

LOGOLI WOMEN OF WESTERN KENYA SPEAK:
NEEDS AND MEANS

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ABSTRACT

Logoli Women of Western Kenya Speak:
Needs And Means

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The research on women's power in collective and capitalist structures recognises the important economic position of women. Research in Maragoli, Kenya, shows that women's work is not universally confined to the domestic sphere, nor is gender inequality in productive relations a result of the eclipse of communal and family-based production and property ownership. Women believe gender inequality is increasing in Maragoli and are resisting. Logoli women attribute the trend to increasing gender inequality to men's actions in entrenching traditional cultural values of patriarchal ideology which serve to reduce and deny women's growing productive role and value. Maragoli women are not controlled by patriarchal ideology although these values are part of the cultural rhetoric. In Maragoli, women assume a posture of ideological and institutional acceptance attached to "the Avalogoli way" as deliberate social action while recognising that "today life is not fair to women". They are producers of both use and exchange value in the collective and capitalist structures,

extending "home work" responsibilities to "outside work" using cultural avenues to power. Their skills are generated within the collectivity through the accumulation of information and influence which accords them a culturally-valued reputation as "good Logoli wives". Women have power even in a society with a patriarchal ideology and this power is growing as they recognise that male elders no longer rule in their best interests.

This research is based on fieldwork conducted in Maragoli from August 1987 to June 1988.

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To the people of Logoli, I say, Mirembe. Asande muno for giving your time and intimacy to provide the details of this study. You contributed the ambience for participant observation as you embraced me in your lives and provided me with your support and friendship. It is my hope that the information produced in this study will provide further legitimisation of the classification, "She is one of ours."

Avana va Mulogoli, my husband and my children, thank you for your love and your sacrifice. I dedicate this thesis to you.

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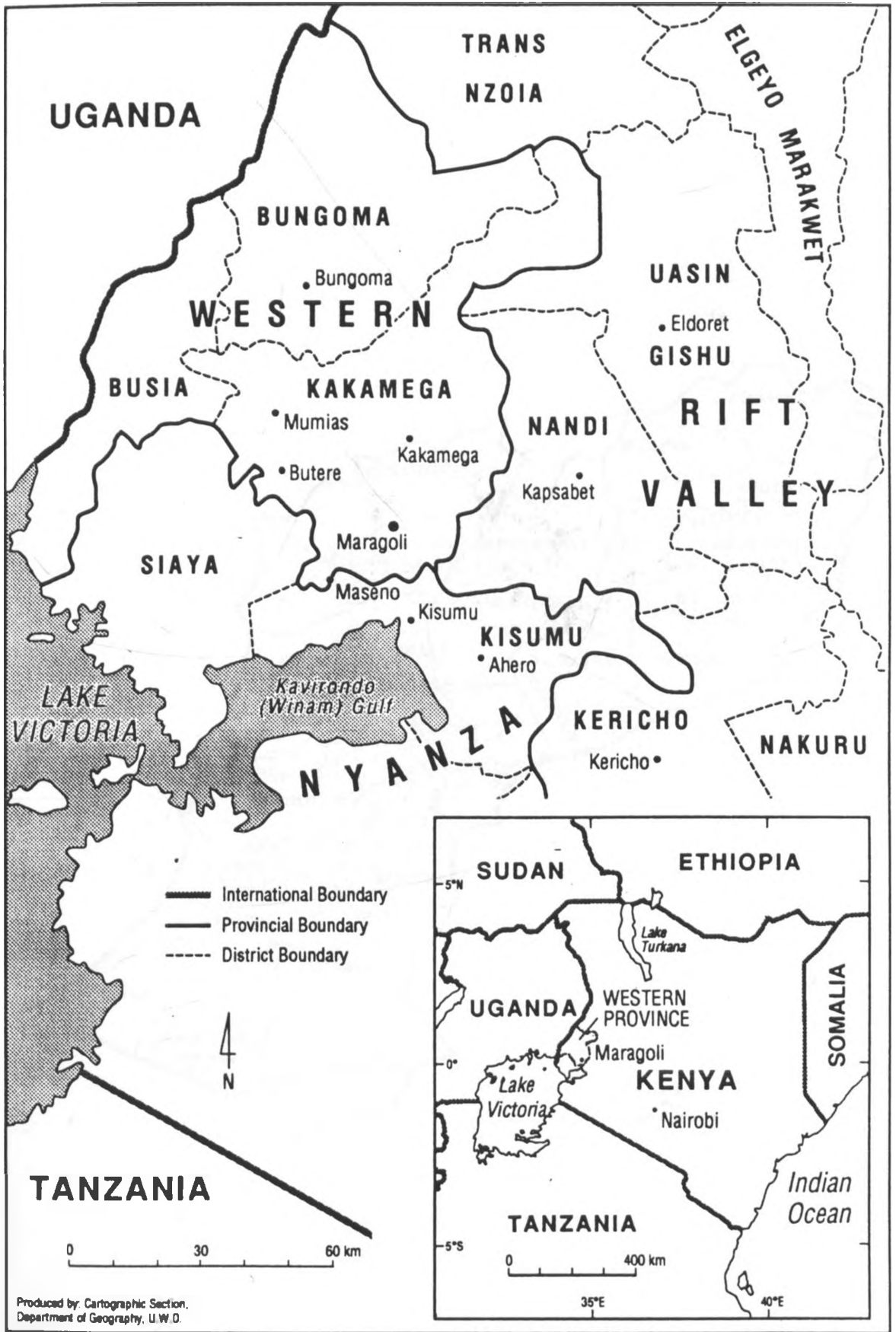
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Map 1: Kenya and Western Province



Map 2: Maragoli

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Women have forgotten their place and so have men. When the ancients went to war it was the men who went first, but it was the women who dragged the rocks. Without the rocks the men could not fight the war (February 17, 1988)¹

The man is *omwene hango*, the commander, he is the owner, he is in charge. Although we all have a higher authority who makes the ultimate decisions, it is a man's duty to be in charge of his home, his wife, his children (Barnard November 17, 1987).

This thesis is a study of women's power. It turns on a gendered approach to the subtle and complex arenas of women's power as exercised in economic, social and political spheres among the Avalogoli² of Western Kenya. The Avalogoli live in an agrarian society integrated in a market economy within the confines of a capitalist state. Women's power emerges from this analysis as a vital organising principle in Avalogoli society.

Patriarchy is a pronounced ideology of Avalogoli society. The power of men is taken for granted; both women and men say that it is predominant. This ideology has been reinforced in recent history by a British ideology of patriarchy which diffused to the Avalogoli through missionaries and colonials. The Kenyan state also legitimises a patriarchal ideology that is a mix of

tradition and capitalism. Women's power is decreased by mutually reinforcing spheres of similar ideologies.

Women's power is both decreased and increased by the penetration of capitalism. In the past, the structural separation of Logoli women's and men's work gave women areas of power outside of men's control. The clear division between men's work and women's work has been eroded by capitalism. Population has increased, land resources have decreased and there is a heavy dependence on market economy. Women are required by necessity to confront these difficulties and to participate in areas of work that are considered men's work. Thus, this extension of their economic activity has also increased women's power as they are instrumental in providing necessary goods and services.

Logoli men demonstrate patriarchal ideology economically, socially and politically. Drawing on a structure of patriarchy said to be grounded in tradition, reinforced by colonialism and the independent Kenyan state, men attempt to impose control over women's production, try to isolate women and subject women to increased physical violence. The economic power of women has weakened many of the behavioural manifestations of patriarchal power, but not its expression in words and manners.

Despite the intrusion of capitalism and increasing expression of patriarchal ideology, Logoli women had and have considerable power and both men and women when pressed

tacitly recognise women's power. Like most women in rural East Africa, Logoli women perform physically demanding labour, tasks that are indispensable to their family and the community. Logoli women appear at first glance to be marginal actors in a world controlled by men, their traditional spheres of power, e.g., in subsistence production and in reciprocal relations having been weakened, the short supply of land and cattle pushing women into reliance on wage and casual labour, and the additional economic burden of state emphasis through *Nyayo*, on individual, community and national *maendeleo* (development) (cf. Abwunza 1990a). Avalogoli translate *maendeleo* as "progress" in English.

But these women are goal setters for themselves and the community. They are active economic providers for their families, contributors to political and community causes and economic innovators. Their willingness to publicly divulge their daily lives for inclusion in this research attests to their self-confident assumption of the importance of their activities. Their words contribute insight into economic, social and political issues of women's place in the Avalogoli world. Their successful definition of the world around them permits a recognition of their intelligence as well as their hard work.

African women have ... capacity... to organise themselves and set their own priorities. ...the international community, and especially those interested in women in development, are getting

wise in terms of attitudes and practices regarding Third World women. The matriarchal⁴ attitude that entailed telling such women what to do and predicating that advice on Western norms and experiences is giving way to listening to them and serving as facilitators in terms of resources...(Robertson 1988:427-28).

Logoli women say, "Today life is not fair for women", with an implied comparison to men. In resignation they add, "But that's the way life is." Their comments establish the gender constructions of their culture and thus their relationships with men, as increasingly problematic. They are aware that their power is threatened by an increasing patriarchal ideology and see this as detrimental to family and community survival and progress. To counter this decrease in power, women posture an adherence to men's rule as *omwene hango*, ("commanders"), and transform that posture into influence in order to facilitate their own interests. They also rely on a tradition of women's solidarity in reciprocal relations and "back door decisions". The former is used as a means for social and economic survival. The latter, "back door decisions", facilitates the former and also acts as a resistance to encroaching patriarchal ideology. This study, done in collaboration with Logoli women, describes and analyses their struggle.

Theoretical Problems

To understand how Logoli women see their relationship with men, the concepts of power and patriarchy and their interaction with capitalism must be examined in the context

of Avalogoli life. The definition of power is taken from Weber: "[T]he probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests"(Weber 1968:1:53).⁵

The definition of patriarchy is also taken from Weber: "...a form of (traditional⁶) domination characteristic of the household group or clan organized on kinship and economic terms"(Sydie 1987:56 on Weber), granting, "...the authority of the father, the husband, the senior of the house, the sib elder over the members of the household and sib..."(Weber 1958:296; Sydie 1987:56). A societal structure of patriarchy assumes men's "own will", the power of men over all those members in a society who are not considered men, i.e., women, unmarried men and children. In this usage, patriarchy is a monolith, fixed and immovable. For those who are not men, patriarchy is a material and symbolic evil of their oppression. For example, "All aspects of peasant life are determined according to the Ethiopian patriarchal family system, which is guided by the principles of domination of old over young and male over female"(Tadesse 1982:211). Patriarchy is, "A system of interrelated social structures through which men exploit women"(Walby 1986:51). Patriarchy is "The rule of the father or the domination of women by men(Vock 1988:83). "The objective of feminism in general has been posed as the

establishment of a theory of patriarchy, defined as the rule of men over women"(Stichter and Parpart(1988:11).

Patriarchy is used in combination with capitalism as, "...capitalist-patriarchy to denote the system which maintains women's exploitation and oppression"(Mies 1986:37).

'Patriarchy' literally means the rule of fathers. But today's male dominance goes beyond the 'rule of fathers', it includes the rule of husbands, of male bosses, of ruling men in most societal institutions, in politics and economics, in short, what has been called 'the men's league' or 'men's house'(Mies 1986:37).

Criticism against the use of patriarchy as a decisive concept notes the difficulty in its definition when it is defined as reified "male power"(Sydie 1987:166), fixed and unchanging over time(cf. Rubin 1975; Barret 1980; Armstrong and Armstrong 1983; Burstyn 1985). Patriarchy is often reified into a natural structure, its cultural content removed, leading some writers to think of it as a timeless, unchanging structure. For example, patriarchy is used "...interchangeably with 'sexism', a reminder that there is one sex which is dominated, another which is subjected", and structurally, as the "...political and social control of women by men"(Coward 1983:8).

Fox in discussing "patriarchy" notes the linkage of structure and ideology in that there are "...three key paradigms in discussions of 'patriarchy': patriarchy as collective male dominance permeating society, patriarchy as

a self-contained system, and patriarchy specifically as the sex/gender system"(1988:165). All her paradigms are cultural, combining ideology and structure. Fox concludes her conceptualisation of "patriarchy" stating that there is a "...need to consider both social structure and ideology/subjectivity"(Fox 1988:177, my emphasis). This is the position I am using in this thesis. A danger in conceptualising patriarchy as only structure is evident as it is conceived of monolithically, fixed in time as a structure of society; or only ideologically in that, patriarchy is, "The *feeling* [his italics] of both men and women that the male's will dominates the female's"(Goldberg 1973:31).⁷

Patriarchy among Avalogoli appears to be both distinct from and articulating with, men's rhetoric and displays of power. It is legitimised by both reified social structure and ideology. Structurally, men are the "owners" of land. Ideologically, as men see it, their ownership extends to include production from the land, production from the realms of reciprocal relations and production from wage or casual labour. Their ownership further extends to permit them to be "in charge", in all aspects of decision-making. As noted in the second preface quotation to this chapter, men see they have a duty to "command" women. "Command" is evident as men display their right to rule by words and actions. A traditional military analogy, that men "rule as commanders"

is used to express both structure and ideology. The term "omwene hango", "commander" is now used to refer to the senior male in a home, the "owner of the home". The structure and ideology of "male command" are the ideal in Avalogoli society.

However, the first preface quotation reminds that prior to colonialism and independence, in "the time of the ancients", women did influence men's power. If women resisted, men's "own will" was impotent. Men's power was qualified by women's cooperation. Both men and women "have forgotten" this in the processes of change. Today, Logoli women's action and resistance remind men and women of women's "place" in Avalogoli society, a place that impedes both structural and ideological arrangements of patriarchy.

The kind of power of greatest interest in this thesis is that of women exercising their "own will despite resistance", in a society where structurally and ideologically men do have power over women. The purpose is not to reduce gender contradictions to "myths about male or female rule", but to provide analysis "about real relationships of men and women" (Sacks 1979:122).

The Avalogoli mode of production prior to colonialism and resulting capitalist intervention approximated the "kin corporate mode of production" (Sacks 1979). "People are all members of a corporation with collective ownership of the main means of production and, in one or another sense, are

thus political decision makers with respect to the basis of their group's economic well-being" (Sacks 1979:115).

Avalogoli speak of a sense of a collective action and ownership in the past as well as today, for example men's ownership of land but women's rights to land, as well as a notion of collective action expanding through forms of reciprocity. In practice, differences and hierarchy interfere with these idealised expectations. For example, in the memory of Logoli men and women, men have always been, or are aging toward, their position of *omwene hango*, "owners".

Avalogoli land ownership is a system of inalienable land rights inherited patrilineally. Within the patriline, ownership of the means of production is today described as "family land" in the sense of an idealised lineage collective, land owned by all for the benefit of all family members, men, women and children. In actuality, the senior elder controls the land and oversees land distribution. But acceptance of elder decisions depends on the power of the elder and the strength of the opposition. Women had and have rights to land through marriage and women were and are, ("always"), the farmers. Men were "warriors", "hunters", "commanders" and assisted in digging the land and building houses.⁸ Today the ideal for men is in wage labour. A similar idealisation of the lineage collective affected and affects the allocation of products, through, for example,

reciprocal obligations and benefits in kin and affine networks. Within this collective sphere, men and women lived separate and autonomous lives through, "women's work", "men's work", that promoted separate spheres. Differences and hierarchies existed in each sphere. The right of appeal against untenable hierarchy existed and still exists.

The Avalogoli kin corporate mode, with its collective underpinning, integrated and articulated with capitalism during British colonial rule. The collective system was affected by a British ideology of patriarchy, amplifying the role of *omwene hango*. Important changes in political aspects were in the imposition of chieftainship, first a non-Avalogoli Paramount Chief, replaced in the early 1930's by Avalogoli location chiefs, and bounded reservation areas(cf. Abwunza 1985). Avalogoli continued kin corporate relations and traditional land owning practices and aspects of reciprocity, in these reserve areas. Logoli men began a circular relationship with outside wage labour imposed by British rule, (the need for labour on settler farms and taxation) and their land at home. In men's absence, women added men's labour and managerial responsibilities to their farming duties and worked to produce and feed the male labour force(cf. Pala Okeyo 1980, for the Luo; Oboler 1985, for the Nandi; Nasimiyi 1985; Abwunza 1985; Stamp 1986 for the Kikuyu). At the time when women's responsibilities increased, women's and men's worlds became more separate yet

less autonomous for women, as a British ideology of patriarchy, of the male owner and breadwinner, was imposed. Women's contribution in their own commercial ventures was undervalued even as women began to engage in trade (cf. Ogotu 1985). The title deed system of land ownership for Africans was introduced toward the end of British rule, (Swynnerton Plan, 1954).⁹ The British ideology of men as owners of the means of production, the land, and patriarchal control in relations of production, articulated with the kin corporate mode of production. The capitalist mode of production began to invade more thoroughly as Ahalogoli were faced with increasing population and decreasing land sources and the imposition of needed and wanted market goods. The settler need for labour began to decline during and after the depression of the 1930's and the reserves were further exploited by colonial needs for African agriculture as subsidy (cf. Heyer 1975; Pala Okeyo 1980; Abwunza 1985). Colonial attention was directed to men, as owners and supposed farmers, reflecting the imposed patriarchal ideology (cf. Davison 1988).

In independent Kenya, the traditional patriarchal ideology and the imposed patriarchal ideology articulate. The protective aspects of the traditional kin corporate group appear to be diminishing as the capitalist mode of production further invades. But the state bureaucracy is schizophrenic in that it promotes sharing and reciprocity

while at the same time encouraging capitalism which contains the ingredients of individual ownership and accumulation. Men are the assumed owners. Development initiatives are directed to men but only rhetorically to women(cf. Staudt 1985; Nasimiya 1985). Women are assumed to be exclusively subsistence or domestic producers, even though it is obvious that providing subsistence today requires women to engage in the capitalist sector in order to maintain a decent standard of living.

To say that only domestic power relations produce value for women whether connected to their production or reproduction is inappropriate in African societies as women participate in both domestic and public spheres(Hay and Stichter 1984: Stichter 1988: Stichter and Parpart 1988: Hay 1988). Women's power is felt and enhanced through their work in the private and public domains. Making a living necessitates Avalogoli's women's involvement in both private and public domains. Patriarchy as structure and ideology is challenged within the working lives of women. Women's participation in the two domains indicates a relationship which "...instead is highly responsive to--indeed, [is] a central part of--changes in the relations of production as a whole"(Leacock 1986:x). This integration of work contributes to the negative consequences for Logoli women and their society, but also provides the location of gender struggles which could re-establish the integrity of power.

Women's integration of work allows criticism to be applied to an assumed mode of production for women, capitalist labour valuation and a world systems approach. For example, feminist criticism (cf. Stichter and Parpart 1988) is levelled against a "domestic mode of production" (Meillassoux), "lineage mode" (Rey) and "family mode" (Caldwell) where women's production is seen to be confined to a domestic sphere. Additionally, women's integration of work provides a challenge to the orthodox position that labour valuations in capitalist and non-capitalist modes are absolutely incommensurable. Non-capitalist production is socially regulated and therefore value-creating (cf. Stichter and Parpart 1988). A "world systems" view describes household production and reproduction strategies as ultimately defined only by capital. It leaves no room for gender struggles within a household and for differing and contesting claims. Ironically, if the "world systems" approach is followed, many of today's African societies are left unanalyzable in regard to women's power.

In Avalogoli society, people's survival depends upon two modes of production. All members participate in both spheres, capitalist and non-capitalist, because creating and maintaining Avalogoli "proper way of life" depends on it.

The Avalogoli way is also connected with reproduction. It is recognised that in any mode of production domestic labour contributes significantly to surplus value (Gardiner

1975) and that the labour force is socially constituted (Edholm, Harris and Young 1977), (cf. Stichter and Parpart 1988). The danger in conflating human reproduction with the reproduction of the mode of production or with the reproduction of labour power is also recognised (cf. Edholm, Harris and Young 1977). But what is important to recognise is that "...some part of the multifaceted "use values" of children must usually be marketed for the family and the individuals to survive" (Stichter and Parpart 1988:9). Women's value in human reproduction cannot be discounted in African societies. Reductionism may be overcome in empirical contexts by attention to value in fertility. Among Avalogoli, "posterity", i.e. having many children is united with "power"; "power comes from children" as it is connected to the children's labour. Value may be connected with labour and incomes from "posterity" and how these relate to and affect the 'rule' of male elders. Among Avalogoli "posterity" requires reciprocal relationships between fathers and sons (elders and juniors) in ownership of land and labour (Abwunza 1985). Logoli males as well as females use fertility as a strategy for acquiring status and ensuring survival (Abwunza 1986). Obviously, women figure preeminently in this process. "Posterity" is dependent on women's human reproduction. In a sense, in a lineage society, there are only ancestors and children. As long as a person is alive s/he is identified in terms of their

ancestors, that is their parents. One is always a child of the lineage in terms of responsibilities. Women are not only producing the "next generation of workers" but also the next generation of actors in reciprocal relations, productive and otherwise, as well as a future generation of ancestors, all of which are vital aspects of Avalogoli society.

Another problematic issue in establishing women's power in situations where patriarchal ideology pervades lies in their consciousness of oppression. Sydnie notes that patriarchal ideology discounts any likelihood of men and women acting together against oppressive conditions; "...the private, familial exploitation of women that persists under capitalism...nullifies the assumption of a unified class consciousness among men and women(Sydnie 1987:120). Balbus concurs in reference to the penetration of patriarchy;

[I]f there is a domination-subjection relationship based on sexual identity, then there is a structural basis for hostility, rather than solidarity...If the male worker views his wife as inferior, he cannot see her as a "comrade"; indeed he is probably more likely to vent his rage on her than on his capitalist boss. On the other hand, since the woman is oppressed by her husband, she has good reason to view him as an "oppressor", as part of the problem rather than part of the solution(Balbus in Sydnie 1987:120).

Logoli women identify men as part of the problems they face in their society. Women say, "Men and women should work together to survive and progress," in recognition that gender cooperation is deficient but necessary. Yet Logoli

women are also reproducing the ideology of patriarchy, which is part of their oppression. What is acknowledged in this thesis is women's consciousness in doing so as it promotes their own interests.

The concepts of power and patriarchy and their interaction with capitalism are essential to understanding Logoli women today. However, the conceptualisation of patriarchy continues to present analytical difficulty unless women's interests are taken into account. Recognition of differing degrees of power existing in a kin corporate mode of production articulating with degrees of power in a capitalist mode of production only deals with part of the problem. Women's power can only be conceptualised by a further analysis of the pervasiveness of patriarchy as an ideology.

Who rules in whose interest is helpful in understanding this situation. As mentioned, Avalogoli socially articulate their lives in terms of an ideal patriarchy following the "rule" of *omwene hango* and say this is the desired form of what ought to take place in their society. Patriarchal ideology provides the *vika*, (steps) to a "proper Avalogoli" way of life. But patriarchal ideology has limited reinforcement in that the patriarch must exercise his power in the interests of those he rules (Weber 1968:3:1012). Without this exercise, the patriarch as person, (for Weber, not the position) may be replaced. There is a possibility

here for transformation of power. Patriarchy loses its effectiveness if the interests of those ruled are not maintained.

Feminist theory has been wary of utilising Weber's conceptualisation of power in patriarchy (but see Sanday 1974; Schegal 1977; Begler 1978; Oboler 1985). For Weber, patriarchy was an expression of power relations, based on "irrational" traditional power, that had as its origin marital arrangements and household. This association with traditional power provides for historical correspondence some see as inappropriate for current relevance. In addition, the origin of patriarchy in marital arrangements and household may provide for a biological determinism most would prefer to avoid as the political implications are devastating. Yet, as Sydnie says, "Weber's ideas are very relevant to feminist concerns, particularly with regard to the definition of patriarchy as the power of men over women, experienced on a day-to-day basis by all women, and transcending particular modes of production" (1987:51), (cf. Richardson 1981:15). I see the basis of power in irrational authority as important for understanding aspects of societal inequality, gender and otherwise, in that power depends on continuing fulfilment of role expectations which can be challenged if unfulfilled, leading to change. Among the Logoli, patriarchal ideology says that "commanders" must be "good" Logoli men, honourably abiding by custom, i.e.,

providing women with land (or equivalent production) and bride-wealth, in order to receive their authority from those they rule.

In this thesis I offer two suggestions. First, that we overcome our reluctance to examine the association of patriarchy with traditional power, a reluctance which extends to examination of the origin of patriarchy in marital and household arrangements. Second, that we look at the relationship of patriarchy with traditional power in order to examine where and how transformations in the power relationships may take place. I depend upon the voices of Logoli women who experience the relations of patriarchy in marital and household arrangements, to assist in this examination.

In this study I develop two points. First, structures of patriarchy and ideologies of patriarchy are inextricably linked, but differ in the way each contrasts the actual and the ideal. "[T]he organization and the experience of patriarchy are different historically and cross-culturally (Sydie 1987:51). Neither are monoliths. Second, we cannot neglect women's power, their "own will" in these processes of change. Women are not merely acted upon. They are also actors. Among Avalogoli, in the articulation of the kin corporate mode of production and the capitalist mode of production, women have postured adherence to the tradition of patriarchal ideology to serve their own

interests and those of their community. Indeed an additional part of women's value is in maintaining the ideology that permits patriarchal relations to continue (cf. Fox 1988). The rule of "commanders" is dependent upon women's interest.

Today, Logoli women's interests are not maintained by the Avalogoli ideology of patriarchy or the ideology of the patrimonial capitalist state. Logoli women attain power by accruing information and utilising influence to confront patriarchal control. A symbol of women's power is the idea of *vivuni vye kwandangu*, (back door decisions) discussed in Chapter 5. In this study there is evidence that women attain individual power and their individual power extends, influencing communal action in aspects of survival and "progress".

Fieldwork

The processes of gathering and ordering data for this study were influenced by a general critique of research on African women. Although the literature represents data on demographic, economic, political, educational and social aspects, the indicators which would explain the situation of these women are still not fully understood. We are beginning to have a sense of what day-to-day life is for women in different cultures, their position and image and the diversity that is likely to exist in their roles and statuses. But they need to be given the opportunity to

state their own views.¹⁰ Emphasis in this research was therefore placed on Logoli women's views and assessments of their social reality, their participation in economic, political and social activities. Their views are discussed in terms of the positive and negative impacts of modernisation and development on their work-loads and their lives.

To that end, with my husband and four of our children, I lived in a permanent house, in a Maragoli yard in one of the Maragoli villages described in Chapter 3.¹¹ One aspect of my legitimisation of residence stems from my work as an anthropologist. Another stems from a kinship tie. I am married to an Umulogoli. The fieldwork during which most of these data were collected took place from August 1987 through May 1988.¹² In addition I have spent varying amounts of time in Maragoli during five previous trips between 1975 and 1984.

The following techniques were utilised to collect data in the field. Participant observation as recommended by Howell was used in the sense of the four phases he recommends: making friends, being where the action is, putting it all down, and putting it all together (1973:367). This was accomplished in two ways. First, as friendships and relationships were previously established I drew upon these to extend the area of participant observation and gradually increased my involvement with families and

community affairs. Once my interest in people was established most days began with a woman or a group of women calling on me to bring my "hoe" (pen) and join them.¹³ Second, I utilised what Staudt has called a "geographically purposive sample"(1985a:63) by which is meant sampling according to the physical accessibility of interviewees to the investigator. For me, geographically purposive meant any Maragoli person within walking or sometimes driving distance, who would consent to being interviewed. Thus, a purposive sample for me is defined as "physically and socially accessible". As a result, in most cases I was party to the action that took place, whether it involved celebration or sorrow, going to market, digging in *shambas*, (gardens, Kiswahili) collecting water, firewood, or vegetables, or engaging in long conversations over meals and endless cups of *chai* (tea) during visiting.

I conducted open-ended interviews with 410 women along with varying numbers of members in their families.¹⁴ Three hundred of these interviews took place in the sub-location under study, covering 77% of sub-location yards and 26% of households (each yard averaging about three households).¹⁵ Seventy of the interviews were conducted with women in other areas of Maragoli; twenty were conducted with Maragoli women living in a neighbouring division; and an additional twenty interviews were conducted with Maragoli women living in Nairobi. In these interviews, I collected census

information pertaining to all family members: age, sex, place of residence, household composition and relationships (i.e. *inyumba* (house) membership) within that composition, marital status, number of children, education, religion, land size, occupation and area of occupation. These interviews taking from one to four hours, two to three, once as many as six, a day, provide data which form the background or context for the more detailed interviews.

From these 410 women, some ninety women provided more detailed answers on more questions than others.¹⁶ Examples of the topics on which women provided more detailed information are: *uvukwi* (bridewealth) status, amount of land and location, title deed, sex of farmer, hired labour, crops, livestock, government assistance, water supply distance and frequency, fuel supply distance and frequency, commodity purchase, availability of cash and from where along with questions relating to abuse and incest. Questions about attitudes were asked and discussed with these women: for example, perceptions of women, men and children, of government, of development, assessment of incentives and rewards and gender relationships.

A number of government officials as well as educational officials and teachers discussed Kenya, Maragoli and Maragoli people with me, formally and informally. I also conducted open-ended interviews with eleven men and had informal conversations with many men. Fifty-nine families

attempted yard budgets over a range of time from one month to six months. Forty-nine of these were from the sub-location, (13% of the yards), and ten were from Nairobi households. Nineteen of the women interviewed gave their time and intimate details to provide life histories.¹⁷

In all these interviews, people were encouraged to provide their own assessment of situations. I kept the criticism relating to our lack of knowledge of African women at the forefront of my thoughts in framing questions and therefore I hope Avalogoli women's confidence of the importance of their activities contributed to a successful collection of textual information. At the outset of every request for an interview I explained that I would be taking their words to Canada and writing them down for their children and others to read.¹⁸ I also explained they would be assisting me in my future career. Most agreed to do so. In the context of interviews, particularly with attitude questions, first, I directed a question and received an answer. Then I waited. If no response was forthcoming, I prompted by the statement, "Say some more, I am telling your story." People responded by providing more information or by saying, "indo", (that's all), (that's the end of it). Second, I gave them my interpretation of their answer, "I want to be sure I understand, you are saying....?" Agreement or correction followed. I considered agreement tenuous and correction more to the point, although

frequently I was regarded by those interviewed as naive.¹⁹ Their patience likely came about from the assessment of their self-importance and their dedication to teaching a relative, yet outsider. I have not discussed their correction of my interpretation in this thesis. Final correction will come about when I read them the text (cf. Mbilinyi 1989). Most interviews took upwards of two hours, on some occasions stretching to four. Life histories were collected in one to two hour sessions over differing periods of time. For example, in Flora's case we had six sessions and many hours of spending time together as we engaged in other activities, even other interviews. I found these contexts particularly helpful in that Flora (and others) would say, "I believe this to be the case..." or "That is not the way I believe this to be."

I recognise the position of power I have taken as I have chosen which of their words to include and which to delete. I have tried to compensate for this by framing their words with a minimum of discussion and analysis (cf. Amadiume 1987:10; in this thesis, "Women's Voice, Chapter 2). Their actions and resistance will be evident to their readers.

Archival and statistical research on local and national issues was conducted at the Provincial Commission Library in Kakamega and in various government offices and government libraries in Nairobi. I was not permitted access to the

files in the District Officer's office in Vihiga, Maragoli. However, people there, as well as in the Social Service office in Mbale were cognizant of my needs and most gave freely of their time with oral information. Information was gathered on: population, unemployment, health care, social services, fertility, development plans, agriculture reports, land tenure records, district focus for rural development, probation and economic surveys. More intensive investigation including participant observation was conducted in areas of health care and fertility in Maragoli at the Rural Health Clinic in Mbale and from Women Groups (sic) and their leaders. In addition, the 1988 Kenya general elections were conducted during the time I was in the field. I was able to collect information on formal policies and procedures relating to that process, as well as on the informal 'goings on'.

Language

A glossary of Luragoli, Kiswahili and local English terms used in this thesis is found on p. 226.

Luragoli. Luragoli is the language of the Logoli people. It is a first language spoken by all members of the society. Within Maragoli, Luragoli is the main language of communication. All interviews were conducted in Luragoli unless otherwise stated. In the text, Luragoli words and phrases are italicised and the translation is in brackets.²⁰

Kiswahili and English. Swahili and English are national languages in Kenya. In Maragoli schools, the language of instruction is English, and Swahili is taught as a second language. Both languages are, however, used mostly in the school room or in Government offices. English or Kiswahili are used more between Avalogoli and others, rather than among Avalogoli. Where Kiswahili terms are used in their text they are so designated and the format is the same as for Luragoli.

Local English. Sometimes referred to as "Kenyan English" or "Africa English", local English is an adaptation of English words to local circumstances and practices to convey specific meanings to acts that conventional English usage does not. In this thesis these forms are usually designated by inverted commas, but the apparently idiosyncratic usage will make them obvious to the reader when not so designated. For example "to provision" or "provisioning" refers to providing food, food-related goods as well as other items, a somewhat conventional translation used as a verb. "Posterity" means children. The words of a childless man lack power and weight: "*Ezingulu zitula ku mwana*" ("Power comes from children"). When a husband or wife separates from a spouse it is said they "walked". Another example is the Avalogoli usage of "dowry". In conventional anthropological meaning, dowry is reserved for the gifts that the bride's father or group pays to the new

household. In local English, "dowry" is the term used by Avalogoli for bridewealth, the transfer of wealth from the family of the bride-groom to the family of the bride.

Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter 2 provides a brief review of some of the literature on African women's work and power in historical and contemporary societies. The review provides a limited scrutiny of early and ongoing research, analytic and empirical, that has permitted a more germane knowledge of African women. The emphasis is on research conducted in East Africa. Analysis of the literature is in terms of the relationship between productive and social systems and the economic and political aspects accorded to women's role. In the context of this chapter, the basis upon which Logoli women speak in their own voices on their social reality throughout this thesis is established.

Chapter 3 presents particulars of Avalogoli history and current life, providing a more detailed frame for the exacting circumstances Avalogoli face today.

Chapter 4 provides the empirical description of women's work in Maragoli. Women's work is culturally categorised as "home work" and "outside work". For theoretical purposes, women are at the intersection of both public/private domains activating relations of production in both kin corporate and capitalist modes of production.

Chapter 5 contributes the detail of women's decision-making and its pervasiveness in social, economic and political life. The processes by which women facilitate their position are discussed. Here, it is established that women are decision-makers in the areas of work and reciprocal obligations and benefits and that they use their power to generate a culturally-valued reputation through the life cycle of birth, marriage and death. Their decision-making is similarly facilitated on the state political level.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis and provides the analysis of women's "own will". Women have influence which provides them with power in Maragoli. As women's power increases, men's actions in defending patriarchal ideology increase thus exacerbating gender inequality. It is concluded that women are well aware that their work and role have value. This awareness may allow them to acknowledge that their cultural posture in acceptance and promotion of patriarchal ideology is no longer productive. Maragoli women are conscious actors and in a context of patriarchal ideology and capitalist encroachment, their experienced lives, they have the power to generate change.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. The words of a very old lady at an early morning Assistant Chief's barazza. This "Mummy" refused me permission to "take her name to Canada".

