

**A CASE STUDY OF RURAL WOMEN HOMEWORKERS IN SAN KUMPHEANG,  
THAILAND**

by

**SAOWALEE COYLE**

**A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**Department of Sociology  
University of Manitoba  
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## Abstract

Changes in policies regarding population and economic diversification have led to recent industrialization in Thailand. Nevertheless, although the national economy is no longer dominated by agriculture, it continues to employ the majority of the rural population and remains an integral part of the lives of rural Thai villagers.

Subsistence rice villages in San Kumpheang are in transition. Due to their greater reliance on commodities purchased with cash, peasants must augment their traditional rice subsistence production by earning cash incomes. Thus village men and women seek employment outside the family farm in order to supplement farm income. At the same time women have become employed in wage labor within the home, so that they can continue their traditional non-wage reproductive and productive home labor. Women's work in reproduction of the labor force, i.e. housework and non-wage productive work, helps to preserve the household and in turn the subsistence economy. Moreover their role in the reproduction of the labor force has lowered the wage in the capitalist/industrial sector.

Due to the penetration of capitalism into the subsistence economy, rural women now face a "triple burden" of work: housework, unpaid family labor, and wage labor. This wage labor includes employment on other farms as well as homework. Nevertheless the traditional sexual division of labor (hereafter SDOL) prevails in peasant society, i.e. women remain first and foremost as housewives. As a result the capitalist sector benefits from cheap labor by rural women, and the subsistence sector is able to maintain and reproduce itself (as a reproductive and productive unit).

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## Chapter I

### Theoretical Background

#### I. Introduction

Analyses of the role of women in subsistence economies and of the sexual division of labor (hereafter SDOL) have recently focused on the issue of "domestic labor". In a changing world, subsistence agriculture faces the challenge of capitalist expansion and integration into the market economy. In addition to providing for their own subsistence, agricultural households must become more integrated into the economy through cash crop production and/or participation in wage labor markets.

Female domestic labor serves to preserve and maintain the non-capitalist mode of production by providing activities that are necessary for reproduction of the labor force: production of subsistence foods and daily maintenance (attending to other needs of family members). These activities permit lower wages, higher profits and greater capital accumulation within the capitalist economy.

In this study, I will tentatively conclude that rural women's role in the reproduction of the labor force is at the root of different forms of their subordination. At the same time I will also argue that these forms of subordination are partly conditioned by the nature of the production process as well as by the requirements of a given process of growth and accumulation.

#### II. Objectives Of The Thesis

The main purpose of this thesis is to study the role of household work by rural women within the framework of the household and the larger economy. I investigate the

hypothesis that women's economic activities in subsistence agriculture are conditioned by their role in the reproduction of the labor force. This thesis studies factors contributing to conditions of rural women as unpaid family laborers, agriculturalists, wage laborers and homeworkers. The village of San Kumpheang in northern Thailand provides the setting for a case study.

### **III. Significance of the Thesis**

This empirical study will attempt to further the understanding of the nature of women's work and of factors affecting the SDOL. Since the conditions of different women are not identical, this case study of a single village is not intended to provide generalizations about rural women in Thailand or in the Third World. Nevertheless it is only through a series of case studies that a more detailed understanding of these matters can be obtained.

### **IV. Theoretical Foundation**

#### **A. Subsistence Economy**

Studies of development in rural subsistence economies have often focused on the process of capital accumulation. Dependency theories have emphasized unequal development whereby underdeveloped non-capitalist modes of production are exploited by the capitalist mode of production (for example, Mandel (1970), Luxemburg (1973), and Amin (1975)).

The technical usage of the term "exploitation" implies the extraction of surplus value. I employ the term to the extraction of large amount of surplus value (i.e. in terms of labor) which is dependent upon low wages made possible by the co-existence of the

modes of production. Within the co-existence of modes of production, the measure of exploitation employed in this study is "labor intensification". In other words, in order to produce one wage laborer for capitalist mode of production, rural women work in three ways: non-wage reproductive, non-wage productive and wage productive labor.

