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SONGHAY WOMEN:

Tradition and change along the banks of the Niger River.

By:

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"The free woman is just being born; when she has won possession of herself, perhaps Rimbaud's prophecy will be fulfilled: 'There shall be poets! When woman's unmeasured bondage shall be broken, when she shall live for and through herself, man--hitherto detestable--having let her go, she, too, will be poet! Woman will find the unknown! Will her ideational worlds be different from ours? She will come upon strange, unfathomable, repellent, delightful things: we shall take them, we shall comprehend them.'"

Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex

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SONGHAY WOMENChapter OneIntroduction

This report on Songhay women is the result of a five-month socio-economic study undertaken in the Seventh Region of the Republic of Mali, to gather information on farm families living within the Action Riz-Sorgho Gao Zone. Research was done in eight villages along the Niger River between Bourem (to the north) and Ansongo (to the south), both of which are located approximately 100 kilometers from Gao. My time was to be divided between 1) gathering general information on agricultural activities; 2) administering a lengthy questionnaire to selected farmers in order to analyze the various sources of income and the annual amount of crop sampling in order to estimate sorghum yields in the zone; 4) and doing a general sociological analysis of women in the zone. (The results of 1-3 are discussed in a separate report).

The objectives of the report are:

1. To present a general analysis of the various social, economic and political activities which are considered appropriate for women depending on a caste, class, age, family size, and marital status.
2. To present such an analysis of women's roles in an historical perspective, indicating changes which have occurred and anticipating future trends.

3. To explain the cultural milieu which Songhay women inhabit in order to understand their current changing status.

4. To describe the Songhay woman's relationship to power and authority within the larger framework of general anthropological literature in order to understand the impact of the 1972-73 drought on male-female dynamics and the likely effects of the Action Riz-Sorgho Project (ARS) on women.

5. To suggest potential new activities for women while expressing the priorities for improvement voiced by women of various ages and classes.

Methodology

The eight villages where research was done (Bia, Forgho Sonrai, Bagoundie I, Tacharane, Fodyel Gargouna, Bara, Mozonga and Seyno-Sonrai) were chosen as a fairly representative sample of the zone. Choice was based on the following criteria: 1) presence of an ARS extension agent, therefore limiting work to the "haoussa" or Gao side of the river; 2) north-south location to account for possible ecological differences; 3) population size (between less than 1,000 to more than 5,000 inhabitants; and 4) ethnic affiliation of the majority of the inhabitants which turned out to be Songhay. (Detailed information concerning the methodology used in village selection can be found in "A Microeconomic Analysis of Farm Production, Annual Income and Expenditures for Typical Families in the Action Riz-Sorgho Gao Zone."

Program Activities

- 1) General literature survey of the zone, preparation and testing of the economic questionnaire, organization of women's themes, questions and hypothesis (one month).
- 2) General tour of the eight villages, introducing myself to the chief and his wife (wives) in initial meetings while gathering agricultural statistics (one month).
- 3) Taking crop samples in various villages in order to estimate sorghum yields (two weeks).
- 4) Administering the economic questionnaire to household heads and visiting village fields in the mornings. Interviewing women in the afternoons (two months).

Apart from number one on the preceeding page, all research was done in the sample villages where I spent a total of one to two weeks per village.

All of the work with women was done through the intermediary of a woman interpreter who spoke fluent Songhay, Tamachek and French, except for an occasional schoogirl whom I was able to directly interview in French. Initially I had hoped to administer a questionnaire testing a hypothesis correlating women's independence, power, authority and public status to their economic role within the family and society as a whole. Due to the time constraints, this proved impossible since it was discovered that very little general information about Songhay women is known and therefore needed to be gathered first. In order to cover a broad range of topics concerning women's lives, a list of themes to be discussed was developed (Appendix I). A set of questions, based on Edgerton's (1971: 210-212) values questionnaire used in East Africa was formulated including, in addition, specific questions about daily activities, sources and use of income, and educational experiences (Appendix II). Much time was spent with women, of various ages, social classes and philosophies, chatting informally about their work and lives. Specific questions were asked in order to understand better the Songhay cultural milieu and to discover whether my hypothesis had sufficient validity to be properly tested at a later date. A few women from each village were also requested to respond to a brief one-page priority questionnaire (Appendix III).

A warning is in order here. Most of the data presented must be interpreted as being the opinions of specific women. Due to the briefness of my stay within the zone I was unable to check the accuracy of certain statements. In addition, my personal data on some topics is necessarily scanty so I will rely on previous literature.

Chapter TwoBackground Information

Jean Bouch (1954:1) locates Songhay country to the north of the bend in the Niger River stretching from Lake Debo to the mouth of Birni nKebbi in Nigeria. Within this area there are disparate cultural traditions including two separate dialects--Timbuctu as opposed to Gao Songhay--although mutually intelligible. The data gathered by my research, therefore, can only be considered representative of a band of villages located on or near the river between Sourem and Ansongo. According to Bakar N'Diaye (1970: 212) the 300,000 Songhay in Mali represent 6.2% of the total Malian population.

The Songhay within the ARS zone, generally are farmers cultivating mainly "decrue" sorghum, rice (particularly floating varieties) and a small amount of millet. Some vegetable gardening (manioc, yams, tomatoes, lettuce, melons, eggplant, okra, etc.) is practiced where water is accessible. (November through April). Although local dikes are constructed, water control is limited in the zone leading to frequent crop failures. As a result, at least half the population depends to a great extent on wild plants gathered. These include: 1) cram cram (*Cenchrus bitorus*)--a wild grass with a prickly burr eaten August through October; 2) water lily seeds and roots (*Nymphaea lotus*) which are available from January through June; 3) Bourgou (*Echinochloa stagnina*)--an aquatic grass, which when pressed, gives a juice which is mixed with the cram cram and water lilies. It is harvested in June and July, but can be stored year round.

Interest in livestock raising is high despite the disastrous drought years (80-90% losses) both for investment purposes and for the income earned from the sale of dairy

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products, and as a last resort, from the sale of the animals themselves. Cattle, goats and sheep are very common, donkeys are seen less often, while horses and camels are quite rare today. Many families raise poultry for their personal consumption. Although the sample villages are located on the limits of the flood waters (at their height), in the dry season the river may have withdrawn to as much as seven kilometers away. Getting water during this season is a major undertaking.

The entire Seventh Region is plagued by a very high temporary out migration rate (10-50 percent of all adult males) each year, with many men not returning for several years. Most men go to Ghana or Nigeria in order to supplement the almost non-existent cash income at home.

One of the biggest changes in recent years is women's increased contributions to the family income. Palm leaf mats, which women traditionally made for house construction and sleeping purposes, have become an important source of cash income for many families. All Songhay women learn to make mats. In fact, this is one of the first tasks taught to a girl child, but now at least 50 percent of the women in the project sell mats in order to buy grain for their families. This has had an important effect on male-female relations and will be dealt with in a special section.

Traditional Songhay society is marked by hierarchical distinctions. However, the distinctions presented to me by reliable informants do not entirely agree with those made by Dick Down (Action Blé report-USAID) or Bokar N'Diaye (1970) which seems to confirm the reality that Songhay differ from region to region.

1) The most commonly accepted version of the origins of the A ma is that they are descendants of the Sixteenth Century

Moroccan invaders and their Songhay wives. Considered as nobles, they bear the family name Touré. They are classified with the Songhay because they follow Songhay tradition and also permit marriage with Songhay nobles.

2) The Songhay nobles traditionally call themselves by the family name Maiga. They consider themselves the only "true" Songhay. Along with the Arma, the Songhay nobles were masters of a deeply entrenched feudal system.

3) The middle class, sometimes known as the "free men" consists of the "gabibi"--men of the land and the "sorko"--fishermen. The "gabibi" are supposedly the original cultivators of the land and sometimes warriors in the past.

4) Certain castes exist based on occupation specialization passed on from parent to child. Included among these: blacksmiths (garasa) whose wives work with sheep and goat skins; griots and griottes (also garasa)--the oral historians and entertainers; shoemakers (tam takoy) who use cow hides; women potters (yoneyé). Traditionally, both the blacksmiths and the griots were attached to one or more noble families, for whom they not only worked, but also acted as "confidantes" and messengers. More respect is accorded to the griots than to other castes, because most people fear the power of their tongues.

5) At the bottom of the ladder are the "Bagna," the former captives of the nobles. According to many nobles, the "Bagna" are really a separate race which is why inter-marriage is so objectionable to many of them. In the past, the "Bagna" were not permitted to own land, but did all the work for the nobles.

Distinctions which were kept alive in the past by strong sanctions against inter-marriage between groups have become blurred since Mali gained its Independence in 1960. Although the caste groups continue to keep their identity separate, it is becoming more and more common for nobles to inter-marry with former captives,

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if the wealth they possess overrides the stigma. Most "gabibi" and "sorko" today when asked their origins will proclaim themselves as nobles.

The main distinction in the past between nobles and captives was based on land ownership and hence participation in village government. Since Independence, however, everyone is allowed to own land and in some villages the largest landowner may be a captive. In other villages, captives own virtually no land so are forced to sharecrop at the exorbitant price of one half or two thirds of the harvest. Today it is not possible to distinguish Arma, nobles, gabibi or captives by the work they do because all work equally hard to make a living. Generally, it is only when there is an argument that a noble will downgrade someone else purely because he is of captive descent. This goes for women as well.

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Chapter Three

Class Distinctions

Traditional Class Distinctions

Traditional Songhay society is based on very strict class distinctions. It was similar to a feudal system where the rich nobles owned all the land which was worked by the poor captives (ex-slaves) while artisans provided services to the land lords and a few "gabibi" and "sorkos" earned a living farming or fishing as free men.