2. Note on nomenclature. The (Bantu languages) prefix, 'ava-' or 'aba-' transforms the meaning of the word Logoli to 'the people of' Logoli. In the language of Luragoli the morpheme 'Logoli' always occurs with another element. It must be prefixed as in Avalogoli, 'the people of Logoli'; in English translation it may be realised as 'Logoli people', 'Logoli women' etc. Maragoli is the place name of Avalogoli, nowadays referring to the Location. These terms are derived from the name of the ancestor, Mulogoli.

3. Some English terms are given a twist in Kenyan usage. I will note these "Kenyan English" terms in inverted commas.

4. Robertson is criticising the attitude of some western researchers, in particular western women, who have assumed a superior or privileged knowledge position in their investigations of African women. Hence her phrase "matriarchal attitude". See also Davison (1989:4); Lyons (1988); Wipper (1972), (1988) for similar criticism, as they suggest western researchers and development workers listen to rural women, write their words, and take heed of their experience and suggestions.

5. Sydie perceives Weber's definition of power and the exercise of power, in the context of his interest in the structure and process of power, as sex neutral and applicable to many circumstances. Sexism pervades when he applies his general definition of power to forms of domination (1987:83). Power in this thesis is sex-differentiated, utilised as women exercising their "own will despite resistance".

6. Traditional domination, designated "irrational" by Weber, is based on tradition, or custom, that attempts to rationalise the dominion of the ruler. "However, in reality, both tradition and competing powers often curb the absolute power of the patriarch" (Sydie 1987:57).

7. "Review of Steven Goldberg, The Inevitability of Patriarchy", (Leacock 1981:264).

8. See Abwunza (1985) for ethnographic descriptions of traditional Avalogoli life.

9. Consolidation and registration of title deed did not begin among Avalogoli until the mid 1960's and is by no means complete even today(cf. Abwunza, 1985 and Chapter 5 this thesis).

10. The CIDA Action Plan, 11 June, 1986, Women In Development, attached to Operation Africa 2000, tabled in the House of Commons May 9, 1986, says in "Understanding Women's Role": "Women need opportunities not only to participate in development, but to tell their own development story. Women seek recognition for the contribution they now make and for their potential, which is only beginning to be tapped. Promoting awareness of women's roles in development is a priority both in developing countries and in Canada."

11. Most people who informed this study asked that their real names be used. However I consider that use to be contextually dependent on degrees of sensitivity. I believe it unwise to identify those who candidly offered their opinions in certain circumstances. In addition, the composition of the area is such that people within the area, and to some extent outside the area, (government research licences are required), had an awareness of where and from whom data were gathered. To compound the problem, the use of pseudonyms is not appropriate in Maragoli, as the names of people and places are for the most part lineage derived or otherwise identifiable. I have attempted to resolve the ethical problem by referring to "the sub-location under study" or to "the sub-location", or the "village". In sensitive areas, I refer to people by what is considered their more common English, rather than Avalogoli names. They will be able to recognise themselves in my text, but will not be easily identifiable to others.

12. Funding for this fieldwork was provided by SSHRC, IDRC, and Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto. Permission to engage in research was provided by the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, and the Office of the President, Kenya, East Africa. Affiliation was provided by the University of Nairobi and the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi.

13. Logoli women considered my work, constant writing day and night, to be extremely taxing. They often suggested I put my pen away as they put their hoes away after digging was finished for the day. At some point, they began to call my pen, the tool associated with my work, a hoe.

14. I was assisted by four interpreters: my husband, George Abwunza, two local women and a woman university student, during initial interviews. Often during the course of the more public interviews, Logoli English speakers

provided asked and unasked for assistance. As I became more confident in understanding Luragoli I did not use an interpreter. However, my Luragoli speaking skill still leaves much to be desired in terms of pronunciation.

15. Total population of the sub-location is given as 7615, 3495 males, 4120 females (Central Bureau of Statistics 2 Oct 1982).

16. The "n=" utilised in the thesis signifies the number of cases (Loether and McTavish 1980:47); that is, the number of people who responded, in order to provide the contextual detail stated.

17. All life history collections were tape recorded. Translations of tapes and reading over and reflecting on written interviews were tasks completed after I left Kenya. My residence in Kenya was tenuous and time spent in interviewing and participant observation did not allow me the luxury of reviewing tapes and returning to extend or repeat interviews. In some cases written communication has provided me with further information.

18. Names are symbolic and Avalogoli are careful with them and to what end they may be used, say in witchcraft. For example, women would say to me when I asked their husband's name, or their children's, in the process of collecting census information, "I am wondering what you will do with his/her name."

19. The English term used by some Logoli women was "thick".

20. The thesis follows the structure recommended by Turabian (1987).

CHAPTER 2

WOMEN'S POWER AND VOICE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

More than two decades of theoretical and empirical attention to women's place in African societies has forced acknowledgment of widespread diversity in women's roles and statuses. Much of the research has been directed to economic issues and development initiatives involving women who are embedded in sets of socio-culturally contextualised relationships. Models in current usage arise from three basic critical strategies. First is the criticism of the optimism about economic progress of women through modernisation, or the imposition of a capitalist economic system. Second is the re-evaluation of the role of women to reflect their changing status in contexts where an underlying emphasis on patriarchal ideology endured and expanded through changing economic practices and deliberate state policies. The third approach, connected to the second and crucial for this study, emphasises a theme which is absent or incipient in early research, that is, the association of women's power in economic, social and political roles with gender and class inequalities. In some literature this approach denies women's power, in other literature this approach grants women's power.

The investigations on women are now narrowed to detailed case studies (cf. Robertson 1984 on Ga women of Central Accra, Ghana; Oboler 1985 on Nandi women of Western Kenya; Amadiume 1987 on Igbo women of Eastern Nigeria), and/or centre on pertinent analytic categories, i.e., colonisation, Etienne and Leacock(1980); work, Leacock and Safa(1986); class, Robertson and Berger(1986); patriarchy and class, Stichter and Parpart(1988); state, Parpart and Staudt(1989). This emerging literature speaks about women's continuing hard work within changing systems of production and women's contribution to economics and development issues. Women's actual power in work and decision-making however, may not be given sufficient representation. If it is given representation, power may be implicitly denied to women through the imposition of confined theoretical perspectives epitomised by a language use that assigns a secondary status to women's work and decision-making. This is seen, for example, in the usage of the term "subsidiary" for "subsistence production" or in the usage of "petty" for commodity production in selling goods (say market goods) or providing services (say through women's group work or, on an individual basis, say through sex in prostitution) when held up against an assumed superior capitalist mode of production. Women's decision-making power is dismissed as mere "strategy" or as attempts to "outwit the system". System in this context refers to some form of patriarchal

structure said by some researchers to be evident in a historical "patriarchal mode of production" continuing today in a "capitalist mode of production" that relegates women to a position in the class structure labelled as "oppressed".

The assignment of second class status to the value of women's labour in contrast to what are considered "real wages" in the "formal sector" of capitalism, presumably engaged in primarily by men, does not reflect the actual contribution of women to production. Women engage in all forms of productive labour, particularly in today's economic circumstances in which men as well as women have limited access to something depicted as "real wages" in capitalism. Similarly, women's designation as an "oppressed class" does not adequately reflect their power position in decision-making processes attached to their involvement in all productive forms of labour or in their vested interest in permitting a patriarchal ideology to continue.¹ It is necessary to extend theoretical perspectives and the language usage within theoretical perspectives to reflect women's power in work and decision-making. It is no longer possible to assume women are powerless or marginal actors "strategizing" in situations dictated by men and that there is a reified world economic structure in which the will of capitalism always wins. Indeed, more realistic attention is required in empirical and theoretical investigations recognising that during the course of the many researches

life goes on for women as they rationally assess their needs and the means to fulfil them. For example, as Robertson points out in a recent essay directed to African women's history, "Never Underestimate The Power of Women" (Robertson 1988). The position taken in this study is that women's actions along with their voices will assist in revealing women's power. Women's voices and the literature addressing them are discussed at the end of this chapter.

Literature On Women's Power

The analysis of African women's power is by no means straightforward and similar for all parts of Africa. Indeed, these analyses have stimulated an enormous debate that is only touched on in this review of the literature. In early research, Paulme called attention to the fact that African women "...have a wide area in which to exercise their authority" (1963:6). Lebeuf concluded that "African women have a tradition of practical participation in public affairs" (1963:114). Yet in what is considered the preliminary model for the research on women's economic and political participation established by Boserup (1970), women's power and their active and conscious participation, seems to be overlooked. Boserup suggested a research focus on local studies that concentrate on women's working conditions at home and in the labour force as well as on their social status internal and external to the family. The underlying aim was to integrate these local studies with

studies of economic progress in order to "assimilate" women into what was considered to be the natural processes of economic modernisation and development.² This liberal approach to economic modernisation by Boserup, along with analyses that followed (cf. Tinker 1976; Stimpson 1977; Rogers 1980), rightly criticised the assumption that improvements in the lives of women would be a natural by-product of processes of modernisation attached to national development. Western assumptions of economic progress undervalued the already existing provisioning aspects of women. This allowed, for example, development issues to be defined in terms of men, while women were seen as an impediment, clinging to traditional ways believed to be unproductive (see Parpart 1985:2 for criticism). Economic progress generally, and development issues specifically, focused on areas such as industrialisation, farming, rural development, educational expansion, with a men's bias and an assumption that a general economic growth would also better women's lives. Evidence arising from a new emphasis on the actual condition of women showed this assumption to be naive or simply wrong.

Most of sub-Saharan Africa is heavily dependent upon agriculture. Until the late 1960's and early 1970's, although women made up 50 to 80 per cent of the agricultural labour force, social science literature had focused primarily on 'men and economics' (cf. Herskovits 1952;

LeClair and Schneider 1968; Sahlins 1972; Service 1979). Women's involvement in subsistence farming, seen as growing the food which the family ate, had not been sufficiently valued. Studies of 'socio-economic participation' had neglected those who actually provided the survival base for most Africans.

Boserup's seminal study called attention to women's role in economic development, recognising that, "Africa is the region of female farming par excellence"(1970:16). Noting that "...the problem is...poorly understood", Boserup and Liljencrantz insisted that "...planning must be based on a systematic analysis of the present use of the male and female labour potential, and on the study of ways of making the most efficient use of the labour of both sexes during transformation of the economy"(1975:4,80). Boserup called for further research to assist in improving the overall working conditions of Third World women(Boserup 1977:xi).

There was no real indication in this liberal approach that women may direct their own initiatives through their own power in work and decision-making. The emphasis was on the acceptance of an imposed world order that must be made aware of the importance of women's contribution through their work in changing systems of production and/or how women are affected. There is little hint in this research that women (or men) may rationally assess a "world systems" approach, adapting the means as they attempt to facilitate

their needs. What did develop from this research was the awareness that through a selected emphasis on the relationship between women's important economic contribution on the local level and their coincident access to political opportunities, attention could be directed to the resulting effects on women's power in securing family as well as community well-being.

In 1972, members of the Human Resources Development Division, United Nations Commission for Africa, reviewed the result of analyses to that point, indicating some of the factors affecting the condition of sub-Saharan women. The resulting publication (HRDD 1972), emphasised "historical influences" containing two elements. The first of these elements would open the way for future feminist investigations directed toward gender and class analysis. This element was the traditionally engendered division of labour which in some societies provided a status definition that benefitted males rather than females (but see Leacock 1981, for "myths surrounding male dominance"). In that same context, it also stated that a colonially imposed western ideology of women's roles exacerbated existing status differences. These influences contributed, and continue to contribute to women's loss of status. Second, although some innovations, Western medicine, supply of water, roads, availability of mass produced items, eg., cloth, dishes, pots and pans,³ may have assisted women, others may have had

a negative impact. Negative innovations cited are crop rotation, land tenure 'reforms' and loss of labour as children are in school and husbands are often working elsewhere in wage labour. Since demographic statistics on Kenya showed that 31 per cent of rural households were headed by women(HRDD 1972:364),⁴ the overall effects of local economic changes on women's daily lives were striking. Additionally, wage employment grows slowly and appears to have 'feminine fields'. The HRDD reported this as a serious concern where up to one-third of households may be headed by women. They suggested "...that wage employment for women in Africa should be seen not as a question of having extra income for luxuries, but as a necessity for a decent standard of living"(1972:366). The HRDD report pointed to a tradition of biased approaches and decisions which diminished the success of women's participation in the affairs of modern society.

Studies recognised that women's power decreased throughout the colonial period and continued to decrease in current times(cf. Van Allen 1972). Other studies recognised women's power in pre-colonial structures and continuing in current times(cf. Hoffer 1972; Clark 1980, Amadiume 1986), or, conversely, not in existence during pre-colonial times but in evidence today(cf. Newbury 1984). Yet others put forth the view that women had limited power in pre-colonial structures and colonialism simply continued or worsened

these conditions(cf. Oboler 1985). (See Thomas 1988 for a review of "optimist" and "pessimist" positions).

Notwithstanding these differing opinions, all of which may be valid, it was concluded that the extent of women's contribution had seldom been acknowledged by those who planned development on local, national and international levels(cf. Charlton 1984; Monson and Kalb 1985). Analyses concluded that women were rendered 'invisible' because, in comparison to men, they have limited institutionalised power on local, national and international levels(cf. Charlton 1984:24).

In East African research, the analysis provided by Mbilinyi pointed to the importance of state structures on women's power. The Tanzanian political regime rhetoric advocating gender equality, "Work by Everyone and Exploitation by None"(1972:371), does little for the position of women as traditional structures protecting women's interests are disappearing. Wipper suggested examining the "...underside of development--not the formal but the informal sector of the labour force, not the cash crop but the subsistence economy, and not the public but the private spheres, for therein lie hidden subsidies largely accounted for by the labor of women"(1975-76a:1). Storgaard supported a located analysis of this kind in her study of women in the Ujamaa villages in Tanzania where transformation of the rural economy did not allow women

equal access to the basic means of production(1975-76). Also in Tanzania, Brain presented today's women as "less than second-class", being "...far worse off on the settlement scheme than in their traditional societies"(1976:285).

Stichter (1975-76) used a historical perspective to analyze women in the labour force in Kenya. She stated that after 1945 when changes in the economic character of Kenya led to stability in the commercial and industrial sectors, simultaneous land shortages and population increases prevented all Africans from being accommodated in agriculture and increased participation by women in the wage labour force was not possible. She compared this situation to that found in European societies in the early stages of capitalist industrialisation, when many jobs which currently tend to be women's domain, domestic workers, clerks, shop assistants, teachers and health workers, went to men. "In general, like women in Western societies at both the early and late stages of industrialisation, Kenyan women have remained concentrated in the lowest-paying and least-skilled occupations"(1975-76:61). The risk to women's important economic position became a new focus of research concern as traditional forms of division of labour disintegrated in the course of colonial capitalism and development(cf. Pala Okeyo 1980); Berina 1982). Education for women was advocated in an effort to correct gender imbalance in wage work and

assist women's "assimilation" into the modernising process(cf.Boserup and Liljencrantz 1975:1).

Education. It is recognised that current levels of education and training for most areas in sub-Saharan Africa are an improvement over past levels. In Africa, "Women now constitute from 30 to 50 per cent of students enrolled in primary schools. In secondary schools, the percentages are smaller but increasing"(HRDD 1972:367). However, most of the benefits from educational participation are noticed for the male segment of societies. UNESCO statistics, World Education Documents and statistics gathered by researchers and governments within African societies generally show that whenever a formal education programme is launched, the percentage of females attending classes is always lower than males and the percentage of female dropouts is always higher.

A report from the Kenyan Bureau of Statistics indicates that, "There are also consistent and considerable sex differences in academic performance, wastage and subject specialisation which tend to disadvantage females"(Women In Kenya, 1978:1). Even though the Kenyan educational system has expanded since independence and sex differences in educational attainment have declined, "The majority of women, some 70 per cent of rural females aged 15 and above cannot read or write, which is twice the national figure on illiteracy for males"(Women In Kenya, 1978:1). Statistics

published in 1980 show girls moving gradually toward parity with boys in primary schools in Western Kenya but female enrolment in secondary schools accounts for only 37 per cent. Female participation rates decline to between 10 and 21 per cent in different undergraduate programmes at the university level (Provincial Statistical Abstract Western Province 1975-1980).

Gomes expanded on these issues in her article on the negative relationship between level of education and family size (1984:655). She found that parents in Kenya give preference to eldest children whatever the ultimate family size but when family size exceeds seven children, the disadvantage to younger children is reduced. At least part of this is explained by the fact that parents exert control over the labour income of their eldest children and then invest that contribution in educating the younger children. In reference to sex differences, Gomes notes, however, that the relationship between educational attainment and family size is more skewed for females than for males and attributes this to "...females often requir[ing] a higher level of education than do men before migration [to the wage labour sector] becomes worthwhile" (cf. Stichter 1976-76; Robertson 1985, 1986).

Traditional agriculture, crafts and market trade can still be engaged in by illiterate persons although in all of these activities literacy may be essential in avoiding

exploitation(cf. Boserup and Liljencrantz 1975:27). It is recognised that literacy is required for employment in trade and service sectors, for education and training in improved methods of farming, and for the fundamental necessities of hygiene, nutrition, basic accounting and simple organisational methods. Unfortunately this type of education is not encouraged or readily available for women(cf. Robertson 1985, 1986). Even when education is attained for entrance into wage employment, particularly in training for urban jobs, larger aspects of general unemployment will be a deterrent to full female participation. These aspects include the fact that lesser educated males are given priority for jobs over better educated females and available jobs become feminised and thus of lesser return(cf. Stichter 1975-76; Robertson 1985, 1986). Predicting this, Boserup and Liljencrantz had advocated simultaneous reforms of the educational and the labour market in order to encourage development for women(1975:29). This prediction suggests that "assimilation" of women into modern society could take place through specialised programmes which deal with the traditional cultural prejudices they saw as responsible for women's marginalisation, i.e., generally their domestic isolation stemming from patriarchal institutions.

Education for women continues to be advocated, "Young girls should be encouraged to aim high in their education so

as to be effective participants in the well being of their families and the development of their countries"(Shitakha 1985:3).⁵ Robertson however, discusses the "dysfunctionality of women's education", in the light of "You're dammed if you do and you're dammed if you don't"(1985:29). The dwindling of percentages for girls at higher levels of education points out the difficulty in their accessing higher education(cf. Smock 1982). If they do access formal education it may prepare them for subordination. Their aspirations are raised and they are unwilling to accept work other than salaried. Not succeeding in this endeavour, they are said to look for a man to get them a job⁶ or otherwise support them. Additionally, if they are successful in overcoming general aspects of discrimination against women in getting jobs they may suffer sexual harassment on the job(Robertson 1985:30). It is clear that educational participation alone does not provide a solution for women.

Boserup and post-Boserup analyses established that the modernisation process would not automatically include improvement in women's daily lives. What Boserup failed to take fully into account in advocating the assimilation of women in the existing modernisation process was that the intrusion of capitalist economics dictates capital accumulation. This results in a political process whereby men and women lose control over production. Class and

gender inequalities are part of that process and have influence on the success of any reform. Later analyses, some reviewed above, (see also Etienne and Leacock 1980; Beneria 1982; Leacock and Safa 1986), indicate that a more informed analysis directed to a further understanding of women's power was and is necessary.

However, as outlined above, researchers engaged in historic empirical analysis were not in agreement in reference to women's power and resulting influence on today's economic and political structures. At least part of the difficulty existed in some not recognising or not analyzing the dynamics between gender relationships in context and how these local scenes are affected by today's state structures. This is not to deny the importance of history but only to say that a reference to degrees and kinds of previous power and autonomy has only minutely facilitated the current day to day position of women and development initiatives.

Discovery of Women's Power

The publication of DAWN⁷(Sen and Grown 1985) incorporated information gathered from many studies to show the impact on women of economic forces from outside their local communities, i.e., from the state and the world economic system. The DAWN study also assisted in legitimising the synthesis of gender and class and feminist perspectives. This study concluded with a suggestion that

we may see that women will empower themselves in the creation of their own projects from their own perspective as the micro attributes of flexibility of membership and resources as well as the macro processes of states are recognised.⁸

The conclusions reached in the DAWN publication stemmed from research pointing out that women empowering themselves on both local and state levels is a political process that is affected by structures of inequality. Research using an engendered perspective in which recognition is given to the realistic constraints on economic, political and social life has been successful in providing an increased awareness of the power of women. Cottingham and Karl point out that a current lack of political status for women may stem from aspects of colonisation more than aspects of traditional oppression(1979:4). Etienne and Leacock take a position that relations of greater gender equality likely existed prior to colonisation and capitalist intervention(1980:7). Whether this position can be generalised is an open question. However, it is increasingly being established that power existed for women in some societies as part of a pre-colonial social structure reflecting a more egalitarian or flexible gender system. This system was changed by colonial ideologies of more stratified gender systems(cf. Amadiume 1987; Chapter 1 above). This is reaffirmed in women's lives today as they call on their power from past

systems to resist encroaching patriarchal claims and difficult economic times(cf. Stamp 1975-76, 1986; Kettel 1986). In this thesis, the discussion of patterns of reciprocity and "back door decisions" in Chapter 5 is an example of the use of women's traditional power.

Stamp's early study of rural Kikuyu women in Mitero, Kenya, focused more on women's agency and less on their "oppression"(1975-76). Stamp concluded that women's experience would lead to increased economic and decision-making opportunities. She suggested that as long as women remain the primary food producers, there are aspects within their economic contribution that will assist them in adapting to new circumstances. For example, they retain control over some resources and gain skills in decision making and experience in the formation of groups. These informal spheres provide opportunities for extending their skills in management, production and redistribution. She also added that, "...the subjective experience gained--the "I think I can" mental set... allows a person to act effectively in the cause of his or her own interests"(1975-76:37) (cf. this thesis). O'Barr maintained that based on existing theories, there are constraints against women in politics generally. But in her analysis of a group of Pare women, the Usangi women of Tanzania, she recognised "...that women have often entered the political fray both during colonial times and at present(1975-76:124). She

concluded that Usangi women's activism in current elected leadership positions in local political organisations was a "very conservative reaction". Yet, "The very fact that Usangi women are in low-level leadership positions brings them into new networks and is beginning to give them new perspectives. They become active in politics because of new awareness, interests, and values"(1975-76:131). For O'Barr, this provided the foundation for her suggestion that we investigate the conditions under which women might enter political arenas.

Kershaw(1975-76) measured decision-making roles in the Kikuyu family, finding aspects of women's power. In Kakamega District in Western Kenya, Staudt (1975-76), (1985a), provided quantitative support for the hypothesis that the government gives preference to men in agricultural services, a prejudice against women that has carried on from colonial times, but women remain the principle producers. Hay (1976) wrote that the Luo women of Kowe, in Kenya, have experienced devastating changes imposed by the colonial capitalist economy but that they manage to "hold on" by virtue of their own initiatives. In a Centre for Development Research Project paper on Kenyan rural families, Monstead analyzed the division of labour in contemporary rural families. If the husband is living at home, he often assists in the fields. "The wife however is usually the main labourer on the cash crop...together with children above eight years of

age(1977:266), (cf. Staudt 1985a). Monstead also provided interesting facts on the Maragoli area. As male migration from Maragoli has been high for 30 years, this is the area with the highest proportion of women heads of households, 36 per cent in the 1969 census(1977:277), (cf. Moock 1978-79). (The implications of this migration for Maragoli are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 where it is noted that migration does not necessarily mean men working in wage labour.)

More recent Kenyan statistics pointed out that, "The vast majority of women, some 88 per cent of the total, reside in rural areas where they make a major contribution to the rural economy"(Women in Kenya 1978:1). Nearly all engage in farming activities on small holdings, produce much of the food their family eats, fetch water and firewood, and engage in housekeeping, preparation of meals and child-care.⁹ This report stated that, "In slightly less than one-fourth of all rural households, the husband is either absent for long periods or deceased and females in such rural households also assume much of the work usually undertaken by men"(1978:1). The report further stated that only 16 per cent of Kenyan women were engaged in the wage labour force; unskilled work, teaching and secretarial work were the most feminised. Notwithstanding all of the above, Monstead said, "Even if a man is temporarily absent from the farm, he will tend to be perceived as the manager of the crops, and the

one responsible for all decisions concerning cultivation and sale"(Monstead 1977:266). Gender is contextually and bureaucratically constituted.

Cottingham and Karl had contended that nothing will be achieved for African women or for their society as a whole unless women themselves organise and begin to take control of their own lives(1979:4). Researchers recognised that Africa had a particularly rich tradition of women cooperating in groups: rural work groups, secret societies, and modern cooperatives. In Kenya, Wipper wrote on women's groups, the *Maendeleo Ya Wanawake* movement in particular (1971; 1975; 1975-76b).¹⁰ Groups in Kenya include rural cooperatives and self-help groups, occupational associations, urban business enterprises, social welfare, and church and entertainment groups(cf. Riria Ouko 1985; Nzomo 1989).

Wachtel examined the underlying conservatism of an urban women's group in Nakuru, Kenya as they made several attempts to become economically effective. It was her contention that women's groups must "...gamble on a grand gesture because only a conspicuous success will significantly alter their position. Women see the need for audacity"(1975-76:77). Stamp directed attention to Mitero, Kenya, where women's self-help groups draw on the traditional bridewealth sex-gender system as "organized resistance to exploitation"(1986:39), in "counterbalancing political, economic, and ideological power"1986:42-3).

Discussing African women's economic participation, Bryson attempts to clarify the interaction between productive and social systems. She contends that invisibility of women, "...the failure to recognise/enhance their activities is contributing to current problems with the food supply which can be overcome most effectively by working with rather than against women"(1981:29).¹¹ One of her most important conclusions is that any solution critically depends on female food producers as most rural men do not see it as their responsibility to assure the family food supply. Their incomes will be spent on other items, thus efforts must be made to increase women's holdings and their incomes. Personal initiatives and development plans must build on traditional roles in agriculture, enhancing women's activities. Approaches which do not do build on traditional roles will have less success as "...they represent a denial of African potential and African culture"(1981:45).¹²

For example, Nelson speaks of providing effective involvement in development projects for African women generally. By utilising case studies, she suggests organisational and management issues under the headings of "government staff, the selection and organisation of specific development activities and popular participation of local women"(1981:57). Her emphasis is on recruiting women staff and on local consultation with both women and men.¹³

Charlton, in an analysis of women and development, advocates women's involvement in micro-level projects, leading to integrated regional projects, ultimately resulting in macro-level change, development "...alternatives [which] are not mutually exclusive"(1984:177). This will require women's action in the political arena through the expansion of their political consciousness.

Women's political consciousness, although widened by local, national and international attention to their important productive processes, is seen to be affected by local and state gender inequalities, "male-controlled institutions" and "...only a select few, if now expanded group of women act politically in or with such institutions. Yet the autonomy and strength of indigenous women's organizations, unfettered by state structures and class bias, provide a means by which women's consciousness might repoliticize comprehensive women's concerns and thereby foster genuine gender redistribution"(Staudt 1985b:80) (cf. Staudt 1986).

Women "unfettered" by class and state bias presents a problem particularly if structures of patriarchy are seen as monolithic and unchanging over time(cf. Chapter 1 and below). Women's actual power in economic, social and political processes may be hidden or depreciated by an unrealistic association with structures of class and gender inequalities on both local and state levels. Today in

Kenya, the government maintains a policy that women are not discriminated against, that indeed this has allowed them tremendous progress in terms of equality and development. Women's continuing advancement is said to be guaranteed as long as they cooperate with and retain close ties to the government(cf. Moi 1986). As a result there is little advancement in terms of direct attention to women's difficult economic condition or to women in development programmes(Nzomo 1989:9-10). In actuality, the Kenyan state is less committed to gender equality and more committed to a "patrimonial bureaucracy", where "...characteristic traits...belong in part to the rational form of domination, whereas other traits belong to a traditionalist form of domination"(Weber 1958:299-300). In the Kenyan state, following the "footsteps of the ancestors" through the hegemony of *Nyayo*, demands both traditional and rational forms of domination. Today's situation directs Kenyans to a mix of old and new through government edicts surrounding *Nyayo*(see Abwunza 1990a). The present political structure in Kenya is known as the *Nyayo* administration and President Moi may be seen as patriarch, "the father of the nation". In the process of economic survival and development as well as nation building, Kenyans are faced with a requirement to follow in the "footsteps" of their ancestors, promoting love, unity, peace and sharing with one another while at the same time maintaining the "productivity and creativity of

the individual" (Moi 1986:9). As mentioned, AVALOGOLI translate *maendeleo*, (development), as "progress" in English. Progress denotes the availability of necessities as well as individual improved standard of living through accumulation. Realistically, no one person or group of persons remains "unfettered by state or class" influences, but all people, including women, have recourse to refine their situations. Assuming women as actors in political structures permits an examination of how they intelligently define their interests throughout changing and articulating modes of production. In that change and articulation women are preeminent as their power of production is material and necessary for human survival. In this study, we see that LOGOLI women deliberately use "footsteps" and posture an adherence to patriarchal ideology, as this has provided them with the influence to serve their best interest in today's difficult economic circumstances. But posturing an adherence to a patriarchal ideology may not assume the existence of a monolithic patriarchal structure that permits monopolisation by patriarchs.

Denial/Conviction of Women's Power. Some writers deny women's power by treating patriarchy as a monolithic structure wholly restricting women and determining their actions. Some analyses (cf. Stichter and Parpart; Henn 1988; Introduction in Robertson and Berger (eds.) 1986) assert that in many African household and lineage systems,

gender relations are class relations. "...household-based production is monopolized by a class of patriarchs who are socially recognized as heads of household and/or extended family production units." This class of patriarchs denies the "dependent class---wives, unmarried daughters, sons and junior siblings of the patriarchal class" free access to the means of production. "Within these class relations a patriarchal mode of production can be recognised"(Henn 1988:37-38). The "patriarchal mode of production", where gender relations are class relations is used theoretically to examine what is seen as women's "subordination and exploitation"(Walby 1986; Stichter and Parpart 1988; Henn 1988). As this patriarchal mode of production contains class differentials, Henn denies that many African societies had a communal mode of production as "Differences in power, consumption or labor times have...importance in the identification of class relations"(1988:36). Henn goes on to call for demonstration rather than "mere" assertion. "One would expect communal possession to denote situations in which all adult members of a community participate in decisions concerning the use of the means of production"(1988:37). It is stated in some studies that a "patriarchal mode of production" has today become integrated in subordinate fashion into world capitalism and articulates with it(Walby 1986; Stichter and Parpart 1988; Henn 1988). This position assumes that the class relationships

associated with patriarchy articulate with capitalist class relations and work to worsen the position of women today.

Notwithstanding the importance of analytic conceptualisations of class and gender, these analyses deny the power of women and men who are not patriarchs. Patriarchy takes on monolithic overtones in the structures of "a class of patriarchs" who control the labour and production of a "class of patriarchal dependents" in a "patriarchal mode of production"(cf. Henn 1988:28). What is neglected in analyses where patriarchy is seen as a monolithic structure is the emphasis on the relations of production found in the kin corporate mode and how that provides protective elements against any individual accumulation, class or otherwise. "Regulatory and coercive "functions""(Henn 1988) were and are indeed used in a kin corporate mode, but the "class of patriarchs" were also regulated and coerced(cf. Sacks 1979; Abwunza 1985). For example, among the Avalogoli it would appear that accumulation by elders or others was not tolerated in the past. This is reflected today, in times of economic risk, when traditional relations of sharing are incorporated, mainly by women, as a form of resistance and an adaptation to capitalism. Those who exhibit "progress" without taking relations into account run the risk of sanctions, for example loss of membership in the social group or witchcraft(Abwunza 1985).

Possibilities for dissent against total monopolisation by a "class of patriarchs" are present: in the voices of female elders and women and others in the "dependent class" who may not receive privilege and therefore do not permit monopolisation. Differential access may not assume a monopolisation of power by only the "patriarchal class". In a kin corporate group organisation articulating with a capitalist mode of production, for example the Avalogoli society today, "dependent class" dissent can be empirically established such as in this thesis where women's power relating to and affecting an ideological 'rule' of patriarchs on both local and state levels is examined.¹⁴

Former relations of production in a society based on a kin corporate mode do articulate with a capitalist mode of production, but as data in this thesis show (see also Abwunza 1985, 1990a, 1990b), former relations of production are far from "subordinate" in Avalogoli society today. The imposition of capitalism say through wage-labour, may not signal the destruction of pre-capitalist formations, for example, assuming the deterioration of the collectivity (cf. Wagner 1949; Mook 1975; for Avalogoli). Resistance and adaptation to the imposed mode must be taken into account. Articulating modes may better be seen as a "...compromise between capital and the peasantry", reflecting "...the inability of the [colonial] state to transform African society" (Beinart 1985:93). Articulating modes may be seen

as "...the way in which rural people fought to retain access to resources"(Beinart 1985:94) and the way they survive today during times of economic risk(cf. Coy 1988). Recognise that the Tugen players won the capitalist game between three Tugen and four American players, as Tugen "...strategy for winning Monopoly appears to lie in their own notion of economically rational and morally acceptable behaviour"(Coy 1988:40). In Kenya today, the current political climate directs and legitimises the articulation of both modes.

Moreover, the class relations in capitalism at least in some societies, do not necessarily worsen the position of women. Presley, for example, speaks of the significant increase of women's political and economic contribution in Kiambu District. Women "...refused to be excluded from political life and continually confined to cultivating and child care"(1986:270). Additionally Presley's analysis points out that capitalism "...increased rather than decreased African women's economic participation"(1986:270), as their cash contribution is essential. Bujra points out that women recognise the value of their labour as it becomes commodity in capitalist transformation, especially in cases where male migration for labour takes place. "[T]here is "no free labor," some are beginning to assert, "even in villages." And children "produced" by women's labour are beginning to be seen as their "assets"(Bujra 1986:139).

Women also recognise their power in promoting the ideology of patriarchy as is argued in this thesis.

The few of many examples provided here point out that the unrecognised or under-reported political and economic activities of women continue to be investigated and revealed. Researchers have recognised the importance of gathering the empirical data measuring the increased involvement(cf. O'Barr 1975; Stamp 1986; Staudt 1986), whether drawn from traditional structures or newly created innovations, of women's power in work and decision-making spheres and the effect on their lives and the lives of others in their community. A perspective which takes gender into account requires a more thorough examination of society. Not only does this go beyond mere "modernisation" in the hope of encouraging the "assimilation" of women into current structures through the implementation of specialised programmes, this takes seriously the action and the voice of women. Local and state initiatives which advocate increased benefits for general populations cannot ignore the contributions of one half the population by isolating (say to the 'welfare sector'), thus trivialising, the efforts of that one half.

Hay and Stichter(1984), providing a digest of the 1970's work on gender inequality, suggest that the division of men's and women's roles, where women are seen as confined to the domestic sphere while men monopolise the public

sphere, seems to have limited application in these societies. The artificial theoretical dichotomy of gender relations and power into "public" and "private" domains does not adequately explain gender inequality (cf. Chapter 1 this thesis). In a more recent work, Davison augments this view citing pertinent analyses.

