2)	11 (17.2)	14 (21.9)	3 (4.7)	64 (100.0)	62 (88.6)	7 (10.0)	1 (1.4)	-	70 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.9
 EDUCATIONAL PATTERN BY CASTE AND SEX
 (For population 5 to 14 years)

(In number)

Sex/Schooling Level Caste	M A L E			F E M A L E				
	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Total	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary	Total
HIGH	10 (43.5)	12 (52.2)	1 (4.3)	23 (100.0)	18 (72.0)	7 (28.0)	-	25 (100.0)
OTHER	2 (100.0)	-	-	2 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	-	3 (100.0)
LOW	5 (100.0)	-	-	5 (100.0)	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)	-	8 (100.0)
ALL CASTES	17 (56.7)	12 (40.0)	1 (3.3)	30 (100.0)	27 (75.0)	9 (25.0)	-	36 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

percent) of these respondents felt that it wasn't important to educate girls (Table 4.10). Interestingly, the proportion of male and female respondents who saw no value in female education was almost the same. Moreover, as shown in Table 4.11, most of the respondents who did favor female education thought girls should have a much lower level of education than boys. Slightly more than 13 percent of the respondents favoring female education thought that girls needed less than three years of schooling. While 55 percent of the respondents thought that less than an eighth class pass was sufficient for girls, 85.7 percent thought that a boy should have at least an eighth class pass and 49.2 percent thought boys should continue in school to as high a level as possible.

Having already analyzed the time allocation data on children's work input and seen that girls in the 10-14 age group have a work burden of 6.80 hours per day (or only 1.36 hours less than an adult male), it is not surprising that 51.4 percent of the responses cited the need for girls' labor in the fields or at home as the reason for keeping a female child out of school. Despite the emphasis of female sexual purity in the Parbatiya community, only 5.4 percent of the responses indicated that the reluctance to send girls to school was based on the concern that they would have to mix with boys at the school. Moreover only 16.2 percent of the responses indicated the cost of education as a constraint on female education (Table 4.12).

Before leaving the subject of women and education, it should perhaps be noted that although the comparison of the eight villages studied (Acharya and Bennett, 1981) shows Bakundol to have the highest female literacy rate, this fact is not accompanied by a higher female input into the household decision making process, as might have been expected. On the contrary, the women of Bakundol have one of the lowest levels of decision making input encountered. Instead, the comparative study showed that the structure of women's participation in the economy seemed to be a much more significant variable and that in communities -- unlike Bakundol -- where women participated more equally with men in the market economy, their say in household decision making was much greater. Of course, a much more thorough study would need to be done in order to draw any conclusions about the relationship between female education and women's status. Nevertheless, these findings do suggest that increased female education, unless it is accompanied by other economic and



With a work burden of almost 7 hours per day, this Sarki girl will never have the chance to attend school.

TABLE 4.10

ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
BY MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

(In number of responses)

Question	Is it important for boys and girls to go to school?					
Answer	Boys			Girls		
Sex of Respondents	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
MALE	31 (96.9)	1 (3.1)	32 (100.0)	24 (75.0)	8 (25.0)	32 (100.0)
FEMALE	32 (100.0)	-	32 (100.0)	25 (78.1)	7 (21.9)	32 (100.0)
BOTH	63 (98.4)	1 (1.6)	64 (100.0)	49 (76.6)	15 (23.4)	64 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.11

DESIRED LEVEL OF EDUCATION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
BY MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

(In number of responses)

Sex of Respondent	Sex of Child		Boys	Girls
	Desired Education Level			
M A L E	Less than 3 years		1(3.2)	4(13.3)
	3 - 7 years		2(6.5)	14(43.4)
	8 - 10 years		9(29.0)	3(10.0)
	More than 10 years		4(12.9)	6(20.0)
	As much as possible		15(48.4)	4(13.3)
Total		31(100.0)	30(100.0)	
F E M A L E	Less than 3 years		1(3.1)	4(13.3)
	3 - 7 years		5(15.6)	12(40.0)
	8 - 10 years		6(18.8)	5(16.7)
	More than 10 years		4(12.5)	5(16.7)
	As much as possible		16(50.0)	4(13.3)
Total		32(100.0)	30(100.0)	
B O Y S	Less than 3 years		2(3.2)	8(13.3)
	3 - 7 years		7(11.1)	25(41.7)
	8 - 10 years		15(23.8)	8(13.3)
	More than 10 years		8(12.7)	11(18.4)
	As much as possible		31(49.2)	8(13.3)
Total		63(100.0)	60(100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

TABLE 4.12

REASONS FOR KEEPING GIRLS OUT OF SCHOOL

(In number of responses)

Reasons	Sex of Respondent		
	Male	Female	Both
They are needed for farm work	4(23.5)	5(25.0)	9(24.3)
They will have to mix with boys at school	1(5.9)	1(5.0)	2(5.4)
They are going to get married and leave the family soon	4(23.5)	4(20.0)	8(21.6)
They are not likely to join service or get salaried job	1(5.9)	-	1(2.7)
They are needed for house work	3(17.6)	7(35.0)	10(27.1)
It costs too much	3(17.6)	3(15.0)	6(16.2)
Other	1(5.9)	-	1(2.7)
Total	17(100.0)	20(100.0)	37(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate column percentages.

social changes, may not produce the expected degree of positive impact on women's status.

Women's Political Awareness

The low level of women's involvement in politics in Bakundol is evident from Table 4.13. While nearly 80 percent did know the name of their Pradhan Panch, or village headman, only 23.5 percent knew the name of their own Panchayat and 14.7 percent knew what ward they lived in. The level of awareness of district and national politics drops even lower. Only two women could name their Chief District Officer whose office was only 30 minutes away and not a single woman knew the name of the Jilla Savapati, the head of the district Panchayat or the name of the Prime Minister of Nepal. Low caste women seemed slightly more aware of local political facts but overall, caste does not appear to be an important factor in women's political awareness.

In accordance with the regulations in effect during the period of field work,* Srikhandapur Panchayat, to which Bakundol belongs, had one nominated female representative since no women had been elected. Yet only 44 percent of the women questioned knew that there was a female representative. Only 16 percent talked to her regularly. Another 28 percent said that they had at least spoken to her and the remaining 66 percent didn't know of her existence. As for the Nepal Women's Organization, the class organization created with the express purpose of representing women's interests at all levels of the political structure, not a single woman interviewed had ever heard of it.

Despite the fairly low level of awareness and contact with political leaders and institutions, the women of Bakundol did participate by voting in Panchayat elections. About 82 percent reported that they had voted at least once or twice.** According to the data in Table 4.15, female voting participation is much lower among women from the lower economic strata. Caste, on the other hand, does not

*The rule requiring the nomination of a least one female member to the Panchayat if none are elected has since been abolished.

**The survey was conducted before the National Referendum or General Elections.

TABLE 4.13
WOMEN'S POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Questions	Economic Strata			TOP			MIDDLE			BOTTOM			ALL STRATA			
	Answers	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total
Local	Which Panchayat does your village belong to?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	7 (36.8)	12 (63.2)	19 (100.0)	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)	7 (100.0)	8 (23.5)	26 (76.5)	34 (100.0)			
	Who is your Pradhan Panch?	8 (100.0)	-	8 (100.0)	14 (73.7)	5 (62.3)	19 (100.0)	5 (71.4)	2 (28.6)	7 (100.0)	27 (79.4)	7 (20.6)	34 (100.0)			
	What number ward do you live in?	1 (12.5)	7 (87.5)	8 (100.0)	4 (21.1)	15 (78.9)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	5 (25.3)	7 (100.0)	5 (14.7)	29 (85.3)	34 (100.0)		
Sub-total for Local Level		9 (37.5)	15 (62.5)	24 (100.0)	25 (43.9)	32 (56.1)	57 (100.0)	6 (28.6)	15 (71.4)	21 (100.0)	40 (39.2)	62 (60.8)	102 (100.0)			
	Who is the C.D.O.* of your district?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	2 (10.5)	17 (89.5)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	2 (5.9)	7 (100.0)	2 (5.9)	32 (94.1)	34 (100.0)		
National & District	Who is the Jilla Savapati of your district?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)			
	Who is the Chairman of the district Back-to-the Village Campaign Committee in your village?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)			
National	Who is the Prime Minister?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)			
	Sub-total for National and District Level	-	32 (100.0)	32 (100.0)	2 (2.6)	74 (97.4)	76 (100.0)	2 (2.6)	28 (100.0)	28 (100.0)	2 (1.5)	134 (98.5)	136 (100.0)			
Women's Organizations	Have you ever heard of the Nepal Women's Organization?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)			
	Have you ever heard of the Women's Services Coordination Committee?	-	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)			
Sub-total for Women's Institutions		-	16 (100.0)	16 (100.0)	-	38 (100.0)	38 (100.0)	-	14 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	-	68 (100.0)	68 (100.0)			
	Grand Total	9 (12.5)	63 (87.5)	72 (100.0)	27 (15.8)	144 (84.2)	171 (100.0)	6 (9.5)	57 (90.5)	63 (100.0)	42 (13.7)	264 (86.3)	306 (100.0)			

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

*C.D.O. = Chief District Officer

TABLE 4.14
WOMEN'S POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS BY CASTE

(In number)