Noble women consequently lived a life of leisure. Their primary occupations were making palm leaf mats for their houses and for sleeping; playing with their children and beautifying themselves. The menial tasks such as carrying water, looking for firewood, pounding grain, cooking, washing dishes and laundry, collecting wild plants and sometimes helping in the fields were carried out by their captives. In return, captives depended on their masters for food and clothing. Artisans were members of separate castes where the occupation was passed down from parent to child. The women of the blacksmith or "garasa" caste were specialists in leather crafts, generally working only with sheep and goat skins. Other caste women include "griottes" -- oral historians and entertainers and potters. Caste women provided products for various noble families, although generally attached to one particular family for whom they also acted as confidantes and messengers. Caste women in addition, performed all the menial tasks for their families as did the women "gabibi" and "sorkos".

Current Class Distinctions

Any sociocultural analysis of the Seventh Region must emphasize two critical dates which catalyzed socio-structural upheavals. These two dates are particularly important for understanding the Songhay woman today as compared to her grandmother. The Republic of Mali declared its independence in 1960, at which point the "Code Malienne" came into existence. As part of the new regime, captives were no longer bound to their masters and declared free to work for themselves. Although nobles, in some villages, allocated modest amounts of land to their former captives, in many cases because they had no alternatives, captives were forced to remain dependent on the nobles. Nevertheless, little by little, captives began to acquire land and began to set themselves up as autonomous households. Certain captives in fact, became quite rich through hard work and a great deal of initiative. Then the disastrous drought of 1972-73 struck the entire Sahel. There were enormous losses of livestock which were critical for the rich nobles who banked all their savings in this form. Not only were many of them almost destitute, but also large numbers of captives who had struck out on their own returned to their former masters in search of aid. As a result, there was a growing interest in agriculture, and many of the "bourgoutieres" grazing areas for livestock were parcelled out for agriculture.

While Independence began a subtle change in the lives of noble women, the effect of the drought was dramatic. In 1960 and the following years, many captives chose not to exercise their option of leaving their nobles, but continued in their role as unpaid servants/dependents. Most noble women therefore, began to perform a few menial tasks, but generally could find a captive woman to do the most tiresome tasks. With the

drought, however, everyone had to begin looking out for themselves in order to survive. Noble women were abruptly forced into doing tasks they had never considered before. In addition, with the loss of their herds, many families were now entirely dependent on the fruits of their labors in agriculture. Lack of rain and insufficient control of the Niger's floodwaters pose a continuing threat to success, and crops fail with more regularity than they succeed. As a result, Songhay women have become active economic contributors to their families, through the sale of their palm leaf mats in order to purchase grain and other foodstuffs.

Today, in most villages it is impossible upon sight, to distinguish a noble from a caste or former captive woman. They appear to dress alike, do the same chores and all age prematurely due to too frequent child bearing and hard work. A limited number of rich landowner nobles have retained their wealth, however, and their wives can be distinguished by some of the traditional signs. Only rich women who sit around all day long and do no physical labor are able to achieve the Songhay ideal of beauty. As in our culture, an examination of the state of hands, feet and skin in general may reveal how much work, particularly outdoors, that a woman may perform. Although noble and captive women traditionally have worn the same hairdos, it is only rich women who have the time and money to have their hair done regularly every week or two. The material for most clothes is cotton, but is only rich noble women who can afford to wear "basin" a very heavy cotton, for their everyday clothes. The state of a woman's jewelry, but not necessarily the quantity she wears, can indicate her social status. Rich women may not wear much jewelry but it is generally well cared for.

Poorer women may wear a large quantity of beaded bracelets and necklaces but, they often are in a state of disrepair. Their silver is frequently tarnished because they can not afford the repairs.

Within the home it is possible to differentiate between rich and poor families. Although there are some very rich captive families, their numbers are not large, so in villages, at least, it is generally safe to assume that rich homes belong to the nobles. If while visiting a young woman in her home, it is observed that much older women are pounding grain, fetching water and serving her, then it is probable that the hostess is of noble descent and the woman waiting on the guests are the family's captives. In a rich home one will probably notice some of the following items:

- 1) large quantity of colored palm leaf mats
- 2) sheets and other covers of foreign make
- 3) large quantity of enamel dishes
- 4) a silver tea pot
- 5) a radio or tape recorder
- 6) a European style table or chair

It is on a social level that the distinction between a noble and captive background continues to remain important. In the past noble and captive children would grow up together and establish life long friendships, but by a certain age, each understands his future role. Today captives are aware that legally nobles have no rights over them, however they have little defense against nobles insinuating remarks of superiority. For example, a group of school age girls may be best of friends, but if there is a quarrel the noble girls will taunt the others as follows: "You are nothing, how could you be right when we are your superiors; we are your mistresses, while you are but a captive." This type of behavior extends to adults as well. Even though a captive man may be right

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in a village quarrel or land dispute the noble men will gang up on him insisting that he is wrong saying, "You can't trust a captive. His word as a witness is useless." If the village Chief and Councilors are nobles, as often is the case, the captive will lose his case.

In addition captives defer to the nobles in more subtle ways. When the bowl of water to wash one's hands is passed before a meal, captives wait until last. Nobles are also served first when the tea tray makes its rounds. When nobles and captives eat together today, something unheard of in the past, captives will always get up to fetch anything missing. According to noble women, their former captives, although no longer directly dependent on them, still feel certain ties. The captive women will come by a noble woman's house every day to visit and see if they can help. If a noble woman has a lot of visitors, captives will come do much of the menial work so the hostess can be free to entertain the guests.

Chapter FourThe Life Cycle of a WomanI. Birth

My personal data about childbirth is quite scanty so most of the section is taken from Jean Rouch (1954:53-54) and Bokar N'Diaye (1970:228). Pregnant women continue about their habitual chores. If it is her first baby she returns to her mother's house to deliver it, because she would be ashamed to be seen naked in front of her mother-in-law. Later babies will be born in her own house where she may be assisted by friends. Songhay women deliver their babies (crouching) on their knees in front of a pile of sand where the baby can fall. When the child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a knife and knotted, then the baby's head is massaged, her nose is rubbed and she is made to breathe aromatic fumes and is tossed in the air several times to get rid of any evil spirits. Meanwhile, the mother sits, leaning against the hut wall, to assist in this operation then both she and the baby are washed in warm water.

Next the husband is informed and depending on his means, a chicken, sheep or cow will be killed in order to prepare a hot highly seasoned broth called 'goundo tonan' which is given to the mother to rid her stomach of all the bad things inside. The mother and child remain sequestered in the hut for one week until the baptism. Her friends may visit, except for married women who have never borne a child, for they may not see an unbaptised baby. The village women will get together to do her menial chores for the first week or so until the new mother has regained her strength. In some families only the immediate family members are allowed to know the child's sex before the baptism. In other families the husband does not see the baby or his wife for

40 days in the case of a first child, although usually fathers avoid sleeping in the same hut for the first week only. During the course of the week, if he is rich, he may slaughter more animals for the family and friends to celebrate.

On the eighth day after a baby's birth, her baptism is held according to Islamic tradition. The paternal grandparents may choose the name, but more generally it is selected by the marabout according to the day, month and special events connected with the birth. A sheep is dedicated to the marabout and slaughtered in his honor. Meanwhile, the husband prepares a family feast depending on his resources. If it is a first baby, a woman's parents will generally offer her gifts--new clothes, jewelry, and have her hair fixed. For 40 days after the birth of a child women wear special braids and may put "kohl" (a local makeup) under their eyes. In addition, both maternal and paternal grandparents, as well as the baby's father will offer her some livestock (sheep, goat or cow) as a gift if they are rich enough.

Children always take their father's surname and belong to him in case of divorce except children born out of wedlock. Illegitimate children are treated very badly in Songhay society if they are not claimed by their father, and belong to their mothers. If a woman later marries, her husband is not obliged to accept the child. With the recent changes in morals, several middle-aged women informed me that the number of illegitimate children was rising so they were being taken care of by the woman's family and discrimination was decreasing.

Birth Control

None of the women interviewed admitted practicing any form of birth control. All of them said they wanted as many babies as "God" or their bodies" could give them. In addition there is

a high mortality rate for women in childbirth and for young children.

Children are looked upon as an immediate source of labor and as potential sources of enrichment in the future. Sexual relations are stopped after the sixth or seventh month of pregnancy and not resumed either until the baby can sit up (at approximately four months) or is weaned (at one-and-one half years of age).

II. Infancy through Age 6

A baby is always nursed by her mother except under special circumstances. If a mother dies in childbirth or does not have enough milk, the baby is fed goat's milk which is considered richer and more nourishing than cow's milk. Children are usually not weaned until they are one and a half to two years old, although they may begin eating soft foods, such as cream of sorghum or fish, earlier on. Songhay women say they are so poor and have nothing else to feed their babies. Girl babies sleep with their mothers for two years, their brothers only until they are one year old. "Custom" was the explanation given for this distinction.

Between two and four months of age babies are taught to sit up alone. Initially a shallow hole is dug and clothes are placed around them to act as supports. At about six months babies begin to crawl and they start to walk when a year old; talking begins at eighteen months to two years of age. "Early or late progress is determined by the quality of a mother's milk--so said some informants. When babies are only a couple of months old their mothers and other women and girls start to carry them around on their backs, tied securely in place with a length of cloth.

Children of both sexes are taught to run errands as soon as they can walk steadily. This consists usually of simple tasks of fetching objects for an adult. Children barely three years old have been seen carrying trays loaded with several full tea glasses. For the first few years, girls play at imitating their mother's chores--cooking with sand piles, attempting to lift pestles and carrying objects such as wood or bowls on their backs in lieu of babies. Little girls generally run around naked until five or six or else spend all day taking their clothes on and off as they become uncomfortable.

Discipline is very lax at this stage and is performed by both parents. Mothers insist that they teach their children to respect adults and do as they are told early on. Songhay men appear to like babies and will spend much free time playing with them and help with the discipline.

III. Age 6 to Age 12

By the time girls are six years old, the women's duties they had imitated have become real work for them. The education of daughters always remains in the hands of the women, that of sons is passed over to the menfolk at about age six. Now they have become proper helpers and have less freedom to run around with their friends. Their sense of modesty has developed and little girls over six no longer run around naked, instead they wear short shifts, wrap skirts or bubus. Little girls sweep the huts and yards; they wash most of the dishes; they begin to help fetch wood and water and start to learn to cook. Working on palm leaf mats gets introduced to them as they learn how to prepare the leaves for use. Little girls also do much of the babysitting, keeping an eye on succeeding babies, carrying them around and comforting them if their mothers are busy.