One way of explaining women's current lack of power in gender relations of production often advanced by Western social scientists is the creation of boundaries between so-called "domestic" and "public" spheres, with women perceived as having less access to the "public" sphere (e.g. Rosaldo, 1974; Sanday, 1974; Reiter, 1975; Hafkin & Bay 1976). However, as Afonja (1980:96-99) and Sudarkasa (1976:50) assert, such a division does not always apply to African societies, where historically women have held both public and domestic roles. Dividing a society into two "spheres" with women relegated to the "domestic" or private sphere, while men control the so-called "public" sphere, arbitrarily trivializes the labour of women as procreators (Jaggar, 1983). Moreover, African women do not view themselves as relegated to one or the other sphere and often operate in both. Production (usually included in the public sphere) and procreation (included in the domestic sphere) are interwoven in the daily lives of African women (see Afonja, 1980; Kariuki, 1985). The creation of gender-specific "spheres" only serves to confuse an analysis of gender differences in African societies (Davison 1988:8).

Davison also says; "Gender-structuring, because it is socially determined, is subject to change. The result of change is tension in productive relations, which eventually gives way to new forms (1988:8), (cf. Conclusion this thesis).

An engendered perspective looks at the details which determine the position and influence of women in social,

economic and political domains. This approach permits investigation of what is seen as women's subordination through the imposition of capitalism as well as their subordination through aspects of patriarchal ideology(cf. Beneria 1982), in today's local as well as state societies(cf. Staudt 1985a, 1985b, 1986; Kariuki 1985; Parpart and Staudt 1989). Additionally it permits an examination of what is seen as women's subordination through patriarchal structure. For example, Nzomo in writing on the empowerment of women in Kenya suggests that women first off have to confront the structural forces that lie at the root of their oppression, they will have to politicise their efforts. "Among other things, women need to learn to put value into any contribution they make to society and should never undervalue their labor and time inputs into production"(1989:16). The engendered perspective also permits awareness of the increase in women's political and economic power through capitalism(Stamp 1975-76; Presley 1986; Bujra 1986) and through changing ideologies as women, through their work and decision-making, define their own interests(cf. this thesis).

Women's Voices

The recognition of women's action has provided an arena for acknowledging their important, indeed vital economic and political participation in African history and current life. In an effort to overcome the former androcentric evaluations

that have ignored or undermined women, it is suggested that women speak of and on their own experiences. This approach has an important theoretical contribution. All research, economic, political and social, and their association with "progress" must build on the responses of those who are directly experiencing the situation.

The personal narratives approach is suggested in an effort to allow women to represent themselves (cf. Personal Narratives Group 1989). For example, this method has recently produced: Each In Her Own Way (Levy 1988), Three Swahili Women (Mirza and Strobel 1988), Life Histories of African Women (Romero 1988) and Voices from Mutira (Davison et al. 1989). This approach has been depicted as "inglorious", in that it is "...collecting and publishing what Third World women are saying, as if Western women originated the thoughts or arguments... Given the monopoly on resources, (for African women to engage in research), this is, unsurprisingly, another form of exploitation; it is stealing words from the horse's mouth!" (Amadiume 1987:10).

Still a personal narrative approach attempts to assist in circumventing the "...political and theoretical complexities of trying to speak about women, while avoiding any tendency to speak for them. ...feminist anthropology, unlike the 'anthropology of women', has made some progress in this area, because while it acknowledges that 'women are

all women together' it also emphasizes that there are fundamental differences between women"(Moore 1988:191-192).

This study relies on the personal narrative approach while at the same time recognising the imperfections of such an approach. Logoli women are speaking alongside me and it clearly remains my choice to include or delete their words. As Amadiume has made clear, the ideal presentation of the experience of these women's lives would be entirely their own.

There is a need for material about women, collected and explained by African and other Third World women themselves, from which adequate and suitable theories and methodology can be worked out.... It can be argued that because of their plural and multicultural backgrounds as a result of the colonial heritage, Third World women are best qualified to carry out comparative studies and make generalized statements about women's position in their societies(Amadiume 1987:10).

Until that happens, the reliance remains on predominately Western researchers utilising a case study emphasis, recognising that the impact of social change is profound and variable and the risk of overgeneralisation is considerable.

Conclusion

A common theme emerges in the studies: in most circumstances economic and political influences of colonial and capitalist systems interacted with existing social orders in ways that appeared to increase inequality along gender and class lines. If women benefitted from change it

was as a consequence of general conditions which likely benefitted men more, and certainly it was not as a result of policies or programmes directed at improving the conditions of women's daily lives. Evidence for this comes from area studies where it was found that little or no attempt was made to view women as integrated in differing economic situations either during times of colonialism or post-independence periods. A further general consensus emerges. The neglect of women's work and general contributions to their societies has disadvantaged women as well as their communities. For example, it appears that in the majority of cases, women's lives are made more, rather than less difficult, by the impact of many development processes (cf. Charlton 1984; Kariuki 1985). Yet,

Women are the majority of the population and form the backbone of the family in Africa...there is a lot of need to focus our attention on their requirements and aspirations. The majority of these women also happen to be residing in the rural areas. Therefore, rural development is actually the development of women (Shitakha 1985:1).

The question that comes to mind in reviewing literature directed to women's economic and political issues is: if women are powerless, how is it that so much of the responsibility for family and community well-being hinges upon their efforts? "In many ways, the women perceived themselves, as having primary responsibility for the economic well-being of their families" (Kariuki 1985:228).

The enormity of that responsibility does not indicate powerlessness.

Full consideration of the action and voice of women in the light of women's "own will" or power is required. Research on African women is centring on interviews with women and on actual decision-making processes rather than assumed. In some cases, it is acknowledged that women, "...subvert the male order of things"(Thomas 1988), (cf. Reiter 1975), and engage in "guerrilla tactics" against men(Mbilinyi 1989). Women's power was not seen as an ingredient of patriarchal and state control thus women's power was not considered part of modernising or development processes. This is assuming only structure of patriarchy rather than acknowledging the linkage of structure and ideology that differ contextually and change over time. Male power is often assumed, few tests or inquiries are made. This is, in short: a misreading of history in action.

In this thesis, Logoli women themselves recognise social, economic and political inequality and this recognition contributes to the air of resignation surrounding their statement, "But that's the way life is." However, the data collection in this thesis emphasises women's actual day by day behaviour and reveals their action in areas of work and decision-making that does not demonstrate decisive resignation or deficiency of power.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. The words emphasised by inverted commas in these opening paragraphs are taken from "Introduction: Towards a Materialist Perspective on African Women". They are found in section C., which provides a summary of the articles in the edited volume (Stichter and Parpart 1988:14-23).

2. See Mcfarland (1988) for a review of women and development theories.

3. The availability of these items requires cash. It is therefore questionable whether we are able to generalise and categorise them as "innovations which assist women".

4. See also Stichter (1975-76); Staudt (1985a).

5. Opening Address, National Chairman, Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization, Kenya at an international conference in Nairobi, September 24-28, 1984. In a special issue of the Journal of Eastern African Research and Development. p. 1-3.

6. It should be noted that paternalism is a way of life in Kenya. Men as well as women depend upon those engaged in wage labour to facilitate their own entrance into wage labour.

7. Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era.

8. In Maragoli this translates into women being able to join groups and pay membership fees. Kenyan state influence is identified as women's groups are required to have licences and are directed to take an apolitical stance.

9. See also "The Women of Kenya: The Backbone of National Prosperity" in Moi (1986:108-118). It has become fashionable for governments to at least rhetorically state that improving the situation and status of women is part of their national agenda. This is particularly true in Kenya, where the United Nations Decade on Women (1975-1985) concluded with the Nairobi meetings.

10. Wipper writes on a militant women's equal rights movement in Kenya, where issues pertaining to "...polygamy, bride price, modern manners and fashion are subjects of public controversy" (1971:429). She attributes this movement to "a climate of ferment" (1971:430). More recently (1985) Wipper

provides a cross section of women's voluntary associations in Africa.

11. Moi (1986) makes a similar statement in reference to Kenyan women.

12. See also Hill who states her purpose as "...expos[ing] what I see as the old-fashioned, stereotyped, Western-biased, over-generalized crudity and conceptual falsity of so many conventional economic premises"... along with the "...practical demonstration that many of the findings of the less esoteric branches of economic anthropology ought to be regarded as highly relevant to development economics although, as any glance at economists' bibliographies shows, they are habitually ignored" (1986:xi).

13. Amadiume criticizes conflating the experiences of women in different societies for general purposes, "development", or "co-operation for political action and solidarity", i.e. the general notion of "sisterhood". She uses as one example, Caplan and Bujra (eds.), Women United. Women Divided - Cross-Cultural Perspective on Female Solidarity, 1978. She particularly criticises the incorporation of Nelson's article in this volume, in reference to Nelson's use of Mathare women. Women, Nelson says who have 'not learnt to operate effectively as a group in the political arena'. Amadiume says, "The choice of harassed and powerless beer-brewers using every means to survive reinforces the racist notion that African women prostitute themselves to survive" (1987:5).

14. This examination disregards the use of the term "women's strategies" as strategies have been utilised to speak of women's power. Strategy implies a second order power. In Maragoli, accruing information and utilising influence is a more appropriate designation of women's action as first order power.

CHAPTER 3

AVALOGOLI

Geography and Description of Place

Maragoli Division is an area of 198 square kilometres immediately north of the equator. The outstanding topographical feature in Maragoli is the Maragoli Hills, which rise to heights of over 6000 feet. The southern boundary of these hills is defined by the Maseno and Maragoli faults. The Vahani River, flowing southward toward Lake Victoria has deeply incised an area between the peaks of the hills. The northern area forms a peneplain, lying at 4,500 to 5000 feet above sea level. Except in zones bordering the hills, where sandy soils and large rocks predominate, the soils from the volcanic rocks are richly red and fertile (Ligale 1966:65; Mmbulika 1971:1). The dissected nature of the surface, steep hill-sides and flat-bottomed valleys, contributes to farming problems. In early days of settlement, prior to population expansion, the hill-sides were sources of firewood and when cleared were marked off for communal grazing. Current land scarcity has required the utilisation of this land for crops. This leads to erosion difficulties. Annual rainfall varies between forty and eighty inches per annum, with the long rains from

March to June, and short rains from September to November. In the past there was an abundance of surface drainage with many rivers and streams, most of which were permanent, flowing from the Nandi and the Maragoli Hills. Erosion has reduced the permanent aspect and many are now only seasonally available (Abwunza 1985:35). Temperatures average between twenty-eight to forty-two degrees in the dry season, and twenty to thirty degrees in the wet season.¹

Maragoli. Today, Maragoli is a Division in Kakamega District, Western Province of Kenya. Maragoli is divided by a tarmac road that runs from Kisumu on Lake Victoria, the third largest city in Kenya, to Kakamega, a Western Province town containing bureaucratic structures of Provincial Government along with tourist infrastructure. Areas within Maragoli are divided into North, West and South Locations. A further Location division, Central, is projected. Locations are politicised by both descent group elders and today's state bureaucratic structures overseen by Members of Parliament, Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Council Members, and Headmen. Within these locations are further divisions between sub-locations, market towns and villages (see Map 2). One of the larger centrally located market towns, Mbale, has now received the status of "town" and government agencies are being established there. For example, the court facility and division offices pertaining to agricultural services, social services, council, etc. are being moved to

Mbale from other market towns. A large central post office and rural health centre have been in place for some time in Mbale as well as electricity and a central water source. During the period between 1987 and 1988, road paving and construction inconvenience became a way of life. Expropriation of family owned land and relocation of people was under way to provide space for further Mbale expansion. These projects continue despite their traumatic effect on the families relocated.

Mbale. Mbale is a typical market town. It has a number of shops made of mud or cement blocks with corrugated iron roofs arranged on both sides of a main thoroughfare. With the exception of two shops owned by Kikuyu, all are owned by Avalogoli. These shops sell assorted commodities, for example, food, clothing, bedding, furniture, general household utensils and supplies, dishes, lanterns, kerosene, as well as agricultural commodities, hand tools, seeds and fertilizer. Speciality shops include butcher shops, wholesale commodity shops supply stores, a grinding mill, carpentry shops, iron works and bars. Mbale, being a major town has a printing shop with photocopier, booksellers, stationary shops, a beauty parlour and a recently constructed large, relatively modern except for a running water source, hotel. Outdoor market tables are also in evidence, supplying all goods, as well as fresh vegetables, dried fish, charcoal, chickens and livestock. Outside

market sellers and shops do business on a daily basis, however Saturday is the largest market day in Maragoli. By noon, crowds of people and herds of livestock have raised clouds of red dust that signal convergence. The dust dissipates in the late afternoon, when tired women gather their unsold produce to return home and cook the evening meal and long lines of children and adults carrying assorted containers form in front of the kerosene pump. Most residences in proximity to Mbale Town as well as to other market towns are permanent, that is, made of cement block with corrugated iron roofs. There is little agricultural land in these more concentrated areas, but there are some small domestic garden plots.

Villages. Villages in Maragoli are defined by the presence of schools rather than market places. Schools are usually in the centre of a village area and consist of half a dozen primary and sometimes also secondary school buildings. In some villages a church is dominant. Communal village activities take place in either the school or the church. On a Sunday for example, most people will congregate at church from early morning until early afternoon. Worship takes up part of that time, however, visiting as well as the arrangement of village communal work activities are also included in church activity.

In villages shops are scattered here and there and market sellers sit on the road or path sides displaying

their commodities on tables or cloths. Scant inventories attest to the fact that the bulk of household needs are purchased at the market towns or Mbale. Most market towns are accessible by walking. This access by dirt and gravel roads is relatively good in some cases and extremely poor in others.

"Yards". *Mugitsi*, homesteads or "yards" as they are called, each seen as belonging to a localised descent group are scattered across what is known as a village area. A yard in the past had land space for an economic base that supported polygyny as well as patrilocality. Current increases in population and land shortages have created difficulty in permitting a viable economic base to support these traditional structures. Yards still contain extended family groups, some polygynous, (usually the ascending generation), with younger men working or looking for work elsewhere. Their wives attempt to provide for the needs of their family and community from an increasingly reduced resource base. Houses are thatched roofed, square and round built of mud, or in some cases built in a "semi-permanent" way, mud with corrugated iron roofs, and in a few cases, "permanent" houses constructed from concrete blocks, or yard-made bricks, with corrugated iron roofs. Each wife in the yard should have a house. Livestock, (cows, sheep, goats) and fowl (chickens, ducks) share the human living spaces. Outbuildings, for example "kitchen huts", usually

one to a yard although this is not consistent throughout, with the required three cooking stones, perhaps a charcoal burner, and granaries are also in evidence. Cemented graves of deceased relatives are in all yards, ideally located in the front of houses in which they lived. *Mulimi* (land for crops), (Kiswahili, *shamba*), including banana "plantations", belonging to these yards are in close proximity and the total yard area is usually enclosed by thorn bush fences or trees. For some more fortunate families, further agricultural land may also exist elsewhere. Water is collected from central, piped spring sources, or when that fails, the rivers. Electricity is not available in village areas. Most villages contain cross sections of family groupings ranging from relatively affluent to relatively poor.

Yards, paths and roads are the centre of usual activity in Maragoli villages. Maragoli is an open society, few aspects of people's life are private and not subject to discussion in conversations. In the early morning light, in different areas of the yard, men and school children wash from small basins of water women have allocated. Women greet one another on the paths as they make their second trip for water. Once men and children leave, the yards are taken over by women washing clothes and spreading them on bushes to dry. Younger children have fun and "assist" by walking over the clothes with muddy feet. Old people sit in

favourite spots in front of their houses, caring for children or dozing. People passing by stop to give greetings and visitors may arrive for tea or a meal. Others join in work activities or gossip with those working in the yards or gardens. In the heat of the afternoon people rest from work, talking or dozing in small groups scattered around the yard or on path-sides. Late afternoons find conversing people moving on the paths fetching water and firewood or returning from markets to join animated conversations in yards. Preparations for the evening meal take place and noisy children, livestock and fowl are rounded up, escape, rounded up, more times than one would care to count. Children run to shops for kerosene so that lanterns may be lit before it gets too dark. School girls run for a last supply of water and the young men hanging out on the paths encourage a speed not usually in evidence. To this outsider, life in Maragoli is active, noisy with conversation, laughter and sometimes anger, but the tempo is usually slow.

Maragoli is an attractive area, lushly green and red interspersed with brilliant tropical flowers through all seasons. It is predominantly agricultural and known for its fertility. The Avalogoli are known for skilful farming techniques and production levels and a phenomenal population growth. Avalogoli are also known for their attachment to

"home", where birth gives them membership in a social group and their resting place in death.

Migration and Settlement: Avalogoli History

The history of Avalogoli has been written by those who are not Avalogoli,² as well as Logoli people themselves. According to the Avalogoli accounts of migration and descent (cf. Lisingu 1946), "A long time ago" Logoli ancients came from a country called Asia. From Asia they settled for a time in *Misiri*, (Egypt), then travelled the Nile and arrived in Congo. From Congo, they travelled overland to Uganda, then crossed Lake Victoria from Uganda in "canoes made from reeds" to today's Kisumu, Kenya. Some forefathers died on the journey, *Muyeli* in Ethiopia and *Nabwege* in Uganda(*Mwelesa*).³ A strong wind on Lake Victoria is said to have split up the canoes. This resulted in some forefathers going "south" and some going "north".⁴ However, "The grandfather of all was the same person, and wherever people went they left behind those who had the same customs and language as the Logoli"(Lisingu 1946).⁵ The forefathers of *Mulogoli*, the ancestor of all Logoli people, stayed for some time ("many years") on the shores of Lake Victoria, (from about 1250 A.D.).⁶ The father of *Mulogoli*, *Andimi*, moved farther inland, dying in South Nyanza. *Mulogoli*, "tired of fighting" with the *Nandi* and the *Masai*, moved north-west to *Seme*, then *Maseno*, and finally to *Mwigono* (*Maragoli Hills*) or *Evologoli*, today's *Maragoli*. His brother, *Anyore*,

settled nearby, in today's neighbouring Division, Bunyore. The Maragoli settlement by the ancestor, Mulogoli, with his wife Kaliyesa, is considered to have taken place around 1700(Were 1967b:7-8).⁷ Today's memories say this land was uninhabited and wars between neighbouring groups, for example, the Luo and Nandi, did not begin until settlement was well established(cf. Abwunza 1985). In the old days, Maragoli was "known in two steps, east and west."⁸ Today, the locations of North and West Maragoli are in the traditional east, and South Maragoli is in the traditional west.

Mulogoli and Kaliyesa had four sons, Musali, Kizungu, Kilima and M'mavi. These four sons make up the *tsinyumba tzinene*, (great houses) in the segmentary lineage structure of the people of Logoli. Mulogoli, "as all fathers do" gave his sons land. Musali moved north, as did Kizungu. Kilima went to the west and the last born, M'mavi, "remained behind", in the south, *yatigala nalinda misango gia Mulogoli*, (caring for his father's land). These sons and their children spread over the land, in defined territorial segments that for the most part remain today. For example, even though it is empirically established that "people live all over", the sentiment of territorial ownership of land puts the *inyumba*, (house) of Musali and of Kizungu in North Maragoli, Kilima in West and M'mavi in South. In terms of authority, the north is the home of the first born son,

Musali, the south of the last born son, M'mavi, two important hierarchical statuses in the segmentary system.

The names of the sons of Mulogoli, their sons, and their son's sons are now written, as Avalogoli say, for history, "To show the beginning of Mulogoli (signifying people) in the world"(cf. Mulama, no date⁹; Lisingu 1946). In addition, a further segmentation of twenty-two(Mulama) or twenty-five(Lisingu) "little houses"; that is, other grandsons of Mulogoli are also named but not designated by specific territorial segments.¹⁰ They live "just anywhere" within the territories of the four sons. Those who trace their relationship from the four sons identify themselves in this manner. Some would say, "We are avana va Musali, (children of Musali) here." This signifies their relationship to the important first born son of Mulogoli and permits them to locate and own land in North Maragoli. In South Maragoli, people say, "We are all children of M'mavi here" or, "We are all children of Mahagira here", in a sub-location of South Maragoli. Mahagira was the third born son of Gonda who was the third born son of M'mavi, the last born son of Mulogoli.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity in African situations centres around a common group experience, emphasising the historical underpinnings facilitating group identity that assist in explaining language and cultural attributes. The historical account

presented above provides the foundation of Avalogoli collective group experience. Today, 200,000 Avalogoli¹¹ live in Maragoli. From colonial times they have been seen as part of a larger cultural and linguistic Bantu group. This group was first known as the Bantu Kavirondo Tribe, a label given by Colonial Officials. Later, Avalogoli were included in a Luhya Nation. For a time, this indigenous designation served economic and political purposes centred around ownership of land and independence from colonial rule. In present day Kenya, they are categorised by the Kenya Central Bureau of Statistics as a "sub-tribe" in the "main-tribe" designation of Luhya. The Baluhya are second in population size in Kenya. Kikuyu are first and Luo are now third.¹²

During colonial times in Kenya all indigenous ethnic groups suffered similar inequalities: alienation of land, conscripted labour reinforced by pass laws, establishment of reserves or locations, and laws against African cash crop production and trade. Opposition to these inequalities by Western Kenya Baluhya began through voluntary associations introduced by the missionaries which were later adapted by Africans to serve political ends. One of the most important of these organisations, the North Kavirondo Central Association was formed in 1932 with the help of the apolitical Society of Friends. It was strongest in the most densely populated areas, Maragoli and Bunyore. It

eventually grew until it had membership in almost every location in Western Kenya. By 1938, this Baluhya association had become political, issuing protests against compulsory destocking, demanding payment of war gratuities to dependents of Africans killed in World War I, campaigning for tax exemptions and lower taxes. Soon the protest was extended to missionaries and settlers, accusing them of stealing African lands. The association gains were few and members often faced persecution from the British. They nonetheless persisted. In 1939, the association changed its name to the Abaluhya Central Association thereby legitimising the idea of a Luhya Nation by those people known to the British as the Bantu Kavirondo. Individual ethnic groups assimilated to advocate reserve ownership of land by title deed and to protest against soil conservation measures within the location. These were seen as a ploy for further European takeover of African land. By the 1950's, the even broader group identity, the Kenyan nation, emerged in the fight for independence from the British. Eventually the Baluhya Political Union merged with the Kenya African National Union (KANU) with the common goal of achieving *Uhuru*, (Kiswahili, freedom).¹³

For some time then, in their history, Avalogoli ethnic group identity was subsumed when its main goal was in Kenyan nationalism advocating independence from Britain. An idea of nationalism evolved that stemmed from membership in

religious groups, then crossed religious and ethnic lines to a larger group identity of Baluhya, and finally climaxed in a national identity of Kenyans. This is a good example of Weber's notion about opposition generating identity: "...a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of [an] other group" (1958:173).

Today, Avalogoli limit Abaluhya identity to mainly urban contexts. National identity is contextual as well. Although the idea of national identity in Maragoli is convincing as is its political slogan of Nyayo, the expression of ethnicity, as Avalogoli, apart from other Kenyans, is still pronounced. Their identity stems from a common commitment to ancestry (Weber 1968; Barth 1969; Isajiw 1975, 1979); their language, Luragoli; and what they characterise as a "proper" Avalogoli way of life, "the Avalogoli way", where "...one's ethnic cognitions result in ethnic self-identity" (Aboud 1981). In addition, although their ethnicity emerged from the above characteristics, today it has become an important "objectified principle" (Comaroff 1987:313f). As a result, their ethnic identity assumes a pervasiveness in their everyday life, including their political life (Patterson 1977:102f). This permits their own interests to be aspired to at the level of collective action, in order to provide not necessarily an aspect of equality (cf. Comaroff 1987:314), but to provide privilege compared with those around them in the Kenyan

nation. In Maragoli today, privilege is exhibited by "progress", undertaken by Avalogoli themselves and with government assistance. Ethnicity pervades social, political and economic spheres, as Avalogoli adhere to a hierarchy of contextual allegiance; first among segmentary structures of Avalogoli, second among all Avalogoli, third, Baluhya, and fourth, in Kenyan nationalism.¹⁴

Economy

Avalogoli are cattle-keeping agriculturalists, who for a long period of time have relied heavily on input from the wage labour sector (cf. Mook 1978-79). The segmentary lineage structure of their society legitimises ownership and disposition of land and cattle (along with other livestock and fowl) and similarly influences wage labour production. Today's Maragoli contains people engaged in a mixture of economic pursuits. Some, usually women, engage in farming small plots of land, growing the staple crop of maize, along with millet, bananas, sorghum, yams, beans, and green (cowpea) vegetables. A few have coffee, fewer yet have tea "plantations" and the recently introduced and government assisted French bean crop.¹⁵ Others, usually men, work or look for work in the wage labour sector, inside and outside Maragoli. People as individuals and as members of a family may be more or less farmer or wage earner, and, through the implementation of "proper" Avalogoli ways, more or less dependent upon one another to survive. Both occupations are

nowadays precarious and hazardous, factors which do not allow a culturally defined viable economic expansion.

Economic hardship is common in Maragoli. There is a scarcity of wage labour positions. Only 28% of the potential labour force was employed in the early 1970's (Moock 1975:21), and there is no indication of improvement. Kenya generally is threatened by an unemployment situation that has reached massive proportions. Agricultural land for personal subsistence is expensive and in short supply. In 1978, a demographic analysis of Maragoli by Ssenyonga called attention to dangerous density levels associated with the agricultural resource base. Population figures showed a total population of 123,713 in an area of 208 square kilometres, with North Maragoli having the higher density of 614 per square kilometres and South Maragoli next with 542. Ssenyonga pointed out that fertility indices in Western Province generally appeared to be above the national average, 54.2 as against 50 births per thousand (population). He observed, "...as one narrows the spatial angle towards Maragoli from the national plane, the higher the densities soar" (1978:5). He assessed the reported rates and figures in Maragoli as "frightening", "...a total fertility of 8.6 (children per family), and an annual rate of natural increase of 3.52%, in a rural unit where the average density is close to 2500 persons per square mile" (1978:13-14). In relating this to the resource

base and human potential, Ssenyonga said, "Many will doubt whether this rural people has been able to build up a life support system with the capacity to sustain its phenomenal population"(1978:14).

By 1982, the population had increased to 142,205, the Maragoli area had decreased to 198 square kilometres, and densities ranged from a low of 277 (in a area of very poor land) to a high of 1065; South Maragoli averaging 902, and North 748, increasing the average density to 825 per square kilometre. (In the Population Census, 1982, the area is reported as 198 square kilometres, an apparent reduction of 10 square kilometres from 1978. It was not possible to establish the basis of this revision. There were no reports of Avalogoli "losing land" by boundary revision or other measures.) The annual rate of natural increase rose to 4%(Central Bureau of Statistics 2 Oct 1982). The increase continues. In 1988, the population in Maragoli was given as 197,324. A burgeoning population growth in combination with restricted land resources and limited opportunity for wage employment are the main variables contributing to today's economic difficulties.

Notes on Avalogoli Traditions and Beliefs

Ideology of Patriarchy

As noted in Chapter 1, among Avalogoli patriarchy as a system refers to an idealised patriarchal institution where it is believed that all men rule or have the right to rule

as "commanders" over women and children. That is they have the right to rule if they are honourable and follow custom and thus can be characterised as "good" Logoli men. The rule extends outward from the rule of the "commander", ideally the eldest man within a yard, throughout the structure of Avalogoli society. This rule is age and context dependent, elder men are seen to rule over junior men, some elder men are seen to rule over other elder men, but all men see they have a right to rule over women and children. Men's words and actions are the authority in regards to women. This authority ought to saturate all aspects of women's life so that their desires and goals are only directed by men's desires and goals. As men see it, their rule allows their ownership over all production and their authority in all aspects of decision-making.

Men expect that women will respect their right to rule in all words and actions. This respect for rule should be evidenced by women's deference to all men, but most particularly to their fathers, husbands, husband's elder brothers and their fathers-in-law. If deference is not maintained, then depending on context, any of these men have the right to inflict "punishment" in order that women may "learn". However, any of these men along with women's brothers and other women, have the right to intervene. "Teaching" women by beating is institutionalised. Beatings may take place with the left hand, so as not to inflict too

much damage, and should not descend upon vital areas of the body, eg., kidney, liver, heart. The instrument for beating women is the hand, although frequently pangas (machetes), hoes and sticks are used. Women may not be beaten when they are "with blood" (pregnant).

Women posture a deference to patriarchy. For example, groups of women and men may engage in animated conversations, however, immediately any of the men listed above, (with the exception of women's brothers), join the group, a woman takes on an attitude where her mind and body appear to withdraw from the conversation. She immediately stops conversing, lowers her head, folds her hands or arms and looks down. Not taking on this posture of deference will allow her to be described by women and men as "a woman acting like a man", as "too independent", or, as in one case, "computer mouth". This deference to men is also in evidence as women instruct other women how to avoid verbal or physical abuse. Advice runs from keeping quiet no matter the provocation, sitting quietly with legs and arms crossed while absorbing a torrent of abuse, to running to hide in the bananas.

My own relationship, that is being married to Mulogoli, (a Logoli man and thus to all Avalogoli), is an aberration. My husband and I engaged in conversations as a couple, in groups, made eye contact and often touched one another. On occasion we argued and my husband was disinclined to use

institutionalised means to "teach" his *mukali* (wife)¹⁶ the appropriate behaviour. My relationship with my father-in-law, fathers-in-law and elder brothers-in-law was similarly aberrant as I engaged in dialogue with them and all men, in a fashion more appropriate to Western life than Avalogoli life. My relationship with mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law was more characteristically Avalogoli, as I deferred to and respected the former and took on a role of elder sister and friend with the latter.

Ideal Marriage of Avalogoli

A marriage in Maragoli ought to be organised and overseen by parents, indeed all elder relatives. A request for marriage consideration should come during a visit from one of the parents of either the man or woman. The request is made after the elders have observed the young couple and are able to pass judgement on the appropriateness for each other (relationship, health, criminal behaviour) as well as their "goodness". "Goodness" is generally described as being a "good worker" for a young woman and for a young man, the ability to provide his wife with land. At the time of the initial request, or shortly after, *uvukwi* (bridewealth) discussion should be begun by the young man's relatives. Prior to this discussion, both the young man and the young woman will have an opportunity to discuss the marriage with their parents. If they agree to the marriage, they may also contribute their own ideas as to how much *uvukwi* should be

offered and accepted during the negotiation. If the negotiation results in an agreement, at least part of the *uvukwi* should be given immediately in order to assist with wedding expenses.

Uvukwi prestations are cattle and cash. The "first cow" (a bull), important because it starts the *uvukwi* exchanges and symbolises the relationship, is given by the young man's father. Fathers should have accumulated cattle from their daughters' *uvukwi* in order to assist their sons in providing *uvukwi*. A father will tell his very young son which sister will provide cows for his marriage. All people share this knowledge as the two grow up. The sister takes on the care of this brother while they are in their father's yard, cooking, laundry, and the brother watches over his sister and is involved in her *uvukwi* discussion. When they marry, their children will have a relationship with each other and with their *cosa* (aunt, uncle and respective spouses) that is more sibling, parent, than the usual relationship between brothers, sisters and their children. A girl's father receives the cash and cows but a girl's mother should receive part of the cash as well as "small" gifts, for example, cloths, head scarf, tea, sugar or extra small amounts of cash. The daughter should also provide a small amount of cash for the mother.

Two weddings should be held. The first is in the yard of the bride and from there the bride and her female age-

mates will walk (nowadays drive) to the second, held in the yard of the bride-groom. In both yards, relatives will contribute wedding gifts and food so that all may "feast". People dance and sing wedding songs. This ideal structure of marriage opens the way for ongoing reciprocal relations among the relatives of the married couple.

Today's pattern of marriage in Maragoli does not often follow the ideal. A few more affluent families attempt to achieve the ideal. For most however, uvukwi prestations are expensive and they cannot afford to consider beginning the ideal marriage transaction. Most young people elope, the young woman taking up residence in the young man's yard without any uvukwi discussion and wedding ceremonies. Frequently, the pressure for uvukwi discussion will come later from the young woman's relatives. If the negotiations do take place, the initial "payment" is often a token amount. Neglecting a discussion, or the payments following a discussion, creates tremendous dissension within and between entire families as it is not only the married individuals who are concerned. On the individual level, a woman demands that her father receive his cows. It is a symbol of her husband's and his family's regard for her as a wife. It also opens the way for the reciprocal relations vital to her and her family's welfare in today's situations of economic difficulty.

In my own marriage, which took place in Canada in 1965, the uvukwi situation remained anomalous for some years. In 1976, my women affines in Maragoli insisted that my uvukwi had to be "discussed" and "paid". As a result, proxies for my father and elder brothers (I do not have any brothers or anyone to be placed in that category!) and a woman "from my neighbourhood in Canada" were designated and the discussion took place. After some time during which totally outrageous figures were tossed around, uvukwi was decided upon. The proxies received a share of the cash and the remainder (cows and cash) was given to my husband to hold "in trust" for my father as he declined to have cows shipped to Canada. Some of the cows died, but they are still "owed" as dead cows have to be replaced. Death of uvukwi cows symbolises ill intent, that they were "not sent with a good heart". The remaining cows have assisted my younger brothers-in-law in their marriage arrangements and my sisters-in-law who benefit from the milk and calves.

Conclusion

An enduring ethos circumscribing "the Avalogoli way" embraces land, cattle, and children. Land, cattle and children provide "the good life". Unfortunately the first two stipulations for the good life are decreasing and in combination with an increase in the last, population, Avalogoli face difficult social and economic circumstances. This chapter and the preceding ones, provide a frame for the

investigation of women's work and women's decision making in the light of these demanding circumstances.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Based on temperature recordings during 1987-88.

2. Ogot (1967:72) and Were (1967a:64-65; 1967b:7-8) provide historical aspects of the Logoli people. Also, Whiteney (1960), Ochieng(1978), Osogo (1965) and Barker (1950) give histories of the settlement of the area which include Avalogoli. Wagner (1949) engaged in fieldwork in Western Kenya in the 1920's and 1930's. The Avalogoli are included in his ethnography of the "Bantu Kavirondo". For a more detailed treatment of Avalogoli history as well as ethnographic particulars see Abwunza (1985).

3. Mwelesa (undated) has recorded the circumcision sets of Avalogoli and includes on this chart these deaths and places of the deaths.

4. For example the Avalogoli and the Avakisii consider themselves brothers. The Kisii people are said to have split off in this manner.

5. This provides the explanation for similarities in language and customs among Abaluhya.

6. Barker (1950:3).

7. Dates are not provided in Avalogoli sources until the first circumcision in the area of present day Maragoli. This is recorded as 1750(Mwelesa, undated).