Questions	Caste			HIGH			OTHER			LOW			ALL CASTES		
	Answers	Knows	Total	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	Knows	Does Not Know	Total	
Local	Which Panchayat does your village belong to?	7 (33.3)	21 (100.0)	14 (66.7)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	10 (100.0)	8 (23.5)	26 (76.5)	34 (100.0)	
	Who is your Pradhan Panch?	16 (76.2)	21 (100.0)	5 (23.8)	21 (100.0)	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	3 (100.0)	9 (90.0)	1 (10.0)	10 (100.0)	27 (79.4)	7 (20.6)	34 (100.0)	
	What number ward do you live in?	2 (9.5)	21 (100.0)	19 (90.5)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	3 (30.0)	7 (70.0)	10 (100.0)	5 (14.7)	29 (85.3)	34 (100.0)	
Sub-total for Local Level		25 (39.7)	63 (100.0)	38 (60.3)	63 (100.0)	2 (22.2)	7 (77.8)	9 (100.0)	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)	30 (100.0)	40 (39.2)	62 (60.8)	102 (100.0)	
	Who is the C.D.O.* of your district?	2 (9.5)	21 (100.0)	19 (90.5)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	2 (5.9)	32 (94.1)	34 (100.0)	
Sub-total for District	Who is the Jilla Savapati of your district?	-	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	
	Who is the Chairman of the district Back-to-the Village Campaign Committee in your village?	-	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	
National & District	Who is the Prime Minister ?	-	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	
	Sub-total for National and District Level	2 (2.4)	84 (100.0)	82 (97.6)	84 (100.0)	-	12 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	-	40 (100.0)	40 (100.0)	2 (1.5)	134 (98.5)	136 (100.0)	
Women's Institutions	Have you ever heard of the Nepal Women's Organization?	-	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	
	Have you ever heard of the Women's Services Coordination Committee?	-	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	-	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	-	10 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	-	34 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	
Grand Total	Sub-total for Women's Institutions	27 (14.3)	189 (100.0)	162 (85.7)	189 (100.0)	2 (7.4)	25 (92.6)	27 (100.0)	13 (14.4)	77 (85.6)	90 (100.0)	42 (13.7)	264 (86.3)	306 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

*C.D.O. = Chief District Officer

TABLE 4.15

WOMEN'S VOTING PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL PANCHAYAT
BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Question	Have you ever voted in a village election?			
Answer	Regularly	Once or Twice	Never	Total
Economic Strata				
Top	3(37.5)	4 (50.0)	1(12.5)	8(100.0)
Middle	5(26.3)	12 (63.2)	2(10.5)	19(100.0)
Bottom	-	4 (57.1)	3(42.9)	7(100.0)
All Strata	8(23.5)	20 (58.8)	6(17.7)	34(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

*C.P.O. - Chief District Officer



One of the few channels to the outside open to women in Bakundol is the radio.

appear to have a noticeable effect on the pattern of female voting participation (Table 4.16). However, not a single woman in the entire sample had ever attended a Panchayat meeting and according to Table 4.17 only 26.5 percent said they would have been willing to serve as a member of the Panchayat if they had been nominated. Although the sample size is too small to provide any conclusive evidence, the data in Table 4.18 suggest that low caste women are more willing to become actively involved in the community political process than high caste women. The fact that 50 percent of the low caste women said they would serve as compared to only 19 percent of the high caste women is consistent with the general pattern noted earlier of a greater concentration of high caste women in the subsistence domestic sphere. For high caste women in particular, the political arena, like the market economy, is not viewed as the proper place for women. Yet it should also be noted that a high caste woman from a village not far from Bakundol has, despite the disapproval of her husband and her lack of even a high school education, risen to prominence as a district and even national political figure.

To the women of Bakundol, however, this isolated success of a female politician had had little impact on their own relationship to the political process. The fact that she is a woman is in a way irrelevant to them and when I would initiate discussions about her the reaction was almost invariably a combination of mild cynicism and amusement. There was no sense among the women that she "represented" them or their interests either generally as citizens of Bakundol or specifically as women. Several times I was told that this female politician had visited Bakundol a few years ago for some official function which none of the women could remember. What they did remember was that the speech she made contained a reference to Bakundol's good fortune in having ample drinking water. In fact, as mentioned earlier, Bakundol's drinking water situation is extremely bad and construction of reliable year round system for the village is the unanimous development priority of every single respondent in the sample -- male or female, high caste or low caste, wealthy or poor. The opinion was divided among those who told me about the speech as to whether it meant that the female politician was simply unaware of their need or had chosen to ignore it because Bakundol contained no sufficiently influential citizens.

TABLE 4.16

WOMEN'S VOTING PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL PANCHAYAT BY CASTE

(In number)

Question		Have you ever voted in a village election?			
Caste	Answer	Regularly	Once or Twice	Never	Total
	High		4(19.0)	14 (66.7)	3(14.3)
Other		-	2 (66.7)	1(33.3)	3(100.0)
Low		4(40.0)	4 (40.0)	2(20.0)	10(100.0)
All Castes		8(23.5)	20 (58.8)	6(17.7)	34(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.17

WOMEN'S WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL PANCHAYAT
BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Question	If you were to be nominated would you like to serve in your village Panchayat ?				
	Yes	No	Do not know	No Answer	Total
Economic Strata					
Top	5(62.5)	2(25.0)	1(12.5)	-	8(100.0)
Middle	2(10.5)	14(73.7)	3(15.8)	-	19(100.0)
Bottom	2(28.6)	3(42.8)	2(28.6)	-	7(100.0)
All Strata	9(26.5)	19(55.9)	6(17.6)	-	34(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.18

WOMEN'S WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL PANCHAYAT
BY CASTE

(In number)

Question	If you were to be nominated would you like to serve in your village Panchayat ?				
Answer	Yes	No	Do not know	No Answer	Total
Caste					
High	4(19.0)	14(66.7)	3(14.3)	-	21(100.0)
Other	-	2(66.7)	1(33.3)	-	3(100.0)
Low	5(50.0)	3(30.0)	2(20.0)	-	10(100.0)
All Castes	9(26.5)	19(55.9)	6(17.6)	-	34(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Access to Credit and Training

Whether it is for agriculture, animal husbandry or income generation projects, two essential components of development extension are credit and training. The data presented here can not in any way be considered an adequate assessment of the perceived needs and potentiality for specific types of development projects in Bakundol. They do, however, give a preliminary indication of some areas of need and of the types of constraints faced by men and women seeking credit within the present structure.

Earlier we analyzed the data on decision making regarding the household borrowing when the coparcenary group undertakes a loan. Not surprisingly, since men are traditionally the household heads and control most of the ancestral property which serves as collateral, they were the major decision makers in this area. About 84 percent of the loan transactions undertaken by households were carried out by men on their own (Table 2.28).

However, sometimes family members do take out personal loans pledging to pay back the debt on their own. A survey was conducted to ascertain the relative access of males and females to such personal credit and to find out why they took such loans. Whether or not the respondents fully understood the distinction between household and personal loans and saw it as a valid distinction, I must confess I was not always sure. Nevertheless, the pattern of responses was different from that which emerged for household borrowing and showed more female involvement. Hence, although there may have been some overlap between the two categories of borrowing, I believe that by and large the distinction was maintained in the responses.

Tables 4.19 and 4.20 show the pattern of personal credit use by economic strata, caste and sex. Although the disparity between male and female involvement is not as great as for household borrowing, women still lag behind men. Approximately 66 percent of the male respondents had taken credit as compared to 45.7 percent for female respondents. Within the lower economic stratum and the low caste group, both men and women take fewer loans than those in the top stratum and high caste group.

The data on sources of credit presented in Tables 4.21 and 4.22 show that women are far more likely to borrow from

TABLE 4.19

CREDIT USE BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Economic Strata	Sex	R E S P O N S E S			
		Have Taken Credit	Have Not	No Answer	Total
TOP	Male	6 (60.0)	3 (30.0)	1 (10.0)	10 (100.0)
	Female	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	-	8 (100.0)
	Both	11 (61.1)	6 (33.3)	1 (5.6)	18 (100.0)
MIDDLE	Male	13 (72.2)	4 (22.2)	1 (5.6)	18 (100.0)
	Female	7 (35.0)	12 (60.0)	1 (5.0)	20 (100.0)
	Both	20 (52.6)	16 (42.1)	2 (5.3)	38 (100.0)
BOTTOM	Male	4 (57.1)	2 (28.6)	1 (14.3)	7 (100.0)
	Female	4 (57.1)	3 (42.9)	-	7 (100.0)
	Both	8 (57.1)	5 (35.7)	1 (7.1)	14 (100.0)
ALL STRATA	Male	23 (65.7)	9 (25.7)	3 (8.6)	35 (100.0)
	Female	16 (45.7)	18 (51.4)	1 (2.9)	35 (100.0)
	Both	39 (55.7)	27 (38.6)	4 (5.7)	70 (100 0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.20

CREDIT USE BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Caste \ Sex		R E S P O N S E S			
		Have Taken Credit	Have Not	No Answer	Total
HIGH	Male	15 (68.2)	6 (27.3)	1 (4.5)	22 (100.0)
	Female	12 (54.5)	9 (40.9)	1 (4.5)	22 (100.0)
	Both	27 (61.4)	15 (34.1)	2 (4.5)	44 (100.0)
OTHER	Male	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	-	3 (100.0)
	Female	-	3(100.0)	-	3 (100.0)
	Both	2 (33.3)	4 (66.7)	-	6 (100.0)
LOW	Male	6 (60.0)	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	10 (100.0)
	Female	4 (40.0)	6 (60.0)	-	10 (100.0)
	Both	10 (50.0)	8 (40.0)	2 (10.0)	20 (100.0)
ALL CASTES	Male	23 (65.7)	9 (25.7)	3 (8.6)	35 (100.0)
	Female	16 (45.7)	18 (51.4)	1 (2.9)	35 (100.0)
	Both	39 (55.7)	27 (38.6)	4 (5.7)	70 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.21

SOURCES OF BORROWING BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number)

Economic Strata	Sex	Sources of Borrowing				
		Institutional	Money Lender	Relatives	Friends & Neighbors	Total
TOP	Male	2 (25.0)	2 (25.0)	2 (25.0)	2 (25.0)	8 (100.0)
	Female	1 (16.6)	1 (16.6)	3 (50.0)	1 (16.6)	6 (100.0)
	Both	3 (21.4)	3 (21.4)	5 (35.7)	3 (21.4)	14 (100.0)
MIDDLE	Male	2 (10.0)	7 (35.0)	1 (5.0)	10 (50.0)	20 (100.0)
	Female	-	-	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)	7 (100.0)
	Both	2 (7.4)	7 (25.9)	4 (14.8)	14 (51.9)	27 (100.0)
BOTTOM	Male	1 (14.3)	4 (57.1)	-	2 (28.6)	7 (100.0)
	Female	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)
	Both	1 (9.1)	5 (45.4)	1 (9.1)	4 (36.4)	11 (100.0)
ALL STRATA	Male	5 (14.3)	13 (37.1)	3 (8.6)	14 (40.0)	35 (100.0)
	Female	1 (5.9)	2 (11.7)	7 (41.2)	7 (41.2)	17 (100.0)
	Both	6 (11.5)	15 (28.9)	10 (19.2)	21 (40.4)	52 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.22