By age ten a clever girl already can do rudimentary cooking and is beginning to weave mats. As they get a little older they begin to do the laundry as well. The amount of pounding a girl does depends on her strength, the size of the family and the number of other females available.

In most villages, although the eldest daughter remains at home to work, the other girls will begin school at age six. The workload of the schoolchildren is diminished although they are expected to make up by helping alot during the summer.

IV. Age 12 through Puberty

As a girl approaches puberty her share of the work increases. In families where there are teenaged daughters, mothers leave all the fetching of wood and water and the pounding of grain to them. Many of the girls complain that they feel like household drudges which, in effect, they are. The only way to diminish the load is to be a schoolgirl since they often refuse to pound grain or fetch wood saying that they do not have the time. However, as girls approach

marriageable age (14 onwards) most parents remove them from school and have them start preparing for their weddings. The only free time teenagers may have is at night after dinner. Then they gather together in groups to sing, clap hands and dance or gossip, watched from afar by the young men of the village.

Often young girls (10-14) will try to prove how brave they are by tattooing themselves on or directly below their bottom lips. They take cinders or the soot from kerosene lanterns and apply it to the desired area after attaching 10 to 12 needles together to prick the skin. Of course, one is not supposed to show any sign of feeling pain.

Excision is not practiced among the Songhay. The reason why, according to tradition (N'Diaye 1970:234) is that the first time that this operation was performed on a group of Songhay girls, they all died, so it was deduced that any young Songhay girl who was ever excised would die.

Girls are generally informed about "the facts of life" by their mothers so they tell their mothers when they begin to menstruate. The girl is dressed in her best clothes and jewelry and the family has a small party for her friends. An animal is slaughtered, depending upon the family's resources, and the griottes (oral historians) entertain. Special hairstyles (or braids) are worn by girls who have started menstruating but are still unmarried.

Unlike many other African cultures, the Songhay do not make a real fuss about menstruation, nor do they seclude their women. Women continue about their regular activities when they have their monthly periods while controlling the flow with rags. They keep the same clothes on that they were wearing when it started, but wash them daily. However, they only take sponge baths during this time, waiting until the flow has stopped to take a complete bath and change into different clothes. Monogamous women allow their husbands to stay in their huts:

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while women in polygamous households continue to have their turn with the husband staying with them, although all sexual intercourse is forbidden. Women do not pray nor do they fast when they are menstruating which presumably arises out of Islamic theories of pollution.

When a girl's begins menstruating it signifies to her family and the community at large that she is ready for marriage. The Songhay believe that adolescent girls should marry as soon as possible so they don't "get into trouble" because sexual attraction may be too strong a force to withstand for long.

As almost everywhere else in the world, adolescent Songhay girls take a great interest in their appearance. They will wear more jewelry, change their outfits frequently and, if possible, change their hairdos as often as once a week. Although demure in the presence of young men if adults are around, when left in groups, the girls are quite coquettish.

V. Preparation for a Marriage and the Event Itself

In the old days child betrothals, arranged by fathers, were not at all uncommon. However, today all adults deplore the lack of control they have over their children's spouses. Meanwhile, teen-aged girls continue to insist that most of them will be thrust into arranged marriages. These complaints appear to be justified for the majority of marriages, where a girl's father, sometimes in consultation with her mother, picks a husband for his daughter. The Songhay show a marked desire to marry relatives, particularly cousins, or, if this is not possible, to marry endogamously within the village. The immediate family incest rule extends to forbid marrying the son or daughter of your brother or sister. If a young man finds a girl he wants to marry, he consults his own father, who if in agreement will talk to the girl's father.

It was impossible to gather precise information about the bride

price, engagement obligations and the marriage ceremony itself because the customs have been changing quite rapidly and vary from village to village. According to the code Malienne, the official bride price is 20,000 FM and no one should exceed that amount. However, the Songhay, along with most other ethnic groups in Mali, ignore this mandate. Informants from one village told me that in the old days a prospective groom sent one sheep to be slaughtered as soon as the engagement was finalized while paying between 5 to 25 head of cattle before he could claim his bride, plus gifts of clothing to her and to many of her relatives. More recently, men have given 4 to 5 sheep, 50,000 to 60,000 FM and clothing to the girl's immediate family. In some cases, only 30,000 FM was given to the girl's father. If the girl had been married before she was considered worth only 10,000 FM. Elsewhere, a teenager said that her cousin had recently been engaged to a man who gave seven head of cattle, worth nearly 400,000 FM as well as clothes for her. In still another village, the young girls outlined the payment as follows: the official 20,000 FM in livestock or if in cash to be divided between the parents; 5,000 FM each for the girl's two grandmothers if living; clothes and shoes for all the girl's immediate family; at least one sheep at Tabaski, and small amounts of cash to her uncles and aunts.

It was not possible to get married women to admit how much the bride payment for them had been, either because they were too shy or did not know. For example one teenaged girl I met only knew that she was engaged because a friend of hers had overheard the older women discussing it, but she did not know the sums involved. This girl said she might be informed of her wedding immediately before its occurrence and, very possibly, might not be told the quantity of the bride payment. In the old days a boy's father automatically shouldered the expenses of his getting married. Today, however, except for rare exceptions, the young men, who are considered eligible for marriage from 20 onwards, must acquire the necessary funds themselves, which they usually do by working abroad for a while.

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Wedding customs vary from village to village, but today, both a civil ceremony (before the Justice of the Peace) and a religious (usually Islamic) ceremony are necessary. Generally, the wedding festivities last seven days with lots of drum beating and singing by the griots and griottes and large quantities of meat being prepared.

As tangible proof of her changed status the young girl is now allowed to wear the braids reserved for married women. In this region the woman owns her own house, the mats of which her mother started preparing as soon as her daughter was born. The couple install themselves in this nuptial house where they will live for seven days. Songhay girls are supposed to be virgins when they wed, so in some villages a blood stained sheet is required to be passed out to the concerned family as proof. Some cheating is done using chicken blood, but this is frowned upon. If a girl is a virgin it greatly raises her status in her husband's eyes as well as increasing her family's prestige. As a result, she is honored with lots of gifts. One man stated that the real reason men want virgins is because they think the girls will be easier to control and less likely to be unfaithful if they are inexperienced.

In addition to her house, a young girl is expected to take the minimum of household utensils with her: a mortar and pestle, a cooking pot, a mat knife, a sleeping mat and a leather cushion. If possible, she should also have a pottery jar or metal bucket, some enamel dishes, ladles, a milk funnel and a leather bag for making sour milk and butter.

My informants, young and old alike, were almost unanimous in stating that the happiest time in a woman's life is from age 15 until the birth of her first child. At this point in her life, although she may be obliged to do a lot of chores, a girl is free from responsibility. She does not have to run a household nor worry about her husband and feeding her children. When a girl gets married she may be able to continue her life in a lighthearted vein until her first child is born; then she must settle down and become responsible.

VI. Young Married Life and Motherhood

Residence after marriage is patrilocal, that is, near the husband's parents. Although older women insist this is a good system because the young girl is spoiled and fattened up by her in-laws, young girls insist they dislike the idea. Lack of privacy is one complaint. They feel it is impossible to quarrel with one's husband without his parents, particularly his mother, interfering. Secondly, the young bride is generally regarded as convenient extra or replacement labor if the mother-in-law is beginning to lose her daughters in marriage. In many cases, young brides will not get to cook for her husband because all meals may be prepared by her in-laws, which may cause some conflicts. In addition, there are a lot of rules of behavior in front of the in-laws: one should never speak of too serious matters before them, one should address them with great respect and use no bad language, one cannot eat with them, one should not let one's mother-in-law see one naked and many others. By living right next door to her parents-in-law a woman is placed under the strain of having to behave correctly all of the time, while her husband only occasionally has to be ultra polite and respectful to her family.

Depending on the individuals concerned, a young bride's life may be made miserable if she does not conceive at once. Some husbands are patient and do not start to bother their wives until after the first year goes by without their becoming pregnant. Others are real boors though, and within a month or two begin to accuse the woman of failing them. Coupled with a mother-in-law's continuous solicitations the bride may become quite upset if she cannot prove herself right away. Although initial blame is laid on the woman, the Songhay are aware of male sterility. "For how else could it be that a woman who gave no children to one husband gives them to the second man, while the original spouse takes several wives to no avail.

Men do divorce their wives for not providing them with children, but all the women interviewed agreed that this was unfair. "If it is God's will that a woman be sterile, then the man should take an additional wife, but not divorce her." It is very important, in order to be considered a successful woman, that one bear children, but sterility is less denigrated than eternal spinsterhood. "If a man never offered for one's hand one can't be looked down upon for being an old maid. However, if one had offers and refused them out of perversity or notions of idealistic love, one is definitely to be condemned."

If bearing babies regularly increases a young woman's status within the family and community as a whole, it also greatly increases her workload. Most young mothers long for the day when their children will be old enough to help with the everyday chores to allow them more time to spend working on their mats. Although most women want their children to be educated they have not yet seen any economic proof that it is worthwhile keeping their daughters in school after a certain age. Education is respected purely as a possible way of later earning a bigger income. Few girls, however, have been allowed to continue school long enough to be able to go out and get salaried jobs in order to convince their families that this might be more beneficial than just marrying them off. Although some girls would like to continue attending school, most of them do not mind dropping out and their education does not seem to have a great effect on their lives. Educated girls often will refuse to marry illiterate men, which is one reason why some fathers are against feminine education.

VII. The Middle Years, Old Age and Death

The major advantage of being a middle aged woman in having partially grown children who can do all the menial tasks permitting the individual to spend most of her time working on her mats. Some mats are needed for house repairs, some for sale perhaps, but the majority are made for the houses of one's daughters when they get married.