8. For Avalogoli, east is life thus the sunrise. West is sunset and where worship was. The Mung'oma Hills (Maragoli Hills) are considered to be in the west. The caves of the ancients, where Mulogoli and his people first lived before building houses are in the Mung'oma Hills.

9. Mulama's Maragoli Map containing the names has been printed within the last five years.

10. It is said that traditionally, Avalogoli practised a total exogamy, that is no Logoli person could marry another Logoli person. In recent history exogamy is practised within the four main lineages. However, incest is traced from both the mother's and father's side at least through two ascending generations. As Avalogoli are seen to live in localised

descent groups, a man and woman with grandmothers coming from the same area in Maragoli cannot marry.

11. Published statistics (Central Bureau of Statistics 2 Oct 1982) show the Maragoli population as 142,205, however the census taken in 1987 gives 197,324 as the population count (Provincial Office, Kakamega, private communication).

12. 1979 Population Census Analytical Report. Until 1979, the Luo group was second in population size. The Baluhya have now overtaken the Luo. The Baluhya province of Western Kenya has the highest rate of natural increase in population in Kenya (cf. Ssenyonga 1978).

13. See Abwunza (1985) for a more detailed investigation of independence along with the analyses of other researchers.

14. See Abwunza (1990b) for a more detailed analysis of ethnic politics.

15. Usually on one-half to one acre plots.

16. Usual usage, *mukali gwa Abwunza* (wife of Abwunza) or *mukaye gwa* in the case of an elder wife.

CHAPTER 4
WOMEN'S WORK

Q; "Who works harder?"
A; "Women work harder."

It is generally perceived by Maragoli men and women that women work harder. According to most women, men "only talk and flock to market" or "sit and order women". To be a "good Logoli woman" one must work hard. This is summed up by a very old woman; "If women don't take care of the entire house and yard, who is going to do it?" (Kagonga, Oct. 26, 1987). Men are ancillary in the productive process.

Today, in regard to understanding the importance of women's economic role in Maragoli society, it is important to recognise that women's primary task, "taking care of the entire house and yard", involves a movement across the domains categorised as "private" and "public". Neither men nor women in Maragoli categorise value as "use" or "exchange". The sentiment of male rule demands that women "provision" (provide needs) for their family in whatever way possible. This includes the domain of the household, ideally women's production from men's land and ideally, men's cash production from wage labour. In terms of productive value, the two domains articulate and conflict while sharing a common theme of male elder rule. This

ideology provides for an unrealistic delineation of labour tasks by gender that contributes to problematic situations between men and women. Culturally, Avalogoli define labour tasks into two major categories: "home work" and "outside work". "Home work" is women's work defined by production of food and staples from plots of land and "outside work" is men's work defined by production of food and material goods from cash.

Home Work

"Home work" is traditionally and currently performed by married women with the assistance of their children and other women.² It consists of digging³ one's own land, "fetching" and "collecting" water and firewood, acquiring and cooking the daily food, caring for children, doing laundry and cleaning the house and yard. Young, single men may engage in some of these tasks on their own or to assist women in the yard and both men and women may dig on the land, (just as both may be involved in arbitrary entrepreneurial and structured wage activities), but for the most part, men are only engaged in the heavy work of breaking up the ground for cultivating. Any task which involves digging is women's work because it involves the production of food and both men and women agree that women are the farmers. This responsibility is extended to digging crops for cash to buy necessities like, tea, sugar, cooking oil, flour, condiments, kerosene, etc. at markets. Husbands

are not diggers in a culturally defined sense, even though they may dig. They are only "permitted" to fetch water if their wives are sick and there is no other woman available.⁴ They seldom clean the night's supply of cow dung from the hut, sweep either house or yard, cook, collect firewood, or care for children. This isolation of work by gender is clear in the general statement: "Men do not do that, it is women's work."⁵ Although men do not do "home work", women are not similarly restricted. A few women are in more structured wage positions as clerks, teachers or nurses and some do agricultural labour for a wage or for a share of the crop in order to provision for their family. When colonialism brought cash and commodities to the traditional Maragoli economy, a further separation was encouraged between women and men. Relations between them were thus made additionally problematic. Women resent the implication of responsibility connected to the necessity to provide more than daily food requirements from "home work" in order to survive. They also resent that there is not enough land to get the cash needed to buy food items and commodities. This resentment is directed to men who do not or cannot supply land and cash. Men add further to the responsibility shouldered by women by blaming them for mismanagement, e.g. when the yield of maize from a garden is low or when it disappears "too fast".

The culturally defined categories of work by gender create difficulties but these are made worse when men or women do not or cannot live up to expectations. Men and women may suffer community disapproval or a loss of social status if they participate in work deemed the responsibility of the other. This is particularly evident for men who do women's work. This is seen as role confusion: "A lazy woman tells her husband 'go and get water and cook', and he goes! Or there are women who claim to be sick, refuse to go to hospital, the husband does the work, but she gets up to eat! This is a woman acting like a man and a man acting like a woman"(Alfayo, Hannah and Febe, Nov. 23, 1987).⁶ When a man engages in woman's work, both he and his wife are highly criticised; a man fetching water suffers ridicule and his wife is considered lazy. In one case, a sick wife's request to remove the cow dung brought a tirade of overwhelming magnitude from her husband, concluding with, "Do you think I have breasts and a vagina?"(Aggrey, Jan. 26, 1987).

The Daily Routine

A woman's day begins early,⁷ somewhere around six in the morning on a sunny day, or perhaps a bit later if it's overcast. *Vuche* (or *vuchee*), the morning greeting is given to and by those she meets. It is an important indicator of well being and sets the tone for the day. *Vuche* means more than good morning. It contains the ingredients of good health and contentment, "It is my sincere wish you have

spent a good night and all is right with your world." Neglect to pass this greeting sends a strong message of disapproval with life, or possibly signifies illness. If there has been no rain during the night and the water containers are empty, a woman's first task is to fetch water⁸ for bathing⁹ and to make the morning tea, provided tea leaves are available. Next, she will chop firewood¹⁰ and make the fire to heat the water over the traditional three stones. If older children are in the home, girls will fetch water and scavenge for firewood and boys will chop it.¹¹ As cooking utensils are in short supply and not usually washed after the evening meal, they will be cleaned prior to drinking tea and eating any "slept over" food from the night before. Breakfast is not an expected meal as it is in Western culture. If there is flour left from cooking the evening meal, porridge may be cooked for young children, or during the bean harvest, these may be cooked the night before and consumed in the morning. Tea, however, either *ituliungi*, "strong", that is without milk or sugar, *mukafu*, without sugar, or the preferred *chai*, "regular", is almost a necessity.¹² Without it, people are "hungry" or "starving". A man who has to leave his yard without tea considers himself hard put upon¹³ and will inform those along his route that he has had to leave home without it. Cows and other animals are given the little water remaining and women may make a further trip to the river depending upon the

amount of livestock. Following tea taking, children will be sent off to school and women will make another trip for water to wash clothes. Not all clothing is washed on a daily basis. Bed clothes, usually rough blankets and rags which get wet through the night from the urine of bare bottomed children, are laid out in the sun to dry and washed weekly to reduce extra trips for water.¹⁴

The Annual Cycle

Maragoli women do not engage in digging except at peak agricultural periods when the land has to be cleared for planting by burning and digging or during seeding, weeding, and harvesting. For the most part, maize is the predominant crop. Beans are planted after the maize sprouts to provide additional food and put nutrients (nitrogen) back into the soil. The maize stalk provides support for the bean plant. Sorghum, millet, cassava, sugar cane, napier grass for the cows and green vegetables (assorted cowpea) are also planted if garden space permits. There are two maize crops in a calendar year but the crop from the long rains is by far the best producer. Short rain crops are scant, producing smaller cobs. Most people plant beans but many neglect the planting of green vegetables which could be an added food supply, stretching the supply of maize flour during the off season, that is after maize, sorghum and millet have been harvested and prior to new crop planting. This neglect seems to be associated with digging work generally.

Planting a crop of green vegetables would necessitate digging up the land two more times to plant the seeds. This is additional work and even though every one "loves" eating green vegetables, many buy them at very high cost rather than engage in the extra work. Most homes have a banana plantation and cooked or sweet bananas provide additional food. If enough are grown, bananas also provide a small cash supply. Cash cropping is limited as land is limited. A few women may plant cabbage, tomatoes and onions for their own use and to sell. In Maragoli, most women plant on a quarter to a half acre of land.¹⁵ In many cases, this does not provide subsistence for their large families¹⁶ let alone a cash crop. If monetary needs are immediate, subsistence crops may be sold which may leave families in a position of "starvation"--having to buy food to eat during periods of scarcity and higher prices.

Once the small fields are planted, they require little care beyond a bit of weeding and loosening of soil. The growing is left to nature. Women and men observe the growth but generally do not engage in any kind of agricultural work again until it is time to harvest.

Alternate Daily Work Patterns

Women perform other tasks and take time to entertain, visit with friends or perhaps just sit around. Agricultural work is performed in short, labour intensive bursts for perhaps four hours a day and there remains still more hours

of women's work. Along with general home tasks, it may be necessary to patch a wall or lay a floor with cow dung. It may even be necessary to build a new hut.¹⁷ If money is available and a permanent house is to be built, time away from digging tasks allows one to make the bricks¹⁸ to begin construction.

Agricultural chores take precedence except when social demands interfere as this is a society of obligatory visits and prestations. If garden work is in order, women will move to their plots, carrying their hoes, and work there for most of the morning. Although digging in Maragoli is extremely hard physical labour, many women maintain that they enjoy it.¹⁹ Most yards have more than one woman living in them, so women usually have companion diggers. Since the garden plots are close together, women dig a bit, then lean on their hoes and have conversations with their neighbours and others passing on the paths. They talk, joke, flirt with passing men and catch up on the neighbourhood news. Babies and younger children are in the gardens with their mothers, so women will frequently stop their digging and provide for their needs; nursing the babies, sympathising with scrapes and bruises, or joining in the play of older children. Shortly after noon, women begin to leave the plots and make another trek for water to cook the mid-day meal of *ovukima* (a stiff porridge made from maize kernels ground into a flour) or bananas. Normally this is ready

around two in the afternoon and women will divide the food among the number of people present; visitors, workers if they can afford to hire them, the children and lastly themselves. Following lunch, women will usually sit or recline on the grass for a few hours, gossiping with others or dozing in the mid-afternoon sun.

Around four or four-thirty in the afternoon, women will "go for water" again to bathe young children and themselves and to wash the utensils used at lunch. This trip normally takes a bit longer than the others as women will stop and talk to those on the roads and paths who are also collecting water²⁰ or returning from the nearest market. When these tasks are accomplished, they will return for more water for the evening meal and look for firewood. School children will have returned home and they may assist in these chores or at least care for the younger children while women perform them. It is usually between seven and eight in the evening and dark, when women begin to cook the evening meal, and in all cases they add, "If there is food." Food comes from a number of sources: from the gardens, if the harvest has not been depleted; from the market, if there is money to buy it; or from relatives in the cycle of giving or loaning. The main portion of the meal is *ovukima*. Maize is no longer ground into flour in yards.²¹ Women or young girls must make a trip to a central grinding mill to have the kernels ground into flour for a shilling or two, depending upon

quantity. From one village this is a distance of eight kilometres, or translated into walking time an hour and a half to two hours in an already tiring day. Although many people buy or grind a two-day supply, there are those who do this on a daily basis, scraping up a few shillings here and there for the purchase.²² Ideally, the meal is prepared and consumed by nine in the evening. This extra work for *ovukima* may seem excessive, but in a literal and symbolic sense, a meal without *ovukima* is not a meal. No matter what food people may consume, not taking *ovukima* means they have not eaten.²³ Once the meal is complete, younger children are bathed (if this was not done in the afternoon) prior to sleeping. On many occasions, children are given porridge, perhaps roasted maize or tea if they are too young for the hard kernels. They may go without the bath as the time gets late and they simply fall asleep. The utensils from the evening meal are left aside. At this point in the day, women or children no longer have the necessary energy to fetch more water to clean cooking utensils. Travel to the river can be dangerous after dark notwithstanding the awareness of hygiene created by efforts of church groups who warn against letting the *ovukima* pot "sleep overnight". Realistically, the easiest way to wash this pot, with its caked on *ovukima* and burnt bottom from the three stones is to let it soak overnight which is the common practice.²⁴

Bedtime for women comes when all of the above chores are completed usually sometime between ten and eleven at night.

Even during peak agricultural periods, the requirement to visit and receive guests interferes with the completion of "home work". A death or serious illness in one's extended kin group or a death in the village in which one resides results in a work stoppage. Logoli people do not dig if a relative has died. It would result in a very strong *olovo* (curse) being inflicted upon the living with still more illness or even death. Furthermore, the land dug during this period would not produce. In the case of serious illness or death, depending upon the closeness of the relationship, women gather food and other resources and transportation money to travel to the yard of the afflicted family. This also occurs when an individual dies within the village. Women down their hoes and gather with men in the yard of the deceased. It would be an unusual week in Maragoli if work was not interrupted for illness or death. Women may also have to travel the kin network "visiting" in order to obtain food for their own yards, money that is urgently required for school fees, books, or transportation and to call on other relatives to fulfil obligatory visits. Women may also refuse to dig as a result of problems they have in the yard: arguments with husbands or in-laws and slights or criticisms they have detected. They may also refuse to dig if they are ill; malaria is the name usually

given to the illness. It would be an unusual week in Maragoli if digging or other chores were not interrupted to fulfil these needs or express these sentiments.²⁵

Although the above tasks and responsibilities must be performed, on an individual basis the actual ones completed and how they are completed depend on individual contexts and circumstances. Consider the following two case examples. Joyce manages with creative planning to conform to Maragoli norms. Ritah confronts the norms and questions their direct benefit to her.

Joyce.²⁶ Joyce is 28 years old. She married in 1982 and has three children, two girls and a boy. Her husband works in wage labour in Kitale. She is the eldest in a family of four and her siblings are still at home. Joyce's mother is Avalogoli, her father Tiriki, so she is *ummenya* (an outsider), as "insiderness" is traced through patriliney. Joyce wanted to be a nurse, but there was no money for her training. She decided to marry as she did not have enough education to work. Since her husband's parents are dead, he calls himself an "orphan". His father died first and his mother refused the custom of levirate, preferring to remain working as a nurse in Nakuru, some distance from Maragoli. Joyce's husband's father (FB) gave him land when he decided to marry, one-half acre,²⁷ and he also assisted with the arrangements, *uvukwi* (bridewealth) discussion and payment.²⁸ Joyce was already living with her husband when the

arrangements took place. Even as an *ummenya*,²⁹ Joyce is typified as an "excellent wife" by the community. To call a woman an "excellent wife" means that she fulfils all the responsibilities of women's work cheerfully and quietly. She does not answer back even when provoked or abused by her husband or other men. She stays in the yard and does not run to her father's yard when difficulties arise. And needless to say, she does not "run to men", i.e., she is faithful to her husband no matter how tested or tempted. Joyce's husband does not share an equally good reputation. He is known as a drunk, an abuser, a poor provider and not deserving of such a good wife.³⁰ As Joyce describes her situation:

My husband asked for me, the table was opened.³¹ I was to pay some of this, but I was not working, so I left the matter to my parents. He paid 150 Shillings to open the table, 100 was from him and 50 was from me. My father and they (husband's FB, FBS) decided on 6000 Shillings and seven cows. 3000 Shillings was given to my parents. I was satisfied. My husband was not satisfied with the land given him but I walked the land with him and insisted we accept. He would never give me land if we did not take that piece. I pushed him to build, but left to him nothing would even have begun, ever have been built. I built my house.³² For a time I lived in one room and I could be seen from the outside (the mud had not been applied to close in the house). In those days it was 10 Shillings to get someone to dig the mud and 30 Shillings for someone to plaster. So I had someone dig for the building, enough so I only had to wet it for more, and I plastered it myself. My children were very small, so I got up early, fed them porridge and took them with me to dig. When they woke up, I gave them more porridge, put them back to sleep and dug some more.

Now I work with two other women, we dig, plant, weed and harvest together. This has been

going on for some years. We work two days at one place and move on to one of the others. The person whose home is dug supplies and cooks the food. Three others have asked to join us, but we have refused them entry. My husband does not know we work together. Husbands do not approve of women being together, they want wives to stay in their yards. He asks me, "Who did this building or digging for you?" I say, "I did this myself." Women have to have a mind of their own, women have to push husbands. Ritah has no wish to work, no plans, just sits and waits, no one knows for what. She needs to push her husband for land. I rise at six in the morning and fetch water two times. Next I sweep the house as I have chickens in there and make tea. I wash the utensils and the clothes. I go to the *shamba*³³ to work until one and then I make lunch for the children. After that, I wash the utensils and the children and begin to prepare the food for the evening meal. I wash the utensils once more and go to bed around ten. I have a relative who helps me fetching water and minding the children while I dig. I give her food and clothing. Often, in the evening I will prepare the vegetables for the next day's cooking and I always have water and if possible firewood for the next day. Before February, I plant for the long rains, maize, beans and sweet potato. I watch to see if the rain begins to come. The sweet potato will be ready in April, the beans in May or June, depending on rain, and the maize will come in July, the end. From February until April I will have to buy maize as mine has gone, in April when sweet potato comes, I will buy less maize, one sack will last two months. If there is no money we will eat less and April will be the hardest month, we will eat bananas instead of *ugali*.³⁴ The most difficult month is April, but if people plan well they don't have it so hard. Not many people here plan, so they will have starvation.³⁵

I like to dig, I do not like sitting and doing nothing. I would like more land to dig and lots of cattle. Then I could educate my children as I could sell more. Now I can only sell a few cabbages, sometimes tomatoes or a banana, but my land is poor, maize only grows so high (she gestures showing four feet not the usual six or eight feet). I would like to finish high school and train for nursing. My husband must decide if this is possible. Then I could buy more land and educate the children so they may do better than I

have. My husband could help me with this if he would stop paying 30 Shillings a bottle for *chang'aa* (local liquor distilled from maize).

Joyce performs "home work" willingly. Her marriage land was given by her husband's father's brother and some *uvukwi* provided as tradition demands. Her view of marriage is active but fundamentally traditional in context. For Joyce, a wife must move her husband to live up to expectations and be disciplined enough to avoid temptations.

Ritah.³⁶ Ritah is twenty-two years old. She lives in the yard belonging to her in-laws along with her husband, their three children under five, an older daughter's teenage daughter and an unmarried son. The unmarried son lives in the kitchen hut where the animals also sleep.³⁷ Another unmarried son who has land nearby but no house, also takes up residence occasionally, sharing the kitchen hut. Her husband's family in residence at the time of the marriage was husband's parents, two married brothers, their wives and children, and two unmarried brothers. For some time after Ritah came to the yard, she and her husband shared another brother's house in this yard with two married brothers, their wives and children, along with the two unmarried brothers. In August of 1987, the brother whose house they were living in and his family took up residence in this house. The two other married brothers left the yard and Ritah and her family moved into an unfinished cement block building that was being constructed for cattle. The building

is without windows and water pours through the roof. Insects accumulate because the floor is unfinished. Some of these insects are dangerous to the crawling baby. Ritah's husband has been given a piece of land by his father but the ownership of the land is disputed. Taking up residence, that is constructing a house on it, would be "death" so they remain in her father-in-law's yard.

Her father-in-law has considerable land; however little of it is planted. The two young men are considered lazy, the mother-in-law is old (and some say lazy), and Ritah, the one younger woman in the yard, refuses to dig. Two women and one man are hired on an almost continual basis, still much of the land "sits" and there is a heavy reliance on food purchased by the father-in-law. This is tenuous as frequently he gets angry with his family and cuts off the supply of food. Not only are the members of the immediate family living in the yard affected but the workers who require tea and a meal along with their wage stop working.

Ritah is not "liked" by either of her parents-in-law and frequent arguments and criticisms are directed to her and about her to others. She is criticised for failing in her duties, for not cleaning the house and yard, not fetching water, not chopping firewood, not assisting with cooking, and above all, not digging. At one point, her father-in-law went so far as to ask the Assistant Chief to remove her from his yard. The Assistant Chief effectively

sidestepped the request by suggesting he give his son an appropriate land so he could move with his wife there. During the 10 month period of fieldwork, Ritah engaged in digging for only two days shortly after a bullock was sent by her father-in-law for her father's funeral. She frequently refused to assist her mother-in-law with the tasks at home, sitting in the yard with her children, seemingly ignoring the torrent of criticism directed toward her. On the surface, it appeared that the criticism might be justified.

Ritah was "married to the yard during the rainy season, April 29th at 8 p.m. of 1984". Her union was one of *kuvahira* (elopement) rather than *urukari*, (marriage). Proper marriage arrangements had not been made by either of the families. More to the point, an agreement on the marriage and *uvukwi* discussion had not been made. Their first child, a girl, was born in December of 1984. The second, a boy, in November, 1986 and a second boy was born in April of 1988. In December, 1988, Ritah "walked" with her three children,³⁸ that is, she returned to the yard of her parents. Following is Ritah's description of her daily work and defence of what her in-laws consider to be "disrespectful, lazy and uncooperative" behaviour.

I did not want to marry, I wanted to be a nurse, but there was no money for training. I have five sisters and six brothers. Two sisters and one brother remain at home. There were no school fees for me. My brothers were not working and my father was sick. I went to Form 2, when I

was seventeen, I left school. I liked school, if I had waited until my brothers got jobs I could have gone back to school. But I worked at home for a year, helping my mother, digging a small land. It is so small we were often hungry. Now for example they have finished the food, (now is September, from the July harvest). I thought I would just sit there, and it was time to go, so I decided to marry. I met him at school first. He was coming to the schools, looking for a wife. Nowadays Maragoli men fear to marry in Maragoli, there are too many people, they fear they will marry a relative, so he was looking in Bunyore, where I was schooling.³⁹ My parents did not know I was seeing him, but his parents did, I often visited his home, even staying for the night. So I came here, and my parents found out after I was here. When I first came here, I did everything there was to be done in the home, even the cows, (boy's work). I worked very hard to impress my in-laws, and now the father of the home respects me and the mother of the home respects me and I respect both of them very much. I just did everything there was to do.⁴⁰

In the morning I was rising at six, and getting the water. I chopped the wood, made the fire and heated the water for washing bodies. Then I cleaned the cow dung and swept the kitchen and cooked the tea. Then I went for more water and washed the utensils and the clothes. I laid the bedding on the grass. If there was flour I made porridge for the children. Then I divided the rest of the water to (among) the cows. Then I would ask my in-law (mother), what work there is to do. Perhaps she would set me to plant or weed, maize or beans, or just dig. Then I would cook the noon meal and divide it among people. After eating I would rest a bit, then wash utensils, and fetch more water. If there was food, I would cook the evening meal, then wash the children and go to bed around ten or eleven. This is hard work, I would rather work out (wage labour) and use the money to feed people at home, build a house, buy clothing and soap to keep it clean, remember parents and parents-in-law, with something little. I like the home work, but I should have my own house, my own yard, my own land to dig.

But my father has written to my husband's father two times, suggesting that a little bit (uvukwi) should be sent. My father has said, "Even though I am too sick to eat, a small bit of food (euphemism for money) should be sent to place

at the corner of my mouth." There has been no answer. *Uvukwi* for me should be five cows and 3000 Shillings, my father has said even if my schooling is not high, I work hard, I am worth that much. My in-law must move first, he must give the first cow. But he is refusing. My in-laws refuse to send me nicely to visit my home, yet when I do, my parents send me nicely back here.⁴¹ The last time I visited my home, there was hunger in this yard. My mother sent a very big container of flour, so much that some was given to my other fathers-in-law (husband's father's brothers). Also I was sent with a chicken and two kilos of meat. Now when I want to visit my mother and my sick father, my in-law (mother) is saying there is nothing in this yard to be sent. I am to return my mother's container empty! My people will think I am coming from trees, not people. So I ask, what am I? Am I not fit to be here? If this is so, I was supposed to be told much earlier, rather than waiting, waiting for nothing.

Ritah does not willingly do "home work" as a direct response to the failure by her husband and his family to her natal family's demands that land and *uvukwi* be provided. Sons are supposed to get land from their father. A marriage is supposed to be a reciprocal arrangement. In this case, however only Ritah is held accountable for not doing the "home work". The failure to observe tradition is ignored.

These two cases show that the overriding responsibility for women to "provision" for the every-day survival of their families in every context is clearly enormous. Additionally, as is obvious from the information given, today the results of "home work" are an inadequate source for family survival as an input of cash is required to purchase supplementary market commodities. Cash for necessary commodities is only available to those who work in

wage labour or to those who are able to access cash from those who work in wage labour.

Outside Work

"Outside work" is categorised as working for money. "Home Work" is never rewarded with payment. Therefore "Outside Work" in Maragoli includes, "digging for others", "I work for myself", (entrepreneurship), or a "full-time job". Some women dig for others for a wage on a part-time basis during peak agricultural periods. A few do agricultural labour for others consistently and more would like to. Most people, however, cannot afford to hire labourers and few have enough land at any rate, to justify employing others. Private entrepreneurial work consists of selling cash crops at a market and petty trading in goods or food stuffs from shops in their homes or along the roads and paths.⁴² A few women are prostitutes and some make and sell *busaa* (millet beer) or *chang'aa* (distilled alcohol from maize). Full-time wage labour by women is not common in Maragoli. The government is the main source of full-time employment so women may work as civil servants, clerks and secretaries in the few government offices, teachers and nurses. A half dozen or so are employed to assist with Women Groups(sic) which are organised and licensed by the government to assist with women's development. Other possible wage positions are as teachers in Harambee schools (where parents pay fees) or as barmaids. Domestic work as

baby sitters, or as maids, for women with salaried jobs are other possibilities but, for the most part, relatives usually perform these tasks in return for food, clothing or school fees.

"Digging for Others"

A number of women do agricultural labour for others as their only source of cash employment.⁴³ Some may use this as a supplementary source to add to their limited cash resources from other areas; for example, support or gifts from husbands or other relatives.⁴⁴ The daily wage for digging was raised from 7 shillings to 10 for women, and from 12 Shillings to 15 for men, on May 1, 1987.⁴⁵ The responsibilities attached to the actual field digging appear to be the same for both men and women but women are still perceived by other women as being the harder workers and men as working shorter hours. Although women and men feel the apportionment of labour and wages to be unfair only one employer paid women and men equally on the basis of hours worked. Women and men say that they begin digging at 7 a.m., have a tea break at 10 a.m. and then continue, men until 12 p.m., women until 2 p.m. Upon completion of the day's work, a meal of *ovukima* and meat should be provided. Workers should also receive their daily wage at the end of each working day, although a few who are hired on a regular basis are paid monthly. Many workers, however, are not paid when they complete their work; often they have to wait,

sometimes for hours or days, or spend time seeking out the person who is responsible for payment if they are in desperate need.

During the period of this study, twenty-seven women diggers and four men diggers were observed throughout their actual working day. The results of these observations revealed a contradiction between what the workers say in reference to their working day and what really takes place. First, digging for others is contingent upon the same events and constraints for digging one's own land as discussed above. Furthermore, although those hired may present themselves as ready for work sometime between seven and eight in the morning, the cultural demands for morning greetings and sociable conversations occur prior to anyone leaving for the field, which delays the start of work. Generally, the hired workers leave, hoes over their shoulders, somewhere between eight and eight-thirty. People are greeted along the way so that actual digging is delayed to around nine. Between ten and eleven, men return to the yard and sit, waiting for their tea. The women remain in the field waiting for their tea to be brought to them. Taking tea usually consumes the better part of an hour and except during peak agricultural periods, men usually do not return to the fields. If the rain holds off, women resume digging and continue to do so until sometime between one and two in the afternoon. If the rain comes before, digging is

finished for the day. They return to the yard, receive water to wash their hands and feet⁴⁶ and wait for their meal. On many occasions, the "proper" meal of *ovukima* and meat is not available so *ovukima* with green vegetables, which is almost "proper", or cooked bananas, not at all "proper", is substituted. Only on a few occasions was the daily wage given immediately following the meal. The hired diggers frequently sat in the yard waiting for anywhere from one to three hours to be paid. On several occasions, the employer negotiated a substitute for cash, for example, maize flour, or firewood. Cash was preferred so the negotiating process frequently took the form of argument. The consequence of this argument is two-fold: diggers may refuse to work for the next few days and may also report any injustice to those they meet on their way home. To protect their own reputation in the community, employers thus prefer to settle the matter amicably prior to diggers leaving the yard. A number of employers who have the reputation of being "mean" are unable to hire diggers. From both the employee and the employer position, digging for others is very much a wait and see process. Wait and see if the diggers report for work. If they do so, wait and see if the employer is able to supply the tea, meal and the wage. Digging for others tends to be a very unreliable form of employment. The cases of Estella and Florence, who both dig for others, illustrate these conditions.

Estella.⁴⁷ Estella is 49 years old and has given birth to thirteen children, five girls and eight boys, two of whom died. In addition to her own children, Estella's husband's first wife left three daughters for Estella to care for. Estella was a market seller for a number of years during the time her husband worked in wage labour in the Eldoret area. Her husband became "sick" and the family had to return to Maragoli, to a piece of land less than three quarters of an acre inherited from his father. This land was utilized by a relative for the approximately twenty years they lived away, who vacated it when they returned to take up residence. Estella digs for others on a regular basis and maintains that this is the only source of income for her large family. When asked if she received any assistance, she replied, "No, there is no one to assist." Close observation over a period of time showed that Estella was very resourceful at generating support from the kin network in the form of cash, clothing and food. One brother-in-law was quite generous in providing additional land on which she cultivated crops for sale and, he also, on occasion supplied food. It was said that he provided Estella's yard with more food than his own yard. This was a source of some dissension. Estella met her in-laws' anger by out-yelling them or with humour. She is an articulate and bright woman with a particularly assured manner in dealing with the demanding difficulties of women's work in Maragoli society. The fields where Estella

digs are "noisy fields" with much loud conversation and laughter. In spite of her resourcefulness, Estella is correct when she says she works very hard for very little and despite her efforts, there is hunger in her yard.

My husband worked for a company in Eldoret. He was working with the trees, stripping bark, making sure they were not cut and growing properly. I bought things and was coming to sell them there at the market. I sold onions, potatoes, tomatoes and other vegetables and sweet as well as English potatoes. We had money then. But my husband got sick, we had to come home. During those days I was very happy and I was able to earn money. My children were well-clothed and they were well fed. Also, they were able to get education. The way things are now, by digging alone, we go hungry many times, the children are not well dressed, things have changed. We go hungry...but this is life. Then my children were well clothed, ate well and school fees were paid.⁴⁸ I am paid 10 Shillings a day for digging. I dig every day. And that is too small to feed your family. On my land, its small, you plant beans, you plant maize for the children to eat, you cook it, whatever is left you cook for the family, there is nothing to sell. If God wishes, and you have money you can then buy some things and sell, or grow some things and sell, and then you know this is where sugar is going to come for my family, this is where salt is going to come from.

Eight children are at home. The oldest (daughter) who is married has five children but there has been no cow coming from there, no uvukwi, those are the things that help. During the days we were away from here my husband drank what he earned, he didn't know the home. Nowadays there is a change but he doesn't earn any money. I have nowhere else, I can only dig, here and on this small piece we have. If you have money and you are working that will make a change, then we can get land where we can say, "Muyesu (her son), you go to that land and we stay where we are." That's how it should be. The way it is now, if he marries he would build right on the three-quarter acre. We will have to divide for four sons. That's it, they will be there. Where can you send your child? You stay together, whatever you get, you eat. If my husband had a chance before,

without drinking his money and thought about where the children are going to be it would be different. It's too late. After working so hard and you have not been paid, and you get home and there is nothing to eat, you sleep without eating food, where does enjoyment come from? There is not any. There is not. Sometimes, you get your 10 Shillings (from digging). You go and buy two things, kerosene. You have to have kerosene, then you don't have sugar, you don't have salt and you have to go on on what you bought. You have to buy what is necessary for that day and you may not buy food. If you sit, then you will be extremely very poor. There will be nothing. You have to go on. You must have the heart to continue.

Estella works hard. She completes the necessary "home work" and digs for others. The reciprocity expected from her husband's family is minimal. There is a shortage of land. No *uvukwi* is paid for her daughter. Moreover, she feels her work for wages is not adequately recognised.

Florence.⁴⁹ Florence has eight living children: two have died. Her husband has one quarter of an acre of land given to him by his father. The land is so small that she can "finish digging it in two days", so she digs for others on a regular basis. Her husband also digs for others, which being "outside work" is acceptable. He works in the Kitale area, some distance from Maragoli and he seldom comes home to visit. Florence is very quiet and shy. She works diligently, seldom engaging in the conversation or fun of digging with others. Five of her children are still at home. Her oldest son works in Nairobi and sometimes sends 50 or 100 shillings.

My husband used to drink, now he has stopped and he spreads the word of God. He gives 100 or

150 shillings a month to the home. I give the remainder. I care for a cow, I use the milk and I will get a calf for my trouble. Sometimes I sell green vegetables, but most times we eat (them). Sometimes my sister or my son buy clothes, if they can. I used to be better, now I have a lot of difficulties, there is no proper care for my life nowadays. The government budget makes things too high (prices). If I can buy sugar, some little tea, soap, its alright. Sometimes I can manage fish, and once in a month, I like to have meat. Life is difficult, I like when my children feed properly, when they sleep without crying.

The cases of Estella and Florence show the precarious livelihood that can be wrung from a combination of small domestic farm plots and digging for others. Hard work and long hours in agriculture are not enough to support a family.

Entrepreneurs

Women who are in business for themselves can be classified as entrepreneurs. Although it might be expected that women shop-keepers could be designated as entrepreneurs, discussed below, this is not the case in Maragoli. For the most part, women who run shops selling goods must be excluded from this category because men have either provided the money to build or rent⁵⁰ the building and to acquire the licence⁵¹ and the shop's inventory. It is also husbands who "give permission" for wives to work in the shops. Wives recognise men's ownership when they express their desire for husbands to "set them up in business" (funds and permission). Wives see themselves as benefitting from men's generosity even if they provide the

labour and supply the husbands with funds from their labour. Working all day in a shop cannot even be classified as working for others as women do not receive a regular wage as they would if they worked for a shop owner who was not their husband.

Women entrepreneurs in Maragoli are those who are able to personally support, financially and socially, their own business endeavour without the aid of their husbands. Entrepreneurial activities thus include petty trading from their own homes or in large markets. This category also includes those women who sell home-made brews and provide services such as sewing and knitting. Prostitution is also a form of entrepreneurship.

A few women at the larger markets sell their wares on a daily basis but the majority sell at the more congested Saturday market. The licence fee for selling "outside" a shop ranges from two to five Shillings a day.⁵² Other costs include transportation money so unless they are assured of selling goods, women usually cannot afford to be there on a daily basis. Women must also perform their home work and cannot often manage the time to "sit on the market all day". Fruit and vegetables sold may be bought from others and re-sold at a profit or received from neighbours and relatives who provide a commission of 10 to 15%, depending upon the distance women have to carry the goods. The majority of the women say they make very little money.