SOURCES OF BORROWING BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number)

Caste	Sex	Sources of Borrowing				
		Institu- tional	Money Lender	Relatives	Friends & Neighbors	Total
HIGH	Male	4 (17.4)	10 (43.5)	1 (4.3)	8 (34.8)	23 (100.0)
	Female	1 (7.7)	1 (7.7)	6 (46.1)	5 (38.5)	13 (100.0)
	Both	5 (13.9)	11 (30.6)	7 (19.4)	13 (36.1)	36 (100.0)
OTHER	Male	-	1 (50.0)	-	1 (50.0)	2 (100.0)
	Female	-	-	-	-	-
	Both	-	1 (50.0)	-	1 (50.0)	2 (100.0)
LOW	Male	1 (10.0)	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	5 (50.0)	10 (100.0)
	Female	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)
	Both	1 (7.2)	3 (21.4)	3 (21.4)	7 (50.0)	14 (100.0)
ALL CASTES	Male	5 (14.3)	13 (37.1)	3 (8.6)	14 (40.0)	35 (100.0)
	Female	1 (5.9)	2 (11.7)	7 (41.2)	7 (41.2)	17 (100.0)
	Both	6 (11.5)	15 (28.9)	10 (19.2)	21 (40.4)	52 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

relatives or neighbors than men are. Approximately 82 percent of the loans taken by women were from relatives or neighbors.* Institutional credit is not in wide use in Bakundol, especially among women, only one of whom reported receiving institutional credit. A slightly higher proportion of female loans (11.7 percent) is from money lenders but this source accounts for a much bigger proportion (37.1 percent) of the loans taken by men.

Tables 4.23 and 4.24 show that in more than 56 percent of the cases the personal loans taken in Bakundol by both men and women involve no collateral. When collateral is required, men generally offer land (in 26.1 percent of the cases versus only 6.7 percent for women) while women offer gold and silver (in 20 percent of the cases versus 8.7 percent for men). Caste also affects the type of collateral offered as well as proportion of loans taken without collateral. Among the high caste 40 percent of the males and 63.6 percent of the females had taken credit without collateral while 40 percent males and 7.1 percent females had secured credit through offering land as collateral. Among the low caste 72.7 percent of the cases did not involve any collateral and no one had taken credit against land.

As we noted earlier, women make little use of institutional credit. Both men and women who had not taken institutional loans were asked why they had made that decision. For 47.2 percent of the women (and 20 percent of the men), the reason was that they did not know how to get credit through such an institution. The data in Table 4.25 show that for both men and women, bureaucratic "know how" decreases with economic standing. Likewise, as shown in Table 4.26, caste status makes little difference for women in terms of knowing how to approach credit institutions: women from all castes are uniformly unaware. For men, however, caste makes a big difference in bureaucratic "know how". Only 8.7 percent of the high caste men had not taken credit because of lack of knowledge of the institutional procedures while 37.5 percent

*The fact that men take only 8.6 percent of their loans from kin while women take 41.2 percent is probably a manifestation of the type of affection and support which women receive from their natal home as described in Chapter II.

TABLE 4.23
 TYPES OF COLLATERAL PLEDGED BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

Economic Strata	Sex	Number of borrowers who pledged							Total
		Land, House	Gold, Silver	Animals	Other	Collateral	No Collateral		
TOP	Male	2 (40.0)	-	-	-	3 (60.0)	5 (100.0)		
	Female	-	2 (40.0)	-	-	3 (60.0)	5 (100.0)		
	Both	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	-	-	6 (60.0)	10 (100.0)		
MIDDLE	Male	3 (23.1)	2 (15.4)	-	1 (7.7)	7 (53.8)	13 (100.0)		
	Female	1 (16.7)	-	-	1 (16.7)	4 (66.6)	6 (100.0)		
	Both	4 (21.1)	2 (10.5)	-	2 (10.5)	11 (57.9)	19 (100.0)		
BOTTOM	Male	1 (20.0)	-	1 (20.0)	-	3 (60.0)	5 (100.0)		
	Female	-	1 (25.0)	-	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)		
	Both	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	5 (55.6)	9 (100.0)		
ALL STRATA	Male	6 (26.1)	2 (8.7)	1 (4.3)	1 (4.3)	13 (56.5)	23 (100.0)		
	Female	1 (6.7)	3 (20.0)	-	2 (13.3)	9 (60.0)	15 (100.0)		
	Both	7 (18.4)	5 (13.2)	1 (2.6)	3 (7.9)	22 (57.9)	38 (100.0)		

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.24
TYPES OF COLLATERAL PLEDGED BY CASTE AND SEX

Caste	Sex	Number of borrowers who pledged							Total
		Land, House	Gold, Silver	Animals	Other	Collateral	No Collateral		
HIGH	Male	6 (40.0)	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)	6 (40.0)	15 (100.0)		
	Female	1 (9.1)	2 (18.2)	-	1 (9.1)	7 (63.6)	11 (100.0)		
	Both	7 (26.9)	3 (11.5)	1 (3.9)	2 (7.7)	13 (50.0)	26 (100.0)		
OTHER	Male	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)		
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-		
	Both	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)		
LOW	Male	-	1 (14.3)	-	-	6 (85.7)	7 (100.0)		
	Female	-	1 (25.0)	-	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)		
	Both	-	2 (18.2)	-	1 (9.1)	8 (72.7)	11 (100.0)		
ALL CASTES	Male	6 (26.1)	2 (8.7)	1 (4.3)	1 (4.3)	13 (56.5)	23 (100.0)		
	Female	1 (6.7)	3 (20.0)	-	2 (13.3)	9 (60.0)	15 (100.0)		
	Both	7 (18.4)	5 (13.2)	1 (2.6)	3 (7.9)	22 (57.9)	38 (100.0)		

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.25
REASONS FOR NOT TAKING INSTITUTIONAL LOAN BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Economic Strata	Sex	Reasons for not taking institutional loan										Total
		No need	Do not like to borrow	Too much interest	Repayment schedules too strict	Forms difficult to write	No connection with institution	Not treated with respect	Do not know how to get credit	Other		
TOP	Male	-	3 (33.3)	-	-	-	-	1 (11.1)	2 (22.2)	3 (33.3)	9 (100.0)	
	Female	1 (12.5)	3 (37.5)	-	1 (12.5)	-	-	-	3 (37.5)	-	8 (100.0)	
	Both	1 (5.9)	6 (35.3)	-	1 (5.9)	-	-	1 (5.9)	5 (29.4)	3 (17.6)	17 (100.0)	
MIDDLE	Male	2 (10.0)	3 (15.0)	-	2 (10.0)	-	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)	2 (10.0)	8 (40.0)	20 (100.0)	
	Female	4 (20.0)	6 (30.0)	-	-	-	-	-	8 (40.0)	2 (10.0)	20 (100.0)	
	Both	6 (15.0)	9 (22.5)	-	2 (5.0)	-	1 (2.5)	2 (5.0)	10 (25.0)	10 (25.0)	40 (100.0)	
BOTTOM	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 (50.0)	3 (50.0)	6 (100.0)	
	Female	-	2 (25.0)	-	-	-	-	-	6 (75.0)	-	8 (100.0)	
	Both	-	2 (14.3)	-	-	-	-	-	9 (64.3)	3 (21.4)	14 (100.0)	
ALL STRATA	Male	2 (5.7)	6 (17.1)	-	2 (5.7)	-	1 (2.9)	3 (8.6)	7 (20.0)	14 (40.0)	35 (100.0)	
	Female	5 (13.9)	11 (30.6)	-	1 (2.8)	-	-	-	17 (47.2)	2 (5.5)	36 (100.0)	
	Both	7 (9.9)	17 (24.0)	-	3 (4.2)	-	1 (1.4)	3 (4.2)	24 (33.8)	16 (22.5)	71 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.26

REASONS FOR NOT TAKING INSTITUTIONAL LOAN BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Caste	Sex	Reasons for not taking institutional loan								Total
		No need	Do not like to borrow	Repayment schedules too strict	No connections with institution	Not treated with respect	Do not know how to get credit	Other		
HIGH	Male	2 (8.7)	4 (17.4)	2 (8.7)	1 (4.3)	2 (8.7)	2 (8.7)	10 (43.5)	23 (100.0)	
	Female	4 (18.2)	6 (27.3)	1 (4.5)	-	-	10 (45.5)	1 (4.5)	22 (100.0)	
	Both	6 (13.3)	10 (22.2)	3 (6.7)	1 (2.2)	2 (4.4)	12 (26.7)	11 (24.5)	45 (100.0)	
OTHER	Male	-	-	-	-	-	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	4 (100.0)	
	Female	-	1 (33.3)	-	-	-	2 (66.7)	-	3 (100.0)	
	Both	-	1 (14.3)	-	-	-	4 (57.1)	2 (28.6)	7 (100.0)	
LOW	Male	-	2 (25.0)	-	-	1 (12.5)	3 (37.5)	2 (25.0)	8 (100.0)	
	Female	1 (9.1)	4 (36.4)	-	-	-	5 (45.4)	1 (9.1)	11 (100.0)	
	Both	1 (5.3)	6 (31.5)	-	-	1 (5.3)	8 (42.1)	3 (15.8)	19 (100.0)	
ALL CASTES	Male	2 (5.7)	6 (17.1)	2 (5.7)	1 (2.8)	3 (8.6)	7 (20.0)	14 (40.0)	35 (100.0)	
	Female	5 (13.9)	11 (30.5)	1 (2.8)	-	-	17 (47.2)	2 (5.6)	36 (100.0)	
	Both	7 (9.9)	17 (24.0)	3 (4.2)	1 (1.4)	3 (4.2)	24 (33.8)	16 (22.5)	71 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

of the low caste men gave this reason. As would be expected, not a single respondent gave high interest rates as a reason for not taking institutional credit; compared to rates of local money lenders (usually 40 percent per annum according to villagers), institutional interest rates (reportedly ranging from 10 to 16 percent) were perceived as very reasonable.