But, like mothers everywhere, they spend much of their time worrying about their daughters getting into trouble and how to find them a suitable husband.

Many older women stated what a relief it was to be old and no longer responsible for the welfare of their children. Instead, the children are obliged to take care of their mother, while for the first time in her life she can sit around and be lazy without being criticized. Old women consider it a real pleasure to have grandchildren whom they can enjoy without having to discipline or worry about. Old widows remain in their own houses but are set up near to a married child who takes care of them.

Old age is considered the time to reap the rewards for all the hard years and old women are respected according to how they lived their lives. For example, if one put up with a horrible husband but just kept on smiling and never complained, people will admire that woman. Contrary to my initial expectations, it is not the number of children one has, but how they turned out after a mother's training that accrues respect for the women. Thus, a woman with one devoted child who helps her out is much more respected than a woman with lots of children who ignore her.

Death is accepted with a certain fatalism. Although detailed information was not gathered on funeral rites, it is known that the body is washed and dressed in its best clothes, then wrapped in a clean blanket and buried according to Islamic custom.

VIII. Inheritance

Inheritance customs vary from village but are based on Islamic law so remain essentially the same. In some instances, it was said, if a man's wife dies he may request the family to let him marry a sister as a replacement.

According to the women in Bia, when a woman dies her oldest daughter inherits all her belongings and is supposed to divide them up among other daughters as they get married. This refers to household effects, jewelry and livestock. Extra mats are divided, but the house itself remains in the hands of the eldest daughter. The dead woman's clothes are carefully washed and given to her woman friends. These women insisted that there were rarely any disputes. In other villages it was said a woman's belongings were immediately divided equally among her daughters, unless of course she had specified otherwise before her death. Old clothes were passed on to the poorer village women.

When a man dies a marabout must be called in to officiate and act as witness. If he leaves a wife with young children, after the suitable waiting period of four months to ascertain whether or not she is pregnant, the woman may marry one of her brother's-in-law who are already responsible for the children and will raise them in case she marries elsewhere. Except for livestock, which may be pastured far away and need some time to arrive, everything gets divided right away after paying off any debts and the funeral expenses. Unless other heirs and special dispensations were named before a man's death, his belongings are divided as follows according to N'Diaye (1970: 230-233): the marabout sets aside one eighth for the man's wives, then one sixth of the remaining goes to each parent of the deceased. If there are only two sons they split the inheritance; if there is one son and one daughter he gets two thirds and she gets one third. If there is but one son, he inherits everything, but if there is but one daughter, she only gets half, the other half goes to the "ascendants". If there are but two girls they each get one third, the other third going to his paternal living ancestors. If the deceased left neither children nor "living ancestors", his wives would get a quarter and the rest would be divided up between his brothers and sisters. And finally if a man dies with no paternal relatives to inherit, his fortune goes to the village chief to administer and later pass on to a poor young villager.

The essential thing to remember is that according to Islamic law, women only inherit one third while men inherit two thirds. In the old days women were allowed to inherit land from their fathers. However, it was stated in several villages that this was no longer possible because of the national government's stated policy. Having been unable to verify the laws it cannot be stated with certainty whether certain chiefs decided to exclude women from land inheritance or whether the government actually stepped in with an order. The story is that if a man died and his daughter (s) inherited, then she (they) might marry men from outside the village. The land, therefore, would be passed on to this man's children (outside of the original paternal family) who would not even belong to the village and hence complicated intervillage disputes would arise over the ownership and control of the land. Consequently, it was decided to exclude women from inheriting land. Needless to say, all the women with whom this topic was discussed were furious about this state of affairs. According to them, if a woman's husband is willing to move to the village to farm the land he should be allowed to, and if instead he wishes her to join him in his own village, the woman should be able to designate someone to farm the land in her absence and still profit from the ownership. "This state of out right discrimination is totally unfair" exclaimed one woman.

IX. Divorce and the Co-Wife System

As stated before, almost all first marriages were arranged by the parents and usually between cousins. In the old days, however, divorce was quite simple. It sufficed to say certain phrases in the presence of witnesses and a marriage could be annulled. As a result, it is said that in the past a child was rarely conceived during a first marriage. Quite frequently young girls would be unhappy with their father's choice (often picked without maternal advice) so encouraged by their mothers, they would just take down their house and bring it home signifying that they wanted a separation. If the woman requests the divorce, she is obliged to return the bride payment to the man. If the husband requests it, she gets to keep the bride payment. (It is considered very disrespectful in Songhay society

not to follow one's parents advice completely. In the old days because it was so easy to get divorced, daughters were not adverse to pleasing their parents by contracting a distasteful marriage because they knew they could easily get out of it. According to the code Malienne the party requesting the divorce is required to pay the bride price money or 20,000 FM. This has proved to be a major hardship for a large number of women in unhappy marriages who would like to get divorced, but cannot manage to save this sum of money. Women were constantly complaining about this law, asking me if there wasn't anything that could be done to change it.

The real tragedy is the double bind in which it puts young girls. When their father proposes a suitor for his daughter, she is usually still too young to defy her father and refuse nor does she realize how difficult it will be to get out of an unhappy marriage under the present system.

There is no stigma attached to a divorced woman. A second husband generally is chosen by the woman herself and is more likely to be a success. Only if a woman get divorced several times because she is difficult to get along with, will any adverse comments be made. The reasons women give for wanting divorces appear similar to those given by American or European women: general incompatibility; they no longer love each other; he runs around too much (infidelity? adultery?); he cannot support her in the manner to which she is accustomed; he mistreats her, either is just unkind, or actually beats her; he is a poor lover-- in which case the euphemistic explanation given to parents is that he is never at home.

The Songhay generally consider themselves Moslems, hence under the Islamic law, men are allowed up to a maximum of four wives. The women with whom the topic was discussed were universally against this system of co-wives. The Code Malienne states that when the marriage license is signed, both partners must agree to opt either for monogamy or polygamy. Initially, it was assumed that village

women were probably unaware of this option. However, my informants said that most women knew of the option, but still signed for polygamy although they disliked the thought of a co-wife. Further questioning revealed that the reason for this paradox lies in the tremendous importance being placed on a woman's getting married in the Songhay culture. Parents pressuring daughters into a marriage will not allow her to jeopardize the arrangements by refusing to agree to a situation which they feel is right and normal. On the other hand, young girls who are madly in love with a man often just want to get married and say they feel secure that they need not worry about later rivals. Due to the value placed on marriage by the Songhay, it is still considered better to be a reluctant co-wife than never to have wed at all. It is ironic to note that at the present time few men have two wives and it is extremely uncommon to find men with three or four. This is attributed to the current extreme poverty of the inhabitants of the Seventh Region. One of the top personal priorities listed by men after food or livestock was acquiring an additional wife if they could afford one. Could this mean that a project which will raise the standard of living for the population as a whole will condemn more women to living with what they consider an unjust system?

Women's Occupations

Any analysis of the way in which women spend their time must distinguish those activities common to almost all women and those seasonal activities and special occupations engaged in by fewer women. Although one is rather frequently asked to pinpoint the exact time women devote to each activity, average times are not really an accurate indicator of the importance of certain tasks because there are too many variables involved to generalize. A woman's work load is determined by her age, her marital status, the number of children she has that she can recruit to help her, whether or not she has a co-wife or other adult women living with her family, whether or not her husband has livestock or does vegetable gardening, the status of the weather, and consequently the status of the crop as well as the results of last year's harvest, how rich her husband is, whether relatives sent money back home and whether or not she is a member of a caste group. Other determinants include the availability of wild plants and the proximity of a market and wells.

Although a few rich Songhay women (generally nobles) can be found in the zone who continue to remain "ladies of leisure", they are an exception. Except for certain activities which will be specified, most noble and captive women today perform the same tasks, as do married and unmarried women. Caste women alone continue to have some specialized occupations.

1. Daily or Weekly Activities

Certain essential activities are part of an average woman's day, just as housewives routinely perform some of the same boring but essential tasks day after day. These tasks are 1) house cleaning; 2) washing dishes and laundry and carrying water; 3) meal preparation-- an essential component being pounding grain; 4) caring for children; and 5) mat making. Weekly chores would include gathering fuel and marketing.

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Times are estimates of woman hours needed per day, not the time spent by a particular woman.

1) Housecleaning. This task generally does not take much time (less than one hour) because it consists mainly of putting away all the bedding in the morning, sweeping inside the hut or a man's banco house and sweeping the immediate outside living area. All the women in a household would do their small part and the little girls would be recruited to do the sweeping.

2) Washing dishes, laundry and carrying water. The critical factor here is not only woman power but also the availability of water. Of the villages where research was done, five of them (Bia, Bagoundie, Todyel Gargouna, Mozonga and Seyna) had no wells. Although the villages bordered on the river when the floods were at their highest, during most of the year the river withdrew to a maximum distance of seven kilometers away. In some, but not all cases, fairly permanent ponds or mud holes were located near by. In the rainy season a woman can send very small daughters right down to the river's edge to wash a few dishes whenever necessary. In addition more personal bathing is done--complete baths for everyone daily; laundry gets done quite frequently and the house not only has full water jugs, but also has a supply of washing water. Two hours might be adequate to supply water. In the dry season, however, when water is so far away, a lot less of it is used. No extra bathing or laundering is done. Women must either fetch the water themselves or use teenaged girls, because little girls are not strong enough to carry full water jugs or buckets. Although perhaps only two or three trips may be made, the time involved may be much greater (three to four hours) and cannot be delegated to another quite as easily.