A few appear to do quite well as evidenced by their semi-permanent homes and their children's attendance in the fee-paying schools. Women who do not sell in the market maintain the belief that market sellers are able to make a good living and during most discussions on development, women wished for more land to be able to sell cash crops at the market presuming that they would be able to return home at the end of the day with money. Other women sell on the roadside and paths that lead to the major markets. Prices are a few cents more than at major markets and women are perhaps able to sell to those who do not want to spend the time it takes to walk to the market proper. Others will purchase a little extra at the larger markets and sell for a slight profit to their neighbours, again benefitting from their desire to save time. More frequently, cash does not come into the yard until it is too late to journey to the larger market. Jerida is one of these entrepreneurs, selling both cash crops at the market along with market commodities from her home.

Jerida.⁵³ Jerida is 42. Her husband works in wage labour in Nairobi. She gives her occupation as digger and market seller. She has seven children, all living, and all either in school or working. Jerida has considerably more land than most women, approximately five acres, her husband's share of a very large family land in Idakho Location. At the time of this interview, her daughter-in-

law had delivered the first grandchild so Jerida was extremely busy "feeding her properly" to ensure a good milk supply. Jerida hires diggers and sometimes oxen to assist with the agricultural work. She prefers to hire the oxen at a rate of 100 Shillings a day as ploughing is faster and cheaper than feeding workers over several days. On two occasions, she had hired the oxen and paid a deposit but waited for almost three weeks for the work to be done. Her main cash crop, almost one acre, has been cabbages, with smaller amounts of maize, cowpeas and cowpea seeds. She has recently availed herself of the government-assisted French bean crop.⁵⁴ Although her first French bean crop made very little money, she has decided to try them once more. Jerida is an extremely hard-working woman, spending long days in the garden in home work. She does not sell at the market herself, preferring to pay 10 percent to a seller. This arrangement allows her to remain working at home. She keeps a supply of kerosene, dry fish, washing and bathing soap to sell from her yard. She estimates that she earns 800 Shillings a month from this trade, which is a very good income.⁵⁵

My husband works in Nairobi, he has not forgotten his home, he comes (usually) once a month. He only brings 300 Shillings with him. The children help, they send another 400 Shillings (three are working, two in casual labour). My husband may have a friend in Nairobi. You can say you are alone (only wife) but there may be another one. Here in the yard I'm the only one. I work all the time, from early morning until late at night. That's the only way one can progress. My

children have learned this from me. They don't see their father working, but when he comes home we dig together. I have good land, cows, a goat and chickens. We eat well. But life is difficult for women. Many men don't keep their wives. Instead they go get other women outside and don't maintain their home. So women have to maintain the home and children. Men have *itama* (excessive sexual desires). For women, their reward is the good reputation from the community, that they are responsible wives in the home. Men prefer roaming about for drinks. They don't do any job in the home to promote their life. Progress is unity. Unity starts from husband and wife, then to children, then to neighbours. With that unity things in the home run smoothly. If there is no unity between the husband and wife the children will be the same, the home will be disrupted. Jealousy and gossip are a problem. Women and men drink. If wives don't get home earlier than the husband they get beaten. I do not drink, I am a farmer and a market seller. I work hard. Although I am tired, my life is a good one. My children are being educated. They have food and clothes to wear. I have been abused. Two times I have hired men to do a job. They promised they would come on a day, then on a day, (promised on two occasions). I made the food. They did not come. When I went to ask why they had not come to plough when I had paid them 200 Shillings, he told me I was a fool. Then he said he could choose any day to come or not, even though I had paid the money. This was my in-law (father-in-law's brother). He is my father. This is not a normal way to act. But I persevere and we women assist one another, my co-wives (sisters-in-law) and the groups (Women Groups).

Jerida is a success, expanding "home work", petty trade and sales of crops at the markets into a good living. Support of her husband and her status as hard-working wife in the yard are important to her. Despite her success, she experiences the same lack of reciprocity from men that other women suffer.

Making and selling the local brews is an occupation of both women and men in Maragoli. More often women assist their husbands in this enterprise. Frequently, in this circumstance, women do not receive the proceeds. Making and selling *chang'aa* is illegal, however *busaa* is permissible if a licence is purchased from the Assistant Chief. Most avoid obtaining a licence as the cost is 20 Shillings each time and the licence limits the selling price. Without a licence a 500 gram can be sold for 3 Shillings; with a licence the maximum legal price is 1 Shilling 50 cents. Prior to the new regulatory law, the same container sold for 60 cents. Distilling brew is mostly an undercover activity. Sellers sell on the regular days of meetings of the Assistant Chiefs or on the occasion of a fund raising event or funeral, which will be attended by all officials. The sellers even appear at the functions themselves for a short time before going off to sell while the officials are otherwise engaged. The drunkenness and abuse associated with this business suggest it was not profitable but an excuse for excessive drinking. If women whose husbands are involved in distilling brew report their husbands' neglect or abuse, they leave themselves open for the "entire government to enter their yards". The illegality of the business means that a choice between any difficulties, neglect, hunger or abuse, and government intrusion must be made. Erika provides an example of the negative consequences experienced by women

who are held completely accountable for men's behaviour and the ideology which supports it.

Erika.⁵⁶ Erika is forty-five years old and has nine living children. She and her husband brew and sell *chang'aa* in Idakho Location. When she married her husband in 1967, she "found another wife there". Her husband and the woman separated after she came. The woman left one child, a girl, with Erika. She gets income both from her land and from selling brew, but brew-making takes most of their time so they rent over half the land to others. The money received from rent and from selling *chang'aa* "goes to drink". Erika says it is mostly her husband who drinks the money. Neighbours believe that both drink on a continuous basis, neglecting the home and the children. Erika maintains that her husband constantly abuses her verbally and physically. She cannot leave him because she has too many children and there is no one to help her. In her words:

I have land. If there are crops, I can sell. But I spend time making *chang'aa*. There is money to be made, if my husband did not drink it all. He used to dig but now he only drinks and abuses. I sometimes get money if I dig for someone,⁵⁷ but usually I don't have money. The school people are threatening to take my house. They have already taken some of my things to pay for school fees. What right do they have to come to my yard and take my possessions? Now, there is nothing for them to take, only the cow, which is not mine. Myself, I do nothing. It is for my husband, because he is the one to know what is going on and the one to look after his home. I'm the one looking after cattle, chickens,⁵⁸ children and yard. My husband just goes drinking. Responsibility comes from me. Other women are not being beaten like myself who is always beaten.

Even during the first year of marriage. I went to a funeral. He got very angry and went after me. I came home and I was changing clothes. He chased me to the neighbours. I was in my undergarments. He ran there and with a tree branch and beat me very badly. I thought the kidneys will be totally finished. Without me, he would not have the land. He tells me I am nothing in this yard, but I brought two chickens to be slaughtered during the demarcation of the land. Without those two chickens he would have no land. (Marriage to her allowed him to be given land from his father, permitted the demarcation to take place).⁵⁹ He accepts this, if he is not drinking, but he is always drinking. He beats me with his walking stick, on my back. I am always feeling pain in my back. To be beaten on the back is very bad. It will cause the bleeding to be inside the body. It's better if the wound bleeds out, the blood comes out. I have complained to the Assistant Chief, to the neighbours and to my brother. But nothing changes, a drunk is a drunk, they only tell me to go back to my house. They say, you are married, you drink alcohol and you do not go to church. But I do not drink, I tell them, and I am Catholic. Even death will not make them intervene. My father-in-law had three wives. My husband says, "I will one day kill you because my father killed his wife and a child." My son (age 18), who hears this says, "Go ahead and kill me if you want to kill me".⁶⁰ It is good to love your neighbours, and for them to love you. But no one cares for me, not my neighbours, not my relatives. I make, I drink, I sell a little, but it is never enough.

Erika's reputation in the community has deteriorated to the point that she cannot get any assistance from kin, affines or officials. Her statement, "...no one cares for me", is a realistic assessment of her situation.

An even more unsatisfactory occupation in Maragoli is prostitution. Prostitution appears to be a losing financial arrangement.⁶¹ Those few who are actively engaged not only suffer community disapproval, interfering with their claim

for support, but seem to make very little money, a few shillings here or there, a small supply of brew or *bhang* (marijuana), or perhaps some sugar or tea. The few neighbourhood prostitutes were "known" to have venereal diseases, and also to "run" with fathers and their sons, which opens up a situation for a strong *olovo* (curse), as fathers and sons may not have sexual intercourse with the same woman.⁶² One woman engaged in prostitution is Hawa.

Hawa.⁶³ Hawa was invited for an interview at 10 a.m. and a male assistant was sent as an escort. When they arrived, they were followed by a group of children from the primary school. The children had noticed Hawa and a man walking together on the road and pursued them, assuming they would be able to observe the two involved in sexual intercourse as her regular trysting place is a nearby forest. It was a considerable disappointment to the children to observe only the Muzungu (European) asking yet more questions and busily writing.

Hawa is 45 years old, an *ummenya* from Kikuyuland. Her mother is Kikuyu and her father is Somali.⁶⁴ She married in the area sometime around Independence (1963) and has had a total of ten children, of whom two have died. She receives no support from her husband as there are family conflicts. In fact, her husband lives and works in Nairobi and has had a family there for some years. He does not come at all to Maragoli. She estimates that it has been seven years since

he has come home although he allows her to remain on the quarter acre with its tumbledown mud hut without a "proper roof". A number of her children are the result of other unions and she maintains she will send them to their fathers when it is time, demanding to share their *uvukwi*. Only three children, the youngest, remain with her, the others have "run away".

I was raised drinking. I drink every alcohol possible. I was raised not knowing my father. My mother always rents land. Once when I went to Nairobi I met my husband. I like digging. I grow cabbages, beans and maize. But here you cannot have much land. I would like to work for others, digging, fetching their water, but the women here are bad. They always bite backs. The women are afraid I will take their husbands. I used to have long hair, I was very pretty. If I sleep with men I will be like a dog to them. If I work for someone digging, the women bite my back. They say I am everyone's wife. Every time they see me coming from a place they think I have sex there. If I had been everyone's wife, I would have twenty children now. I sell *bhang*, some *inasoli* (opium) to get money to drink. Men are alright if you understand each other. There is no Maragoli neighbour who will help me. I did not leave. When my children marry I will get their cows. I am waiting for that. My husband beat me very badly. He has not returned here since that time. See the marks remaining on my head. It was split from the firewood he hit me with. I drink with men. Then I date them.

Hawa's difficult life as a prostitute exists alongside her responsibilities for home work. She is unable to work for others because women refuse to have her in their yards. She cannot depend on others because of her established reputation. She looks forward to the time when her children are grown and she can return to her mother's home.

Full-Time Wage Labour

Full-time wage labour is differentiated from other wage labour as it is more structured. Working in full-time wage labour requires daily attendance⁶⁵ and provides a reliable monthly wage. Full-time wage labour opportunities in Maragoli are scant.⁶⁶ Access to these opportunities depends on a number of factors. The first is education. Few women or men are able to obtain wage employment from the largest employer, the government, without passing at least their Form IV exams in the first division or without some type of specialized training which is dependent upon upper level production in Secondary school, at least a pass in Division 3. All of this is based on the availability of educational fees and although people say that nowadays more emphasis is placed on educating girls, as girls "never forget their parents", rhetorical statements are not supported by statistics.⁶⁷ Educational levels and general literacy levels of women are very low. Any education requires the support of parents, siblings and other relatives. This sets up a reciprocal cycle, as the one who becomes educated must support some others to do the same, and also provide still others with some support in the form of cash, food, clothing.

A Maragoli historian⁶⁸ says that Avalogoli did not traditionally believe women should be educated. It was not until the 1950's that they were encouraged to attend school.

It is his opinion that this lack of formal education has "retarded" their development on the farm and in wage labour. According to him, it was the Friend's Church (Quakers) insistence that women be educated in schools along with men that has changed the situation.⁶⁹ He contends that education is now equal for boys and girls in Maragoli. Although statistics for Maragoli were unavailable, the provincial statistics for Kakamega District, where Maragoli is located, still show a higher male enrolment in Primary School. This continues with an increasing gap through Secondary School and University.⁷⁰

Another variable in obtaining a job is patronage or kin "fixing". Who you are connected with and know is a criterion: that is, individuals find it impossible to obtain employment simply by virtue of their performance. Possibilities of employment come from those among your kin who already have a position or know someone in a position. These are the people who assist others in obtaining employment.

A further variable pertains to husbands agreeing or giving wives permission to work in wage labour. First, the husband must allow the wife to leave the yard on a daily basis: "It is for him to give his permission, she has married to his yard." Most women say husbands give permission to allow wives to seek work. A few said husbands refused as they were afraid other men would "take them".⁷¹

As well, in order to be able to work outside the yard on a full-time basis, other women in the home yard must be willing to perform the necessary daily tasks.⁷² Some do and they benefit from the wage earner's generosity. If there are no other women in the yard, a "maid" must be hired.⁷³ For example among those who hire were a young woman with little land and few children, and an older woman with more land (who also hired a "shamba boy") and children. Both drew enough salary to provide either some cash or living accommodation to a hired caretaker or relative to assist in the home. Even then, part of the work remains for the woman wage earner, engaging her in a "double day".⁷⁴ An interesting paradox occurs in conversations with women. Those few who have a full-time job say they will be happy when they can retire from it and rest at home. Those who are at home engaging in "home work" wish for a job in wage labour, not only for the money but to avoid the difficult, hard "home work".

The Vihiga Town Council in Mbale Town hires a number of women, one for secretarial duties, another whose title is Community Development Assistant, two Location Women Leaders who assist with Women Groups and one Nursery (School) Supervisor. The Community Development Assistant is 27 years old with two children.⁷⁵ She has a relative staying with her who "baby-sits" the children during work hours. Her husband is currently unemployed. Her salary is 1500

Shillings a month with an annual increment of 60 Shillings. She has Form IV education and one year training at a Social Training Centre. The courses at this centre were in nutrition, community development, group work, physical education, casework, agriculture, child development, civics, English and day care training. She feels her training is adequate for the job in which she is involved.

A Location Women Leader who was interviewed is paid 1200 Shillings monthly with a 50 Shilling annual increment.⁷⁶ She was pregnant in 1988 with her second child and her husband is unemployed. Her mother-in-law cares for her child at home. She achieved Form IV and has one year further training at a Training Institution. Her courses were in pre-primary teacher training, community development and relations, nutrition, home management and day care centre management.⁷⁷ She was trained to be a nursery teacher or nursery supervisor so she strongly feels that she is not trained adequately for the job she is expected to do although she is very grateful to have a position. The women spend two days in their office at Mbale and three in the field visiting Women Groups. Despite the requirement to travel, these positions are not supported with a travel allowance. The women "foot it" or take *matatus* (buses or taxis), which they pay for themselves. Their areas are large.

The Nursery Supervisor is paid 1480 Shillings monthly, with a 60 Shilling annual increment for supervising thirty-two schools in Central Maragoli.⁷⁸ She is an older woman with grown children and she also hires labour to dig. The nursery school teachers she supervises are paid 1200 Shillings monthly. The teachers' salaries come from fees, 30 Shillings paid monthly by parents for each child to attend. If the parents do not pay, the teachers do not get paid.⁷⁹ These women say they are able to benefit "a little" from their positions in wage labour. However, they also say that if you are working, all the relatives expect that you should supply them with some of your earnings. The expectations placed upon them have increased with their responsibilities and they remain accountable for tasks at home. Only one woman has hired help and all women say it is better to hire a non-relative. Once non-relatives are paid, the obligation is finished. With relatives, it "just goes on and on" and they do "little for the assistance they give".

Teaching is another area of wage labour involvement for women. Kenyan teachers in government schools or in government-assisted schools are employed by one governing sector, the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC). The development of this organization is said to have improved the benefits of the teaching profession. As one group, they are better able to argue for themselves in reference to

salary and conditions of service.⁸⁰ The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), both a trade union and a professional body registered under the Trade Unions Act, gives further protection to teachers' benefits and rights along with professional activities such as curriculum development. In addition to their salary, teachers in government-supported schools receive a house allowance,⁸¹ free medical services, maternity leave with salary and the "Union looks after any problems they may have". Trained teachers also do not have to search for jobs because there is a shortage of teachers in Kenya at all levels. Women and men are permitted to enter teacher-training from their performance in Form IV or Form VI if they are chosen from the thousands who apply. Ideally, there is little or no discrimination in reference to gender in the teaching profession. TSC and KNUT are aware of how many women and how many men are taken for training and have attempted to even out any lack of representation or disadvantage for women. In one class in the area, twenty-two of the thirty-six trainees were women: "The best student in the class was a woman." Women are said to be given the "best" areas, i.e., areas where less hardship will be experienced. Men are sent to the hardship areas.⁸² Pregnant women trainees are given an eight-month leave so as not to waste the training they have received.

The idea that boys are more deserving of education, is said to be "no longer there". Indeed, "My daughter bought me this shirt, my son in Mombasa works and gives me nothing" (Magwaga, Dec. 23, 1987). Both men and women who manage to access and survive the long and expensive process of teacher-training will be securely employed until retirement at age fifty-five if they manage to get a job in government or government-assisted schools. If not, they are dependent upon fee-paying parents thus making their position more insecure.⁸³

Alice and Flora are in professional positions, one as a teacher and one as a nurse. They manage with great difficulty to maintain their reputation and advance themselves in the 'public' domain.

Alice.⁸⁴ Alice is 24 years old and a Secondary School teacher in the area. She is third-born in a family of ten children. She relates that there was little opposition to her going on for higher education except from her maternal grandmother who wanted her to leave school while she was in Form I and get married. The family had the usual problems with fees but they managed. Alice's father appears relatively affluent as all his children are in school or working, his land is well kept and utilized and the yard has livestock, cows, chickens, goats. Alice's motivation was to get a job so that she could assist her family. She said that everyone in the family depends upon her for money and

she finds the burden "overwhelming". Alice has been living with her husband who is also a teacher, since January, 1987. They have seven-month old twins, a boy and a girl. Uvukwi discussion has taken place and her in-laws and her relatives have agreed on 23,000 Shillings and five cows. A 3000 Shilling "down payment" has been given, and her marriage occurred in January, 1988.

We live in a house supplied by the school. We have electricity and water and a gas cooker. We have a small house plot in my husband's yard at Bunyore, and six acres in the scheme in Kitale. We hire people to dig there, as we are teaching, so far we have not sold cash crops. We are only beginning. On the schemes, workers are paid between 500 and 600 Shillings a month to dig, so it is expensive. There is no need of paying uvukwi. Am I a farm to be bought? It is unfortunate the parents are poor. Parents ought to contribute to the newly married to start them off.⁸⁵ But there is nothing we can do, it's a custom. Also uvukwi is not the end of assistance to parents. Some men mistreat after buying, that is paying uvukwi. Some men refuse to help parents any more after uvukwi, think that's enough. On the other hand if you don't pay uvukwi, the husbands think you are not valued by parents. You are cheap. It's a tug of war.

People who get jobs in Kenya have been to school, these are the elite. They are able to integrate various situations. They are analytical and choosing courses of action. They have developed decision making skills, this gives access to wage labour. Most women are not this, many men are not. Things have changed for women, but still it is very difficult, they must work very hard. In the old days, customs did not allow men in the kitchen, now they do. It's absurd to see milk boiling over in the kitchen while I'm taking care of the baby and he is reading. A more even distribution of labour is needed. Women need a word of appreciation for their hard work, in the home and caring for children. Here in Maragoli we cannot develop, the population is too high. The government is suggesting that maternity leave will not be given after the fourth child.⁸⁶ This is a

good thing but it has not been passed yet. I will not be abused in my marriage. I will leave. My job is difficult. Children are beaten, sent from school for fees, for harambee this, harambee that. Seldom do I have my entire class to teach. Some are always missing. I have had to chase them for fees. This is not my role, my job is to teach them, so they may better their lives. I refuse to beat them. I try not to upset them. I want them to learn. But many do not want to. Girls only want to chase boys, and boys the girls. But a few learn. Teaching is difficult.

Alice takes a different position from most Logoli women. She complains of having to follow traditional ways in these difficult economic times, even as she adheres to them. She sees that she is caught in a bind. Not following the traditions will place her in a position of being without a good reputation and thus at risk in the community.

Another professional woman, Flora, manages to work within as well as outside the traditions. Flora's occupation is nursing. The same criteria are required for nursing as for teaching, except that one must have completed Secondary Schooling in order to be admitted to train as a nurse. A category allowing "untrained" to work as nurses does not exist as it does in teaching. Nursing is seen as a secure profession because there is a shortage of nurses as new health centres are opened in Kenya. A disadvantage of nursing is that postings for a nurse close to her rural home are very difficult to get.⁸⁷

Flora.⁸⁸ Although Flora worked in her occupation for some years in Nairobi, four years ago she moved back to the

area, taking up residence on her husband's land and working at the Maragoli Rural Health Centre. Flora is forty-one years old, and has eight children, three boys (two are twins) and five girls. Her oldest daughter is married and working in Nairobi. The second oldest daughter is in university and the remainder except for the two youngest are in school. Flora sees herself and is seen by others as a progressive, forward-looking person. Along with working in wage labour, she maintains ten acres of land⁸⁹ with the assistance of her children, a baby-sitter and a hired "shamba boy". Part of her land is in tea which produced for the first time in 1988. Currently, she is building a very large, permanent house. Flora lived her growing years as an "outside" child because her mother did not live in her father's yard. In fact, she was married to another man, as it is said "married elsewhere". Flora was acknowledged by her biological father and from the time she was very young visited his yard on a regular basis. She describes herself during the formative years as a "temporary person", never knowing quite where and to whom she belonged. Her current marriage is her second: her oldest daughter is from a brief liaison when she was still attending school. Although she lived with the child for a brief time at the father's home, his parents "chased" her and she went to live in Nairobi with her mother. It was while she was living and working in a factory in Nairobi, in 1965, that female-relatives

encouraged her to marry a man working and living in Nairobi. She credits this husband with "moving" her to complete her Secondary schooling and engage in training for the nursing profession:

Then immediately after I joined with him he decided to take me for further education. He could come, pick me from my job, take me to the evening class at the college. I did my O Level there. For two years he was doing that. So after the exam I managed to get my certificate and it is with this certificate that made me to join nursing. So he also motivated me to try that expectation. Then I applied, I joined nursing and then did that for three years. I needed teaching a lot. I really loved teaching. I went for the interview. When they brought the reply I was one month old in the nursing training, so I thought it was not fair for me to abandon after the one month's training and settling...I continued for three years training and qualified. He also asked me to continue with the evening classes...looking for A Level...but then as I was continuing I became pregnant and I became too lazy to continue. But after, I managed to do my Midwifery also.

Flora was able to gain an education and further her possibilities for structured wage labour and its security but her second husband did not remain with her. Despite the help and advice of female relatives and her second husband, eventually she became totally responsible for the support of their children.

I came to acquire his land, then at least to do some cultivation and to harvest some food for the kids. Because I sensed that with high school fees and my small salary I could not afford to pay the fees, bring the rent, electricity and water, transport to and from various schools and then feed the kids (in Nairobi). T'was too much for me, I decided to come home and work in the clinic and start a little farming. Nothing was cultivated, it was a forest, the mother (mother-in-law) was living in the middle of a forest. I

could not believe it! ...In the process of coming home I found that he was not assisting me at all. I sat and thought what could I do? Then I thought of at least getting something from him through the court, ...through the Children's Department. To assist with the school fees. He thought I was joking because I was staying in his yard I could not take him to court. Because according to tradition you can only take your husband to court, or to the elders if you are staying apart and if you are staying at your parent's home. If not the others (husband's other wives and their children) would get all, the (husband's) salary, the land. Especially the bar maid. The (his) whole family were defending me. Then I managed through the Children's Department. I managed to get his salary attached. That's how the house is being built.⁹⁰ I'm getting one-third of his salary.⁹¹ His employer slashes it, the computer has to computerize it off from his salary and then they put it in cheque form and bring it to Kakamega court. The court informs me to go and collect the cheque and then cash it at the District Commission. It is now a year since I have got that.⁹² He was really very angry in the beginning, but now, after finding that I don't use the money for myself, it is only for the school fees for his children...I showed him. He had to see that the expenditure is not for me but it's all for his kids. Not shopping, because I have to do the shopping myself. I feed them when they are at home, I buy them shoes and all this. I pay for the people who help. So he found that I was not misusing his money. He does not see where the two-thirds goes, he only drinks, he doesn't know, but this one-third now, he is seeing what it is doing, what good it is doing.

Flora relied on tradition in order to receive her land.

However, utilising her knowledge of law and taking her husband to court for child support while residing on that land created some difficulty for her in regard to her reputation in the community(see Chapter 5).

For women in all aspects of any wage labour, the costs are high. Digging for others, entrepreneurship and

structured wage labour positions are difficult to get and usually do not offer a dependable income. A regular, wage-paying position allows these women some purchasing power and generates value as most of those interviewed appeared to have, in Maragoli and Kenyan terms, a better quality of life, evidenced by availability of food, clothing, better housing and the means to educate their children.

Conclusion

Today, "home work", the cultural designation of women's production of food and staples from plots of land is an inadequate source for provisioning family needs. Survival and "progress" require women's involvement in "outside work". Shortages of land, the necessity for market commodities, changes in the relations of production, demand women's activity in both 'private' and 'public' domains. The theoretical division of domains into public and private is artificial in Maragoli life as it disregards women's actual economic activity. Both women and men agree that women are responsible for "home work" and that notwithstanding the non-participation by men in providing land, uvukwi or other sources of traditional support, that women are still the caretakers of values surrounding male elder rule. Women are held accountable for traditional values by both men and women while men are not. The non-compliance by men with culturally-defined values is problematic for women. This exacerbates economic inequality

already constructed by gender roles. Women are aware of inequality. They recognise that their "commanders" are not acting in their best interests. Their direct experience of the social and economic consequences of this situation begets the question: "In whose interest?" Their awareness of the articulating dynamic between a collective and capitalist ideology is most clearly demonstrated in action and political decision-making.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. During interviews with 83 women and 6 men, (n=89), 49 or 59% of the women and 3, or 50% of the men categorized women as working harder than men. The others offer the following: men work harder, 3 women, 2 men; both work equally hard, 20 women, 1 man; both are lazy, 4 women; some work hard, some do not (depends on the people), 6 women; men in wage labour, but mostly women work harder, 1 woman.

2. During an interview with eight school girls, ranging in age from 14 to 16 (Oct. 23, 1987), girl's daily work was categorized by them as; fetching water and firewood ("around six a.m."), making tea, washing utensils, ("school eight a.m. until four p.m."), fetching water and firewood, digging, cooking, caring for younger children, washing utensils and clothes, cleaning and spreading cow dung. Their main work, as they see it, is fetching water. Boy's work, according to these girls, is making fences, building, caring for cows and milking, digging and going to market. Girls don't have time to go to market. In answer to the question, "Who works harder?", both work hard but girls work harder. In answer to the question, "Is that fair?", "No, it should be equal."

3. Digging is the term used for hoeing, that is breaking up the ground, planting and weeding. Although the norm says men will do the initial, heavy work of digging up the ground for planting, in actuality it is usually women who undertake it.

4. This would be an unusual case but in its event, a man carries the containers to the top of the hill overlooking the river and convinces a woman to fetch the water for him. The woman would then feel it her responsibility to carry the water to his home. Following that, she would return to the river to obtain her own supply.

5. There is even a normative structure as to how items should be carried. Women carry them on their heads or backs, men carry them on their shoulders or in their hands. Men sit with legs crossed, usually on chairs, women sit with legs stretched out crossed at the ankles, usually on the ground. Men may direct their gaze to faces during conversations with either gender, women ought to direct their gaze off to the side and down when conversing with men.

6. The inference here is deliberate, men are seen to play at being sick, or lazing around, thus women who do this are acting like men.

7. The following "day in the life" is taken from interviews and observations.

8. Collecting water seems the most time consuming task women face. Times collected daily and distance were measured in 66 yards, (n=66). Only four had water in yards. In 62 yards, 393 trips were made to get water, an average of 6.34 each yard daily. In the same 62 yards, 531.50 kilometres was the measured distance, an average of 8.57 each yard daily. The least amount of times to collect was 2, the most, 18. This last was a yard containing over 20 people and a number of pure bred cattle which were zero grazed. The shortest distance travelled for water was one quarter kilometre, and the longest, 5 kilometres. During the rainy season this gets cut down as rain water is collected, however containers are in very short supply, thus even during heavy rains, water will still have to be collected from the springs or river. Only three yards had water tanks and a number had large (rusty) containers.

9. Men and school children bathe in the morning.

10. For many, the most frustrating task is obtaining and chopping firewood. In 78 yards, 21 had wood lots. Tree planting was introduced in the 1960's by Sub-Chief Inguya, however many people do not have enough land to plant trees. In four yards, trees were purchased, the cost ranging from 50 to 100 Shillings. A tree lasts 2 to 4 months, depending upon size. Six yards purchased bundles of firewood, a small bundle costing 4 or 5 Shillings for a day's supply. Larger, 10, 20 and 30 Shilling bundles are also available. In 47 out of the 78 yards people obtained their firewood "from the garbage", that is they (mostly the children) were involved in stealing it, or scavenging for it which amounts to the same thing as all land is owned. Many arguments and even physical fights ensue over firewood. A further problem develops once the wood is obtained, many yards do not have axes and have to borrow, thus axes are certainly charged with "social significance". Often to borrow an axe requires supplying wood to its owner, or at least inviting the owner and the axe into the yard where she may chop some of the wood for her own use. A few yards use charcoal if they can afford to buy it, a fifty pound bag sells for 60 Shillings, plus a 10 Shilling deposit on the bag, if they can afford to buy a charcoal burner. However charcoal making in the area has become illegal in order to practice forest conservation, so charcoal is not a viable alternative to the shortage of fuel. Foreign exchange rates fluctuate, during 1987-1988, there were 10 to 12 Kenyan Shillings in a

Canadian dollar. Consider the following when a woman receives 10 Shillings a day digging for others: a 2 ounce packet of tea sells for 3.80 Shillings; a kilo of meat sells for 29.50 to 33 Shillings; washing soap sells for 5 to 10 Shillings; bread, 4.20; sugar, 11.40 a kilo; kerosene 3 shillings for 6 ounces. Government price controls are in existence for many commodities; for example, meat, sugar, tea, bread, maize, kerosene as well as some building materials. The people believe the government controls all pricing.

11. Only one adult woman in a yard faces a tremendous burden, as all these, and the tasks following are her responsibility. The preferred living pattern is two or three children, with a girl older, or sisters-in-law. Once a daughter-in-law comes into the yard, the assumption is she will remove most of the work load from the mother residing there, (mother-in-law). Often young married women with small children will invite a young relative from their natal home to assist. Ritah and Aggrey are "...blessed by God, we have the right (ideal) family, a girl first and then a boy. When the girl is older she can collect the water and the boy can care for the cows. When they grow, the older girl, can assist in providing dowry for the younger boy, to get a wife"(Sept. 16, 1987). But, Aggrey has a son "outside" this marriage and he will be required to provide him with land. Ritah delivered a third child, a boy, in May, 1988. The ideal is seldom the real.

12. Tea was introduced by the British.

13. Men often show their displeasure with wives, or inhabitants of the yard generally, by loudly announcing they will leave for their daily activity without taking tea. It is a "bad thing" for men to leave their yard without taking tea. Reasons for it will be discussed among those left behind, and attempts will be made to correct whatever has angered him.

14. Women and children all sleep in one area, usually on the floor. Men, for the most part sleep alone, usually in a bed.

15. Land size was measured in 52 yards, (n=52), in the Sub-Location under study. 19 of these yards had one-quarter acre, 13, had one-half an acre. Only 7 yards had one acre. Others ranged from zero in one case, to 5 1/2 in one other. Four women in one yard shared a plot of one-quarter acre, one-sixteenth for each. In Idakho Location, the next location west of Maragoli, where some Logoli women in this study have married, average land size was 3 to 5 acres. However agricultural work is difficult here as soil is very rocky and hilly. In one case millet was planted on a 90 degree slope.

The women digging here worked on their knees to keep their balance.

16. A businessman in the area says that with proper use, people could get enough maize to last from harvest to harvest, (as he does), they would not have to buy. According to him, there are two reasons for the very expensive import of maize from the Nandi area to fulfil Maragoli needs. "First, people are lazy here, second they do not receive instruction. The agricultural officer does not do his job, he writes false reports....he does not walk the land, he is afraid to get his shoes muddy. The women do the best they can digging, but the men sit and talk, they need to help dig. The men are lazy, the women have too many responsibilities to dig properly"(Hermann, Oct. 25, 1987).

17. Thatching grass must be collected nowadays from some distance away. During this study, December seemed to be the time when most of this took place. People reported they were getting their yards ready for Christmas. The activity appeared to share characteristics with the Western idea of spring house-cleaning.

18. Bricks are made in yards, the soil is dug from the yard, gravel and cement must be purchased. Women and children engage in this for the most part, although men may assist in digging the soil. Also, water must be collected to mix the ingredients. The mixture is shovelled into home made wooden forms and left to harden in the sun. The entire process is expensive, time consuming and intense manual labour is required.

19. During interviews with 51 women farmers, 21 or 41% said digging is their favourite activity, they like digging "very much", and "love digging." These were unsolicited responses, in the context of asking these women their occupation. Seven of the women, 14%, all under 25 years old, wished for another occupation, i.e., teacher, nurse, further training. One young woman said she preferred going for water over digging, and another said she would rather sing or visit with friends.

20. At a seminar on "Women, water supply and sanitation" the Minister for Water Development, Kyale Mwendwa, amused the audience when he said that a sociologist he talked to opposed the idea of providing water in every home, since trekking for water provided "women with an opportunity for gossip, and the girls with an opportunity to meet their boyfriends and possible future husbands." The women I talked to stated that collecting water might be enjoyable, say once in a week, other than that it was simply difficult, time consuming work. Also, they said girls are able to meet enough boys in the schools,

girls who develop relationships with boys at rivers and springs soon acquire a "bad" reputation, and likely another mouth for their family to feed.

21. Maize kernels are removed by hand from the cob (cows are given the cobs) and traditionally were ground into flour on stones. Grinding by hand is very time consuming. Grinding mills do a much more efficient job. This necessitates walking to the mills and having the cash to pay for the service. Robbai (Nov.20, 1987) made the following statements in reference to grinding mills, traditional food, and political powers. "The British said modern is best, going from darkness into light, but Moi (President) says, go back to the traditional ways, use your hands to grind. We lost our traditional food, we planted the maize only, but now we have gone back, we are planting sorghum, beans, vegetables (cowpea), we were foolish to leave it."

22. For example in the case of Ritah, once the harvest food was depleted, she complained that her father-in-law was making her look like a fool travelling the distance daily to the market, collecting the maize from him, which he purchased, along with a shilling to grind it. "He should give enough for at least two days, if not a week. I look foolish." The father-in-law's point was too much in the home at one time permitted misuse. "They will eat it all, or give too much away."