The data in Tables 4.27 and 4.28 show the uses to which villagers said they would apply credit if they were able to get it.* Credit for the purchase of animals was the first priority of male respondents and accounted for 42.4 percent of the male responses. For women this was somewhat less of a priority, accounting for 17.7 percent of the responses, mostly among high caste women from the middle economic stratum. Women were more interested in getting credit to finance improved methods of cultivation. While only 6.1 percent of the male respondents saw this as a need, it was cited by 23.5 percent of the female respondents. Both men and women showed almost the same level of interest in using credit to buy land. Interestingly, the proportion of respondents (both male and female) who wanted to purchase land on credit was highest among the low caste. As mentioned earlier, low caste households have less land than the average high caste household, but some of them have recently begun to acquire more.

Although none of the high caste reported that their first priority for credit use was to start a cottage industry, many of the high caste women did express an interest on other occasions in learning to weave cotton cloth. They have seen the Newari women who engage in this work in both nearby towns. When asked where they would go to learn such a skill -- including sewing, knitting, rug making and other handicrafts as well as weaving -- 64.7 percent said there was no place or they didn't know. No one in the village knows how to weave or make rugs but for sewing and knitting 29.4 percent said they could learn at home or from other villagers. Only two respondents said they could learn from a government training institution such as the Women's Affairs Training Center in Kathmandu or the Cottage Industry Branch Office in nearby Dhulikhel (Table 4.29).

*Respondents were permitted to specify more than one credit use.

TABLE 4.27

USES TO WHICH VILLAGERS WOULD APPLY CREDIT BY ECONOMIC STRATA AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Sex		PERSONS WHO WOULD USE CREDIT TO											Total
		Buy Land/ Building	Start Cottage Industry	Open Tea Shop/ Hotel	Finance Trading	Finance Improved Method of Cultiva- tion	Buy Animals	Meet Consump- tion Needs	Meet Social/ Religious Obliga- tions	Other			
Economic Strata	Male	-	-	-	2(33.3)	-	3(50.0)	-	-	1(16.7)	6(100.0)		
	Female	2(25.0)	-	1(12.5)	-	3(37.5)	-	-	2(25.0)	8(100.0)			
	Both	2(14.3)	-	1(7.2)	2(14.3)	3(21.4)	3(21.4)	-	3(21.4)	14(100.0)			
TOP	Male	5(23.8)	2(9.5)	-	-	2(9.5)	10(47.6)	-	1(4.8)	21(100.0)			
	Female	5(25.0)	1(5.0)	-	-	4(20.0)	6(30.0)	-	4(20.0)	20(100.0)			
	Both	10(24.4)	3(7.3)	-	-	6(14.6)	16(39.0)	-	5(12.2)	41(100.0)			
MIDDLE	Male	1(16.7)	1(16.7)	-	1(16.7)	-	1(16.7)	-	2(33.3)	6(100.0)			
	Female	-	1(16.7)	-	-	1(16.7)	-	1(16.7)	2(33.3)	6(100.0)			
	Both	1(8.3)	2(16.7)	-	1(8.3)	1(8.3)	1(8.3)	1(8.3)	4(33.3)	12(100.0)			
BOTTOM	Male	6(18.2)	3(9.1)	-	3(9.1)	2(6.1)	14(42.4)	-	4(12.1)	33(100.0)			
	Female	7(20.6)	2(5.9)	1(2.9)	-	8(23.5)	6(17.7)	1(2.9)	8(23.5)	34(100.0)			
	Both	13(19.4)	5(7.5)	1(1.5)	3(4.5)	10(14.9)	20(29.8)	1(1.5)	12(17.9)	67(100.0)			

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.28

USES TO WHICH VILLAGERS WOULD APPLY CREDIT BY CASTE AND SEX

(In number of responses)

Sex Caste		PERSONS WHO WOULD USE CREDIT TO										Total
		Buy Land/ Building	Start Cottage Industry	Open Tea Shop/ Hotel	Finance Trading	Finance Improved Method of Cultiva- tion	Buy Animals	Meet Consump- tion Needs	Meet Social/ Religious Obliga- tions	Other		
HIGH	Male	3(13.6)	-	-	1(4.6)	2 (9.1)	12(54.5)	-	1(4.6)	3(13.6)	22(100.0)	
	Female	4(20.0)	-	1 (5.0)	-	5 (25.0)	5(25.0)	-	-	5(25.0)	20(100.0)	
	Both	7(16.7)	-	1 (2.4)	1(2.4)	7 (16.7)	17(40.4)	-	1(2.4)	8(19.0)	42(100.0)	
OTHER	Male	-	2(66.7)	-	-	-	1(33.3)	-	-	-	3(100.0)	
	Female	-	2(100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2(100.0)	
	Both	-	4(80.0)	-	-	-	1(20.0)	-	-	-	5(100.0)	
LOW	Male	3(37.5)	1(12.5)	-	2(25.0)	-	1(12.5)	-	-	1(12.5)	8(100.0)	
	Female	3(25.0)	-	-	-	3 (25.0)	1(8.3)	1(8.3)	1(8.3)	3(25.0)	12(100.0)	
	Both	6(30.0)	1(5.0)	-	2(10.0)	3 (15.0)	2(10.0)	1(5.0)	1(5.0)	4(20.0)	20(100.0)	
ALL CASTES	Male	6(18.2)	3(9.1)	-	3(9.1)	2 (6.1)	14(42.4)	-	1(3.0)	4(12.1)	33(100.0)	
	Female	7(20.6)	2(5.9)	1 (2.9)	-	8 (23.5)	6(17.7)	1(2.9)	1(2.9)	8(23.5)	34(100.0)	
	Both	13(19.4)	5(7.5)	1 (1.5)	3(4.5)	10 (14.9)	20(29.8)	1(1.5)	2(3.0)	12(17.9)	67(100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

TABLE 4.29
WOMEN'S ACCESS TO HANDICRAFTS TRAINING BY CASTE

(In number)

Question Answer Caste	If you or any other women in your village want to learn skills such as Weaving, Sewing, Knitting, Rug making, etc., where would you go?						Total
	Learn at home	Learn from villagers	WATC* or other org.	No place	Do not know		
High	3 (14.3)	1 (4.8)	2 (9.5)	12(57.1)	3 (14.3)	21 (100.0)	
Other	2 (66.7)	-	-	1(33.3)	-	3 (100.0)	
Low	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	-	6(60.0)	-	10 (100.0)	
All Caste	7 (20.6)	3 (8.8)	2 (5.9)	19(55.9)	3 (8.8)	34 (100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* WATC = Women's Affairs Training Centre.

Women's Legal Awareness

During the initial phase of the current Status of Women project, a study was made of women's position in the National Legal Code (Bennett, 1979). The study concluded that Nepal's fundamental laws on property, inheritance, marriage and divorce still reflect the patrilineal, patriarchal orientation of the ancient Hindu codes from which they originated. Despite recent laws -- many passed during International Women's Year in 1975 -- which have brought about marked improvements in women's official legal status, the National Legal Code still does not fully reflect the ideal of sexual equality before the law as set forth in Nepal's Constitution. The study also questioned whether the full impact of the recent legislation had actually reached the vast majority of Nepalese women who live in the rural areas. To what extent are women aware of their actual legal rights under the new National Code and to what extent are they still acting on the basis of localized customary law and the former Code (which openly supported both sexual and caste inequalities)?

In order to assess the level of "legal literacy" among the women of Bakundol and to get a better idea of the prevailing norms concerning divorce, women's control over personal property, their inheritance rights, etc., a simple open-ended questionnaire was administered to one woman in each of the 35 sample households. The questions asked and the responses given are presented here in tabular form (Table 4.30). It is immediately evident from this data that the women were quite knowledgeable about some aspects of the law and almost totally unaware of others. For instance, 69 percent of the respondents knew that if their husbands brought in a second wife they would have the right to claim their share of the ancestral property and live separately. On the other hand, none of the respondents were aware of the new ruling that entitles a woman to child support and 5 years maintenance if she obtains a formal divorce and does not remarry. For this question and many of the others, a large percentage of women had correct information on some aspects of the law but were unaware or confused about certain key points, hence when the answers were tabulated, the intermediate category -- "partially knows" -- was added.

In fact, the most interesting information gathered through this questionnaire was often not the "quantitative" data on how many women knew their official legal rights, but

TABLE 4.30

LEVEL OF LEGAL KNOWLEDGE BY ECONOMIC STRATA

(In number)