By subsistence economy, I refer to an economy or sector of an economy based on a production relation in which life is (re-)produced by unpaid, use-value oriented subsistence work. Production within this sector is carried out primarily to meet the sector's own basic needs (Werlhof, 1988, p. 16). The subsistence sector, according to dependency theory, "allows the capitalist sector to pay a wage that covers only the subsistence needs of the wage laborer - normally a male migrant - rather than the family" (Beneria, 1982, p.131).

According to Marx, the subsistence economy will eventually disappear. However such self-destruction has not occurred as predicted by Marx. Subsistence economies have persisted over time.

Capitalism has not destroyed the subsistence economy, and the co-existence of these two different modes of production is commonly observed in the Third World. The process of exploitation of the subsistence economy (i.e. its labor power) by the capitalist economy consists of a contradictory organization of economic relations between the two sectors. On the one hand the latter preserves the former in order to obtain resources. On the other hand, the latter also tends to destroy the former by extracting surplus and profit (Meillassoux, 1981, p. 98, and his earlier work).

The subsistence economy benefits capitalism by providing necessary labor power at a low wage. The wage in the capitalist sector for labor from the subsistence sector can be low because production in the subsistence sector covers many of the costs of the workers' household as well as costs of reproduction of the labor force. As a result of the low wage, capitalists can realize greater profits.

As the market economy has gradually penetrated into a subsistence economy, production activity has gradually shifted from subsistence agriculture to the market. However in a predominantly agricultural society, a substantial share of the domestic labor force remains allocated to household activities, especially food production (Beneria, 1982, p. 132). As the capitalist sector expands, agricultural households are forced to obtain additional cash income in order to maintain and reproduce themselves. This requires further cash crop production and/or participation in the wage labor market. However, women are restricted to subsistence agricultural production and domestic activities since they are expected to assume the role of maintenance and reproduction of households (and hence the role of reproduction of the labor force entering the commodity labor market).

### **B. Domestic Labor: Women And Subsistence Production**

Feminist scholars, e.g. Deere (1976), Beneria (1979, 1982), Deere et.al. (1982), Mies (1982, 1988), Bennholdt-Thomsen (1982, 1988) and Werlhof (1982, 1988), argue that non-wage subsistence activities are the foundation upon which the wage labor-capital relations are built. Feminist scholars argue that this non-wage labor element or domestic labor, referring to the unpaid labor of subsistence producers and women, provides a precondition for an ongoing capital accumulation process.

The domestic unit and production unit, private and public spheres, and reproduction and production are all separated under capitalist relations of production. Due to this artificial separation, the household unit is left to cover its own reproduction costs by means of the work of women. Thus household/domestic labor reduces labor costs in commodity production by reducing the cost of maintenance and reproduction of labor power supplied to the capitalist economy.

Subsistence agricultural households require access to the means of production of subsistence, i.e. land, so that they can survive and continue to provide labor power to commodity production. As a result, female domestic labor in the subsistence sector includes (1) unpaid family labor in the home as well as in the family field, (2) employment on other farms, and/or (3) piece work employment in home industries. Subsistence producers, typically women, have been relegated exclusively to "the present form of housework, which arose with capitalism". In this respect, housework/domestic labor is being manipulated, reinforced, created and recreated (Werlhof, 1988, p. 16).

Thus women's subsistence work/domestic labor helps lower the wage costs for the market economy. Indeed the market wage is not sufficient to cover the costs of reproduction of labor power; so survival of the household depends on non-wage labor by women in the home and in subsistence production. Moreover during times of labor shortage women constitute a reserve pool of cheap and accessible labor for the market economy.

By reproduction, I refer to an ongoing process of renewing society as a whole (in both its social and economic aspects) as well as reproduction of people. This process

contains three facets. First, social reproduction refers to the perpetuation of the social system which implies the transmission of control of resources between generations. Second, biological reproduction/procreation refers to the physical development aspect of childbearing. Third, there is reproduction of the labor force, which refers to "the daily maintenance of workers and potential labor" and "the allocation of agents to positions within the labor process" (Beneria, 1979, p. 205). In addition reproduction of the labor force is restricted to "processes by which they (people) become workers", including tasks of schooling, socialization, meeting physical and emotional needs for workers and potential labor (Ibid, p.206).