23. On one occasion we fed a young man meat, rice and vegetable, a very large plateful. Leaving our house he went to the kitchen hut and complained he had not eaten. We had not given him *ovukima*.

24. Most yards only have the one large cooking pot. It is used for all cooking, i.e. tea, vegetables, bananas, *ovukima* along with heating bath water.

25. For example on one occasion during planning for a congregation work group to assist in building their church in a village, extra days were allowed, "We never know who will die.", as the death would necessitate a work stop. An incident took place during the building of this same church. *Mufundi* (workmen) from another village not realizing a death had occurred in the village broke into the locked church and continued with the construction. A number of people believed the work performed that day should be "undone" as a curse might ensue. It was decided to let the work "sit" and a signal system was set up to alert the *mufundi* should the incident be repeated.

26. Interviews, Sept. 25, Dec. 27, 1987, Jan. 11, 19, 22, 1988, Life History collection, along with many less formal conversations.

27. Joyce's husband maintains this father (FB) "grabbed the land" left to him by his father (F), and the half acre is not an adequate replacement.

28. "Dowry" is the term used by Avalogoli when they are speaking English though "bridewealth" would be the conventional anthropological term for the institution.

29. A usual criticism of daughters-in-law stems from the fact they are not Logoli women and therefore do not know the "proper ways".

30. A contradiction, as part of the criteria of her excellence depends upon her acceptance of his violence.

31. *Uvukwi* discussion took place and part of the money was paid.

32. Husbands' fathers supply the four main posts for a house and designate the area where it is to be built by placing the four posts. Husbands and other men put up the frame and either collect thatching grass or buy roofing material. Wives assist in filling in the frame with mud and in "plastering", smoothing the mud. Wives make the cow-dung floor. "Women do not build houses, it is men's work." See also Flora (below) in terms of building her own house.

33. Kiswahili term for land or garden, in Luragoli, *mulimi*.

34. Kiswahili term for maize porridge which in Luragoli is *ovukima*.

35. Unfortunately for Joyce, in 1988, the rains began and stopped allowing the army worms to invade the soil and eat the seeds. Those who were "lazy" and put off planting did not lose their seed. Planning ahead does not always pay off when nature dictates the terms.

36. Interviews in English, September 16, 25, 1987 and Life History collection during 1987 and 1988. Also, as I lived in the same yard with Ritah we had daily contact and many conversations.

37. These sleeping arrangements cause dissention as frequently the young man refuses to open the door and allow Ritah access to the three stones, the cooking fire. On a number of occasions this dissention took the form of physical

abuse, either the young man beating her or she beating him. As the assaults were never witnessed, it was difficult to say who was beating whom, both parties always managed to produce marks on their bodies. What could be witnessed (overheard) was his verbal attack, often he called her *mugenda gendi*, (a woman having children here and there), nowadays, *umulaya*, a prostitute.

38. As *uvukwi* discussion had not taken place nor any token "payment" made the children do not belong to their father's home. Until this is accomplished they belong to the mother's natal home.

39. Marrying a relative results in *olovo* (curse), that inflicts the entire family. Logoli mothers-in-law complain bitterly about these *avamenya* (outsiders), saying they do not know how to work as Logoli women do. They are called "lazy" and "disrespectful" even as these same women under discussion are cooking, fetching water, digging. One young wife from Bunyore, whose mother-in-law was berating her, (under the guise of teasing), said, "Maragoli people are all crazy!" Another gave the following advice: "You must laugh and forget (what they say) or you cannot survive here."

40. This statement was made during the initial interview with Ritah, in the early stages of our relationship. As time went on, considering we lived in the same yard, it became impossible for her to maintain the facade of mutual respect.

41. Interview, Nov. 7, 1987. At this point in time Ritah is providing a more realistic assessment of her situation.

42. This selling is actually an illegal activity as anyone supplying a service in Kenya, that is operating a business or selling market wares, is required to purchase a licence. One person said angrily, "In today's Kenya you cannot even sell a pencil without a licence"(Waiter, in a Nairobi hotel).

43. Where $n=74$, 27 or 36% dig for others on a regular (5;7%) and a part time (22;30%) basis. For 12, 44% of these 27 women, digging was their only source of cash.

44. During in-depth interviews, $n=74$, the following were given as sources of assistance, in the form of cash, clothes or food: children; husbands; parents; brothers; sisters; brothers'/sisters' children; parents' brothers and sisters; parents-in-law; brothers/sisters-in-law; neighbours; for a total of 35 or 47% who received assistance.

45. People say "the government" directed this wage increase.

46. People dig barefooted in Maragoli.

47. Interviews Sept.7, Oct. 11, 1987 and Life History collection.

48. I found this contrast very interesting as I visited with Estella in 1976 and again in 1979 during the time she was market selling in the Eldoret area. In fact they had a very small garden, with sparse stocks of maize and a one room mud hut. What was most startling was the lack of a choo or latrine, signifying their transient status, even though they lived on that plot for over twenty years. Outwardly there was no sign of affluence although she is correct in saying the children were attending school. On the occasion of both visits, I found her husband in the local bar and he did have a drinking man's reputation.

49. Interview, Dec. 21, 1987.

50. At Mbale market the rate for renting a plot with a small shop ranges from 220 to 500 Shillings monthly depending upon its location. In the villages the rent averages 100 Shillings monthly.

51. The following are a list of annual market licence costs for a shop: retail business, for example, food, clothing, general merchandise sellers, book sellers, beauty shop, carpentry, iron works, butchers, 1200 Shillings; wholesale business, for example, those who supply the retail shops with their goods, 3000 Shillings and up. Bars also pay 3000 Shillings and up. It appears "and up" is decided upon by the County Council. A carpentry shop for example, pays the following: 1200 Shillings for an annual licence and 220 Shillings a month rent for the building and the plot it sits on. The owner of the plot and building gets the rent, the County Council (regional) gets 790 Shillings of the licence fee and the government (sent to Kakamega where Government offices are) gets the remainder. The penalty for not acquiring a licence is jail. For example Esinga, a carpenter, along with his wife and his mother who were unlucky enough to be in the shop when the police came, all spent time in jail because he was operating without a licence.

52. The fee is determined by location and tables which are supplied by the County Council. Often women forgo the use of the tables and simply place their vegetables and goods on the road way. However, the County Council clerk is within his legal limits to charge them a fee if they are selling anywhere on the market, with or without a table. The sellers and clerk

frequently have disputes over the collection. In Nairobi unlicensed women vendors avoid the askari (police), at Mbale, they avoid the clerk, who threatens to call the askari.

53. Conversations and observation December through March; interview March 3, 1988. Jerida's five acres of land remove her from the category of typical.

54. Recently, the government has provided the means for those with enough land to engage in growing and selling French beans. The procedure is as follows: government workers assess the size of the land and its suitability, give instruction and provide the seeds. Twice during the growing period, government workers spray insecticide and chemical fertilizer. During harvest, which requires a morning and evening picking, the beans are taken to a collection depot where they are weighed. During the first harvest in the area, which was very scant, these depots were some distance, however they have now made available more depots to facilitate faster collection, thus less walking and less spoilage. At the end of the season, the cost of seed, fertilizer, insecticide and administration expense is deducted and the remainder paid to the grower. Most people said it is too soon to assess if French beans will be a viable cash crop, the second crop was under way during the period of this study, and most of the growers who were paid four Shillings a kilo, shared their apprehension that others i.e. those who sell them fresh or can them will be making lots of money while those who grow will get very little. "They killed us, they received much higher prices" (Miriam Sept. 28, 1987). Growers also felt too much work was involved most particularly the morning and evening picking. Maragoli people do not eat French beans, they are sold fresh to hotels, and canned for supermarket sale, that is for urban areas and for export to Europe.

55. Compare this for example, to those who dig "daily" for others earning between 200 and 250 Shillings a month.

56. Interview, January 11, 1988.

57. Erika underestimated the money and overestimated the hours for digging. She insisted she only received 5 Shillings for a day that began at 7 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m. In fact these are the hours and wages based on rates in the early 1970's, which gives some idea how long ago she engaged in digging for others.

58. Erika cares for one cow, which belongs to a relative. She has no chickens or other livestock in evidence.

59. A custom in Idakho Location.

60. In the father-in-law's marriage to the woman, this child walked with the mother, that is came to the marriage with his mother. Apparently the man did murder them both. Erika's now eighteen year old son also walked to Erika's marriage with his mother. His biological father has not admitted parenthood, thus he remains with Erika and his step-father.

61. Prostitution is often an aside activity associated with working in the local bars. However the barmaids I talked with denied having anything to do with prostitution and the one viable example had married and refused to admit to any activity save for serving drinks and food. The information from the community was that barmaids were paid a few shillings and drinks if they also provided sexual activity. Certainly it appeared that women working in bars, or engaging in prostitution was a last ditch endeavour, not anything "good" women would resort to.

62. This olovo manifests itself by swollen testicles.

63. Interview January 29, 1988.

64. Logoli people (men and women) see marrying Kikuyu women as "dangerous". Kikuyu women are known "walkers", that is they leave their husbands, and more important, they take their children when they "walk" even if uvukwi has been "paid".

65. Time off for normative necessities must be arranged and taken without pay. For example, time off say for a funeral or illness, is legitimized by an official document. A telegram from a family member or a letter from the Assistant Chief of your district are considered official documents. The employer decides the amount of time off necessary. In the case of death it is usually one week for Logoli people. The employees may be advanced some salary which is deducted when they return to work. On occasion the employees may be permitted to deduct the unpaid leave from regular leave time. Other obligations must be fulfilled during holiday periods. Most workers in wage labour in Kenya receive a thirty day holiday annually with pay.

66. Out of 410 women interviewed, 16 or 4% worked in full time wage labour.

67. It is my opinion, based on observation, attendance in many government offices, examining many files, that all statistics gathered in Kenya are highly suspect.

68. Joseph Kisia, interview in English, December 3, 1987.

69. Missionary education emphasized "home economics", that is cooking, hygiene, crafts, for girls.

70. For example the Provincial Statistical Abstract, Western Province, 1975-1980 gives for 1980, 162,725 boys and 158,136 girls enroled in Primary Schools; 17,767 boys and 12,784 girls enroled in Secondary School. (Original source, Central Bureau of Statistics.) However these statistics are skewed, as frequently repetition to upgrade Division passing may apply more to males than females. Achatz, an American student is currently measuring this trend for her Ph. D. dissertation.

71. Some working women said their husbands "gave permission", others said their husbands "agreed". Those who said they could not get permission or agreement were not working, however some felt if they could obtain a job, husbands might change their minds. A small number (10 out of 410 or 2%) said their husbands would never give them permission to work outside the yard.

72. Survival insists they be performed. Women say it does not really matter who performs them as long as they are accomplished. Men say their performance is the responsibility of the wife, that is if she does not, she must find someone to, and he must be satisfied with the results.

73. The salary for this service ranges from 100 to 200 Shillings monthly and food and comes from the woman's salary. Stichter (1988) has found women wage earners in urban areas are also held responsible to pay the salary for this service. I found this to be the situation among the women working in wage labour I interviewed in Nairobi.

74. It is the wife's responsibility to obtain and cook the meals for the family, working outside the yard or not. Poisoning and witchcraft through herbs is often spoken of in Maragoli, thus people are very careful who provides food and cooks. Husbands prefer wives to cook their food rather than other relatives or hired help although they will eat food prepared by older daughters and daughters-in-law.

75. Florence Vosolo, interview in English, Jan. 22, 1988. Florence, along with the Women Location Leaders and the Nursery Supervisor were instrumental and extremely helpful, setting up appointments and accompanying me, thus assisting with the research on Women Groups and Nursery School education.

76. Beatrice Iganza, interview January 22, 1988.

77. Maragoli does not have a day care centre.

78. Paulin Asengi, interview January 26, 1988.

79. One nursery teacher, Mideva, said she is fortunate to earn 2 or 300 Shillings a month. Another position where salary is tenuous.

80. Interview in English, with Benjamin Magwaga, Executive Secretary, Kakamega Branch, Kenya National Union of Teachers, December 23, 1987.

81. Currently this is only for men the expectation being that men will supply the living accommodation for their wives unless it can be shown that female teachers' husbands are dead or "incapacitated". However, the Commission's point is all teachers should receive a house allowance, to not do so is discrimination; "she is employed as a teacher, not as a woman, a worker is a worker"(Magwaga, Dec. 23, 1987).

82. Turkana was the example given.

83. In examining the records for 1985 for Kakamega in Western Province, 535 Primary teachers (not sexed, and no total) were interdicted (fired) for desertion, which means teachers simply walk away from their jobs, losing all benefits. To be reinstated, the interdicted must apply through their Chief, their church, and the TSC Disciplinary Committee. Apparently reinstated teachers are few. It would seem that teaching, although a secure position for some may not be perfect. Teachers list the following reasons for job dissatisfaction: low or non-existent wages, lack of promotional opportunities, unjustifiable criticism of parents who expect teachers to provide an image the teachers cannot afford, i.e. manner of dress, singling out teachers in the issue of drinking as this is a nation-wide problem, overwork, harassment by officials and inspectors, and unfairness in handling disciplinary cases. Some say their commitment to the profession per se, soon becomes lost in the above and many only remain as teachers or engage in teaching "because of a lack of alternatives"(The Kenya Teacher, September, 1987:p.18).

84. Interviews in English, December 18,22, 1987.

85. Although many people complained about the "high cost" of uvukwi on no other occasion did anyone suggest that parents should assist a newly married couple and not follow the custom of uvukwi. Alice's feeling is not typical of Logoli people. It comes about at least in part because Alice's uvukwi is quite high and both she and her husband will have to contribute to its payment as she says "at the expense of our own development".

86. This regulation, if passed, will affect only the very few women who have positions in the government sector.

87. Teacher placement in "home" areas is not guaranteed, however it appears to happen more in that profession than in nursing. In nursing, "home" placement is seen as a matter of "great luck". Home placements are far more economical as one has the production from land as an added resource(See Flora below).

88. Numerous conversations during the course of the research. Formal interview in English, October 18, 1987 and Life History collection.

89. Flora is Avalogoli, married in Idakho.

90. Utilising money from the husband's salary for school fees allows Flora to use her wages to build the house.

91. Her husband has since been interdicted for drunkenness, thus the support has ended. He has returned "home", that is to live in the yard. Correspondence received in October, 1990 provided the information that he has had a stroke and is now a "dependent", although he "remains drinking"(Sylvia October 13,1990).

92. Her husband was summoned to appear in court a total of twenty-four times, without appearing. The final summons was issued to the employer, asking "whether this man was existing or not", so he was given compulsory leave, one month, to come and appear in court. "That's how I managed. He was not caring for the Children's Court, Vice-President's Office, he could not even come. I have a big file with letters..."

CHAPTER 5

BACK DOOR DECISIONS

From the time of the ancients, we have always done so. It is rooted in the past with Imungu (God) and in the cave at Muwg'oma that the man will be the commander (Kagonga, Oct. 26, 1987).¹

Last evening Mudasia came back drunk with two of his brothers. He yelled and told all the children to leave the house. He came after me with a *panga*. One of his brothers stayed at the back door of the house and one stayed at the front. This was to stop me from leaving and to hear how he would teach his wife a lesson as they are saying I am too independent. I took the *panga* away from him. I said, 'If you want to fight with *pangas* I have the sharpest one in the house' (Flora, March 9, 1988).

It is believed in Maragoli that men are the decision-makers. This is "the Avalogoli way". But even within a conflicted social situation in which mixtures of patriarchal sentiment dominate, women act to produce value for themselves that goes well beyond this cultural ideal. The dominant and ideal patriarchal sentiment is an ideology of authority and power of men over women, of the rights of men to treat women as they wish including physical abuse, and to benefit from their labour, support and incomes. Central to this sentiment is the right of men to make decisions and the obligation of women to obey. The very form of the house, the physical form of the domestic arena however, presents an alternative and more equal structure of relationships.

Front doors of houses belong to men, back doors to women. Wherever women gather and whatever women do is considered the "back door". Acceptance of *vivuni vye kwandangu* (back door decisions), the power constituted through the back door, implies the power of women. Accepting the decisions of women brings criticism to men as they are seen to be listening too much to their wives' opinions, or even taking direction from them. In this criticism lies an implicit recognition that there is power at the back door. The ideological and institutional conditions affecting women's decisions in the cultural contexts of work, reciprocal obligations and benefits and state politics reveal that women gather information and gain influence that enable them to act with power in spheres of life that expand the "back door" beyond its immediate threshold. The spheres in which women use their power extend from the very literal back-door of the house to the state level of Kenya. Their attempts take several forms. These forms tend to avoid confronting patriarchal sentiments directly and therefore are usually oblique. I begin with domestic arenas of action and conclude with a discussion of national politics in the form of the national elections in Maragoli.

The House and the Yard

As discussed in Chapter 4, women are responsible for "care of the entire house and yard". This care is "home

work", thus women's work. How it is performed impacts on women's reputation in the community. Digging the land, assuring a source of water and firewood, acquiring, preparing and cooking the daily food, caring for children, doing laundry and cleaning the house and yard is women's work and entirely within their spheres of control. In actuality, a "man's yard" is under control of his wife as she assumes the obligation for care and utilises her power as elder woman to designate the necessary tasks to younger women and younger men. Patriarchal sentiment is implicit in these designations, however questionable in practice. It is usually only called upon by women in the event they need further authority in getting tasks done or by men if they are in the yard and notice the omission of tasks. Daughters and daughters-in-law in the yard and women outside, label the yard, Mama (name of eldest child's) yard. It is men who name the yard as belonging to a man.

The tasks performed by the woman in a yard are contextual, dependent upon who else is in the yard, her age or her other responsibilities, which may take her away from home. Early morning is the time for designating responsibilities and for the most part they are specified on a daily basis. A woman moves from one person to another in the yard directing: this young daughter to fetch the first water of the day for bathing, this son to chop firewood, that son to remove the animals and tie the cows, this

daughter and daughter-in-law to fetch more water, another daughter-in-law to get the fire going and prepare the tea while yet another is directed to remove the night's accumulation of animal dung. If she is still a "working woman" she will perform some of the tasks herself, usually providing bathing water and making tea for her husband if he is there. She then sets the tasks for the day for individual members, young daughters and sons are encouraged to hurry to school and daughters-in-law are sent to get water for washing clothes. If she is able to work at all, this elder woman will usually take on the task of sweeping the yard herself. If not, another woman is directed to do so.

When early morning tasks are completed, the elder woman sends or joins her daughters-in-law in the field she has decided needs attention, breaking up the ground, planting, hoeing, harvesting, depending upon the annual cycle. If workers are hired in the yard, she provides them with the detail for their daily work and if she has the money, she pays them when they have finished. If she is leaving the yard for the day, she will provide direction to the members who remain behind before she goes. It is her responsibility to see that tea and food are in the yard for these workers as well as other yard members. This may entail her walking or sending someone to a shop to make purchases and to the grinding mill to have the maize made into flour. She will

either go for more water to make mid-morning tea and the mid-day meal or direct another to perform the tasks. At the end of the day she directs yard members to get more water, bring in animals and begins the preparation for the evening meal. If the elder woman is away from the yard, the daughter-in-law longest in residence, usually the wife of the oldest son, assumes the authority.

Daughters-in-law recognise the power of the mother-in-law in the yard even as they complain of it. They also have their own "home work" tasks to engage in and are sometimes hard pressed to accomplish everything in a day. On occasion this pressure will result in a strike, where daughters-in-law will refuse to provide the assistance their mother-in-law expects. The mother-in-law then complains to her sons, expecting them to invoke the patriarchal sentiment and get their wives to co-operate.

Daughters-in-law prefer to have a congenial relationship with their mothers-in-law. A congenial relationship will aid in gaining mother-in-laws' support for uvukwi discussion and payment. As well it will allow daughters-in-law to assume more authority over their own houses. If the relationship is not congenial, elder women can create difficulties inside and outside the yard, as they gossip to others in the community complaining that their daughter-in-law is not working as she should. Thus, this

relationship has influence on the reputation as well as on the *uvukwi* of the daughter-in-law.

The relationship between the elder woman and her first born son's wife is different from her relationship with other daughters-in-law. Although women assume that all their children will care for them in their old age, there is a cultural expectation that a mother will end her days in her eldest son's yard. This provides this daughter-in-law with a slight leverage in terms of the power relationship. Her mother-in-law may consult with her or may support her in times of difficulty with her husband or his other relatives. An elder woman believes it to be in her best interest to acknowledge the situation of her oldest son's wife, it may influence her own care when she is an old woman.

Daughters-in-law also believe it is in their best interests to have a congenial relationship with their sisters-in-law. Married daughters living elsewhere maintain a close relationship with their mothers, fathers and especially their brothers who they often call upon for support. They have influence in their natal family, they bring cows and gifts. Daughters-in-law in a yard will often turn to these sisters-in-law, who after all face the same situations in the yards where they are married.

Unmarried sons who are past puberty also may create difficulty for daughters-in-law. Instead of following their sisters-in-law's direction, they may attempt to impose a

patriarchal sentiment more appropriate to husbands, husband's elder brothers and fathers-in-law. In this context a husband will usually recognise the viewpoint of his wife and call on the young man to change his behaviour. "People will be asking if you want to be married to your brother's wife!"

A woman in a yard has power that is related to her position in that yard, whether she is elder woman, daughter, or daughter-in-law. As can be discerned by the activities of "home work" one woman alone in a yard faces tremendous obstacles, not only in terms of work itself but in absence of the support of other women. In a nucleated yard, a woman will invite a young relative to live with her to assist and also to "keep her company".

Ultimately, women will usually support women if they are confronted with men's power. On a day-to-day basis men have little to do with what happens inside the house and in connection with the yard generally. Men are seldom in yards. Some are "tarmacking" (looking for work) or "losing the day" at the market or on the roads. Women will put aside their differences for the most part, if it means avoiding men's power, or if dissention impacts on their reputation in the community. Women may call on men's power as a threat, or, men may act themselves if "home work" is not done, but more likely only in regard to those aspects of it that impinge directly on them. Although the

responsibilities of house and yard contain the ingredients of obligation, younger to older or to the man who owns the yard, they are all women's work. Decision-making comes from the "back door" immediately women exit their houses first thing in the morning. A house or yard that reflects inefficiency impacts on a woman's reputation. It disallows her categorisation as "good wife" and interferes with claim on the collectivity.

For women's responsibilities in the home to be completed they must purchase, receive as gifts or borrow certain items from the commodity market. "Tea and sugar" is an idiomatic expression for anything bought at the market. In the category of necessary items other than food and food related items are water containers, clothes, shoes, blankets, utensils, seeds and fertiliser. Other items include batteries, newspapers, supplies for repairing and building, furniture, lamps, animals and more land. The majority of people call themselves *avadaka* (poor people) as they have restricted access to these market commodities. What is accessed in the main part comes from women's work and gifts and provides for the house and yard. If women have access to cash, men expect them to use it to provide for the home, that is, food or food-related goods. Although the cash return is minimal and the return goes mostly to the area of "home work", it nonetheless provides women with a further resource beyond men's control. Only a few men have

full time jobs. Most of these men work outside Maragoli and by the time they pay their own living expenses they have little left to contribute to the home.² Some even "forget the home" completely, neglecting the *vika* (steps) appropriate to the "Avalogoli way".

Vika

Kin, affines and even friends act within interhousehold exchange networks as they follow *vika*. Food gifts take place on a daily basis: relatives and friends visit one another with covered baskets³ which may contain beans, eggs, bananas or maize flour. The basket is handed to the hostess upon the visitor's arrival and when the visitor is ready to leave, it is passed back to her containing a different food gift. Baskets may "never" be returned empty.

Women believe that men attempt to curtail women's aspirations to gain status through *vika*. If men attempt to control women's production, women see men as inhibiting them from gaining a reputation for "treating visitors nicely". Women complain of this as well as of men's neglect of the hierarchy that exists in *vika*. "Closer" relatives should be given more than those who are considered "distant". For example, when wives' brothers visit, bearing gifts such as meat, tea, perhaps sugar and when possible, cash, the proper response is to feed them well with at least a chicken if not a goat. The husband who does not provide leaves a blight on the wife's reputation and status within both kin networks.

Joyce was extremely upset when her brother visited and her husband Vihima did not provide her with the ingredients for a "proper meal" to welcome him.⁴ Joyce (Jan. 4, 1988) describes the lack of respect experienced by herself and her family as a result of her husband's inappropriate response to a visit:

My brother came to visit this morning. My husband has gone to drink. He only greeted my brother and then left him with me. He did not stay to entertain him. I believed he had gone to buy a chicken so that I may cook for my brother. Instead I find he has gone just there, (a close by yard) to drink. He has not directed me to cook my brother very good food. I have been shamed. You know, brother, the uvukwi is only part paid. I have been shamed. Muharikwa, (sister-in-law), when you visited with your husband his sister, he was treated so nicely, very nicely indeed. You were given pork, chicken, rice, potatoes, vegetables, with drinks. He was to have been given a goat, but that will come another time. For me, I am left only shamed.

Joyce's reputation is such that she was given a chicken by a relative, still, the "joy of the visit" was constrained as her husband did not join her brother for the meal.

Vika to appropriate gift-giving and receiving take place throughout every individual's life. This is clarified by examining some aspects of women's involvement and power in reciprocal obligations and benefits as these are in evidence through major stages of life: marriage, birth and death.

Reciprocal Obligations and Women's Power

Reciprocity pervades the economic, political and social spheres of Avalogoli life. Exchanges take place during

informal and formal visits and during times of temporary and severe shortages. Reciprocal exchanges extend outward from members in a yard to all who may be connected to that yard as relatives, in-laws and friends. For the most part it is women who activate the networks.

Avalogoli say "*Mwana wovo ni mbimbu yomungongo*", (Your (adult) child is the supporting stick of your back). Additionally, children are responsible for "*Mbimbu yomungongo*" ("My name to go up"), in that children should "buy this for me" or "build this for me". "Logoli sons are to know again their father;" Logoli daughters "think of and care for parents in their old age." Relations between parents and children are extended reciprocally throughout the community. All those in an ascending generation are parents and the young are their children. Kinship institutions organise the process of distribution as well as production. All parents and children must give and receive,⁵ most particularly those from *umuliango gwitu* (from our door), symbolically our *inyumba* (house) or lineage. Relationships within *tsinyumba* (*inyumba* sing.) give members a sense of affiliation and continuity and provide the basis for individual security. This bond between the individual and the group provides the "good life", i.e. children, land and cattle. This necessitates giving and receiving within the collectivity.⁶

It is the same as you people call banking.⁷
When I face problems, I will send one of my

children to the one I have given to and they will give to that child. It takes away my pain (Sarah, Dec. 12, 1987).

In amounts ranging from 10 to 500 Shillings (most at the lower end of the scale) 61% of women interviewed (n=70), generated cash, for commodity purchase and redistribution, fairly regularly through gifts. Cash came from husbands (who remembered the home), older children, parents, in-laws, (parental and sibling), aunts (mothers), uncles (fathers), sisters and brothers (including cousins) and neighbours. Additionally, they were loaned and given commodities by relatives, friends and neighbours. This support comes from and goes to those with reputation in the community. Avalogoli are truly offended by begging and beggars. They prefer to ask, (*kotewa*) or they say "Ngonya", (Help me). With *koetwa* or *ngonya* there is always a relationship of interdependence. Those who ask and are asked are usually from *umuliango gwitu*.

Women do not automatically hand cash gained through exchange to their husbands although the demand is consistently made. More commonly, they avoid these demands by spending available cash purchasing commodities like tea, sugar and kerosene. As people are now dealing in cash, it is difficult to ascertain who is able to assist. It is easy to establish who has a full granary if the request is for maize; it is not easy to detect an availability of cash which is easily hidden. There is an assumption among

Maragoli people that women "always" have cash but women choose when to give money. Some husbands ask, demand, search and beat for the money they are sure wives have hidden away. Women's ability to extend their reputation through the commodity market and the decisions they make about sharing add to their reputation and subsequent influence with men.

Women's self-image and community reputation is enhanced as their cash and commodity flow circulates the network of reciprocal relations. Their ability to provide an advantage to their children is also increased. Money for school fees comes from both mothers and fathers and is given to both daughters and sons. Sons and daughters thus become more economically self-sufficient and thus more marriageable. In turn they will contribute to the exchange network that which has been offered to them. Sons may be better enabled to come up with the increased *uvukwi* that families of educated daughters demand. Long-term advantages for daughters on the employment market are questionable (see Chapter 2) but there is a return to the family when a good marriage is made for their daughter: *uvukwi* is "higher". These goods circulate in the network of obligations and benefits and heighten women's influence in their families and communities.

Marriage

The first step to marriage legitimacy is *uvukwi* discussion, engaged in by men, followed by "payment" made to

men, with appropriate "small" gifts to women (mothers-in-law). All women, mothers, daughters and women in-laws, are very influential in *uvukwi* processes. *Uvukwi* prestations begin the cycle of affinal reciprocity and it is not completed until it is paid in full. It is said that originally the amount of *uvukwi* was the same for everyone. As far back as 1900,⁸ when people were "still naked before God came", *uvukwi* was three cows and ten to twelve *tsimbago* (traditional hoes). The number of hoes was determined by a woman's "strength". That strength was translated as the assistance she would provide her mother-in-law and her husband's lineage.⁹ Her "strength", working hard to impress her mother-in-law, contributed to her ability to make sure that *uvukwi* was paid to her parents.

Differentiation in *uvukwi* began in 1939 (four goats, three cows and forty shillings)¹⁰ and continued to escalate with different amounts for different people. It remains unclear when material gifts to mothers-in-law entered the transaction: that is, when labour, symbolised by the *tsimbago*,¹¹ was transformed to market commodities and cash. Those who were asked said the change came about when cash intruded. Originally, total payment of *uvukwi* was required before marriage. People believe that the present system of down-payments and the continuing system of outstanding debits and credits, that may remain for as long as twenty-five years,¹² occurred as a result of education.¹³ Febe

(October, 1987) explains that parents invest in education for their daughters and are not willing to relinquish them without "proper reimbursement". Although *uvukwi* has escalated, many women see this as positive; "That's the reward for parents, before and after birth they give (daughters) care and education"(Women from Friend's Church Dec. 17, 1987).

Currently, initial *uvukwi* prestations take the form of cash and cattle to daughters' fathers and tea, sugar, cloth, head scarf and smaller amounts of cash to daughters' mothers. One amount of money is the *ambihu*, literally the gift for the one on whom the child first excreted, assumed to be the mother. This amount should come from the *uvukwi* (cash) given to daughter's fathers. The other cash and items given to daughters' mothers are not "counted" in the total tabulation. If a prospective son-in-law shows proper attention to a mother-in-law's gifts, he and his relatives gain a supporter in *uvukwi* discussion. Since *uvukwi* may now be as much as ten cows and 46,000 Shillings,¹⁴ any hope of a complete payment prior to marriage has long since disappeared. As a result daughters and sons often elope.

Even when *uvukwi* discussion and payment are precluded as a preliminary step to a proper marriage, "appropriate *vika*" must still be followed after an elopement.¹⁵ Letters are sent to inform the parents that the woman has not been in an "accident" or "stolen" as she has kept her liaison

with the man secret.¹⁶ Ideally, the letters should contain an invitation to meet for uvukwi discussion. If the woman "stays nicely"¹⁷ for "two weeks", she will expect to be provided with a gift from her prospective husband to carry to her parents. Making the "short visit"¹⁸ entails taking along sugar, tea leaves, milk, bread and perhaps some money, "up to 200 Shillings". The man may even cover the container with a new cloth for his prospective mother-in-law. The passage of time is noted by the woman and her waiting relatives. If time goes on and the gifts for the "short visit" are not produced a message may come from the woman's relatives that they are "waiting to greet her" or she may decide to return home, cancelling the marriage. If she goes with gifts, it is expected that she will return to her prospective husband's yard with gifts:

...ground (maize) flour, at least 10 kilos, a cock and two kilos of meat. These will be covered with a cloth she may use in her new home. This will identify to the parents of the boy that she is loved. If her parents are Christian, they will take the first letter showing the uvukwi offer to the church. The elders will pray over that letter that she will make a good wife and the boy a good husband(Salome Nov. 3, 1987).

Any refusal of discussion or payment creates tremendous dissension within and between families as payments and gifts do not only travel between individuals. The responsibility for initiating discussion and making payment lies with the yard within which the daughter chooses to marry. If this does not take place, women or men from the daughter's home

yard will make visits and suggest the procedure begin. As a close relationship exists between daughters and their parents usually the amount to be negotiated has already been agreed upon by the daughter and members of her yard. Once arrangements for discussion are made, it is the bride and the women from the yard where she has married who will rise very early and work very hard to accumulate the water and firewood and cook the food men from that yard should provide. Neglect of this has interfered with wedding ceremonies, both customary and more modern. For example, Zablon(Nov. 18, 1987) asked how it was possible to provide a wedding for his daughter when there had been no uvukwi discussion. His daughter and his wife maintained that the discussion would take place after the wedding, but Zablon's perspective was different:

The young man and his parents, who are also Abaluyha, maintain the discussion will take place after the wedding. But how to pay for a wedding without some uvukwi payment. I was very angry, both of them (mother and daughter) pressured me so much that I would just leave the house and go to Daniel's home. The women won, and the wedding took place. My friends and relatives contributed chickens and maize and the guests were fed at my home and the homes of those around me. There was no money coming from those people (affines) to assist. To this point we have not seen the home where my daughter is married. We left her at the place where they register the marriage. The best man I appointed to fulfil that responsibility (taking his daughter to her husband's home) could not fulfil that responsibility. Now my wife and other ladies are discussing going there (to release the daughter). They have already one child. We have not yet seen that child.

Obligations and benefits surrounding uvukwi are problematic for both men and women. As Joyce (Sept. 25, 1987) relates, even when uvukwi discussion has taken place and a "down-payment" provided, conflicts continue.

I wanted to be a nurse, but there was no money for my training. I decided to get married, as I had not the education to work. If money is there, you get educated, then work, then marry later, not so soon. If you can't work, you just stay with parents, so you must leave and the only way to leave is to get married. My husband asked for me,¹⁹ the table was opened.²⁰ I was to pay some of the opening money but I did not have any so I left the matter to my parents.²¹ My husband paid 150 Shillings to open the table, 100 was from him, 50 was from me. He paid for me. Two men came, (FB, FBS) and Helen, a woman from this side²² who was still giving birth.²³ She said nothing.²⁴ Uvukwi was set at 6000 Shillings and seven cows. They (Joyce's father and kin) took 3000 Shillings. It remains 3000 Shillings and 7 cows. I was satisfied. Since then, he has not paid, not even a little, or a cow. My parents are taking him to the court. One cow, one piece of cloth to my mother would have stopped this court.²⁵

A contradiction is in evidence. Women see that their reputations depend on a successful and continuing uvukwi process. Many women do not enjoy even minimal uvukwi benefits and consider themselves "stuck", "just there", "just a slave", after eloping, if discussion and payment do not take place at all. In 79% (n=94) of cases, women reported that discussion and payment had not been completed.²⁶ Most people recognise that adherence to the institution of uvukwi is difficult given the lack of finances,²⁷ however:

...it is the reward for parents and the young man feels very proud for having given uvukwi. It

is another system of saying, 'this is my wife'. If not, the wife can say these are not your children. In death, the parents would demand the body and children, even if there were ten children. Even if one cow is given, it makes the difference. If a mother is buried away from where she bore children it is a very serious *olovo*. This *olovo* says the children themselves would not get *uvukwi* (Women from Friend's Church Dec. 17, 1987).