Question	Level of Awareness		Knows own Legal Rights	Partially knows own Legal Rights	Does not know own Legal Rights	Knows but would not practice because of Social Pressure	All Responses
	Economic Strata						
Can you dispose of <u>Daijo</u> / <u>Pewa</u> * as you will?	Top		1(11.0)	2(22.0)	6(67.0)	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		4(22.0)	8(45.0)	6(33.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		-	-	5(100.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		5(16.0)	10(31.0)	17(53.0)	-	32(100.0)
Can your husband or in-laws dispose of your <u>Daijo</u> / <u>Pewa</u> without your permission?	Top		4(45.0)	3(33.0)	2(22.0)	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		4(22.0)	5(28.0)	6(33.0)	3(17.0)	18(100.0)
	Bottom		2(40.0)	-	3(60.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		10(31.0)	8(25.0)	11(34.0)	3(10.0)	32(100.0)
Does an unmarried daughter over 35 get an equal share with her brothers?	Top		6(67.0)	3(33.0)	-	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		10(56.0)	7(39.0)	-	1(5.0)	18(100.0)
	Bottom		2(40.0)	1(20.0)	2(40.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		18(56.0)	11(35.0)	2(6.0)	1(3.0)	32(100.0)
Does a woman without brothers inherit her father's property?	Top		2(22.0)	6(67.0)	1(11.0)	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		2(11.0)	15(83.0)	1(6.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		1(20.0)	3(60.0)	1(20.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		5(16.0)	24(75.0)	3(9.0)	-	32(100.0)
Can wife claim her share if husband brings in a second wife?	Top		7(78.0)	2(22.0)	-	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		12(66.0)	3(17.0)	3(17.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		3(60.0)	1(20.0)	1(20.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		22(69.0)	6(19.0)	4(12.0)	-	32(100.0)
If you give permission, can your husband take a second wife?	Top		-	-	9(100.0)	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		2(11.0)	1(6.0)	15(83.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		-	-	5(100.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		2(6.0)	1(3.0)	29(91.0)	-	32(100.0)
If your husband divorces you, must you be given a share of his property?	Top		-	9(100.0)	-	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		-	17(94.0)	1(6.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		-	4(80.0)	1(20.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		-	30(94.0)	2(6.0)	-	32(100.0)
Must you pay <u>jari</u> ** if you run off with another man?	Top		2(22.0)	-	7(78.0)	-	9(100.0)
	Middle		1(6.0)	-	17(94.0)	-	18(100.0)
	Bottom		-	-	5(100.0)	-	5(100.0)
	All Strata		3(9.0)	-	29(91.0)	-	32(100.0)
All Questions	Top		22(30.0)	25(35.0)	25(35.0)	-	72(100.0)
	Middle		35(24.0)	56(39.0)	48(34.0)	4(3.0)	143(100.0)
	Bottom		8(20.0)	9(22.0)	24(58.0)	-	41(100.0)
	All Strata		65(25.0)	90(35.0)	97(38.0)	4(2.0)	256(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Daijo is dowry or property given to a girl by her natal kin at the time of her marriage. Pewa is property given to a woman by her husband.

** Jari is compensation for adultery.

TABLE 4.31

LEVEL OF LEGAL KNOWLEDGE BY CASTE

(In number)

Question	Level of Awareness		Knows own Legal Rights	Partially knows own Legal Rights	Does not know own Legal Rights	Knows but would not practice because of Social Pressure	All Responses
	Caste						
Can you dispose of <u>Daijo</u> / <u>Pewa</u> * as you will?	High		1(6.0)	6(35.0)	10(59.0)	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	1(33.0)	2(67.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		4(33.0)	3(25.0)	5(42.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		5(16.0)	10(31.0)	17(53.0)	-	32(100.0)
Can your husband or in-laws dispose of your <u>Daijo</u> / <u>Pewa</u> without your permission?	High		4(24.0)	7(41.0)	4(24.0)	2 (11.0)	17(100.0)
	Other		-	-	2(67.0)	1 (33.0)	3(100.0)
	Low		6(50.0)	1(8.0)	5(42.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		10(31.0)	8(25.0)	11(34.0)	3 (10.0)	32(100.0)
Does an unmarried daughter over 35 get an equal share with her brothers?	High		11(65.0)	6(35.0)	-	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	1(33.0)	1(33.0)	1 (33.0)	3(100.0)
	Low		7(58.0)	4(33.0)	1(8.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		18(56.0)	11(35.0)	2(6.0)	1 (3.0)	32(100.0)
Does a woman without brothers inherit her father's property?	High		3(18.0)	13(76.0)	1(6.0)	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	2(67.0)	1(33.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		2(17.0)	9(75.0)	1(8.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		5(16.0)	24(75.0)	3(9.0)	-	32(100.0)
Can wife claim her share if husband brings in a second wife?	High		11(64.0)	3(18.0)	3(18.0)	-	17(100.0)
	Other		2(67.0)	-	1(33.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		9(75.0)	3(25.0)	-	-	12(100.0)
	All		22(69.0)	6(19.0)	4(12.0)	-	32(100.0)
If you give permission, can your husband take a second wife?	High		1(6.0)	1(6.0)	15(88.0)	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	-	3(100.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		1(8.0)	-	11(92.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		2(6.0)	1(3.0)	29(91.0)	-	32(100.0)
If your husband divorces you, must you be given a share of his property?	High		-	17(100.0)	-	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	2(67.0)	1(33.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		-	11(92.0)	1(8.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		-	30(94.0)	2(6.0)	-	32(100.0)
Must you pay <u>jari</u> ** if you run off with another man?	High		1(6.0)	-	16(94.0)	-	17(100.0)
	Other		-	-	3(100.0)	-	3(100.0)
	Low		2(17.0)	-	10(83.0)	-	12(100.0)
	All		3(9.0)	-	29(91.0)	-	32(100.0)
All Responses	High		32(24.0)	53(39.0)	49(36.0)	2 (1.0)	136(100.0)
	Other		2(8.0)	6(25.0)	14(58.0)	2 (8.0)	24(100.0)
	Low		31(32.0)	31(32.0)	34(36.0)	-	96(100.0)
	All		65(25.0)	90(35.0)	97(38.0)	4 (2.0)	256(100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate row percentages.

* Daijo is dowry or property given to a girl by her natal kin at the time of her marriage. Pewa is property given to a woman by her husband.

** Jari is compensation for adultery.

the detailed explanations they gave which revealed the prevailing norms in Bakundol. It was through these open-ended responses that the full extent of the previously surmised gap between women's official legal status in the National Code and their actual rights in local practice, emerged.

For example, let us look at the first two questions concerning women's rights over daijo (gift of property or cash from a woman's natal family) and pewa (gift from the husband). According to national law, a woman has full rights over both types of property and may sell or dispose of it as she likes. Moreover, such property cannot be used or sold by the joint family without her express permission. Women's understanding of their rights showed considerable variation but only 16 percent knew that they had disposal rights and 31 percent knew that their in-laws did not. Most women believed that they had the right to use daijo and pewa as long as they remained married, but not to sell it without their in-laws' or husband's permission. Five out of the 32 women interviewed did mention that they would be able to take their daijo-pewa with them if they ever separated from their husband, but most respondents reported that direct control over this property was in the hands of their husband or in-laws. Three respondents even explained that although they knew women had full disposal rights over daijo-pewa, they didn't think women could exercise those rights without severe disapproval. Said one woman in response to the second question, "Well, the family might ask the daughter-in-law before they sell the daijo-pewa, but no matter what she thinks she could never say no."

In describing their rights over daijo almost all the women made a distinction between gorduwa (the gifts given publicly to the bride when they wash her feet during the wedding ceremony) and "whatever your parents give you secretly inside the room during the wedding or later when you visit your parents' place." Apparently, gorduwa gifts are considered the property of the husband's family and several women explained that all the gorduwa gifts would have to be divided between the brothers when the joint family separates.*

*One informant reported that the bed and bedding given to the bride and groom belong exclusively to the couple and are not to be shared. Another woman, however, reported that both the saiya (bed) and the gorduwa gifts belonged to the husband's co-parceners.

They said that it was for this reason that parents often do not give the bride all her jewellery and other gifts in public but instead keep it for her in her maiti to give her later. This is consistent with my own observation that daughters-in-law are frequently suspected of keeping jewellery in their maiti (parents' house), or even worse, pretending to "lose" jewellery given by the husband's family while actually hiding it in their maiti.

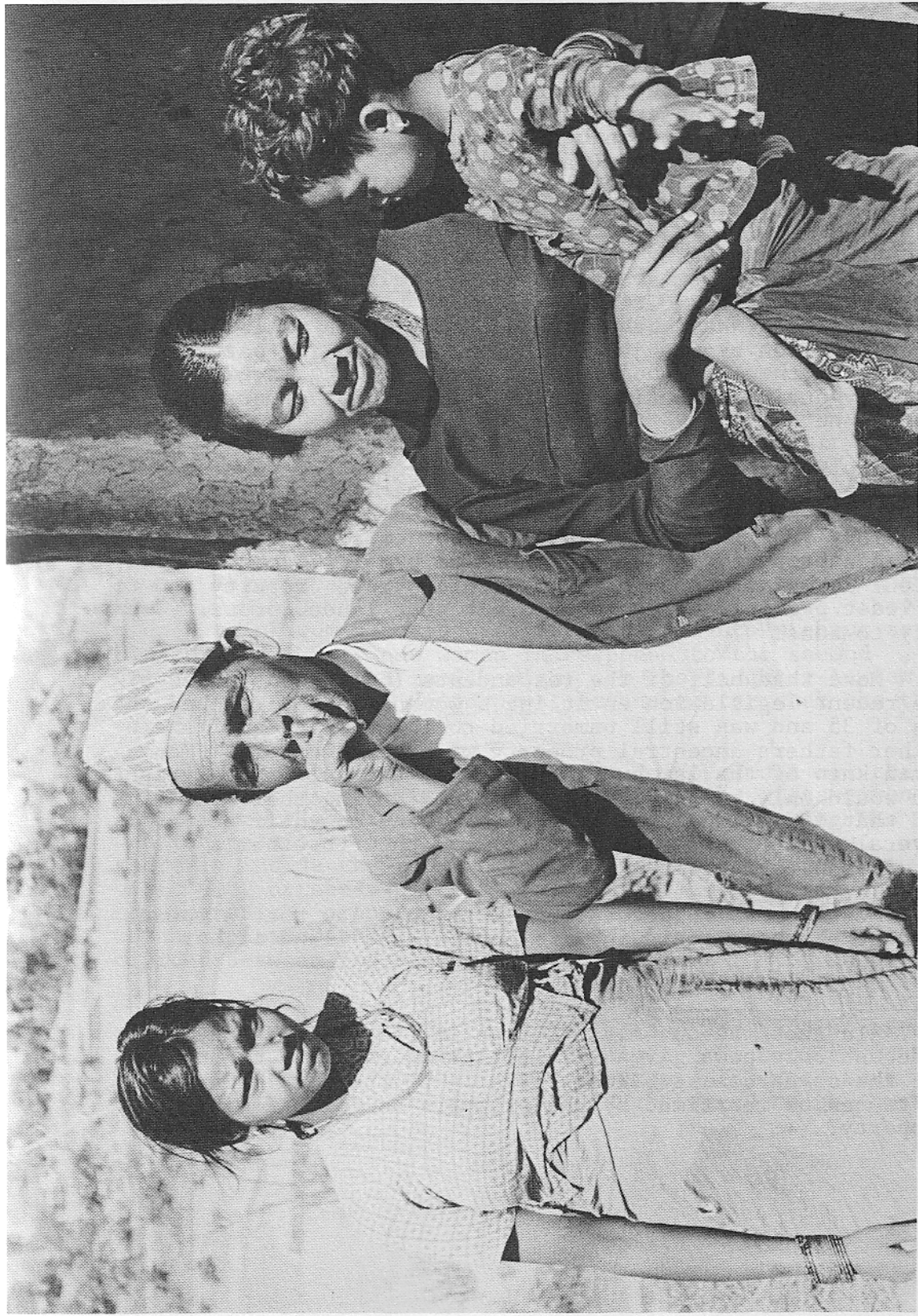
Regarding pewa, a similar distinction was made between gifts from the groom's side given publicly during the wedding and personal gifts (often secret) made by the husband to his wife after they have been married. One woman explained that "what is given by the janti (the groom's wedding party) belongs to the (husband's) joint family. What is given secretly out of affection to the wife without others' knowing, that is hers."*

What emerges from the description of daijo-pewa as practiced in Bakundol is nowhere near as favorable to women as what is set forth in the National Code. Certainly it is a far cry from the ancient Hindu ideal of stridanam or "women's property" which was meant to provide some security to out-marrying women in the form of movable property and to at least partially balance the fact that landed property went only to sons.