The control over social reproduction, i.e. the effects of the inheritance system, other institutions and ideology that control biological reproduction leads to the control over women's reproductive activities and sexuality. The defined roles of women in the area of reproduction of the labor force in terms of reproductive activities, in turn condition their economic activities. In fact, this role is "at the root of the different forms taken by the subordination of women in different societies" (Ibid, p. 203). Moreover "women's participation in production, the nature of their work, and the division of labor between the sexes are viewed as the result of women's reproductive activities" (Ibid).

Furthermore, control over women's reproductive activities, i.e. control over social and biological reproduction, has two basic aspects. First, "the focal point of women's work becomes the household" since activities related to physical reproduction are concentrated in the household. Thus domestic activities have traditionally been allocated exclusively to women. In this respect "the household becomes the very root of patriarchy"

and SDOL is its "most immediate manifestation" (Ibid, p. 209). Second, control over reproductive activities leads to "the restriction of women's mobility". In sum these two aspects of control over reproduction greatly restrict the activities of women. Moreover " they reinforce the separation between the domestic and social spheres of production, and between women's and men's activities" (Ibid). Consequently women's work, i.e. domestic labor/subsistence work, is viewed as inferior to non-domestic work.

Furthermore, it is at the household level that patriarchal family relations and transmission of division of labor by sex, activity (domestic vs. non-domestic), and age become most restrictive. The SDOL, which allocates women exclusively to domestic activities based on their role in the area of reproduction, has greatly restricted women's access to wage labor. (a) These paid activities must be compatible with the care of children, and this generally restricts women from employment outside the home. (b) The type of employment available often depends on rural class hierarchies. (c) This employment is often subordinated to men's work and is age specific. Since social reproduction involves variety of structures such as age, sex, and other power relations, it follows that there are interrelation between different sets of structures. For example, there is sex-age combination regarding employment. In Third World it is rather common that young women employ in factory, but older women stay in the village to raise family. (d) This employment is often an extension of household work. (e) This employment generally involves a low wage and flexible hours (Ibid, pp. 211-215). In the final stage, women's role in economic activities outside the home is constrained by SDOL (which reproduces women's subordination in the home). At the same time their participation in production

outside the home reinforces the SDOL.

Penetration of capital into the subsistence economy is built upon the existing patriarchy in the society. Indeed it is sometimes argued that patriarchy and capitalism are the same system. This system is dominated by the drive for capital accumulation (Armstrong, 1984, p. 38) and is "characterized by a SDOL that subordinates women to men" (Ibid, p. 45), while at the same time it subjects one class to exploitation by another class. In addition Armstrong argued that "capitalism, biology, ideology and actions of women and men all play their part in ensuring" that women and men behave differently and that women are subordinated to men (Ibid, p. 39).

### **C. Women's Paid Employment: The Case of Homework**

I have argued that capitalism is premised on free wage labor and separation of domestic and non-domestic spheres of production. In contrast such a separation does not exist in the case of homework, where rural women participate in wage labor within the home. As a result, the participation of rural women in production of these commodities is viewed as part of their reproductive tasks within the household.

Mies, in *The Lacemakers* (1982), examined the lives and work of landless peasant wives who produced lace at home for the world market. This study of domestic labor and rural women's paid employment examines the SDOL, social, political, historical and economic contexts (at regional, national and international levels). Women's work in the putting-out industry (homework) is a typical case of the exploitation of women's labor based on their socially defined role within the domestic/reproductive domain. Moreover these rural women in the putting-out industry are tied to international capital whose only



interest is the cheapest source of labor. These types of income generating activities are often an extension of their household work, i.e. tasks are often considered to be female works such as embroidery, hand-weaving and other handicrafts.