If *uvukwi* is not forthcoming, it is in women's best interest to demand the return of their daughters and their children. Mothers and daughters recognise that *uvukwi* is an important context within which their lives are enhanced:

Now girls are educated, the child (girl) helps at home, when she leaves to marry, the *uvukwi* will assist those at the home she is leaving. It gives strength to the married girl. She is someone with power, she is not just someone picked from the market (Digoi Women Group, Feb. 11, 1988).

Digoi Women Group members say that "...*uvukwi* must be paid. Women must see it is paid, they must work hard to see that happen."

Women attempt to influence their own *uvukwi* process. They "work hard" either to accumulate cash and cows or to prove their worth so cash and cows may be sent. They "push" or otherwise "convince" their husbands.²⁸ Women also have other alternatives. They may threaten to "walk with their children" to effectively cut husband's sons from the patriline. Although sons cut off from their fathers may be told to get their land elsewhere: "Your mother is not here, go there (where she is) to get your land", mothers choose

whether or not to pursue this choice, weighing the son's loss according to their own best interests.

When *uvukwi* discussion and payment is completely absent, women find the situation intolerable and call on their kin for support. Consider the following case example:

Ritah.²⁹ When Ritah and Aggrey eloped in 1984 (see Chapter 4), *uvukwi* discussion was not initiated by Aggrey's father. It was expected that Aggrey's father must "make the first move", to send the "first cow". Ritah complained that Aggrey had not "pushed" his father to do so even though when she first came to Aggrey's father's yard she did everything that was to be done in the home: cooking, washing, fetching water, chopping firewood, even caring for cows, traditionally a boy's task. Her relatives had approached Aggrey's father on three occasions asking for *uvukwi* discussion. When Ritah wanted to visit her natal home her parents-in-law did not wish to provide her with gifts. After a long discussion on the morning of the visit, the father-in-law finally relented³⁰ and put sugar in the container, a traditionally appropriate gift for Ritah to take along.³¹ It was inappropriate for Ritah to have visited at all because *uvukwi* discussion had not taken place. She therefore returned without gifts³² but with two letters from her brother: one to her husband and one to her father-in-law. Ritah was not permitted to know the content of the letters but her husband shared the information from

his. In the letter, Ritah's brother reminded Aggrey's family that Ritah's father was nearing the end of an illness and that without a discussion and some contribution, Ritah would not be permitted to attend his funeral. As a "gone soul", he would haunt all the living who did not attend his funeral. Most particularly he would haunt the affines who did not follow the vika. When Ritah's father finally died, Ritah returned to her mother's yard. Ritah's mother demanded that a mourning bull be sent from Aggrey's father's yard. Although Aggrey's father considered that the bull would also be uvukwi payment, Ritah's mother saw it as "below the expected standard" as a mourning bull as well as insufficient as uvukwi payment. Ritah's mother further demanded money if Aggrey's father expected Ritah and the children to return to his yard. Aggrey's father's comment was, "Does this women think she can discuss uvukwi?" Eventually Ritah and the children returned to Aggrey's father's yard. But in December of 1988, Ritah "walked" with her children. Within a month of her action, her father-in-law began arrangements for the uvukwi discussion.

Father (father-in-law) has come to the original point. He invited my parents for a negotiation of dowery (sic), three cows has (sic) to go and two cows, 10,000 Shillings has remained. These is (sic) the residual quantity (Correspondence Ritah, February 5, 1989).

Her husband wrote, "The dowary (sic) has been discussed. Five cows - 10,000 Shillings. Three cows are going soon" (Correspondence Aggrey, February 5, 1989).

It is not in men's best interest to completely neglect *uvukwi*. Younger men who complain of having to pay, "Am I buying your body?",³³ grow into older men who collect. They then insist that the system ought to continue.³⁴

Birth

A woman will not usually visit the yard where her daughter has married until the daughter gives birth. After each child is born, the daughter must stay in the yard and she is cut off from exchange of gifts with her natal family until *kutulitsa mukana* takes place: that is, until she has been "released"³⁵ by her mother to do so. Releasing a married daughter who has had a child takes the cooperation of her mother³⁶ and a number of other women. They carry clothing for the newborn, perhaps a towel and appropriate food gifts. Only women (mothers) are responsible for "releasing" their daughters but they expect the assistance of men (fathers):

Children are the bridge for visiting even if children are born and die. I, as *guku* (grandmother) to the newborn must do this, else we may not receive the remaining *uvukwi*. *Guga* (grandfather) will buy milk, tea, four live chickens, bread, sugar and firewood. I myself, I cannot give these items, he must assist, the payment (*uvukwi*) will go to him. I will travel with six other women³⁷ to where my daughter is married. We will take the child away,³⁸ bathe it and examine it. We will sing meaningful songs and we will all handle it. After, we give the child back to those people (affines). Then we are fed very well, they (affines) all contribute³⁹ to that. We take our containers back, they may not stay there overnight, but now (in this context) we do not give food with food.⁴⁰ They (affines) must

give an envelope with 100 or 200 Shillings for us to take. It is after this, if uvukwi has not been discussed, that the father of the daughter will go with some other men to ask. Every effort will be made to have this (releasing) done. The ladies I select know it must be done, they may even contribute to buying the gifts. They know an envelope will be returned.⁴¹ With each child this takes place until it reaches where the releasing of the daughter ends. When a daughter is in the middle of bearing children⁴² we take a bull, a well decorated bull with flowers all over, horns, neck, the whole body. This ends the time of releasing (Rebeka Nov. 25, 1987).

Once "released", the daughter can visit her natal home bringing tea, sugar, and amounts of cash for both her mother and father. These gifts signify that she "comes from people, not trees", that she is well thought of and cared for in the yard to which she is married.⁴³ In turn, these gifts allow her to receive maize, perhaps firewood and the important chicken which is formally presented to her child. Women are under some restraint to produce the necessary items. Even if chickens are in the yard, they usually belong to the husband. Should the husband choose not to assist, he will not be held responsible. Women see this as unfair as he is the one to receive uvukwi. Women circumvent this constraint by obtaining cash through wage labour or by maintaining a good reputation so that husbands or other relatives will assist them.

Death

In Maragoli, it is said that it is "Impossible to have a funeral without women being present."⁴⁴ Women not only

reproduce the next generation of ancestors, they also bury them. Women direct the procedures and decide when they should be carried out during the funeral days. The signal of death comes from drums and from the wails of women in the yard where the death has taken place. The surrounding area is immediately alerted and almost as immediately, neighbourhood women will stop work and gather in the yard of the deceased. A constant stream of women carrying chickens, eggs, beans, perhaps even tea and sugar then files into the yard.⁴⁵ The body of the deceased is washed and dressed by women and women direct men to begin building the coffin. Women fetch firewood, collect water, and begin to prepare the food for at least three days and nights of mourning prior to the internment of the body.⁴⁶ It is women who provide most of the requirements to feed the hundreds of people who will attend. At times, attendance figures run to thousands. It is women who blow the whistles at funerals to alert those in attendance that a collection of cash for the deceased is about to be taken. Women collect money from both women and men during the days of the funeral and decide how it should be allocated. *Ivani* (special money collected in small baskets at a funeral) assists women in feeding the people. During the burial, both women and men give *inguvu* (envelopes containing money given at a funeral). *Inguvu* means clothes.

"...they do not say it is money. You can even buy the clothes to bury the person, but the dead

body cannot use so many clothes, so today, (currently), money is given instead. After the burial the oldest child of the dead person is called forward, but if the oldest is a daughter she must call her brother up, to stand with the mother or father. The two hold the basket (containing the envelopes) with both hands, one on each side. They pray over the money, then the family takes it. The money is divided, daughters who have paid *uvukwi*, sons, the unmarried get a share, the mother or the father (surviving spouse) receives the most (Aggrey, January 11, 1988).

No matter how destitute one is, some contribution must be made,⁴⁷ if not immediately, at some later point in time. Refusing may invoke the wrath of the "gone soul". As population is high in Maragoli, "so many people die", reciprocal relations surrounding death are a frequent and never ending requirement. Women must again rely on their influence to provide from their subsistence and cash resources to make the necessary contribution. Once again, although "close" or "distant" provides the context for the amount to be given, women are responsible for providing. Since funeral giving is a requirement for a "good Avalogoli", a woman takes pride and receives status by being seen as "one who provides well" for the dead as well as for the living.

Land, Labour and Income

The economic situation for most Avalogoli is one where domestic and wage labour production are inadequate. Women cannot depend on land, cash crops from land, cash from wage labour or on men's provision of any of the above. Families

are large and production is inconsistent. Notwithstanding the difficulties which patriarchal ideology and capitalist systems impose, women take a central role in production. They are well aware of their added value as they perform not with resignation but with commitment.

Men own land by inheritance⁴⁸ or perhaps nowadays by purchase. Women are only given access to the land by marriage: "Men are the ones to give land to their wives." Although the proper "Avalogoli way" is that fathers give land to their sons, they do not always do so (see Abwunza, 1985). Scarcity of land is reflected in land prices in the area which average Kshs. 50,000 for a one-half acre plot in South Maragoli with North Maragoli only slightly lower. The purchase price for land inside or outside Maragoli requires considerable accumulation and many fathers and sons simply do not have and likely will never have the means. Within this cultural mandate, mothers and fathers advise daughters of the disadvantages of "marrying land" which has many sons. Miriam (Oct. 10, 1987), provides an explanation:

The reasons why we had bigger land before is like this, in one household you had one son, so he got all the land, but when the sons increase so you have four, you have to divide that land into quarters. Look, I was married to the only son, I have big land, that was my luck. When I got married to that home, I had three sons. The first one had land, the second one had land, the third one had land. No serious problems because there was only one son where I married. With Abigail, there are three sons where she is married, they have sons, and she has eight sons; Freda, seven sons where she is married, they have sons and she has one son. And there it goes, the land is gone!

Marrying where there are too many sons provides an area for criticising women: "Why did you marry there? They do not have enough land for you. There, they have too many sons" (Violet, Oct. 23, 1987).⁴⁹ Women are held responsible for not properly assessing the situation that may develop once they begin to reproduce children and underproduce subsistence and so attempt to control the degree to which cultural rules influence their lives.

Women can also own land. For example, a woman with a "good" reputation can maintain "ownership" of land.

Finasi.⁵⁰ With the approval of the community and information received at the church, where women gather, Finasi, a woman with no sons, was encouraged to counter the cultural prescription that land must only belong to men.

The reason for the conflict was clear. That was because I had not had any sons,⁵¹ they wanted to divide the children so the children would stay with their aunts (FZ), and one to stay with their grandmother (FMo). I was to leave, and the land was to go to my brother-in-law.⁵² That was the major reason for conflict. I refused to leave for two reasons. One is that my children would experience serious difficulties. Two, was the fact that if I leave, since my brother has built me a house, I will leave embarrassment to my brother.⁵³ Now I take care of the old mother, it has changed. She is not the way she was before. Because before it was her daughters and son who put idea into her that I should leave. The land was to be given to my brother-in-law...he wanted it for his own son. Her (mother-in-law) own daughters and son persuaded her to get rid of me. This was after the death of my husband. And the public refused to accept what the family was saying. And also, the government of Kenya, following the government of Kenya from Moi, that if you only have even one child and the child is a

daughter and the father dies, the daughter has a right to that land. It is the law.⁴ I could keep the land and I could leave it for my daughters when I die. The matter was discussed in all the churches. And it was also spelled out clearly at the funeral that I would not leave. The public around, and all the neighbours and all the people concerned, told to me very clearly, that you cannot leave. For you don't know when your children grow up and get married, whether they will ever have peace there. They have to have a place to return. They are entitled to that. We go to church and somebody is sent from Nairobi who knows the government law and he tells people in the church. These government people told me you need to get a title deed because you don't know about changes, you think you have land and then you don't. But the problem with that was there is no money to go to the offices to change the title deed. My husband had the number to the land, I have it, it is eleven. What it means is that if I have money then I go to ask the Registrar's Office and then the number will be transferred to me. A long time ago the cost was 100 Shillings, but they say it is added every year, I have been defeated (unable to afford the cost). According to the changes it would be better to do that (acquire the title deed) although I am secure with this law because everyone is agreed. What I would like to have is the number and the land transferred to me. That's the most important thing, although nobody (husband's family) says anything nowadays, but you never know.

What stopped Finasi from actually obtaining the title deed to her deceased husband's land was lack of money not the restrictions of patrilineage ownership.

In interviews, 41% (n=94) of women believed women should not own land, saying for example, "Men are the ones to give land to their wives." "Men own land, women do not." Women owning land, signifies "trouble in a marriage" relationship. This is in keeping with the patriarchal

sentiment. A male teacher in his 50's provides a synopsis of customary responsibilities:

The land should always be owned by the husband, he should be the owner, he should be in charge. You cannot have two decision makers, it just creates arguments. One person must take the lead and it should be the man, he is the one who knows more, even when women are educated. Those families who have problems, it is because this is not followed. Although we all have a higher authority who makes the ultimate decisions (God), it is a man's duty to be in charge of his yard, his wife and children (Barnard Nov. 17, 1987).⁵⁵

In the same interviews, 47% of women believed that women should own their own land and a further 10% gave qualified responses. "Women should own their own land if they have their own money to buy" or, "No, women should not own their own land, but if they have money (to buy), they may."⁵⁶

Even though men and a lesser percentage of women believed that women should not own their own land, 57% of the women believed women should or could own land. Although men own land by inheritance and make decisions about that land, women today have access to resources and added power to sway these decisions.

One of the added resources available to women is information. For women, assimilation of legal information, such as that invoked above, comes mainly from churches which most women attend as many do not read, own radios or attend barazzas (meetings). Government representatives provide information at church gatherings on wages for digging, prices for commodities, laws and aspects of subsistence:

Before women were seen as weaklings, controlled, but government emphasis is on women and Maendeleo, the women have become productive. The President has announced the young should help their parents, some do--some do not (Edelia Dec. 20, 1987).

The degree to which women manage cultural edicts about what is proper affixes to other aspects of male domination as well. Men generally own the land and make the decisions about crops grown on that land: what to dig and plant, when to harvest, when to sell and when to give to relatives and friends. These men are described as "walking the land" and saying to their wives "now is the time to dig, to plant (maize, beans, cassava), to weed, to harvest." When 94 women were interviewed, it was assessed that in 51 cases, men made these decisions. In 2 cases, men made most of the decisions about the land but the women were "free" to sell surplus crops if any were available. However, in 22 cases, women said their husbands discussed the above aspects with them and they reached mutual agreement. In 19 cases, women made the decisions on their own. In 46% of the total cases women either made or contributed significantly to decisions about crops produced on men's land. Men recognised and valued women's contributions. In his sober moments, Mudasia maintained that he was appreciative of his wife's ingenuity and management. He said, however, that "People are jealous of our development and when I am drunk they convince me to apply a firm hand" (March 9, 1988). Women also recognise their own value; "If I care for the land, dig, plant and

harvest, then I make the decisions about the land"(Amy, November 23, 1987). Although rhetorically men make the decisions about subsistence economics, women with reputation gain influence in this process.

Conflict occurs within reciprocal relations. Within families and spilling over to the collectivity, arguments take place between husbands and wives, children, parents, siblings and affinal relatives. Consanguines and affines debate who should provide resources and how the resources should be distributed. Wives complain of husbands not sharing resources they receive from relatives and affines. Husbands complain that wives are hiding gifts or that their provision of food to relatives and affines leaves the yard without food.⁵⁷ Women and men both complain that children do not provide them with support or argue how much each should receive if the support is given, accusing each other of hiding the "real" amount provided. Children in contexts such as these accuse parents of having "big pockets that never get filled". In turn, parents hold up as examples other parents in slightly better economic circumstances: the children's support, that is their contribution to their parents, has allowed these parents to "progress". Mothers of daughters see that a portion of uvukwi should be given to them; "Who gave birth to this child, did he?"⁵⁸ Daughters-in-law threaten to "walk" unless a part of their uvukwi is sent to their parents; their parents are "pushing" them for

that. Wives argue with husbands in this regard and "push" husbands to "push" their fathers to assist by sending a cow. Women "work hard" to accumulate the needed production so that women's mothers may receive their gifts and their fathers may receive their cows. "My father must get his cows." Ritah removes herself from production and participation until uvukwi questions are answered. Logoli women contribute to paying their own uvukwi and also assist their sons in paying theirs. Uvukwi comes from women's production as well as men's in Maragoli. For example Flora and Alice, who have jobs, save money and buy livestock to pay their own uvukwi. Little if any mention of women's productive contribution to bridewealth is found in other research where men's contributions and men's receipts are the topics of analysis.

The cultural prescription that women provide sustenance for their own families extends throughout the kinship network and is enacted in the life cycle of birth, marriage and death. On the surface it appears that cultural prescriptions about male power in Avalogoli life contain and restrict women's actions but women use these cultural rules and gain power over them. Women's ability to sustain and extend their cultural role gains them considerable economic and political power in social relationships with men. Even in the structures of state politics, women use their influence to add to their power.

State Politics and Women's Power

On a macro level, the political framework within which all Logoli people participate encompasses government officials on a national level, the President, Ministers and Members of Parliament and nominated and elected candidates on the local level, the District Officer, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs with their *mugutu* (headmen), Kenyan police, and members of the local Council.

Many women say that it is the government (men)⁵⁹ which makes change and they appraise that change as "bad".⁶⁰ "Bad" is most often defined as raising prices for commodities upon which they rely. Women do not see themselves represented in state activities.⁶¹ Government edicts are made with little electoral input as people have limited means to act on the rights that government affirms. Maragoli women and men meet this lack of representation by deliberately misinterpreting government decrees for their own benefit.

In the 1988 general election, President Moi's rallying call of *Nyayo* (footsteps of the ancestors) called upon the descendants of all ethnic groups to engage in *maendeleo* to build the nation. According to Moi, economic development will ensue from attitudes such as love, unity, peace and sharing with one another, from the smallest family unit to the larger nation.⁶² But the adherence to African socialism appears to impede the "productivity and creativity of the

individual" that is also required. This burden is simply too arduous for the individual to bear.

In the 1988 election, the President called for an honest and fair voting procedure. The electorate was to cooperate as KANU⁶³ members by purchasing the required number of stamps to affix to their membership cards and by voting without violence or bribes. The Logoli people see, however, that elections and elected officials are corrupt. Nomination depends on financial support from wealthy individuals: money to register, money to pay off outstanding debts and money to pay for votes. The Logoli people know that candidates will "grow fat" in a literal and symbolic sense. The elections can also be "fixed" by interfering with those who stand for election and by miscounting, adding or losing ballots after voting is completed. The election procedure, the promises of candidates and the assurance of government protection guaranteed by following the "footsteps of the ancestors" is not confirmed in actuality. The only way to influence those who make decisions that affect everyday life in Maragoli is to agitate on the local level.

Avalogoli spread rumours, engage in violence against candidates and their supporters and give and receive bribes. In the 1988 election, tallies were kept. One day charges would be laid against members of one group and on the next, similar charges laid against the opposition. Men gathered in groups of five or six on the roads, at the market and in

a few cases, at one another's houses in groups of up to ten. Women are not supposed to discuss politics. But they did. They discussed politics at every opportunity: in yards, on the fringes of men's groups, at markets and at church. Wherever political discussion was taking place, one or two women were likely to be there, nodding agreement, putting in a word here or there--reminding the men of candidate's past favours or injustices as a basis for what the future might bring--reminding men of candidates' political connections or where they placed in the kinship. Men did not acknowledge women's contributions to political discussion. In follow-up conversations, it was noted, however, that men made use of the information women provided. Although men are deemed responsible for political decisions, women influenced the process.

In this election women were proud co-participants in the formal electoral process. They were aware that their votes were worthy and their voices would be included in the final counts. Candidates were also aware of the impact of women's approval. Women recognised that government promises are not often fulfilled so they got as much as possible from a pre-election process. For example, if women were not "properly" provided for during the campaign, they loudly proclaimed the injustice. "I stayed there (at the candidate's house) for the morning without anything, not even tea"; "(The candidate) must give what it cost for the

(KANU) stamps and add a bit more." It is women who gather at the homes of candidates they choose. They dance and provide information to support or gossip to oppose, influencing voters by the information they provide. They are aware of their influence as others are aware. Assuring a "proper" supply of "tea and sugar" to women during campaigns is a significant measure of that awareness. Accruing information to influence allows women to receive at least immediate self-benefit in the state political process and they loudly proclaim any injustice. Women do not outwardly tell men how to vote but their involvement is deliberate.

Following in the "footsteps of the ancestors" means for most Kenyans in positions of power (men) a retention of patriarchal sentiment. On the local level it also provides a vehicle for the retention of traditional male power. Institutionally and ideologically, discussions and decisions in the political framework have always been men's responsibility. A complete acceptance of the underlying patriarchal sentiment similarly supported in the cultural rhetoric of the state is not in women's best interest. Women recognise however, that they cannot afford to totally lose Nyayo as it supports a collective sentiment upon which they rely. In today's patrimonial capitalist state, Nyayo provides yet another context within which women gain

influence. Women have influence and participate in the electoral process to advance their interests.

Conclusion

On both the local and the state level, women assure their continuing power through a cultural posture of ideological and institutional acceptance of male elder rule while at the same time making decisions from the back door. This is clearly stated in reference to decisions made in the home: even where it was obvious that women were making independent decisions, they said, "...it is because I know how he wants the home to be run." Salome (Dec. 14, 1989) described herself as a "submissive wife", an attribute she considered the cultural ideal and in keeping with Christian edicts. In contrast to the cultural ideal, Flora supervises the yard and the building of a new house independently of her husband. Given the effects of an introduced capitalist market and the disadvantage this introduces for men, women's influence is actually growing. The power from the front door is increasingly questioned by women as the power from the back door expands. Men retaliate, Flora's husband and his brothers referred to in the quote at the beginning of the chapter think women's "independence" has "gone too far".

It is increasingly difficult for men to avoid the expanding range of power from the back door in Avalogoli daily life. The pressures from a capitalist system have confronted men with the reality of women's power. Beatings

provide dramatic examples of the dynamics of reaction to questioning of traditional male power. Logoli people, both women and men, say that abuse is more frequent today than in the past. Agnes has been "consistently beaten" by her husband for twenty years:

He does not want me to have money, even my own salary, all money must go to him. When I ask for money, it is a war! This time he was taken to the police but his relatives gave money for bond. He is out now, moving. This is called grievous harm, not assault. They say the case cannot come to court until I am healed. He is still trying to kill me, this is why I live behind the chained door. If I am able to testify it will be bad for him. Without me in the court room he can make up stories. In Kenya the law is difficult. You tell them about a man and a wife and they take slow action, or they are given something little not to notice. Now my brother has gone one more time to the Chief to complain(March 6, 1988).⁶⁴

When interviewed on the subject of conjugal abuse, 43% (n=94) of women said they experienced physical abuse inflicted by husbands. A further 52% said that although physical abuse was infrequently experienced, incidents of abuse were increasing. Men provided an economic rationale for this by saying that women "harass" men for support. This assertion of failure of women to work and produce flies in the face of women's actual output. An Assistant Chief in Maragoli describes the situation as follows:

There are many cases which come to leaders in connection to domestic violence. The most difficult cases are those concerning fighting in families. It is difficult because many avasatsa (husbands) do not have employment, they do not work. Many leave early in the morning to go to groups with other people just to sit and talk, if they are drunkards they go to drink. They

kogotitsa liduku (lose the day). When they come to their homes because they have not brought any money or food they come home and begin beating their wives.

It seems that when husbands are unable or unwilling to provide, they strike out physically in retaliation.⁶⁵

Consider the following case example.

Esta.⁶⁶ Esta's relationship with her husband appears to contain the characteristics of a classic double-bind situation.

My husband started beating me in 1947...unto this day he is still beating me. Even the (*inyumba*) people know. He comes home drunk and he asks a question, they all know how he beats me. After asking the question, you answer in one way he beats you, you answer in another way, he beats you. I ask for money, there is no resource to get money because he does not give me money. I came from a wealthy home, my father was rich, we never ground sorghum on the stone or anything like that, this is an example of how we lived.⁶⁷ I blame this (her situation) on the person who arranged my marriage, a schoolteacher. My mother died, when I got married my father said, look your mother is no longer here, to marry one person and move to the next one is no good. You marry this person you stay there. Also I had children. I could not leave the children. There is a woman here in (village name) who left her husband because he too, used to make *busaa* and sell it, and drink, she left a number of children home, they grew they are educated, they are teachers, they have other jobs. They are members here (in the village) the problem is they do not want their mother because their mother left them. She has wanted to return but it is impossible to return. This is an example. I was beaten by slapping on the face and kicking. In 1949, he bit me on the nose, I bled and bled, that is why my nose is the way it is. I have tried everything possible, I have approached the church people, that did not work. After my mother died my father married again, I went to him and said I would like to get some job outside the home. Father said "No. Your mother is dead, I have married again, you cannot get a job."⁶⁸ The

(inyumba) is very sorry for me. Also, he blames me for not having enough children, I am not profitable. He is forever blaming me.

Men are supposed to make all the important decisions in Avalogoli life. With the intrusion of cash economy and a subsequent exacerbation of gender inequality, this has become increasingly difficult. On the other hand, women continue to do what they have always done even within the constraints of a system organised on the basis of patriarchal sentiments. Women keep kinship networks working for them, fulfil their "home work" responsibilities and engage in "outside work". Their ability to access cultural avenues provides the economic base for the survival of Avalogoli society. This represents a power for women which men fully recognise. Women are vigilant caretakers of patriarchal ideology to the extent that this sentiment is productive in their everyday lives. Today, women are speaking of the unfairness contained in this sentiment. Traditional society provided for a more limited male rule, and one in which the opinion of the collectivity was adhered to. "Today you may not interfere in the yards of others, they will have the law on you." Men attempt to control their yards, even in some cases attempting to curtail women's involvement in the collectivity. In response to women gathering in Women Groups, "Women should stay in their own yards. Women who run to other yards make trouble in their own"(Bowers Jan. 16, 1988). Families are more

nucleated and men are alienated. Given the creativity, hard work and intelligence which they productively muster, women are questioning if the protection of male rule is worth the cost.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. God, prior to missionaries and the intervention of Christianity was *Imungu*. "Today God is *Nyasaye*. *Nyasaye* came when Jesus Christ died, *Imungu* had to leave"(Febe, Oct. 1, 1987). *Muwg'oma* is a place name, in the Maragoli Hills. The ancestral caves, that is the caves people lived in when they first settled in the area prior to building houses, are located at *Muwg'oma*. Up until mid-century, Logoli people ("at 18 years, girls could not go close, men made the sacrifice") made pilgrimages to the caves. "They gave food for the ancestors, medicines and herbs in the calabash. This gave us a good crop, the storms could not spoil the millet"(Febe, Oct. 1, 1987).

2. Of the 32 men working full-time (n=78), only 4 work in Maragoli. Maintaining living accommodation elsewhere is expensive. For example a budget kept by a man working in Nairobi gives the following as shilling expenditures for one month: rent, 500; area watchman, 50; transportation and food, 1020; laundry, 38; donations (funeral), 90; medical 769 (an unusual expense as one is not sick every month yet interesting, as obtaining medical care in Nairobi is seldom free); repayment of debt, 200 (borrowed the previous month); transportation to Maragoli 250; for a total of 2917 Shillings. His monthly salary is 2100 Shillings, he was not able to take money home and he remained 817 Shillings in debt. Even without the medical treatment he would not have been able to contribute to the home in Maragoli. Men also engage in strategies, for example, many do not come home on a regular monthly basis to save on transport and attempt to accumulate cash to provide home assistance three or four times a year. This is tenuous however, as they may end up spending it on relatives, emergencies, or women and liquor. The strategy used by the man above was to draw upon wage labour and the kin group. He received a 650 salary advance, borrowed 200 from a friend (to be repaid the next month), his sister (cousin) gave him 100 and his mother-in-law gave him 250 to cover his transportation cost to Maragoli so that he could attend to a family responsibility at home.

3. Baskets containing goods are always covered, "People have jealous eyes, they want to know if my gift from you is more than they have received. People may demand the same gift and perhaps you don't have. This will create difficulty among people. They can never be seen"(Ritah and Joyce, March 8, 1988).

4. Brothers visiting the yards where their sisters are married must be "treated very nicely", "fed very well", with food provided by brothers-in-law. This has to do with *vika*, (see Joyce below), particularly if the brother visiting is connected to his wife's husband through *uvukwi*. It becomes even more important to provide appropriately if *uvukwi* has not been discussed or paid in its entirety. A question remains as to the sister's "worth", thus "treated very nicely" conveys a respect in that yard for the sister. Where it has been paid in full, the situation becomes less stressful. The brother "knows" his sister is well thought of in the yard. Frequently the provision follows a pattern, first tea, groundnuts or bananas (sometimes both) are provided. Following that a main meal consisting of chicken or beef and *ovuchima* is served, followed by yet more tea with bread and butter or margarine. The brother will be sent off with a chicken, perhaps bananas, sugar cane or even maize to take to his own yard. Should the brother's family accompany him, the first visit of every one of his children will be acknowledged by a gift of individual chickens. It is seldom that women are able to fulfil this obligation with subsistence food and women believe their husbands ought to assist to convey respect both for their wife and for her family.

5. Where $n=94$, 40 women characterised theirs and others children as good. Good is defined as working hard to achieve an education, assisting with the work at home or offering some financial support to the parents. 47 women characterised their's and others children as bad, bad is defined as the opposite of good. 6 women said children can be both bad and good depending upon individuals and contexts. No opinion was given in 1 case.

6. Currently under the state system of *Nyayo*, following "footsteps of ancestors", this is reinforced. It not only becomes part of *Avalogoli* history, but also the history of all Kenyans and the proper way, by state edict, to interact in daily life(see *Abwunza*, 1990a).

7. People who work in wage labour and use a banking system to deposit and withdraw cash.

8. *Jayi-Nora* - Age "How do I know?" Married during *Olololo-Lubwoni* Circumcision dated at 1900.

9. All "good" wives ought to receive twelve *tsimbago*.

10. *Febe* - Age "How do I know the years?" Married at age 30. Girls marry too young nowadays. "They do not know anything!" Interview October, 1987.

11. Prior to *tsimbago*, *uvukwi* payments were in the form of fighting weapons. "Women who came before me got fighting knives, usually they were those fighting knives, twelve of them. There were, in those days, (prior to 1910) two divisions of war. The men from near Maragoli Hills were *Avam'mavi* from *M'mavi* and the ones over this way were called *Avakizungu*. So those from the Maragoli Hills came over here to fight. And so the men here had to get ready for war. That is why *uvukwi* was in the form of fighting weapons"(Kagonga, October 26, 1987).

12. Charles, for example, paid the last cow in 1975 from a 1955 marriage. Nowadays this is by no means unusual. In fact one may consider it the norm. For example in Febe's case, the payment took twenty years. Estella married in 1959, seven cows, seven hundred shillings, four cows and one hundred shilling were paid. She has eleven children.

13. Sometime during the early 1950's.

14. However, as a result of population expansion, it is said that cows are no longer a major part of *uvukwi*; people have no money to buy them and no land on which to graze them. Money takes into account the price of cows. At a market in 1987, Zebu cattle were selling for two thousand shillings; half-bred, three thousand, and a pure-bred cow sold for four thousand shillings. Thus, it is likely that this could read "or" rather than "and".

15. Often the "ideal" is not followed, young women and men simply decide, perhaps from prior meetings, they will stay together and letters requesting *uvukwi* discussion end up coming from the girl's parents.

16. A number of situations were witnessed where the young couple had not met prior to the elopement, or only met for a brief time to "examine" one another. The arrangements for the elopement were made by others, relatives or friends, usually of the same age group. "Nathan, the oldest son of Samuel Egatwa approached me for assistance in finding a wife as he was not experienced in seducing. He showed his good intention, (buying iron sheets to build a house). I discussed with my wife which of her relatives may make a good wife for Nathan. The characteristics of Nathan were put against the characteristics of my wife's relatives. We decided Anita, my wife's sister was the one, the two would suit one another, a polite man must be matched with a polite lady. We wrote to this girl and asked her to visit, she agreed to try"(Aggrey Nov. 2, 1987). However, the young man's father must be given an opportunity to observe the girl prior to writing a letter to her parents. Usually, she is taken to the home, "given" to other daughters-in-law, who will spend a night with her

providing her with information on the yard she is considering joining, so "she may know how things are in that home", and asking her questions. The mother-in-law will question the daughters-in-law in the morning and "report" to the young man's father. In a number of cases, it was after the father's approval that the young couple met, "might lay eyes on one another for mutual approval".

17. This infers choice on the young woman's part, however, it works both ways. The young man may decide he is not "satisfied", and set up situations where she is unable to stay nicely. For one thing he must provide the gifts for her first visit to her parents. Not providing these sends a strong message he is not pleased with the relationship.

18. She does not spend the night at her parent's home.

19. Joyce was already living in Vihima's yard and had given birth to one child when these negotiations took place. Joyce is one of a number of women who believe that husbands must be "pushed" to "push" their fathers to provide the "first cow", in order to allow vika to proceed. The term cows is used collectively, the first cow, ideally provided by the husband's father, is a bull. See Abwunza (1988) for a more extensive development of uvukwi.

20. Uvukwi discussion was to begin and part of the money paid. In a symbolic sense "the way is opened" for reciprocal relations to commence among affines.

21. Means the parents are able decide how much is seen as coming from their daughter's husband (to-be) and how much from their daughter if the designation is not made during the discussion. The designation is important as the money from the daughter is given to the mother. In this case the daughter's husband made the decision, see below.

22. Neighbourhood of the husband.

23. Signifying young, not an elder woman.

24. This woman represented Joyce, who may not be present during uvukwi discussion. A woman in attendance is also said to represent the woman's point of view and/or the mother of the husband-to-be. However I am told she seldom contributes to the discussion. Her role seems to be one of reporting the decisions to other women in both of the concerned yards as men "never tell" what has gone on or what has been decided, they only "smile" or "frown". Mothers who have contributed their opinion as to what amount should be set prior to discussion must be made aware of the final amount decided upon. It permits them to negotiate what they should receive. As it is

women who serve the discussants food and as areas for private discussions are almost non-existent in this open society, all are aware of events during the discussion.