More than half of the respondents (56 percent) knew of the recent legislation entitling a woman who had reached the age of 35 and was still unmarried to inherit an equal share of her father's ancestral property with her brothers. Many women knew of the law but thought they had no disposal rights and would only be able to use the land during their lifetime and that it would return to the male line on their death. Several women thought they would need their brother's permission to inherit.

Most women (75 percent) knew the old law that a woman without brothers could inherit her parents' land if her

*In fact the opposite is true in the official National Code and only pewa given with full knowledge and consent of all the co-parceners belongs legally to the wife. Secret gifts can be reclaimed by the brothers as joint family property.



A Damai man with his two wives. The elder wife, unable to bear children, holds her co-wife's young daughter.

parents went to court and made a will. But only five women (16 percent) were aware that the actual line of succession has been changed to place the daughters before paternal uncles, cousins and nephews who traditionally have been the hakwalas or heirs in the strict patrilineal order of inheritance. Only these women knew that in the absence of sons, the daughter now automatically inherits after wives and grandsons of the deceased and that there is no longer any need for special court procedures.

The lowest level of legal awareness seems to be associated with polygamy and divorce. Even though we know from our discussion of marriage in Chapter II that polygamy is not widely practiced in Bakundol, the traditional belief that men are entitled to take a second wife if they get the written permission (manjur) of the first wife still prevails. Since the husband's family could often pressure a woman into giving her permission against her will, this customary law left women in a very insecure position. In fact, according to the National Code, Nepalese men are allowed to take a second wife while currently married only under very narrow circumstances including the inability of the couple to produce offspring after ten years of marriage, the wife's incurable insanity, etc.* Unless these conditions prevail, a man may be sued in court for bigamy by the first wife even though she has signed a manjur. However, only six percent of the women interviewed were aware of this.

As we noted earlier, none of the respondents knew of the recent law entitling a formally divorced woman to child support and five years of maintenance. Yet most women interviewed did have a sound practical knowledge of their rights in the traditional system in case of marriage failure. They knew that achieving a de facto divorce by simply going to stay in their natal home for several years is more advantageous to them than a formal divorce. As one informant put it, "If you get a chor patra (formal divorce document) then you get no angsa (share in the husband's ancestral property). But if

*For a full account of the "Grounds for Legal Bigamy" see page 63 of my Tradition and Change in the Legal Status of Women, the Status of Women in Nepal, Volume I: Background Report, Part 2, Center for Economic Development and Administration, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, 1979.

you just go off to your maiti and stay several years and don't go off with another man then you can come back and get a share of your husband's property." This aspect of customary practice is actually supported by the National Code (Chapter 14, Section 10A) and hence, the fact that 94 percent of the respondents gave similar answers shows that Bakundol women do have a fairly accurate working knowledge of their options in the case of marriage failure. Their lack of awareness of the recent provision for five years maintenance probably makes little practical difference in the village setting since it would appear that informal separation, which allows the wife to claim a share of her husband's property, continues to be more advantageous than formal divorce. A piece of land which can produce an income in perpetuity is far more valuable than maintenance for a fixed term -- and probably no more difficult to claim. The problem, as mentioned earlier in Chapter II, is that often, unless they have a grown son or strong political support from their maiti, women are often unable to get control of their share.

The other traditional form of divorce which, as we saw in Table 2.40, is still current in Bakundol is elopement, whereby a woman simply leaves her former husband's house and goes to live as the wife of another man. Although traditionally the new husband had to pay a compensation called jari to the former husband, this is no longer the case and according to current law, the adulterous couple are both liable to a prison sentence and a fine -- paid to the court rather than to the former husband -- of up to Rs. 2,000.* Only 9 percent of the women interviewed were aware of this law. The responses of the rest, however, indicated that attitudes toward jari payments have changed considerably over the last generation and many respondents felt that a man who accepted jari payments would lose face. As one untouchable woman explained,

"One can take jari but these days no one wants to because it seems as if the husband is selling the wife off to somebody else and he will be humiliated in front of the wife. Those without shame who are greedy may take jari, but those who are modest and have some pride would never take it."

*Divorce and remarriage by elopement in the traditional manner although punishable is not void.

Hence, even though few women knew that jari payments were no longer legal, the practice appears to be fading out on its own.

Looking at the overall level of legal awareness by economic strata in Table 4.30, we find that "legal literacy" like ordinary literacy decreases with economic standing. Compared to women in the top stratum whose responses were "incorrect" (in that they did not tally at all with the official code) in 35 percent of the cases, bottom stratum women gave "incorrect" answers in 58 percent of the cases. The variation in level of knowledge between castes is not so straightforward, however. While low caste women gave a somewhat higher percentage of responses that tallied precisely with their rights under the Code, high caste women gave more answers that were "partially correct" and both groups ended up with about the same percentage of "incorrect" responses.



CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The women of Bakundol and particularly their labor in subsistence agricultural production are, as we can now see, essential to the economic strategy -- and sometimes the very survival -- of every household in the village. We know that when home production as well as outside earnings are considered, women contribute 45 percent of the household income. We have seen that because of their double responsibility in the fields as well as in the home, women in Bakundol have a staggering work burden of 12.81 hours per day as compared to 8.16 hours for men. We know that agriculture and allied sectors which we have described as the "family farm enterprise" or Sphere I of the village economy are responsible for 71.1 percent of the household income in Bakundol. And we know that women contribute the major share of the labor absorbed by Sphere I. When only the directly productive activities* associated with the family farm are considered, women are responsible for 60 percent of the time input; when both production and family maintenance functions (i.e., domestic work) are included, women's relative time input reaches 72 percent of the total.

Yet we have seen that the major productive role of Parbatiya women is not accompanied by commensurate decision making power in the family. Although women do have nearly equal say with men in farm management decisions regarding the productive process, women made only 12.5 percent of the decisions regarding the disposal of household agricultural production on their own. While women put in 62 percent of the unpaid family labor absorbed by agricultural production (and nearly 70 percent when paid labor is included), it was men who in 81 percent of the cases decided on and handled the sale of what was produced. Even in the traditionally female domain of household expenditures, Parbatiya men made 60.6 percent of the decisions on their own while women made only 32 percent of these decisions. Only in the areas of choosing which staple food grain to cook each day and deciding about small gifts and loans to neighbors and

*Directly productive activities associated with the farm family enterprise were defined earlier as "conventional economic," i.e., agricultural production and animal husbandry, as well as "expanded economic" activities such as fuel and water collection, food processing, etc.

relatives did women lead. Decisions on medical treatment, education, travel, purchase of small household necessities, food, clothing, durables -- even on expenditures for religious and social obligations -- were dominated by men. As for major capital decisions about giving or taking large scale credit, purchase or sale of land, animals and other property or embarking on business ventures, men made more than 86 per cent of these decisions on their own without female input.

The reasons for Parbatiya women's relative lack of decision making power in the family and their generally low status vis-a-vis men are, as we have seen, extremely complex. On one level women's position in Parbatiya society can be seen as an outcome of a deep-seated cultural belief in male pre-eminence combined with the strong ideological emphasis on the maintenance of female sexual purity through protective male control of female behavior. The role models provided for women are, like the legendary Sita, paragons of submissive obedience, chastity and wifely devotion. Whatever informal power women may gain in the family, the formal structure of Hindu kinship itself with its emphasis on the solidarity of agnatic males and maintaining the purity and continuity of the male lineage, is strongly male-oriented. Moreover, this ideological orientation is re-enforced on the economic level by the patrilineal land inheritance system which places the major productive resources under male control while leaving women essentially as dependents.

These explanations are all familiar and certainly not original to this monograph. However, in our analysis of the economic structure of Bakundol we may have uncovered another related factor contributing to women's low status in the Parbatiya community and their relative lack of decision-making power in the family. Whether this phenomenon is indeed a cause or merely one of the results of women's overall position, is difficult and probably somewhat artificial to say. Probably it is both in the sense that it expresses and at the same time helps to reinforce the existing situation. The phenomenon in question is the relative exclusion of women from the market economy which is of special practical interest because, unlike the deeply rooted cultural factors mentioned above, it is amenable to direct development intervention.

Viewing the village economy from the perspective that the household is the primary unit of production and consumption, having links extending outward to the local market economy and to the wider economy beyond the village, we find that female labor is concentrated heavily in non-market production for

family consumption. The time allocation data reveal that women's input into household subsistence production, i.e., the family farm enterprise (Sphere I), is 72 percent of the total. In contrast, women's input into the local market economy (Sphere II) is only 30 percent and their participation in short term migration for employment (Sphere III) is even lower at 7 percent of the total. In short, it is principally the men of Bakundol who are involved with the market economy -- either through the sale of agricultural and other home production from Sphere I or through the sale of manufactured goods plus wages, salary or trading income earned in Sphere II or III.