3) Meal Preparations

Important variables here are woman power, number of mouths to be fed, time of the year and type of grain used. Quite obviously the number of arms available to pound has an effect on the time required as does the number of people eating. More important though

is the type of grain to be used and the season. To recapitulate, sorghum is harvested in September-October; the rice harvest lasts from October through January. For the few farmers fortunate enough to harvest their own crops for an entire year or those with the funds to buy outside grain, sorghum and rice are the staples. Corn and millet may also be bought at the market. A large proportion (over 50%) of the population, however, is obliged to depend on the wild plants--water lily seeds and roots, cram cram and bourgou--that they can gather. A woman may pound cram cram for four hours daily and only have 3-4, 800 gram milk cans full as the end product. This is sufficient to feed at maximum six people for their one meal of the day. But at harvest time, when plenty of food is available, it may take only three hours to remove enough grain from the paddy (an easier task) to feed the same number of people three meals. Corn requires a lot of work because it generally can be used only for "tow"--a slimy mush made from the boiled flour. Thus one must keep in mind the state of the grain is to be used in, whether one, two or three meals are to be cooked and whether or not, in addition, a special sauce is to be prepared in lieu of plain boiled rice in order to estimate the time required for meal preparation. It would seem that previous estimates to two and one half to three hours for pounding grain would be a reasonable average. Meal preparation itself would take an additional one and a half to three hours per day. Women prefer to pound grain each morning when they have lots of energy during the cooler part of the day. They frequently pound again late afternoon.

4) Caring for Children: The variables here are number of children, their age and number of little girls, teenagers or grandmothers who can be recruited to baby-sit if one is busy. As any mother knows it is almost impossible to estimate the amounts of time needed for nursing and watching over an infant or running after a toddler. This is a full time occupation for women in the childbearing years who may nurse a baby until it is one and a half years old, weaning the child so she can be ready for the next one.

5. Mat Making: Most women state that their preference would be to spend all day working on their mats, but unfortunately other chores interfere. Whenever a woman can sit down for a minute her hands are busy working on her mats particularly if she knows that the family depends on the sale of one for its next meal. A special section is devoted to mat making because it is the most important occupation for a Songhay woman.

6. Fuel Gathering: Generally young girls, or if they are not available, the women go gather fuel. This is a group activity and the time required depends on the distance it is necessary to travel. In the villages, where research was done, the women said it took at least half a day to go and come back. Both dry wood, palm fronds and palm nuts are collected and where necessary manure is brought home too.

7. Marketing: Only Forgho Sonra! and Bara had their own markets. People in other villages have to travel at least seven kilometers to reach the nearest weekly market. Markets start later, about 9:00 a.m. and last until the vendors have sold sufficient wares (early afternoon). When the market is one's own village, it is possible to make one's purchases rapidly and return to other work. If one is selling it is also possible to disperse by 11 a.m. or noon. However, people travelling longer distances make a social event of a market and often do not return home until mid or late afternoon. The selling end at most markets is dominated by women, except for the livestock market controlled by men, and a few professional small merchants selling tea, sugar, dates batteries, etc. or selling beads and ready made jewelry. Income from the sale of mats, pottery, leatherwork and condiments belong to the women to be spent as they wish, but in these hard times generally goes for food for the family. Revenue from the sale of dairy products and vegetables properly belongs to men and usually gets turned over to them. Some men however, allow their wives to use their own judgement to spend this money for food. When large amounts of grain are for sale, men are usually responsible. During harvest time women are seen selling just two or three pots of grain and keeping the money for themselves.

Everytime her husband or father gives her the daily allotment of grain to pound, these women put a little aside to sell.

II. Seasonal Activities and Specialized Occupations:

I. Agricultural Production

Traditionally noble women had absolutely nothing to do with agricultural production. However, since the drought many of them will participate in the weeding of their immediate relative's fields. For a period of about four months (August through November) groups of women spend anywhere from one to five days per week weeding. They leave for the fields at dawn, eating breakfast and sometimes lunch in the fields, returning to their homes between 3:00 p.m. and dusk. It is back-breaking work standing in waist deep water all day long continuously bending over so that one's whole body is wet. As a result, most women who weed, suffer from severe backaches and terrible colds during this entire period. If a woman weeds for an outsider, the salary is 150 FM to 200 FM per day as compared to 250 to 500 FM for men who supposedly are doing harder work cultivating the fields. In some villages, such as Mozonga, noble women continue to refuse to weed using the excuse that there are plenty of captives, Gabibi and caste women available to do the job.

If there is a real shortage of manpower, women may help with the transplanting of both sorghum and rice. Sorghum is usually harvested one day at a time, with a woman or child going to the fields to collect enough for one meal.

Threshing is the only other feminine agricultural activity and it is usually done in the confines of a woman's own home--never commercially. Estimates have been made that calculate woman's total agricultural input to be half that of men.

Noble women continue to look down upon agriculture labor, apolo-

gizing for their role by blaming it on dire necessity. Although women are not involved in vegetable production at the present time, they have expressed great interest in learning more about it. Noble women admit that they are looking for different ways to earn money, while they also appreciate the benefits of better nutrition. In several villages the desire was expressed that an expert, not only in production, but also in preservation and cooking of vegetables be sent out to help the villagers get off to a successful start.

2. Wild Plants Gathered

Many farmers in the Seventh Region depend to a great extent on the wild plants they gather. Cran Cram, ready in September and October is gathered by the men but pounded by the women. Water lily seeds, which are ripe for harvest during January and February, and their roots ready from March through June are gathered by the women and children. These are pounded, then mixed with bourgou juice and dried fish to provide a steady diet for many people for as long as four to five months. In June and July both men and women harvest the bourgou plants in order to prepare a juice that is used in cooking and can be preserved all year long.

Other wild plants both consumed and sold, that are gathered by women and children include Fakohoy, wild watermelon, doum fruits and wild dates.

Fakohoy is a wild plant whose leaves are the base for the sauce, flavored with fresh or dried fish, which is the speciality of the Sixth and Seventh Regions. It is gathered in the bush outside the villages and dried by the women before they sell it. It is readily available in the rainy season when the selling price is as low as 25 FM⁺ for 800 g. milk can full. The supply gradually diminishes until it is almost non-existent in the dry season and the price rises to 150 FM per milk can.

Wild watermelons are gathered green when they are about the size of a baseball and usually boiled and sold for 5 FM to 25 FM. When unboiled they are generally added as a thickener to a meat sauce.

Wild dates are gathered in the fall, eaten as a snack food or sold at market for 5 FM the pile or 25 FM for an 800 gram can.

Children, both boys and girls, generally collect the ripe doum fruits and sell it at the weekly markets for 5 FM a piece. A 50 kilogram sack full can sell for 150 to 200 FM which will take a child from one to two days to gather.

In addition, in areas where the palms are available, women collect the leaves to use for their mats or sell as is. A group of women from a village will get together and spend all day, if need be, finding the trees. Sufficient leaves for one mat can be gathered in a single expedition.

3. Caste Activities

Leather work is done by women of the "garasa" or blacksmith caste. It is the blacksmiths' wives and daughters who make beautifully decorated cushions, bags, scabbards for knives, hair decorations and other leather work. They specialize in the use of goat and sheep skins.

Other caste women may become potters and make the water jars and caries used by villagers to keep their water cool.

Griottes occupy a favored position in a village because their power is feared. Not only do they act as oral historians, but also are musicians and entertainers. At other times they will go "begging throughout the village" in order to gain their daily meal.

4. Hairdressing and Jewelry Making

Women may earn money as hairdressers. However, due to the

poverty level of the general public, the demand for this service is quite low. Women say they just don't have time to worry about hairdos when they are hungry. A simple hairdo may cost 200 FM, a more elaborate one taking five to eight hours to style, may cost between 500 FM to 1000 FM in a village while the rates are double that in Gao.

A few women know how to make the fine beadwork headbands and choker type necklaces which are a distinguishing characteristic of the Songhay. Commercialization is usually limited to friends within the village. The beaded bracelets, also very popular with Songhay, are actually made by Hausa women.

Time estimates have not been made for any of these activities because it is obvious that too much depends of the individual situation. This listing, in general, covers the current activities available to Songhay women.

Production of Mats

An important development since the drought has been the increasing commercialization of palm leaf mats, which are produced by the women. This has created some interesting changes in the male-female dynamics which is discussed later.

In the past, making beautiful mats was the leisure activity of the noble women who had captives to perform all the menial tasks. Among the Songhay of the Gao region the hut is owned by women who dismantle it three times a year with different numbers and styles of mats used, according to the cold, dry or rainy season. Annual repairs have to be made if one is to have a hut of which to be proud. In a sense these huts were and are still a symbol of a woman's identity, not only as a creative personality but also as a skilled homemaker. Special sleeping mats are also made for one's self, one's husband and children and given to other close relatives and friends. But, in the past, it was unheard of to sell these mats.

As mentioned earlier, dramatic changes have taken place in the activities of nobles since the drought years. Noble women have been obliged to assume their own menial tasks so have been left with less time to devote to their "hobby"/occupation of mat making. As the harvests continued to be poor every year and many men have no occupation other than farming, women began to sell their mats. In the economic sphere woman's role has changed from being a lady of leisure to being an important economic contributor and, in many cases, the major bread winner for the family.

There are two different varieties of long mats used for house construction that generally do not get sold in the village markets. Those that are usually sold are white or colored sleeping/sitting mats and round prayer mats. Various factors affect the sale price of a mat:

- 1) was the woman able to gather her own palm leaves or did she have to buy them at prices ranging from 125 FM to 1,000 FM to suffice for one mat;
- 2) the fineness of the weave;
- 3) if it is a colored mat whether or not the design is one that is well known or is an original;
- 4) the number

of dyes used; a fancy mat uses one box each of three or four dyes costing 1000 FM/box and one box of black dye at 500 FM/box; 5) the time of year-prices may be a little higher during wedding season because the women are so busy then, while they may be lower just before Tabaski; and other fêtes; 6) how hungry the woman and her family are.

If a woman gathers her own leaves a simple white mat is usually sold for 275 FM to 500 FM. If she has to buy the leaves, the price will rise to 1,000 FM and in some areas due to the high cost of leaves it may only be profitable to make colored mats which sell at prices ranging from 2,500 FM to 10,000 FM.

The speed at which women can work depends on their experience and proficiency and the number of children or other women available to assist them with their chores.