The impacts of capitalist expansion on women (i.e. on women's work and the forms of their subordination) have apparently varied by society. The effects of capital penetration on the subsistence sector seem specific to regional conditions such as access to land, number of large scale land owners, and number of landless laborers (Sen, 1982). Such impacts depend on the degree of impoverishment of the peasant agricultural sector such as the distribution of the means of production or the social differentiation in the rural economy.

Moreover the vulnerability of women is reinforced by systems of male domination. On the one hand, gender-based subordination limits women's economic and political resources and involvement. On the other hand it imposes a SDOL, which relegates women to domestic activities and low wage jobs in the informal sector while assigning men to the public domain of commodity production (Ibid, pp. 26-27). This cultural subordination of women, through ideological manipulation and control over women's reproductive roles and sexuality, has "reinforced male control of resources and power; and the divisions of labor that have enshrined male privileges" (Ibid, p. 28). This is the process of domestication of women by means of creating, recreating and reinforcing the ideological and material definition of housewives. Indeed the ideology of female seclusion worked together with a given set of productive relations to ensure cheap labor to home industry.

Lacemaking is viewed simply as housewives turning leisure time and activities

into income. In turn the female labor employed in these industries is viewed as non-work or something that is not "real work" and earns no real income. Consequently these activities are seen as deserving a relatively low wage. Within the framework of the putting-out industry, the SDOL tends to reproduce gender asymmetrical relationships at the household level, creates mechanisms of female subordination, and reinforces such subordination under capitalist production.

The organization of home industry as in the putting-out system (Mies, 1982) or subcontracting organization (Beneria and Roldan, 1987, pp. 70-73) and the social definition of the workers as housewives are based upon "a special interconnection between the spheres of production and reproduction" which in other industries are usually separated. The element of "non-separation" as such "forms the precondition for the exploitation" of the home workers (Ibid, p. 72). Within the lacemaking home industry, wage relations are informal and workers are domesticated and atomized. In sum, the exploitation of rural women is a function of this interconnection or non-separation of productive and reproductive relations, of rural women entering the wage labor market within the home.

In sum, the study of rural women in a subsistence economy, focusing on their reproductive role, must be understood in terms of the specific context of regional and national historical and social development. In emphasizing women's role in the reproduction of the labor force, we can utilize one aspect of reproduction of the labor force which is the size of household. Number of children and age of children determine the nature and content of women's reproductive role in terms of child care tasks as well

as other housework. In addition women's age, marital status, family structure and household composition shape their domestic work and hence condition their participation in economic activities. The analysis must be conducted in relation to three related factors. First it must be analyzed in relation to agricultural structures and modes of production, i.e. subsistence production and capitalist mode of production. Second it must be studied in relation to the articulation of these modes of production, i.e. in terms of commercialization, proletarianization and/or semi-proletarianization. By semi-proletarianization, I mean that the family owns the means of subsistence production (land) and remains tied to the reproduction of labor power (Deere, 1976, p. 13). Third it must be analyzed in the light of the availability of labor resources, development of wage labor market, labor process and change in labor process (Beneria, 1979, p. 215, Deere, 1976, pp. 13-14) as well as the general economic conditions in the rural communities.

#### **V. Questions Orienting the Study**

The above theoretical discussion suggests three questions that should orient this study of the effect of capitalist development in agricultural production on rural women's work and the SDOL. First, will this process lead to the phenomena of feminization of agriculture which results from emigration of rural men? Second, what impact does the integration of subsistence economy into cash economy have on rural women and the SDOL? Finally, what is the implication of the Thai population/birth control policy on rural women's work and the SDOL?

This thesis categorizes the labor of rural women into three types: (1) non-wage productive labor, (2) wage productive labor, and (3) non-wage reproductive labor.

Although these components of labor are interrelated in the lives of rural women, such a categorization facilitates discussion. I attempt to address the above questions for each of these categories of labor.

Non-wage reproductive labor in the form of housework is discussed in chapter 3.

Non-wage productive labor in the form of unpaid family labor is discussed in chapter 4.