In itself, this concentration of female labor in household subsistence production is not necessarily a negative phenomenon. Indeed, subsistence agriculture is the backbone of Nepal's rural economy and from the point of view of national productivity as well as the survival of the individual farm family, it makes no sense to say that women should abandon this crucial role. There are, however, some negative implications for women's status which must be understood and addressed.

One problem for women is that unlike labor input into the market sector, the family worker does not receive an identifiable payment. Instead, family farm production is, in the true sense of the word, communal. Both the input and the outcome of labor are non-individualized and there is no measurable return over which the worker has some control. Therefore, although a woman may earn a general reputation for laziness or industry through her production of "use value" for the family farm enterprise, this work does not appear to bring the same bargaining power in the family or the same sense of personal security that is attached to outside earning. Moreover, the only part of the family farm production which has a measurable "exchange value" is the marketable surplus which, as we have already noted, is handled almost exclusively by men.

The second problem has to do with the theme that has run through this entire analysis: the inside/outside dichotomy between the socially accorded spheres of men and women. As we have seen, the concentration of female labor in the subsistence sector of the Bakundol economy is accompanied by the fact that Bakundol women have very little access to development services and equally scant awareness of the associated legal, political and bureaucratic systems. Hence, Parbatiya women are seen to be confined to the "inside" not only economically in that most of their labor is absorbed by subsistence agricultural production over which they have little control, but also intellectually



As part of her "inside" duties, a Chetri woman performs the daily worship of the household gods.

in that they lack the knowledge and skills to deal with the world beyond the village. In Bakundol it has always been men's role to mediate between the family and the traditional, legal, political and commercial structures and now it is the men who are learning to use the increasingly sophisticated bureaucratic and technical systems associated with the development process. This means that not only do men retain their traditional control over the land based economic resources of Sphere I, but also they are gaining almost exclusive access to the new economic opportunities for off-farm employment in Spheres II and III. Although generally the whole family benefits economically when men find much needed sources of outside income (few men cut themselves off from their family as completely as Chanti's husband did!), nevertheless men's outside employment tends to widen the gap between the social and intellectual worlds of men and women and to increase women's economic dependency.

The point of view adopted in this analysis is that the constraints on integrating women in development are twofold. It is not simply that men are more mobile and better educated than women and hence better equipped to move out to take advantage of employment and other opportunities of development. While this is true and while the fact of differential education and access is severe, there is, I believe another aspect of the problem: the majority of the existing delivery systems have not yet effectively reached the village and household levels where women are and where they know how to function and how to get what they need. As we have seen, the citizens of Bakundol still view development as something that is going on outside the village, something that is therefore part of the proper domain of men. Development has not yet moved in to the village -- into the family, into the spatial, conceptual and political reach of women.

If women are to continue to make their essential economic contribution to subsistence agriculture without widening the gulf between them and their husbands and sons and without increasing their economic dependency, intensive efforts must be made to insure that this no longer entails being cut off from education, legal and political awareness and access to services. Even more important, opportunities for earning outside income must be created at the village level and targeted especially to women in an effort to relieve their economic insecurity and to allow them the social recognition of making a measurable contribution to the family income. In short, what must be sought from the point of view of the welfare of the family and the productivity of the nation, is not women's

abandonment of their crucial economic role on the "inside", but the enrichment and expansion of opportunities within the village. At present, development efforts are beset with their own inside/outside dichotomy -- with the difficulty of channeling outside resources to the village and family level. Perhaps *by focusing on women and their priorities, these resources can be directed where they are most needed and can at the same time help to weaken the inside/outside dichotomy between the domains of Parbatiya men and women.*

Toward this end there are a number of recommendations for action that can be made. Some of them are at the policy level and would apply not only to Parbatiya women but to most rural women in Nepal. Others are ideas or suggestions for possible project implementation in Bakundol which may be taken as examples of how broad national level policy and program ideas must always be "retranslated" at the implementation level to fit with the specifics of local priorities and possibilities. What is missing here is sufficient familiarity on the part of the author with the structure and technical capabilities the various government and non-government agencies who would be responsible for implementation. Nevertheless, as a starting point for an implementation strategy aimed at weakening the inside/outside dichotomy, the following ideas are presented under three broad policy headings:

1. Appropriate Technology. If anything is clear from the foregoing analysis of the time allocation data, it is that the women of Bakundol, like rural women throughout Nepal, are overworked. At present it would be difficult to motivate these women to participate in almost any development activity because with a working day of 12.81 hours, they are simply too busy. Hence, the first step in reaching women must be to find ways to make their current work in the family farm enterprise more efficient and productive. They need more time. The following suggestions for addressing this problem in Bakundol:

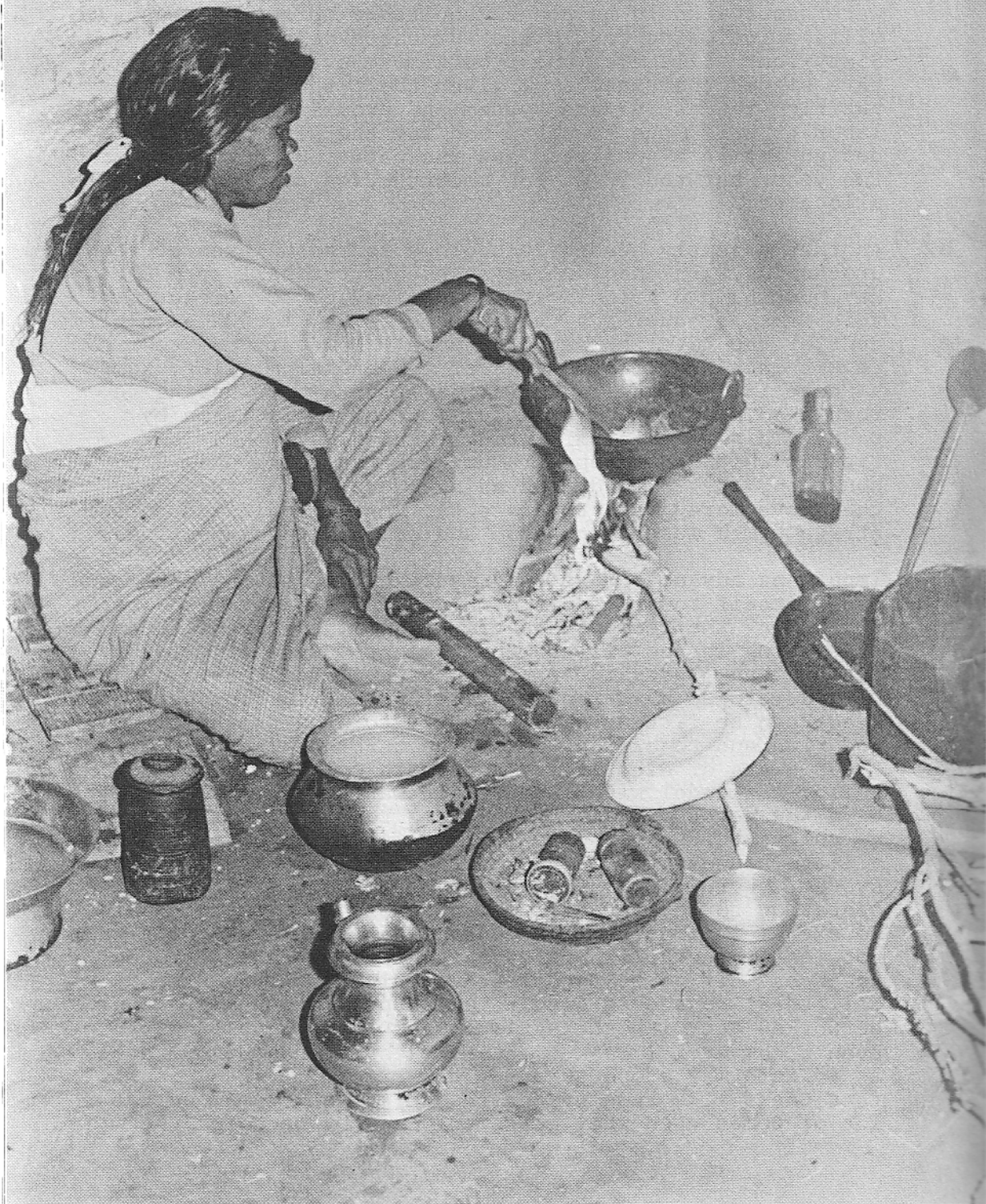
- a. In Bakundol and probably in many other villages throughout Nepal, the first appropriate technology to be introduced should be a drinking water system, the stated first priority of every woman and man in the village.

Women do 97 percent of the water collection in Bakundol and a convenient, safe, year-round source could save considerable time from the 50 minutes a day women spend in this task. A gravity flow system has been carefully surveyed and designed according to HMG specifications. In the design the four taps allowed by the modest but steady

water source would be placed equitably throughout the village including one in the low caste neighborhood. Sixty-four villagers (one from almost every household) have signed their names or given their thumb prints to a petition requesting the system and promising to donate the labor to build the trenches and lay the pipe. But the design has been completed and the petition submitted for two years but the funds for construction have not yet been allocated.

- b. Another urgently needed technology is in the area of food processing. Bakundol women spend about a half an hour a day husking and grinding grains. They do 80 percent of this work, producing a value added to Rs. 13,002 or 6 percent of the total household income. However, due to recent increases in the cost of commercial milling, women -- especially those in poorer families -- are having to return to husking and grinding more of their grain by hand. This fact is reflected by the time allocation figures which show top stratum women spending only 0.39 hours per day in food processing (despite the fact that they have more grain to process), while middle and bottom strata women must spend 0.56 and 0.55 hours respectively.