25. The money for "down payment" of uvukwi was supplied by Joyce's husband, Vihima. Vihima strongly feels that nothing more should be sent until his father, FB, sends a cow, the "first cow" for uvukwi. "I am an orphan, he must supply a cow" (vika). Vihima maintains he will "pay no more" until this has taken place. Late in 1988, Vihima's sister "convinced" her husband to discuss and worked to provide a "down payment" for her uvukwi. Vihima attempted to maintain control over this down payment rather than allowing FB control. Vika say FB 'ought' to receive it in place of his deceased brother and then pass it to Vihima to allow him to "finish" his uvukwi payment. Vihima maintained "father" could not be trusted as he had not provided the "first cow". Conflict has ensued, resulting in a hold up of the sister's uvukwi payment which she has worked "very hard" to provide and which will give her a "proper place" in her husband's yard. Her husband says he is "unsure" where to send it. Vika say he may not send it to a son's yard, when there is a living father.

26. Discussion had taken place in 20 cases; discussion and part payment in 43 cases; and no discussion or payment in 31 cases. There appear to be no particular contributing variables to non-discussion and non-payment. It seems very contextual, i.e. not enough children produced, too many children to be able to pay, not enough money to provide for affine responsibilities. Often, when asked, women were not able, or perhaps not willing, to provide causes. In most cases men put it to a general lack of finances. However all women were adamant that uvukwi should be paid, and men agreed that it ought to be paid.

27. In actual fact this is an impossibility for most ordinary people. As shown above, many men and most women in this rural area, do not have access to wage labour and even if they do, wages do not allow for this kind of accumulation and expenditure. This is one area that allows for the criticism, "Elders have big pockets that never get filled." Yet, during another conversation among women who were waiting for a discussion to end (January 2, 1988), women complained that raising uvukwi "too high" will "make bad feelings". "The girl may get kicked from the home and the mother will then have to care for her daughter and grandchildren while the father will go consuming (whatever payment has been made). These men are ruining children's marriage lives. They should set it at 4 cows and 2000 Shillings as the girl has no education to speak of, she has not done anything, only goes to the river with us. The rest of the money can be used by the bridegroom, bride and

their children to build a good life. If it is too high, they start life on nothing and eventually she will be thrown from that yard." However women assess that uvukwi payments also provide evidence for the continuance of reciprocity, of gift giving/receiving that is the mutual support found within a collectivity, a little here given, a little here received, that allows some institutions to remain firmly entrenched.

28. An interesting aside to this interview was that women are not able to be leaders in the church if uvukwi is not paid. The payment allows for their marriage in a church, (a requirement for leadership), both husband and wife "properly dressed", (long dress, shoes, hat, and a suit for the husband), along with food for the guests, usually tea and bread with butter. A decorated car is hired, flowers...but no sheep for virginity! "My mother and father were married last year, they are over 70 years. These weddings are in plenty--they are very common. To be truly Christian this has to happen"(Florence Feb. 11, 1988). For many years, missionaries attempted to force church weddings and for the most part were ignored. Now, it becomes 'voluntary', as women seek a viable position in Christian patriarchy.

29. From Life History Collection.

30. The opinion here is that these types of interactions contain the ingredients of power, in this case the power of fathers and fathers-in-law, mothers and mothers-in-law, over sons and daughters-in-law. In discussing this situation with men and women, all were of the opinion that ultimately Ritah or any daughter-in-law, would be able to visit and no Logoli man or woman, would ever send a daughter-in-law to her home with "empty hands". It was unheard of. "It (the discussion) is only to show them their place (as children under the control of parents)", was the explanation offered by many. However, during this discussion, that took the form of an argument, there appeared to be no underlying understanding that everything would work out in the end. In other words the individuals directly concerned did not appear to be confident that the security contained within the normative structure would come about in the final conclusion.

31. The father-in-law instructed Ritah and her sister-in-law who would travel with her to wait and walk with him (to market), and carry his bag. He walked ahead on the road and the two followed. "I will see what can be sent. Maize you bring back if they have it, also a chicken and some meat, if they have it. You take tea, milk and sugar"(Alfred Nov. 7, 1989).

32. In actual fact, Ritah did receive gifts from her natal home, a few shillings, some articles of clothing and sweet potatoes. However, these gifts were hidden from the parents-in-law. Ritah's mother-in-law approached her upon her return. She had been sent by her husband to question how the "visiting had taken place". This is a meta message to find out what gifts were received, and to obtain an appropriate share for the parents-in-law. Instead, in this case, Ritah only presented her mother-in-law with the letter for her father-in-law. Both in-laws were angry and the father-in-law "only put the letter away, he did not even read it." Ritah's husband was aware of the gifts, but he too, did not reveal them to his parents.

33. Mutange, a retired teacher, describing *uvukwi* debates between young men and women in secondary school.

34. Of all the people talked to in Maragoli (men, women and teenage boys and girls) only two suggested the cultural prescription of *uvukwi* be done away with. One was a man who described himself as "middle class" and lived and worked in Nairobi, although he maintained close ties "at home" in the rural area. His wife however, who also lived and worked in Nairobi and described herself as "middle class", said, "My father must receive his cows!" (Doreen, Feb. 17, 1988). The other dissenter was a secondary school teacher. She was of the opinion that *uvukwi* payments created a hardship for the young couple beginning their lives together. "It interferes with the progress of the young people. The parents should be assisting them to progress, not taking it (the opportunity for accumulation) away" (Alice, Dec. 22, 1987). However in both these cases, discussions had taken place and contributions to *uvukwi* made.

35. A literal "release" as without this visit from her mother and other ladies from her home to inspect each child she gives birth to and give gifts, a daughter may not visit her natal home to see her kin, provide them with gifts or receive her own and none of her children many receive their first chicken from the home yard. Indeed she is prohibited from visiting anywhere, although I did observe this as not followed on a number of occasions. Considering the expense involved, it becomes more and more difficult to practice *kutulitsa mukana*, some women wait a very long time for the visit from their mothers.

36. Should mothers not be able to attend for some reason, mother's sisters who are also mothers may go in their stead. For example Iemba could not leave Nairobi to release her daughter living in the rural area. This daughter "grew" in Iemba's father's yard. Iemba asked her sister to perform the task and this sister requested their mother also go along.

The two women complained they did not have the funds to accumulate the required gifts and their father/husband would not assist. "He ate the cows from the marriage of Iemba, he should assist in releasing her daughter"(Rebeka and Finasi, Nov. 27, 1989).

37. Six is the ideal, however often only two or three women will go.

38. The women take the child to an area within the yard away from the affines.

39. Providing and cooking the food.

40. In the context of this prestation, containers are returned empty as food is not to be exchanged for food. What was provided prior to cash is "lost". Some assume it may have been the traditional hoes. One older woman thought it may have been water pots or containers.

41. This means that the women are aware they will retrieve some of their expenditure.

42. Usually after a number of children. For example in one case the daughter had eight children, in another seven. A "celebration" to "finish" takes place in a number of contexts. For example once uvukwi payments are complete, and a woman is past child bearing age, her sons ought to present her brothers, with cows. "These can be sold and the money divided up or they can keep them and give the calves to their children to use for uvukwi"(Sarah, Dec. 12, 1987). This is a "final showing", in the context of uvukwi, of respect to the family who gave "a fine daughter to the family". In the case of a woman's death, her kin are responsible for providing a cow, and a deceased man's affines are responsible for providing a bull for the funeral, to "finish", a "final showing" in the case of one's life. Thus some of the cows supplied for uvukwi prestations are returned in a number of contexts. Uvukwi discussions take these redistributive aspects into account.

43. The literal and symbolic "grow fat" also applies in this context, signified by the presence of material gifts and the "roundness", that is plumpness of the woman's body, showing she is well fed. Both mothers and fathers "test" this plumpness, by touching the daughter's body.

44. On one occasion many women in the village were to attend a Women's Meeting at Friend's Church. As people were coming from "all over" for the meeting (included a number of affiliated churches) and it would be difficult to cancel the meeting, a man's funeral had to be postponed until the

following day as women would not be in attendance. "The funeral cannot be held without the women."

45. Usually it is the responsibility of men to provide livestock, for example for close relatives and affines, a bull for men and a cow for women. Men also supply market commodities, tea, sugar, milk, bread and cash. Funerals tend to be very expensive in Maragoli, hundreds, even thousands of people will attend for some part of the time. All must "take tea", that is be given tea, and many will be fed *ovukima* with chicken or beef.

46. All events from the time of death, until the religious ceremony and burial, are collectively called funeral. The *luvago*, which takes place some time later, when the family is financially able to provide a bull or cow and feed large numbers of people, is translated as a "final wedding ceremony". The *luvago* provides the arena for a final reckoning, what is owed to or by the deceased, not only in a material sense, but also socially, for example, an insult, or bad feelings of some sort must be resolved before the deceased is able to "rest" without bothering the living. Should a long time elapse between the funeral and *luvago*, often a "comfort gathering" is held for the deceased, attended by a number of the relatives and one or more elders from the deceased's area. Prayers, speeches, hymns and "a very good meal" are the ingredients contained in the programme. The comfort gathering sends a message to the living and the dead, that the deceased has not been forgotten, that eventually the *luvago* will be held.

47. Although I did hear women complain of the difficulties in making the provision for funerals, for the most part the responsibility is simply accepted without comment. One must have mourners at one's funeral, one must have one's history read. Otherwise the deceased creates difficulty for the living, they do not rest peacefully. If one does not mourn for a dead body, who will mourn for one's own dead body? "If you do not mourn and bury your dead, who will mourn and bury you?" To say, "I will not attend your funeral, I will not look on your dead body", is considered to be a very strong *olovo* (curse).

48. Where $n=410$ only two women spoke of "my land", they had title deeds in their name. The remainder characterised the land as "our land" or "our family's land". In reference to men, out of 245 sons, 78 were married. All sons, married and unmarried were considered to be "living at home", that is the expectation was even if they were away, they had a place at home where they were entitled to a piece of land for their wives to dig, currently, if married, or in the future, if not. For all 78 married sons, wives were living in their home

yards, even if the sons were working and living elsewhere. For example 34 (44%) of these men worked in wage labour, only 4 in Maragoli; 4 worked at temporary jobs in wage labour and 1 was in jail. For the most part these married sons did not have a title deed or numbers for "their" land. For example title deeds or land numbers were held by fathers in 49 cases; fathers' brothers in 3; grandfathers in 5; grandfather's brother in 1; in 2 cases where fathers were deceased, mothers had the land numbers; 1 son of the oldest house and 1 oldest son had a title deed; in 1 case the title deed was in both mother and father's name; in 6 cases no one had a title deed or number; in 2 cases information about the title deed was unknown and in 1 case the individual had no land. The remaining six sons, (total 8 or 10%) had the title deed to their pieces of land.

49. These criticisms would be applied where elopements have taken place. When elders (women and men) are involved in marriage relation decisions one of their responsibilities is to assure that enough land is available for their "daughter's" future use.

50. Interview, October 20, 1987. Life History collection.

51. Finasi has four daughters and one son. However the son was born some years after the death of her husband, and after the dispute over his land. Finasi describes her young son as "being from the bush", that is from a temporary liaison. This means that she may not send the boy to his biological father's yard when it is time for his circumcision, further meaning, he will inherit the land where Finasi lives. On the other hand, the boy's father could, if he wished, call for the boy to come to his yard and be given land from there.

52. Finasi was not asked to be involved in the system of levirate.

53. Finasi, her husband, their children and her husband's mother all lived in one hut. After her husband's death, Finasi's brother built a house for she and her children in the same yard.

54. "Kenyan women have equal rights with men in matters of succession to property"... "the Law of Succession Act, Chapter 160 which came into operation in 1981 after being enacted in 1972, gave a widow and her daughters equal footing with male relatives in property succession" (Attorney-General Mr. Justice Mathew Muli opening a four-day regional conference of the International Federation of Women Lawyers in Nairobi, December, 1987). "Equal footing" appears contextual. For

example, in Kisumu, a 70 year old (Luo) woman won a legal suit over inheritance of her father's land against her father's brothers and male cousins. The male relatives' application stated that the man's daughter had no right as a married woman to inherit her father's land. "...Luo tradition (does) not allow a daughter married elsewhere to go back to her father's home and inherit his property." These male relatives were supported in court by elders and an Assistant Chief of the area. The judge said "The law of Kenya allows a man to bequeath land to his married daughter or any other daughter" (Daily Nation January 28, 1988). A current case in Maragoli has three daughters selling a piece of land as their father had no son. This deceased father has living brothers who seek entitlement, either in the form of the land itself, or at least in a part of the cash proceeds from selling. It is a very unusual case for a Logoli man not to have a son, perhaps not living in his yard, but a son somewhere. All daughters do have a right to a home, as Finasi is saying, therefore, even if another member of the family inherits the land, a deceased man's daughter may always find a home on that land. It is "her home land". Contexts will determine whether or not she will utilize that right.

55. Many Avalogoli believe that "God created man to be the pillar of the house". For example Achura (November 3, 1987) provided this reasoning when asked who makes the decisions in his home. When his wife laughed at his response he amended his answer to say that they "discuss". Febe (October 1, 1987) believes it "depends upon who you marry. If you agree to work on things together, that works out well. It takes both husband and wife to make the decisions that bind everyone."

56. Two women had a legal ownership of land through title deed. Both these women work in wage labour and utilised money from their wages and one of them borrowed (from a male employer) to purchase the land. Both women were married, however, they described their marriages as "not steady" and both had difficulty in registering the title deeds in their names. They had to "fight" for the deed. One of the women was provided assistance in procuring the title from the area M.P.

57. A constant complaint made by men.

58. A constant complaint made by women.

59. Where n=64, 32 women assess it is the government that makes changes in their society. The question was not answered by 2; 16 believe that people generally make change; 5 did not know; 2 believe it is the church; 2 answered men; 4

replied the government and people; and 1 woman believes it is the government and the church.

60. Government change is seen as bad by 36 out of 64 people. Change can be both good and bad, that is good if you have money, otherwise bad, by 17; 5 see change as good; 4 did not answer; and 2 did not know.

61. In November 1987, a video conference made up of Kenyan and US participants was held in Nairobi in order to determine, two years after the United Nations World Conference on women, if women's lot has improved. One of their findings stated, "Women are totally invisible in policy making." This statement has merit in Kenya. On a national level, since independence Parliament has had a maximum of three women MP's at any one time. During the 1983 general elections seven women sought representation for the 158 parliamentary seats, two were elected and one nominated. In 1988, at least ten women vied for the 188 seats, (360 candidates overall), all except four were casualties of the nomination process. Of these four, one was nominated and one elected for a total of only two women Members in the current Parliament. In the area under research, during the recent national election one woman unsuccessfully ran for (council) office. When men and women were asked how they felt about women political candidates, invariably their first response was laughter. It was an amusing thought! After the initial reaction, some people said "It's good for women to run", a number of women said, "Women know women's needs." A few men believed women engaging in politics to be appropriate, "It's just alright, times are changing." However any comments received could be suspect as all knew the research interest was mainly in women. Two businessmen who were advocating the woman contender were interesting, however it turned out they were hoping she would defeat a particular man who was running against her, but only because they detested him, not because they were pro women in politics. A pictorial presentation (The Weekly Review March 11, 1988) speaks to a general attitude toward women engaging in political activity. It shows (in an undetermined location) women voters laughing, standing and waving, with the caption "Prospective voters seem to have enjoyed the rare public drama to which they have been treated...." The companion picture portrays a number of solemn, pensive, sitting men, captioned, "...while some--though noticeably not the candidates--think it's still a serious business after all." "Laughter" (equating women) and "serious" (equating men) are the key words.

62. See Abwunza 1990a for a more detailed analysis of Nyayo.

63. The Kenyan African National Union (KANU) is Kenya's political party. Kenya is a one-party state.

64. Interview in English.

65. Women say that the aspect of their lives they most dislike is being beaten by husbands. "We cannot be happy if someone keeps doing that, we would rather have peace. Now, it is almost common, when there is not money to support the home, the mother wants money, she keeps asking, finally he gets angry and hits. But more and more she has no one else to ask"(Women from Friend's Church, Dec. 17, 1987).

66. Interview November 21, 1987.

67. In other words they always had cash to utilise the grinding mill.

68. This has to do with Esta's natal family providing care for her children while she worked.

CHAPTER 6

THE TRANSFORMATION OF AVALOGOLI PATRIARCHY

In the past, acceptance of patriarchal ideology had benefits for Logoli women as "commanders" "provisioned" in their best interests. "Commanders" provided land and uvukwi; women's means of production and the recognition of women's vital role as producers. Today, in the light of decreasing land supply, limited employment and neglect of uvukwi, Logoli women question if they should continue to posture an adherence to the rule of "commanders". Logoli women believe that changes in Avalogoli society have placed them in a marginal position even as they recognise they are the main producers. Logoli women see that gender inequality has increased and is subsequently disadvantaging them. They see this change as detrimental to family and community survival and progress.

It is an active social assumption in Maragoli that women's labour has productive value. Neither men nor women see women as subordinates in the productive process. Men's means to productive value are now more limited, i.e., limited land and wage-labour. They recognise that much production comes from women. Many men blame women for inadequate production but women have increasing power over

their own production, decisions about which crops will be grown, what to do with them as well as power over their available cash.

Women, avoiding men's voices, use their apparent agreement with patriarchal ideology to accrue power. They make creative efforts to use capitalism to their advantage as a replacement for the loss of their traditional power. Instead of further disadvantaging them, capitalism better enables women to use their authority in the collectivity. "Women with reputation" (as mothers, sisters and daughters) call upon their own resources and the resources of the collectivity to perform their cultural role and engage in a limited capitalistic effort.

Because of the analytical reliance on economic analyses which designate cash and individual accumulation as value and the view that gender inequality was generated after communalism as a direct consequence of private property, women's power has been hidden from view. In contemporary societies in Africa an assumption has been made that the imposition of capitalist economics heralds the deterioration of collectivities. If economics is redefined to better fit actual social circumstances then it also includes production which re-enters the system in direct benefit to its producer. Women are thus workers and producers of not only "use value" but also "exchange value" even within a communal system. In any society, defined as either communal,

collective, or capitalist, women are likely to be producers of labour and production which generates a profit accruing to them a necessary community reputation that contains the ingredients of influence. This production is vital to human survival and development. Maragoli society is not communal; it is an idealised collective articulating with capitalism. It is crucial to recognise women's participation and influence in this society, as they are the prime actors in moving the goods, services and cash around. Women's work and decision-making in Maragoli provides the economic base for the individual family as well as for the community. In these times of economic risk a point might be made that invoking traditional economic ideologies may be on the increase rather than decrease, particularly when elicited by state edict.

Today in Maragoli, men use a patriarchal sentiment to challenge the means by which women accumulate influence. Logoli women recognise this as not only seriously detrimental to economic progress but to actual personal and family economic survival. This thesis shows that women's work and decision-making translates into the ability to generate value in the collective cycle of reciprocal rights and obligations, a value that gives them the influence that has an effect on others. Women's work is also not exclusively confined to the domestic sphere as social activity necessitates women's involvement in the public

sphere. The proceeds from both "home work" and "outside work" are employed in generating value in reciprocal rights and obligations. Making the reciprocal obligations of the collectivity work takes effort; members do not appear in needy yards with a donation. Those who require assistance must travel the network, walking or perhaps scraping up the money required for transport. Women do this work while carrying a baby on their back, a basket in their hands or perhaps a stalk of bananas on their head. They call on the yards where they hope to get support, waiting, sometimes for most of the day, and then return home, hopefully with the needed cash or commodity.

Women generate political value, thus influence, on both local and state levels. It is mainly the women in Maragoli, the mothers, sisters and daughters, who keep the networks of the collectivity animated. It is women who trek from yard to yard giving and receiving, mediating and placating the situations even as they politicise them, recognising their own reliance and that of others on resources via reciprocal relations. On the state level, no serious political candidate in Maragoli could survive a hostile proclamation by groups of women. The consciousness of women's social, economic and political effect on others provides women with the influence necessary for their power.

The organisation and dynamics of Avalogoli society provide empirical support for the realisation that women

have public power on two levels: productive (i.e., accruing and moving goods, services and cash) and reproductive (i.e., giving birth to the next generation of actors in reciprocal relations, productive and otherwise, as well as the next generation of ancestors).¹

Despite the recognition of women producing both "use" and "exchange" value in both private and public spheres, the ideology of male rule remains pervasive. This remains true even when changes in the patriarchal structure are recognised, i.e., that many women advocate women owning land and a few women do own land. Information from this study permits our awareness that the pervasiveness of an increasingly threatened patriarchy in this Kenyan society may in fact be a meta message of women's increasing power in decision-making. Maragoli provides an example where we may examine women's intelligence as well as their hard work. In Maragoli, women move between collective and capitalist modes using the same cultural avenues for accessing resources and amassing power. Gender relations are politicised by patriarchal values which men impose and women posture. Women posture an acceptance of patriarchy for men's benefit as well as their own because it provides them with the ideological base for structuring their own reputation. Logoli women accept a cultural rhetoric of men's power as a posture in order to advance their own power through the collectivity. "Good Logoli wives" adhere to patriarchal

ideology. Gaining a reputation as "good wives" permits their access to the collectivity. Access to the collectivity permits survival in today's stressful economic situation and even "progress" in some cases. Women's cultural posture of submission, although apparently a significant indicator of men's power, and their resulting reputation as "good wives" denotes a recognition of the avenues of their power. In the literature, it is generally this posture which is analyzed and so women's power has been identified as informal or as strategy, second orders of power, rather than categorised as what it rightly is, a primary order of power. Additionally, not recognising that women posture an acceptance of patriarchy as an astute social action may have provided the arena in which African women have been portrayed as "oppressed", "under-valued" or as a "dependent class" in some Western research.

In today's Maragoli, women are conscious that their best interests may no longer be served by assuming a posture of ideological and institutional acceptance of patriarchy. A reduction of value in men's labour and a crucial identification of its ineffectiveness reveal that men are impotent rulers who do not act in the best interests of those they rule (cf. Weber 1968:3:1012). The assumptions of patriarchal sentiment are symbolic statements for the way things used to be for both women and men. Participation in the cultural expression of patriarchy still provides women

with some benefits but with increased gender inequality, they may change the way they ideologically relate to the structural system. The extent to which back-door decisions proliferate points to an increase in the degree to which men are unable to maintain patriarchal control. Men's increased violence on the home front speaks directly to the demise of patriarchy.

Women draw on the tradition of the back door and gather in groups even as it confronts men's authority. Women's *silika* (group work for one another) is vital for *Harambee* efforts, raising money through singing in choirs, raising money by digging land, building schools or churches or cleaning water resource areas. Women gather to provide these services and have an acknowledged social power to influence communal action in aspects of development. In the words of an Assistant Chief: "You cannot have community development without women" (March 25, 1988). There are over two hundred licensed Women Groups (sic) in Maragoli. Many, however, are inactive and most are economically unsuccessful. The publicity surrounding their economic ineffectiveness underestimates women's contribution in these groups.² All active Women Groups are socially successful. This social importance, women supporting women, is indispensable in a society where women have a history of productive results from uniting, as they say "gathering at the back door".

Men denigrate the productive benefits of women's solidarity. They reduce them to contexts within which women gather to gossip about men and attempt to discourage women from joining. Group activities are labelled as economically ineffective as a way of saying that they take women away from what men consider more productive activity in their own yard. Many women, however, ignore the threat and remain group members. Other women gather in private, unlicensed groups of usually up to twelve members, often without the knowledge of men(cf. Joyce, Jerida and Flora). These women are involved in rotating work, or contributing cash or goods on a rotating basis. Women organise these groups "to make [their] lives shine". Shining is evidenced by a blanket, a lantern, utensils, a day or two day's work for one another, or borrowing and lending in times of need. Women say the limited contributions of most men do not allow women's "lives to shine". The topic of women's solidarity will be dealt with in future work.³

Theoretical Issues

Studying Logoli women from an engendered perspective, watching them act as well as listening to their voices, forces a reassessment of theoretical perspectives in regard to productive and class relations. The direct effects on women and their responses to patriarchy and capitalism may not be assumed by generalised theoretical perspectives.

From the research of Boserup(1970) and all those who followed, it is recognised that women's economic role is skilful and vital in African societies. It is also recognised that women have skills not only in production but in the redistribution of that production for individual(Stamp 1975-76) as well as community benefit(Wipper 1985). Yet it appears that the latter contribution, community benefit, is only recognised locally when it is measured as economically productive, a "conspicuous success"(Wachtel 1975).

The question of women's status did not accurately reflect that skilfullness and vitality until dynamics between gender relationships were examined and extended to show how state structures were impacting on these local contexts. Local studies showed that the social and economic positions of African women were critically at risk and that their position was reflected in the lives of all African people. Local studies permitted an awareness of the necessity to include the actual producers of at least the family food supply, women, in development programmes(cf. Bryson 1981). Additionally, "family" requires cultural definition.

Engendered research also permitted awareness of the pervasiveness of traditional patriarchal ideology still in existence articulating with the patriarchal ideology contained in capitalism on both local and state levels that

relegated women to a "private" domain and placed them in a category of "dependent class"(cf. Kershaw 1975-76; Staudt 1975-76; Stichter 1975-76; Robertson 1985, 1986; Stichter and Parpart 1988; Parpart and Staudt 1989). Other studies put forth analyses pointing out that view did not accurately reflect women's actual production in both "private" and "public" domains(cf. Hay and Stichter 1984; Davison 1988). Additionally women's actual power in collectivities as well as their increase in power through capitalism has been underanalysed, with a few notable exceptions(cf. Stamp 1975-76; Presley 1986; Bujra 1986).

This study has focused on Logoli women's power and its effect on issues of economic survival and "progress". It has examined the increase and decrease of gender inequality in Avalogoli socioeconomic and political organisation articulating with a capitalist organisation and how that impacts on issues of located development(cf. O'Barr 1975: Fernandez Kelly 1986:1-2). Although it is recognised that the collective mode is integrated and articulates with capitalism, the Avalogoli case questions the subordinate status usually applied to the traditional mode(cf. Stichter and Parpart 1988; Henn 1988), as the producers in Avalogoli society, for the most part women, rely so heavily upon that traditional mode for the production that permits all Logoli people to hold on(cf. Hay 1976), if not "progress".

This study of Avalogoli women directs attention to women's intelligence in political spheres. Women posturing an adherence to patriarchal ideology is an intelligent and significant political decision, symbolic of their power, that is overlooked in research (cf. Walby 1986; Stichter and Parpart 1988), with the exception of a few analysis (cf. Reiter 1975; Thomas 1988; Mbilinyi 1989).

In Maragoli, power has rested on an ideology of cultural tradition giving power to men. A transformation is taking place. The social and economic experience of half of the caretakers of traditional power do not see their interests being maintained by that authority. However, rather than organising against patriarchal oppression through revolution, Logoli women politicise gender relations from the back door by accruing information and utilising influence. The importance of their influence for community survival has been evident throughout this study. We have heard women's dissenting voices in regard to male power and observed women's powerful productive, political, as well as social action, throughout this thesis.

Conclusion

In this study of women in Avalogoli society, theoretical frames have been extended to focus on women's power rather than on their powerlessness. Today in Maragoli, the ideology and structure of patriarchy, with the authority of patriarchy resting on tradition, providing the

vika to a "proper Avalogoli" way of life is shown to have limited reinforcement. The "irrational" aspects of traditional authority are exposed as women question how men are ruling in women's interests.

Today, Logoli women and some men say men and women must work together to "progress". "The women do the best they can digging, but the men sit and talk, they need to help dig. The men are lazy, the women have too many responsibilities to dig properly"(Hermann Oct. 25, 1987).⁴ Imposing patriarchal ideology as well as assuming a posture of adherence to patriarchal ideology takes energy better directed toward more productive goals. Maragoli men and women can no longer afford the doctrine of separate gender spheres. Women see that men must recognise that today women's work and decision-making is productively superior to that of men. Most men cannot sufficiently access either a traditional mode (i.e., land and cows) nor a capitalist mode (i.e., cash). Women act at the intersection of both modes, granted in limited ways, but their production from both modes is what permits some in the society to hold on and others to progress. Western research must pay heed and acknowledge this.

Today in Maragoli, women's critique of men suggests they are not avoiding, circumventing or even negotiating patriarchal control. They are no longer convinced that abiding by men's rule is in their own or their community's

best interest. Some Western research has been skewed by a misinterpretation of women's posturing in the face of patriarchy. This is a failure to acknowledge women's power in decision-making. When women's posturing no longer serves their interests, as is the case today in Maragoli, the value in men's power based on "irrational authority", loses its foundation. This is a significant change which may permit the transformation of Avalogoli patriarchy and assign to women a "realm of honor", allowing them a "social power"(Weber 1958:194) that more appropriately reflects their efforts.

"Progress" cannot occur without due regard for women's contribution to the economic, political and social system. Women's power is the organising principle around "progress" just as it is the organising principle around survival. African women's hard work has been recognised by researchers. Their intelligence in political processes has not. In Maragoli, patriarchal posturing is a significant intellectual action that has politically served women's best interest in the past. Today, Logoli women are conscious that their energies could be better directed. They see that many Maragoli men are interfering with survival and progress.

It has been recognised that theoretical approaches which leave women's voices and gender inequality out of an analysis lack substance. The situation demands serious

attention be given to what women actually do and say. The evidence is provided in Avalogoli existence in these hard times. Men sit and reflect on strategies to make do. Women accrue information and utilise influence to produce. Needs and the means to acquire them require that men follow women's lead. Women are the main actors who provide the resources, gained from both women and men, that allow the society to carry on. Men are traditionalists, women look forward. This begins first thing in the morning when women begin to think about the day's supply of food. Men's power is situational; women's power is everywhere. A statement made by Violet (Oct. 23, 1987) contains the ingredients of a cynical meta message established by the words and actions of many Logoli men and women: "Men think; women dig as they think."

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Women's decision-making in reference to aspects of fertility is a viable, if difficult, aspect for further research in Maragoli, particularly in the light of the area's natural increase level in population (cf. Abwunza 1986). All women interviewed are aware of the government edict in reference to "family planning", but family planning in Maragoli does not mean having fewer children, it means spacing children over a longer period of time so that elder siblings will (hopefully) be in an economic position to assist younger siblings. For many, using forms of birth control are "dangerous". The "pill", "coil" or "injection" can "finish" a woman's insides, even when used for a short time. Amy, an Assistant Chief's wife, had a tubal ligation after giving birth to eight children. The Assistant Chief and Amy say they were attempting to provide an "example" for the community. Women say of Amy, "She eats for nothing." One man, working at the Rural Health Clinic, had a vasectomy. People say of him, "He has been castrated." "He is "eunuch." Ten children is still the ideal for many women and they are influenced in this regard by husbands and other members. "Power comes from children." Questions surrounding fertility, i.e. decision-making, birth control procedures in the past and today, must be carefully put forth as many people see gathered information of this sort as a helpful tool to engage in witchcraft. For example the usual question directed to a pregnancy in the Western world, "When is the baby due?", is not an appropriate question in Maragoli. Why would you want to have this information? It is not important when the child is due to be born, only that the child is eventually born and survives.

2. A District Officer in the area informed me sarcastically that there are no women groups in Maragoli when I asked permission to research them.

3. A detailed research paper on Women Groups in Maragoli is now in progress. There are a few economically successful Women Groups in Maragoli and a few others where members are working diligently to achieve some economic success. Three of the groups researched now include men in their membership.

4. See Note 16, Chapter 4.

GLOSSARY

Terms are Luragoli unless otherwise noted.

- Ambihu. Gift for the person on whom the child first excreted (usually mother)
- Asande muno. Thank you very much
- Askari. Police (Kiswahili)
- Avadaka. Poor people
- Avalogoli. People of Logoli
- Avana. Children (avana va - children of)
- Avasatsa. Husbands Sing. umusatsa
- Barazza. Meeting
- Bhang. Marijuana (Luragoli and Kiswahili)
- "Big pockets." Greedy (Local English)
- Busa (Busaa). Local beer made from millet
- Chang'aa. Alcoholic brew distilled from maize (Kiswahili)
- Chai. Tea. In context bribe (Luragoli and Kiswahili)
- Choo. Latrine
- "Commander." Ruler or owner of the home (Local English)
- "Dowry." Bridewealth
- "Grow fat." Literal, weight: symbolic, material wealth. (Local English)
- Guga. Grandfather
- Guka. Grandmother
- Harambee. Working together (Kiswahili)
- Imungu. Traditional deity

- Inasoli. Opium (Luragoli and Kiswahili)
- Indo. That is all; the end of a discussion.
- Inguvu. Clothes (at a funeral, money in envelopes)
- Inyumba. House (segmentary lineage) (Pl. tsinyumba)
- Itama. Excessive sexual desire
- Ituliungi. Tea without milk and sugar
- Ivani. Money collected in small baskets at a funeral
- Kogotitsa luduku. Lose the day (waste time)
- Kotewa. To ask
- Kutulitsa mukana. Release daughter
- Kuvahira. Elopement
- Luvago (Lubago). Final wedding ceremony (death)
- Maendeleo. Development ("Progress" in Avalogoli context)
- Maendeleo Ya Wanawake. Development of Women (Group)
(Kiswahili)
- Matatus. Buses or taxis (Kiswahili)
- Mbimbu yomungongo. My name to go up (support)
- Mirembe. Greetings
- Misiri. Egypt
- Mufundi. Workmen
- Mugenda gendi. A woman having children with different men
- Mugitsi. Yard
- Mugutu. Headmen
- Muharikwa. Sister-in-law
- Mukafu. Tea with milk and without sugar
- Mukali. Wife
- Mukaye. Wife (elder woman)

- Mulogoli. Ancestor of all Avalogoli (contextually people of Logoli)
- Mulimi gwange. My land
- Mulimi gwa guga. Grandfather's land
- Muwg'oma. Place name
- Muzungu. European (Pl. Wazungu) (Kiswahili)
- Mwana wovo ni mbimbu yomungongo. Your child is the supporting stick of your back
- Ngonya. Help me
- Nyasaye. Christian God
- Nyayo. Footsteps (Kiswahili) (Political slogan - footsteps of the ancestors)
- Olovo. Curse
- Omwene hango. Ruler or owner of the home, "commander" in Local English
- Ougali. A posho made from maize flour (Kiswahili)
- Ovukima, ovuchima. A posho made from maize flour
- Panga. Machete
- "Run." In context, improper sexual behaviour (Local English)
- Shamba. Garden (Kiswahili)
- Silika. Reciprocal group work
- "Tea and sugar." Idiomatic expression for market goods (Local English)
- Tsimbago. Traditional hoes
- Tsinyumba tzinene. Great houses (lineage)
- Uhuru. Freedom (Kiswahili)
- Uluhangaywa. Cave
- Ummenya. One who is not Avalogoli (outsider) (Pl. avammenya)

- Umulaya. Prostitute
- Umuliango gwitu. From our door
- Umulogoli. One Logoli person
- Urukari. Marriage
- Uvukwi. Bridewealth (Avalogoli translation dowry)
- Va. Of
- Vika. Steps
- Vivuni vye kwandangu. Back door decisions
- Vuche (Vuchee). Morning greeting
- "Walked." In context, separation of spouses (Local English)
- "With Blood." Pregnant (Local English)
- "Yard." Compound (Local English)
- Yatigala nalinda misanga gia mulogoli. Caring for father's land (Mulogoli)

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