Wage productive labor in the form of homework is examined in chapter 5.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Setting: Background Data And Methodology**

This chapter provides general information about setting for this study and contains a description of the subject of this study. This chapter is intended to introduce the readers to basic information.

#### **I. An Overview Of The Thai Economy: Social History and Political Economy**

##### **A. The Rice Economy**

The Thai economy has long been characterized in terms of small family farm production of rice. Since the mid-14th century Siamese society was based on a two class system: the ruling class headed by the king, and the peasantry engaged in rice farming (Elliott, 1978, p. 33). The absolute monarch (King Borommtrailokonath, 1448-1488) issued laws enforcing rigid civil, military and provincial hierarchies in order to gain complete control over the kingdom. These hierarchies determined a position for every individual. Everyone was assigned a number of units of sakdina, literally "field power": 5 rai (2.5 rai = 1 acre) to a slave, 25 rai to a freeman ... and 100,000 rai to a member of the royal family (Wyatt, 1982, p. 73). Moreover a person's position was related to the number of followers (laborers and labor power) under his control. This Asiatic state relied on labor rendered by all freemen on public works, military service, etc. While land was not heritable, it was granted by grace of the king according to sakdina. Thus power was generated and maintained by the membership in the court/bureaucratic structure (Jacobs, 1971, p. 4). In other words the monarch was the collective personification of the communal rights of the village communities.

Since the economy was based on rice production, the monarch and the state controlled the management of water in the northern and central plains. The state constructed irrigation works using labor rendered by peasants. Peasants, moreover, were obligated to provide tribute (e.g. in the form of rice or forest products), taxes in kind or in cash. Most of the social surplus was extracted from peasants in the form of produce, primarily rice, and labor. The corvee system placed women in the role as the more active subsistence rice producers while men rendered their labor to the state. At the same time the monarch controlled international trade (commerce with China, India, Japan) involving tribute.

This pre-capitalist social formation remained until the Bowring Treaty with Great Britain introduced free international trade in 1858. This and subsequent treaties led to increased demands for rice on export markets. Increased exports reflected both external demands and the state's desire to compensate for revenue lost after the abolition (by the Bowring Treaty) of state monopolized trading. The state shifted from its trading monopoly to taxation in order to obtain revenue from trade.

The state induced peasants to concentrate on rice production by changing the required rent-tax, i.e. by reducing the fee for exemption from corvee from 18 to 6 baht. Later slavery was abolished and emphasis was placed on monetary taxation (Feeny, 1982, p. 91), while Chinese migrant labor was hired to do public work in place of corvee labor. In effect, Thai peasants were allowed to concentrate more on rice production, since they were no longer required to render labor to the State. At the same time they were forced to produce more rice in order to obtain the cash needed to pay the new taxes.

The Bowring Treaty was followed by an expansion of rice production in the Central part of the country, but there was no expansion in the North due to poor transportation (Natsupha, 1990, p. 53). Significant changes in rice production in the North were delayed until the onset of monetary taxation in the North. In 1873 the State began collecting taxes (as cash). In 1900 when Chiang Mai (in the North) was more effectively incorporated into the administration of Bangkok, the State initiated taxation on agricultural land. The State also initiated a head tax of 4 baht on every male aged 18-60 years and a commutation tax. This induced changes in production as well as resistance: "peasants faced hardship as they did not know what to sell to obtain money for tax payment. This in turn forced them to rebel....." (Ibid, p. 54).

After the railroad reached Chiang Mai in 1922, the province began to export rice to Bangkok. Rice exports from the North increased from 650,000 hahb (5% of Thai rice exports) in 1925 to 1.3 million hahb (9% of Thai rice exports) in 1935 (Ibid). This indicates that peasants in the North were in fact induced to integrate themselves into the market economy by the joint effect of State policies freeing peasants from corvee, forcing peasants to concentrate on rice production in order to pay monetary taxes, and opening Chiang Mai to rail transportation.