Important advances have been made in Bangladesh, India and Nepal itself towards developing more efficient means of performing the tedious and time consuming work of food processing in the village environment. Recently, for example, an impressive water powered electric turbine has been developed by a Nepalese entrepreneur. Four separate heads can be fitted to the turbine to process wheat, corn and rice and to extract oil. The turbine also generates 2,000 watts of electricity and costs only Rs. 1,000 to build. Bakundol with its extreme water problem would not have the necessary water resources to power this turbine -- unless perhaps it were built slightly outside the village boundaries at the source of the gravity flow water system. Were this system or any other commercial milling operation to be installed in Bakundol, however, it would be extremely important to ensure that the opportunity was not lost to establish it as a female owned and operated business. If no women have the capital or even the collateral to secure credit, a group loan guarantee could be worked out with the Agriculture Development Bank or even a commercial bank. The mill could then be operated as an informal cooperative by the group. It is essential that tasks like food processing which have remained the lot of women when they were performed by hand for the



Bakundol women spend 3 hours a day cooking and serving food for their families. Until appropriate technology can be introduced to decrease the time spent in such domestic tasks, women will have little time for any outside economic activities.

family should not pass to male control when they become more highly technical commercial ventures.

- c. A major area of need is for more fuel efficient and convenient cooking facilities since at present Bakundol women spend about three hours a day in this essential task. Efforts are underway to develop the "smokeless chula" and also to modify the design of traditional village stove so that it consumes less fuel.

These kinds of improvements, however, will only be adopted by village women if, for one thing, extensive on site design research is carried out to ensure that the new stoves -- or any other domestic technologies -- are actually well adapted to the needs of rural women and to the complex balance of the village-farm-house environment. For example, one attempt to introduce the smokeless chula into a hill area with relatively high monsoon rainfall reportedly ended in failure because the thatched roofs of the houses where they had been installed began to collapse after several months. Apparently the smoke of the traditional stove kept the straw thatch dry during the monsoon period and prevented the beams from rotting (Dr. Carl Fredricks, personal communication).

The other essential component of an effective appropriate technology program would have to be careful extension work. Rural women have to be made aware of these improvements and how to construct them. Or, where the technology is too complex or specialized for home manufacture, attention must be given to assisting village artisans (such as un-touchable Kami blacksmiths or Sarki leather workers who could use the extra income) learn how to make the articles cheaply out of local materials. For example, the Department of Forest's Community Forestry Project is presently working with traditional Newari potters on the design of a cheap and fuel efficient ceramic stove which the potters can make and sell as private entrepreneurs.

Extension workers are probably also the most efficient way to get useful feedback for improved designs since they should be well aware of what difficulties village women have found in adopting the new technologies and what features they like or want. The Ministry of Local Development's Women Workers have always had a village technology component in the training they receive from the Women's Affairs Training Centre and they are supposed to pass on what they learn to the village women with whom they work. An evaluation of this aspect of their work might reveal

how it could be made more effective. One possibility may be through cooperation with the Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST) at Tribhuvan University where innovative village technologies are developed and tested but in a laboratory rather than a village setting. Another possibility for the dissemination of appropriate technology may be through the Small Farmer Groups.

- d. Technologies also need to be developed and disseminated to women for improved food storage and drying techniques and agricultural practices such as composting and seed selection.

2. Education, Training and Extension. Women need to gain the skills that will prepare them to deal with the world beyond the family and the village. At the same time, the various development services and bureaucratic systems which extend to the district and the village -- such as the judiciary, banking institutions, health and agricultural extension services -- must make an effort on their part to simplify their own procedures and become more accessible to their own clients. To do this, institutions serving the village should modify their employment policies to allow the recruitment of local men and women. Since few villagers -- and especially women -- have the kind of educational qualifications generally required for government service, this would entail either waiving the formal education criterion or creating a pre-entry level into which local employees could be recruited. The assumption behind this suggestion is that local women given practical training in agricultural extension, health, loan procedures, family planning, etc., will be in a much better position than educated outsiders to contact potential clients, de-mystify procedures and make services more accessible to women. These locally recruited extension agents could do much to weaken the inside/outside dichotomy by taking up the role as mediator between women and the development bureaucracies -- a rôle which in the Parbatiya community is at present filled almost exclusively by male household heads. If women are to eventually be fully integrated into the development process, then the importance of providing girls with equal access to education can hardly be over-emphasized. It is encouraging that female enrollment is increasing in Bakundol and throughout the country. Yet national statistics show that the female dropout rate during the first three years of schooling is between 54 and 62 percent. Moreover, the Bakundol data show that parents want a much lower level of education for their daughters than for their sons. Approximately 23 percent said they wanted no education for their daughters (as compared to only 1.6 percent who wanted no education for their sons) and 13.3 percent said that less than three years of schooling was sufficient for girls.

As we have seen, the major reason for not sending girls to school appears to be economic. In Bakundol, girls in the 10-14 age group put in a work day which is only 20 percent less than of an adult male. In this context, the observation that 51.4 percent of the parents were willing to keep girls out of school because the family needed their labor for the domestic and agricultural work is not surprising. The efforts to make women's work more efficient through improved technologies could also have the additional benefit of lightening girls' workload sufficiently to allow them to attend school. In addition, experiments with more flexible school hours (or perhaps a "core curriculum" focused on essential literacy and numeracy skills condensed into two or three hours a day with other subjects optional) and services for day care of younger siblings at the school could be tried as means to decrease the female drop-out rate.

3. Group Formation and the Creation of Opportunities to Earn Outside Income. These two goals, both equally essential to drawing women into the mainstream of development, appear to be inextricably related at the implementation level. Forming village women into self-reliant groups that can identify their own priorities and can organize to achieve them is perhaps the most important step in expanding women's horizons and increasing their interest and ability to participate in the local political process. In fact, it is probably only in conjunction with the group formation process that either the testing and dissemination of labor saving technologies or the delivery of training and extension recommended in (1) and (2) above can take place in any meaningful way.

However, given what we now know about women's lack of spare time and the importance of their economic contribution to the household, it seems unlikely that village women will be motivated to participate in such groups unless these groups provide a means to earn increased income. It is therefore recommended that group formation be initiated around income generation projects.

In many communities there is already a strong tradition of female entrepreneurship which merely needs to be encouraged and expanded. For example, among the eight communities studied in this series, the Baragaonle and the Lohorong Rai women were all found to be excellent business women who already know how to turn a profit in trading or the sale of home brewed beer. In these and other communities, women already have handicraft skills such as weaving or rug making and merely need assistance

in commercializing these traditional tasks. To implement income generation projects in such communities, the major requirement would seem to be for credit and perhaps training in management and marketing skills and in some cases assistance with supply of raw materials or improved production equipment.

In a community like Bakundol, however, we have seen that there is no tradition of female entrepreneurship. In fact, women have been sheltered as much as possible from all market transactions. Moreover, except for the small minority of the untouchable tailor women and the few Newari women who know how to dye and print cloth, most women in the village have few handicraft skills which might form the basis for an income generation scheme. This does not mean that there is no scope for income generation projects in Bakundol or other traditional Parbatiya villages. But it does mean that in addition to the components mentioned above (such as credit, raw material supply, etc.), projects implemented in villages like Bakundol must also provide intensive skill training from the beginner level as well as orientation to the most basic business methods.

After informal discussions with village women and the identification of several possible projects, the next step towards implementation would have to be a simple feasibility study for each of the projects identified to determine whether or not the project is "bankable" from the point of view of the credit institution involved.

Nothing of a very technical nature has been attempted here, but a few ideas for possible income-generation schemes in Bakundol are suggested below:

- a. Since Bakundol suffers from a scarcity of both fuel and fodder, one useful community development project would be to upgrade the existing public grazing land with improved fodder grass and where possible to plant quick growing fuel and fodder trees. As can be seen from the map (Figure 1.1) there is considerable public land in Bakundol but most of it is practically barren. The one area that is fertile is the "old road" which is about eight to ten feet wide and winds through several neighborhoods in the village. This land is under-used at present and could perhaps be planted in a fast growing species leaving just a foodpath down the middle.

Much more difficult to solve than the technical forestry aspects (which species to plant, etc.) of such a project would be the issues of ownership, protection and distribution of the products. At present the public areas belong

to the Panchayat and the old road is technically the property of the Roads Department. If either the Panchayat or the Roads Department could rent this waste land out to a group of villagers -- preferably women since they do most of the fuel and fodder collection work -- the group could then pay a certain percentage of their earnings as rent as soon as they began harvesting fuel and fodder. Whether the area available in Bakundol is sufficient to produce a surplus for sale or exchange in the village or just enough to supply the household needs of the group members is just one of the many technical questions which would have to be addressed in assessing the feasibility of such a scheme.

- b. Alternatively, the same land could be devoted to sericulture. Although it would require a larger initial investment, sericulture is very labor intensive and would provide employment for more women in cultivating and harvesting the mulberry trees, rearing the silkworms, spinning the silk yarn and eventually weaving. In addition, the mulberry trees must be extensively pruned twice a year and the cuttings would provide a good source of fuelwood.
- c. In the Sarki neighborhood the paths are littered with animal bones. It may be possible for someone to develop a small business to collect and pulverize those bones for use and sale as chicken feed.
- d. Although none of the women in Bakundol currently know how to weave, many expressed an interest in learning. Channels for the supply of raw materials and the marketing of finished products already exist in Banepa and Dhulikhel. If the women could be trained to achieve a sufficiently high degree of proficiency, they could earn money either by working in nearby commercial workshops or by taking out a loan and purchasing their own loom and raw materials to weave at home. The second option requires more risk and organizational skill but is also potentially more profitable and more convenient in that a loom set up at home allows women to weave at odd moments when they find time.
- e. Many of the tasks women already perform for the farm family enterprise could be commercialized on a small scale. Loans could be provided to women who wish to take up goat raising, poultry or dairying. In addition, the feasibility of bee keeping and mushroom growing could be investigated. Since

Bakundol has relatively easy access to the capital city there would be no difficulty in finding markets for mushrooms or other luxury foods. Another possibility suggested for commercializing one of women's traditional tasks is establishing a women-run cooperative milling operation.

The aim of these suggested projects, aside from enriching the economy of Bakundol in general, is to draw women into the local market economy by creating opportunities within the village for them to make identifiable personal income. As the data in Table 3.27 suggest, most of this income will be contributed to the needs of the family. Of those women who reported personal income, 45.8 percent spent the money on general household expenditures and another 12.5 percent spent it on their children while 8.3 percent saved their money for the future. Giving women the opportunity to earn outside income will not only increase their economic security and raise their self esteem, but will also increase the economic well being of the whole family.

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