A sleeping mat is ten strips wide. If a woman has someone to help with her chores she can usually make two to three simple white mats per week (or three-four strips per day). Rare women of great stamina and speed can complete a white mat in one day. Only if she sits uninterrupted all day long can she finish one colored strip in a day. Usually it takes women at least two months to finish a colored mat.

For another study, intensive interviews were conducted with individual farmers (a total of 24) in order to determine their annual expenditures and sources of revenue. Eight of the farm families interviewed earned incomes from the sale of mats. The percentage of total revenue generated this way varies from between less than 1% to 100% with an average of 33.6%. Discussions with women of all ages in this zone leads one to believe that 50% or more of all women nowadays make mats for sale.

Chapter Six

Power, Authority and Status

No discussion of women is complete without an analysis of the relationship of power and authority to male-female dynamics and how this in turn affects the status of females within a culture. The following definition is proposed by M.G. Smith: "Authority is, in the abstract, the right to make a particular decision and to command obedience...power... is the ability to act effectively on persons or things, to make or secure favorable decisions which are not of right allocated to the individual or their roles. Whether power is exercised through influence or force, it is inherently competitive, whereas authority entails a hierarchical chain of command and control. Although the idea of authority implies positive actions and duties, the exercise of power has no positive sanctions, only rules that specify the conditions of illegality of its operations." (Rosaldo 1974:21).

Worldwide, it has been shown, women have traditionally exercised power, but have had no authority to back it up. As a result, women often have a systematic influence on decisions that are made while social norms treat the powerful or influential women as disruptive anomalous or subversive. This is particularly true of the Moslem society where all legitimized power, that is authority is in the hands of men, based on a hierarchy of ages. Women are looked upon as a threat, it is hypothesized due to their sexual power over men, consequently they are secluded from the public eye and allowed to control the education of male children only until the boys reach the age of seven. The Songhay have been followers of Islam, at least nominally, ever since the time of the powerful ruler, Askia Mohammed in the fifteenth century and particularly since their kingdom was invaded by the Moroccans in the sixteenth century. All important life events--birth, marriage, divorce, death and inheritance are ruled by Islamic law, while the daily schedule is organized around the necessity of frequent prayer. The role of women in traditional Songhay society has to a great extent been affected by this Moslem influence. However, before giving an exten-

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graphic description of how this power-authority relationship looks in Songhay culture, it is first necessary to understand what is meant by the term "status".

"Female status is generally defined in terms of 1) the degree to which females have authority/and or power in the domestic and/or public domains; and 2) the degree to which females are accorded deferential treatment and are respected and revered in the domestic and/or public domains." (Sanday 1974: 191).

Iroquois women were accorded high status because they held considerable economic and political power, whereas Western women in their often highly valued roles as helpmate, sex object, the "driving force behind every successful man" are given deferential treatment. High status along one parameter does not necessarily indicate the same high status along other parameters.

The opposition between the "domestic" and "public domain" provides the basis of a structural framework necessary to identify the place of males and females. Domestic refers to those minimal institutions and mode of activity that are organized immediately around one or more mothers and their children. "Public" refers to activities, institutions and forms of associations that link, rank, organize, or subsume particular mother-child groups. This opposition is generally seen in terms of the sexes with women belonging to the domestic sphere, while men are part of the public domain. Women may have some authority in the domestic sphere but when it comes to the public sphere, they are excluded from the hierarchical chain. They are forced to exert any power through the use of interpersonal influences. Men, however, not only exert final authority in the domestic sphere, but also in the public sphere.

The antecedents of female political authority is some degree of economic power, i.e. ownership or control of strategic resources. However, economic power does not necessarily include economic authority, i.e. the recognized right to act effectively on things. Peggy Sanday (1974:192) in doing a cross-cultural analysis selected four dimensions for coding

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female status in the public domain: 1) female material control; 2) demand for female produce; 3) female political participation and 4) female solidarity groups devoted to female political or economic interests.

"1) Female Material Control: Females have the ability to act effectively on, to allocate or to dispose of, things--land, produce, crafts, etc.--beyond the domestic unit.

2) Demand on Female produce: Female produce has a recognized value either internally beyond the localized family unit/or in an external market.

3)Female Political Participation: Females, even if only through a few token representatives, may express opinions in a regular, official procedure and may influence policy affecting people beyond the domestic unit.

4) Female Solidarity Groups devoted to Female Political or Economic Interests: Females group together in some regular way to protect or represent their interests, and are recognized and effectual in this activity." (Sanday 1974:192).

These dimensions will be referred to with regards to Songhay women. Status in the domestic sphere is much more difficult to compare cross culturally because so many variables are involved. My discussion on the Songhay, therefore, will be limited to a present-past comparison and will refer exclusively to the nobles.

If female status is defined in terms of deferential treatment, then the status of women in traditional Songhay culture has been high. Women were perceived as mistresses in their own homes, which in fact they owned. They spent their time making mats, beautifying themselves, entertaining their and their husband's visitors and taking care of children. A nobleman's prestige in the eyes of the community could be raised if his wife succeeded in all these activities as in Western culture. Although ardent reminists would say that the women were regarded as objects, noble women at best were not regarded as beasts of burden. Not only did they refrain from engaging in agricultural activities, but also from doing the heavy menial tasks.

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Living within an Islamic based society, Songhay women had power, but virtually no authority in both the domestic and public spheres. Although charged with the responsibility of raising young children, by age seven for boys, the task was transferred over to the men. While daughters continued to remain under their mother's control the final say or authority in all matters for children of both sexes remained with the father. Men arranged for their daughter's marriages, and unless there was a particularly good "entente" between the couple, did so without consulting their wives. Women's power, however, was revealed through the facility of divorce in the old days. In order not to shame the family or seem disrespectful a daughter would accept a reluctant forced marriage. Within a month or two, frequently without ever consummating the marriage and under the championship of her mother, she would take down her house and return to her parents home. Most fathers would then accept the unsuitability of the match and arrange for a divorce.

Woman's status, based on economic or political authority, can be said to have been very low in the old days. Women had but a limited access to economic power. Although they could own strategic resources such as livestock or land, Islamic inheritance laws quite effectively prevented women from becoming economically powerful. Even if one woman managed to inherit a large amount of land or livestock from her father, she herself could not work the land so it would over to the control of men. She was not allowed to sell her own livestock because this was another task reserved exclusively for men. If she managed, through an agreeable husband, to exert control over her own resources, when she died they would be divided, with sons receiving a much greater share than the daughters. The only goods produced by women were their mats which were not sold.

Female political participation in a recognized manner appears to have been nil. Women had no political authority. Instead they worked through their male relatives to exert their influence on matters important to them. Organized female solidarity groups did not exist. Village women would gather together, over tea or while working on their mats, to discuss community affairs. If they felt anything needed to be done they would return home and alert relatives in subtle ways on the size of their families.

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These manoeuvres ranged from withholding food or sexual services to the more blatant action of starting to take down their house.

Today, a great number of changes have occurred within Songhay society, the most controversial being the changing status of women. As mentioned before, Songhay noble women no longer are privileged members of society. Not only do they perform their own chores but also are presently involved in their commercialization of their one major craft--matmaking. As a result the deferential treatment accorded to women has diminished.

Within the domestic sphere one critical change has occurred concerning women's chief weapon or source of power in the past--that of the threat of divorce. The code Malienne states that whichever party requesting a divorce must pay 20,000 FM. This puts modern Songhay women in a real dilemma. Girls, between the ages of 15 to 20, who are being forced into arranged marriages, are still working within the traditional framework. That is, not wanting to dishonor their families, these girls will go ahead with a marriage assuming that within a few months they will just get a divorce. Even if they are aware of this 20,000 FM clause, most of these women are too young to realize how slim their chances are of raising that amount of money in a short time. As a result, many women spend several years trying to earn enough money to get out of an unhappy marriage, while also trying to provoke their husbands into asking for a divorce and therefore being obliged to shoulder the fee. The strategy adopted by some women, although most are still not that courageous, is to refuse to marry anyone but the man of their choice. This may, depending on the family, entail a great deal of strife between parents and daughter.

My opinion was frequently asked on how to deal with this real problem for women. As an advocate of women's freedom my response was to adopt the latter strategy, although recognizing all the cultural problems this entailed, particularly due to the growing sexual freedom of young girls. No other alternative seemed immediately possible to me, because as Mme. Diop, President of the Union Nationale des Femmes du Mali, stated, "We cannot advocate decreasing this fee of 20,000 FM because there will be a general outcry that the Woman's Union is advocating the easier breakup of families."

While the deferential treatment of Songhay women has been diminished, their status in the public domain, and to some extent in the domestic sphere, has increased due to changes in Sanday's four dimensions. The two most important factors are economic: 1) female material control and 2) demand for female produce, although there have been some set backs in these domains.

Noble women today are working members of the family. Their tasks include household chores, raising children, doing some agricultural work, i.e., weeding, gathering wild plants for the family to eat, selling dairy products within the village or in nearby markets and making mats for sale in order to help feed the family. As a result, the way in which men view women has greatly changed. Most men are delighted with the economic help they are receiving from their wives, daughters and sisters. Men are fully aware that it is the extra revenue brought in by women, which they voluntarily offer for the family's use, that frequently staves the family from starvation. Some men said that their wives were full economic partners and that they had complete trust in their wives judgement in money matters. As a result, these men said they no longer felt that they could (or even should) try to control their wives' activities as much as they did in the old days. They just expected that the women would continue to behave discreetly.

Admittedly not all men were happy with this new situation. Some men openly said that they greatly resented their economic dependence on the women folk and would do anything to bring back the old days. "Please bring pumps to our village so we can start having good harvests and resume wearing the pants in the family" was the plea of the chief and his councilors in one village where research was done. In general, though, men are delighted with the help they are receiving from the women and young men, in particular, kept asking for ways to lighten women's every day work load so they could concentrate on matmaking.