Another effect of the Thai modernization effort initiated by King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) was that feudal chiefs (chaonai) of the North began (in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) to develop and occupy land. The chaonai, who owned the highly fertile land, increased investments such as irrigation. In the mountainous North, the fertile agricultural land is located along rivers and valleys. In contrast peasants

generally owned small plots of farm land located between mountains, and their farm land could not be expanded within these regions. Peasants who did not own land often rented land or migrated to the encroached forests in the hinterland. Evidently, as early as 1930, approximately 27% of peasants in the North were landless (Natsupha, 1990, p. 54-55).

The small size of average landholdings for peasant rice production in Northern Thailand has been documented. For the Upper North (which includes Chiang Mai) in 1983, ARTEP/ILO found that 13.5%, 31.4% and 27.5% of peasant households were landless, owned less than 5 rai and owned 5-10 rai, respectively (Manarangsan, 1985, p. 32). The average land holding in the Upper North for 1982 was reported by the Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute as approximately 12.6 rai per household. In Chiang Mai the average farm size was even smaller at 8.9 rai. In the Lower North the average farm size was 35.6 rai (Chulalongkorn Univ. Social Research Institute, 1985, p. 2-34).

Traditionally Thailand's exports were limited almost entirely to rice, so that the economy was extremely sensitive to fluctuations in the international price for rice. Then changes in world markets eventually led to agricultural diversification and industrialization. As the demands for kenaf, cassava and several other secondary crops increased on world markets in the 1950's and 1960's, there was an increase in production and export of these cash crops (Caldwell, 1978, p. 38).

However these cash crops were not produced in the North. In contrast, peasants in Chiang Mai produce cash crops within small family-centered units, and these crops (soybeans, peanuts, cucumbers and mugbeans) are intended for domestic rather than



export markets.

In sum, the State has induced peasant farmers to specialize in rice production while feudal chiefs (and later Chinese merchants) consolidated the means of production, i.e. land and irrigation. The geography of the North has also contributed to the small size of peasant holdings. Thus peasant rice production largely continues as subsistence farming.

Farm land in the Upper North is well irrigated and relatively productive with 1983 yields of 500-550 Kgs per rai (in comparison to yields of 300-350 Kgs per rai in the Lower North) (Manarangsan, 1985, p. 134). Nevertheless rice subsistence farmers in Chiang Mai must seek additional cash income to supplement household income from agriculture. This additional income is obtained by wage labor, off-farm employment and/or homework.

## **B. The Shift Towards Industrialization**

Around 1960 the Premier (and General) Sarit Thanarat initiated the first national plan to achieve industrialization by adopting an import substitution policy. As a result, the industrial sector grew rapidly from 18.3% of Gross Domestic Product in 1957 to 31.1% in 1968 (Ingram, 1971, p. 235). Rice and other cash crops remained important in the economy.

The period from 1960-80 showed high economic growth but was characterized by two different trade policies. The first period (from 1960 to mid-1970s) was the era of import substitution, particularly in nondurable consumer goods geared towards the domestic market. The second period was the era of export promotion, particularly for

manufactured goods. This was illustrated by the decline in the share of consumer goods in imports from 59.07% in 1951, to 19.36% in 1970, and to 10.58% in 1981 and the increase in the share of industrial products in exports from 30.55% in 1977 to 32.70% in 1981 (Kim and Vorasopontaviporn, 1989, pp. 61-62).

During the first era of import-substitution, the government apparently favored the development of large firms, typically located in the Greater Bangkok areas. All large firms received various promotional privileges in 1982 while there seemed to be a lack of information/study on small firms (Amara, 1989, p. 2-9). In contrast in the second era of export promotion, the government shifted its policy towards the promotion of small firms. This led to a rapid growth of small firms, in particular handicrafts and other value-added products typically made by women (Ibid). In fact the export-oriented policy implemented in the fifth plan (1981-1985) was carried out in conjunction with an announced policy of eradicating rural poverty. Thus small rural and cottage industries were promoted in the fifth plan. In the sixth plan, the policy of rural industrialization continued, but with an emphasis on utilization of local resources as well as the establishment of businesses outside of Greater Bangkok (Ibid p. 2-10).