How do women respond to their changed roles and status? Although generally favorable, reactions were of course mixed. Most women are happy with the extra freedom which their increased economic contributions have provided them. They enjoy going to the market to sell goods, they appreciate

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the fact that their husbands allow them greater freedom of movement. But, it cannot be denied that their work loads have greatly increased. Women are busy from morning to night all year long. "A Songhay woman's hands are never idle" said several informants.

During my discussions with women, they indicated that there were two areas for improvement: 1) need for labor saving devices to decrease the daily workload and 2) need for new money making activities for women. Women everywhere said that they had to devote too much time to household chores and could not spend a sufficient number of hours per day working on their mats. Their heaviest and most tiresome chore is pounding grain, a job which every woman interviewed said she hated. Those who had heard of handmills immediately requested them for their village. Those who had not, were also excited at the prospect, when the use of such machines was explained to them. All women expressed a willingness to pay a small fee, if necessary, for the use of this convenience. The extra time would certainly go to productive use and most likely would result in increased time spent on mat making. Hand mills, therefore, were not perceived just as a labor saving device, but more importantly as a means of freeing women to devote time to revenue earning activities.

Women also complained that mat making was their only source of income and they felt this was insufficient. Many women appeared aware of the power of market women and female merchants in other parts of Africa and indicated that this was an avenue that appealed to them. For this reason women said they wanted to get involved in gardening, not only because it would improve the family diet, but also bring in revenue. An awareness of remaining cultural constraints precluded me from advocating the introduction of such crafts as leather work and pottery to the mass of Songhay women. Instead, a much wiser course of action would appear to develop the already present knowledge of mat making into the production of more useable items for sale outside the region. In other parts of Africa, Tanzania and Madagascar, for example, the women's skill with palm fronds has been channeled into the production of tourist items for export. When I showed some women baskets made in these other countries, they exhibited great interest in learning such new techniques. In addition, a few young women made some lacemats and coasters for me. They said they enjoyed doing

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this work but had no organization or training either for increased production or sales. Women's leathermaking cooperatives have failed in the past in the Seventh Region. These, however, were dealing with different tribes, and apparently, did not succeed due to lack of money, poor structural organization and mis-management. It was not due to ill will on the part of the women.

Thus, it seems safe to say, that as a result of their new (and potential) economic power, women's status in the public domain has been raised. However, a recent setback places quite evident constraints on woman's ability to control strategic resources in the future. Apparently, in some villages at least, women are now being totally excluded from the inheritance of land. With the growing interest in agriculture, land is probably the single most valuable resource in the Seventh Region and it is now being kept out of the hands of the women. This is a very effective way of keeping women in a subordinate position.

It must not be forgotten that female political participation is another dimension of public status. In this domain women's gains have not yet been significant, although a start has been made. A local chapter of the "Union Nationale des Femmes du Mali" has been set up in almost all of the villages where research was done. There is an elected President and other officers and married women are eligible to participate. The main function of this group so far appears to be entertaining visiting dignitaries and intervening and attempting to resolve marital disputes. Although the officers discuss critical priorities for these villages; wells, dispensaries, markets and schools, so far they have not been able to do anything concrete about acquiring them. The Union has the potential to be the organized voice of the women's opinions and hence may be able to influence policy affecting people beyond the domestic unit in the future. At present it could be considered the only organized female solidarity group as well. Although women gather together in work parties to work on their mats, these groups cannot be considered as a social organization for any other purpose.

So far this analysis has ignored the potential impact of the ARS project on village women. Songhay women in recent years have gained considerable

personal freedom due to the important economic contribution they make to the family income. The reason underlying this increased contribution is the frequent and regular failure of crops in this region due to the lack of control over water resources. The goal of the project is to enable a substantial number of farmers to become self-sufficient in their production of grain. If this comes about and farmers no longer have to buy outside grain, but may even be able to commercialize it in large quantities, how will the position of women be affected?

When presented with this question, most women interviewed stated that they liked their new economic independence and would enjoy increasing it. Some felt that their husbands would try to limit their activities as in the old days, but the majority believed men would appreciate the additional income to the family budget even under more prosperous circumstances. Women who today said they felt particularly pressured to produce mats for sale said they hoped to relax some and just make mats for the family for a while. Men appeared to agree with the female analysis of the future situation, except for a few reactionary farmers. Unable to concentrate exclusively on this question, however, no statistical information was gathered. Hence, it is important to monitor this situation so that women are not forced back into a position with which they will be unhappy.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

This analysis of Songhay women does not purport to be a definitive statement either on women or on Songhay culture. Rather, its intent is to present what insights it was possible to form after short visits to several different villages along the River Niger between Bourem and Ansongo.

For the past twenty years, and particularly in the last five, Songhay women have been undergoing a great many changes in their lives. Class distinctions have almost entirely broken down, except in certain social situations. Women who previously were totally dependent on their husbands, have become important economic contributors to the family income. As a result they have gained a certain amount of freedom and independence which they like and hope to keep in the future. Their status is changing both in the domestic and public sphere. With their new economic power it is possible they may be able to gain some political authority working through legitimized institutions such as the Women's Union.

There have been some drawbacks, however. Women no longer exert their traditional form of power. They cannot divorce freely and hence, often get caught in unhappy marriages. In some villages they no longer have access to the most important strategic resource--that of land. With their increased work loads, women say they are always tired. Consequently, they were very enthusiastic about the introduction of hand mills.

Women are also eager to engage in new money making activities. Gardening was mentioned as a possibility, as was developing their mat making skills into more saleable products. It is crucial to remember that any innovations must take into account traditional caste and class distinctions and must have the full agreement of all potential partici-

pants in order to succeed.†

Finally it must be added that Songhay women are delightful to work with and very helpful once they overcome their initial shyness. More detailed and intimate information about their lives and personalities can only, by necessity, be gathered by someone who speaks their own language and can spend one or two years living in a particular village.

+ Appendices 4 and 5 are included because they indicate general strategies on how to increase the productivity of rural women and how this will affect their lives.

(3)
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Appendix I

A. Le Mariage et le Divorce.

Regles, la dot, mode de resolution des conflits,
adultere, statut de la femme mariee et divorcee,
de la jeune fille (initiation?)

B. Le Controle des Naissances:

Controle social, techniques (Contraceptives, avorte-
ment)

C. Education de la Jeune Femme, au sens Large

Formation et information

D. L'Heritage:

Regles precises sur l'heritage des enfants
des terres
des betail
des autres biens

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E. Le Travail et l'emploi de Temps:

Agriculture

Elevage

Le Menage - bois, eau, cuisine, enfants

Les Nattes et autres occupations

Inclus le temps libre - coiffure, etc.

Temps pour effectuer chaque travail

Construction des nattes

F. Relations Sociales/Loisirs de la caste:

Par classe, etat, age et mariee, nonmariee.

Importance de l'argent et de la parure

la réconforte

de la caste, etc.

du travail comme valeur

de l'amour

du travail

signes du statut social (habillement, bijoux, age, etc.)

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Appendix II

Enquête sur les femmes

1. Avez vous une idée sur le nombre d'enfants que vous desirez? Qui en pense votre mari (accord ou non)?
2. Quel choix faites vous sur le sexe de votre enfant? Pourquoi?
3. Avant le mariage, une jeune fille peut elle avoir des relations avec des hommes? Est ce que cela est juste?
4. Qu'est ce que les gens pensent d'une jeune fille qui tombe en état de grossesse?
5. Pour combien de temps est ce qu'une femme évite les relations après la naissance d'une bébé? à quel autres temps?
6. Quel est l'âge qui convient pour une fille d'avoir un mari?
7. Connaissez vous des méthodes que les gens utilisent pour prévenir la naissance de plus enfants qu'ils veulent? Et utilisez vous?
8. Est ce qu'il y a des avortements dans votre village?
9. Entre le mari et sa femme, le qui dépend la séparation? Pourquoi?
10. Arrive-t-il à un homme de se séparer de sa femme parce qu'elle n'enfante pas? Trouvez-vous cela normal?
11. La femme peut elle séparer la discordance? Qui souvent en est cause?

12. Arrive-t-il à une femme de désobéir à son mari? Est ce juste?
13. Comment doit agir un homme qui surprendrait sa femme en adultère?
14. Est ce que l'insatisfaction est un souci? chez l'homme? la femme?
15. Entre l'homme et la femme qui se fâche le plus souvent? Pourquoi? Le mari peut-il avoir raison? En ce moment que faites vous?
16. Quel est la plus importante chose que les parents peuvent enseigner à un petit enfant? Quelle tâche première enseigne-t-on à un garçon? à une fille?
17. Dans le sens de la discipline, à qui entre le père et la mère revient l'éducation de l'enfant?
18. Souhaiteriez vous envoyer vos enfants à l'école? Pourquoi?
19. Êtes vous heureuse de voir vos enfants partir à l'école? Pourquoi?
20. Que doit connaître une jeune fille avant son mariage?
21. Est ce que vous êtes allé à l'école? Pour combien de temps? (jusqu'à quelle niveau?) Pourquoi l'avez vous quitté? Est ce que vous pensez que c'est une bonne expérience? Pourquoi? Si non: voudriez vous apprendre à lire, écrire et calculer?
22. Est ce que vous voulez que votre fille/petite fille aille à l'école?
23. Si vous avez la puissance à propos le futur de votre fille qu'espérez vous pour elle?
24. A quel distance de votre village avez vous voyagé? Pour quel raison? Avec quel fréquence? Aimez vous voyager? Pourquoi?

25. Est ce que vous connaissez ce que c'est une banque? Est ce que vous en avez confiance pour garder votre argent?
26. Combien de langues connaissez vous?
27. Dans votre village y-a-t-il des femmes de caste? Que font-elles? Comment peut on les distinguer? Quel type journaliere/hebdomadaire est ce que vous trouvez le plus enuyeux? Pourquoi?
28. Que pensez vous du travail de piler?
29. Si le USAID vous fournisse avec des moulins a main pour eviter le temps de piler, est ce que cela sera une bonne chose a votre avis?
30. Que feriez vous avec le temps supplementaire?
31. Est ce que vous travaillez dans les champs? Si oui: quel genre de travail? Combien de temps par semaine? Si non: est ce que c'est acceptable pour une femme de travailler dans les champs? quel genre de femme fera ce travail?
31. Pouvez vous decrire comment vous passer une journee normale avec le temps pour effectuer chaque tache? (menage, lavage, cuisine, garde d'enfants, piler, recherche d'eau, recherche de faggots, fabrication des nattes, travail agricole, coiffure, traite de lait, au marche, cuillette, autre cas) selon les saisons si ca change.
32. Que pensez vous du temps qu'il prend pour la recherche d'eau? des faggots?
33. Si le USAID vous fournisse avec des charettes pour apporter l'eau ou les faggots est ce que cela sera une bonne chose a votre avis? Avez vous des animaux convenables? Est ce que les hommes de votre village vous laisseront utiliser les charettes d'un tel facon?
34. Est ce qu'une femme a les sources de revenu apart de celle de son mari? Quel sont ils?

35. Si vous avez de l'argent en plus appartenant a vous meme sur quoi allez vous le depenser?
36. Possedez vous des animaux vous meme? Lesquelles? Combien? Avez vous le droit de les vendre sans consulter votre mari?
37. Avez vous des champs que vous pouviez cultiver comme vous voulez?
38. Est ce que vous allez au marche pour vendre des choses? Quoi? Avec quel frequence? Ou? Faites vous des echanges ou recevez vous de l'argent? Que faites vous avec ce que vous gagnez? (Depense sur quoi? donne au mari? fais des economies?) Combien est ce que vous gagnez? Est cela varie par saison? Qu'est ce que vous achetez au marche?
39. Est ce que ca vous plait tellement d'y aller au marche que vous serez pret a produire en plus pour pevoir vendre la bas? et quoi?
40. Est ce que vous cultivez des legumes? Si oui: quoi et que faites vous avec?
41. Est ce que vous connaissez ce que le projet Action Riz Sorgho pense faire?
42. Est ce que vous essayez de suivre un regime alimentaire pour votre famille? Le quel et pourquoi?
43. Accepteriez vous que votre fille choisisse son mari? Pourquoi? Que tenez vous si il venait d'une famille de capois?
44. Qu'est ce qu'une bonne femme?
45. Pour votre bien etre, quel serait votre souhait si vous disposeriez les moyens necessaires?
46. que comprennent vous par etre bien? Y-a-t-il une difference pour un homme et une femme?
47. Quelle difference y-a-t-il entre un homme et une femme?

- 48. Laquelle est plus important pour vous?
 - de belle vêtements
 - des bijoux en or
 - des bijoux en general
 - des belles coiffures
 - de la maquillage
 - du bésail (quel genre)
 - beaucoup d'enfants
 - autre chose

- 49. Est ce que le travail au sens general a un valeur?

- 50. Est ce que votre pere/Mari essaie de controler vos activites plus que vous desirez? Comment resoudre ce probleme?

- 51. Quel est votre religion? Est ce que vous priez?

- 52. Si vous donnez des conseils a votre mari est ce qu'ils les suiverez?

- 53. Quel age avez vous quand vous avez vu votre premier europeean? qu'en pensez vous d'eux?

- 54. A votre avis qu'est ce que c'est l'union National des Femmes Maliennes? Est ce que il y a une union des femmes dans votre village?

- 55. Est ce qu'il y a certains activites qu'une femme mariée peut faire qui sont interdit a une jeune fille?

- 56. A quel age est ce qu'une femme est la plus heureuse?

- 57. Est ce que c'est possible pour une étrangère de voir des distinctions entre les arabes captifs et des nobles? Expliquez?

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Appendix III

Village:

Nom:

Sexe:

Age:

PRIORITES PERCUES PAR LES VILLAGEOIS

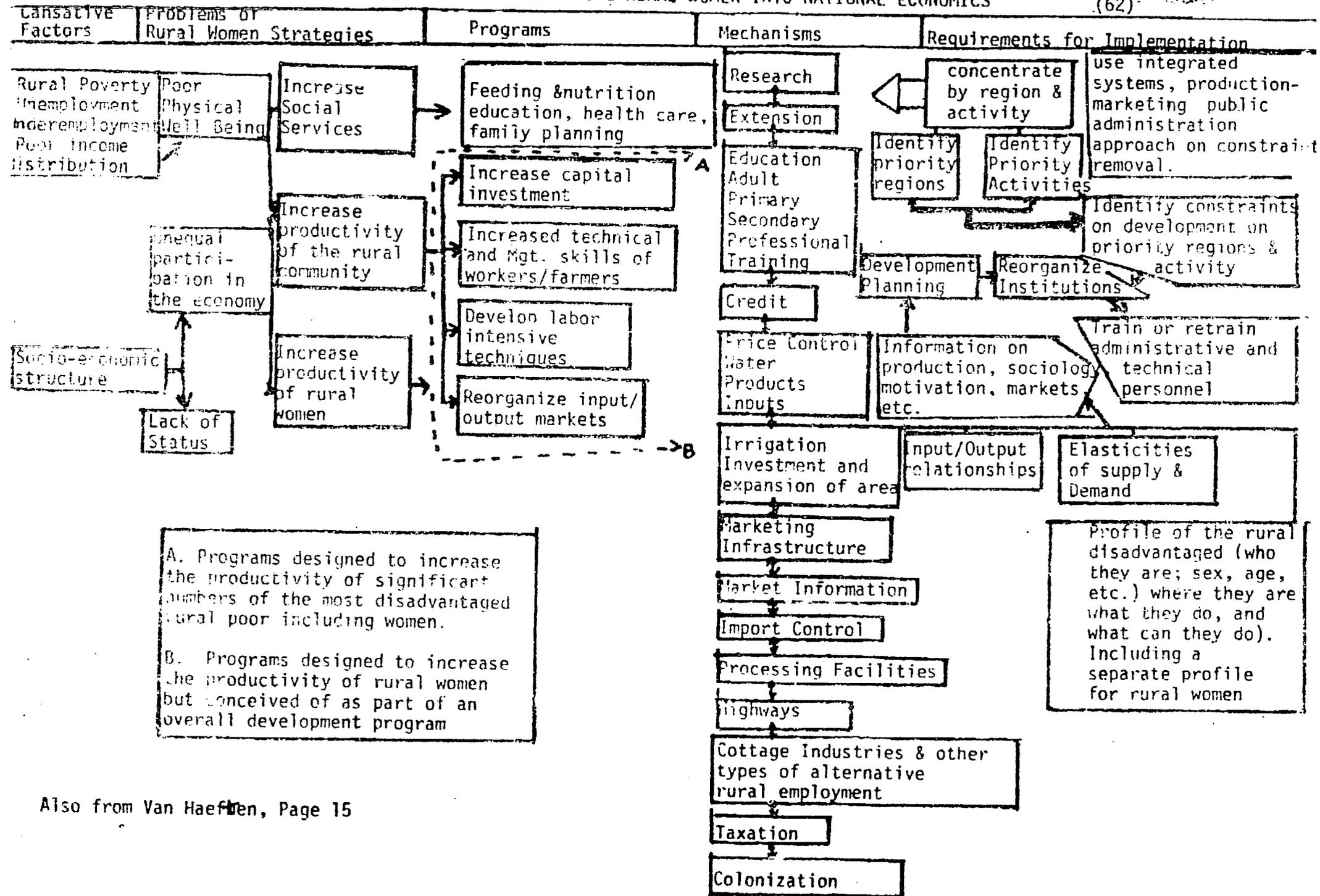
COLLECTIF

Amenagements rizicole
Canaux d'irrigation
Ecole
Dispensaire
Decortiqueuse riz
Meilleure route
Puits
Marche
Magasin d'alimentation
Magasin d'outils
Semences selectionnees
Alphabetization
Centre d'animation feminine
Autres

INDIVIDUEL

Moulins a main
Charette
Charrue
Bicyclette
Mobylette
Radio
Moustiquaire
Montre
Betail
Autres

A gauche notes les priorites decrit par les vil-
lageois librement, puis a droite notes leurs priorites
apres avoir vu la liste.



TYPES OF LABOR	Mechanisms for Reaching Women		Impact on Women and their Welfare (Physical Well-Being, Extent and Level of Participation, Status)	
	DIRECT	THROUGH FAMILY OR FIRM	IMPACT ON WOMEN	RELATIONSHIP OF IMPACT TO THEIR WELFARE
HOUSEHOLD	Training in household skills, health, nutrition, etc.	Increased investment (e.g. well closer to the house)	Increase in time for: a. Leisure b. extra productive work in or out of the household. c. Education.	To the extent that a woman through the family decision making process, is able to use the benefits of her own labor to improve her own nutrition, health, etc., increasing her productivity will have a direct impact on improving her physical well-being. Or to the extent that a woman can use her extra time to increase her level of education, increasing her productivity can have a direct impact on her status and on the extent and level of her future participation in society and the economy. The extent to which the family controls the disposition of the fruits of womens' labor may depend on whether it is produced within or outside the family. In other words, women hired workers, entrepreneurs, and professionals may have more control over their income.
AGRICULTURAL LABOR OR FAMILY PLOT	Training in agricultural skills (time to plant, proper spacing, how and when to fertilize etc.	Increased investment in complementary inputs (fertilizers, seed, new tools)	Increase in: a. time for leisure other work, education; b. output for home consumption c. income if extra output sold.	
AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL LABOR FOR HIRE	Training in skills required on the job.	Increased investment in complementary inputs	Increase in: a. time for leisure and education b. income	
ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS MARKETING	Training in management as well as specific skills required by the job (e.g. grading for those active in marketing. Increased investment in complementary inputs		Increase in: a. Income b. Level of participation c. Status	Direct impact on level of participation and status. Increased income can be used to purchase better nutrition, health, etc. (indirect impact on increasing physical well-being.
PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES	General leading to professional education.		Increase in: a. Income b. Level of participation c. Status	

- Taken from: Van Haefken, R.K. and Cabon, Douglas, 1974; "A Strategy Paper for Integrating LDC Women into their National Economic