Increasingly the economy has shifted towards industry and manufacturing. In 1985 textiles surpassed rice as the nation's major export commodity (Pongsapich, 1989, p. 2-7). Exports of other manufactured products such as garments, gems, jewellery, leather and leather products have also increased substantially (Ibid, 1989, p. 2-8). The share of manufacturing in GDP has increased (16.0% in 1970, 19.9% in 1975, 21.7% in 1980, 20.7% in 1985, 22.2% in 1987) whereas the share of agriculture in GDP has decreased

(27.0% in 1970, 24.8% in 1975, 20.6% in 1980, 19.9% in 1985, 17.6% in 1987) (Pongsapich, 1989, p.2-17 and Parnwell and Khamanarong, 1990, p. 8).

### **C. Policies On Home Industry And Tourism**

Since the early stage of Thai national development, there have been six national and social development plans. It was under the regime of Sarit Thanarat in the early 1960's that the terms "development" (Khawm Patana) and "progress" (Khawm Kao Nah) were popularized. The first national plan was established in 1961 under the National Economic Development Board, which was eventually transformed into the current National Economic and Social Development Board (Fallon, 1983, p. 213, p. 215).

In the fifth plan (1982-1986) the Thai government began to focus on rural poverty within the broad themes of rural development and industrialization. The government encouraged the private sector to invest in small tourist-related businesses (Tourist Authority Thailand, 1987, p. 5-1, 5-3). The plan attempted to combine export oriented policy with rural industrialization as a means of eradicating rural poverty (Akarsanee, 1983, p. 119).

Various domestic and international agencies attempted to facilitate implementation of the plan (Ibid, p. 120, 122, 124, 135). These organizations include the Industrial Service Institute (ISI), Thailand Management Development and Productivity Center (TMDPC), Population and Community Development Association (PDA), and Asian Regional Training and Employment Program (ARTEP) of the International Labor Organization. Financial and managerial assistance and assistance in marketing were provided. These programs attempted to develop home industries and traditional handicrafts

such as silk and cotton production, cloth making, embroidery clothes/clothing, basketry, artificial flowers, and pottery.

The Chiang Mai area has long been a major tourist attraction within Thailand. Thus the policy of rural industrialization and promotion of tourism went hand-in-hand in Chiang Mai: both objectives implied an emphasis on expansion of small home industries such as embroidery for both the export market and for tourist demand. According to this plan Chiang Mai was designated as the center for tourism in the North, and similarly the Center of Industrial Promotion for the North was also established in Chiang Mai. Traditional Northern cultures and arts were to be encouraged since these were the main tourist attractions. Cultural preservation was also a major theme for rural industrialization plan which emphasized the revitalization of traditional artistic handicrafts (Ibid, p. 133). Small scale production of handicrafts and embroidery was expanded in Chiang Mai in order to earn foreign exchange through exports and tourism. While Chiang Mai has been one of the major craft producer of the country, the value of craft exports for Thailand during the period of the fifth plan (1982-1986): craft exports increased from 8587.1 million baht in 1982 to 20766.2 million baht in 1986, and to 31877.5 million baht in 1987 (Thai Handicraft Promotion Division, Department of Industrial Promotion, 1990).

The sixth plan (1987-1991) emphasized industrial development as Thailand sought to become a Newly Industrialized Country (NIC) (Pongsapich, 1989, p. 1-9). The manufacturing sector of 1988 was expected to rise by 10% as world demand for Thai products continued to remain high. Foreign investment in export oriented industries (particularly textiles and garments) remained high during the period of the sixth plan,

while tourism remained the major single source of foreign exchange for the country (Ibid, p. 2-8).

The number of tourists visiting Thailand increased dramatically over time: 81,000 in 1960, 255,000 in 1965, 1,453,000 in 1978, 2,015,000 in 1981, 2,818,000 in 1986, and 4,809,000 in 1989. Similarly revenue from tourism increased substantially over these years. The tourism development plan accelerated directly and indirectly the expansion of home industry in Thailand and in Chiang Mai (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1990).

Income earned from tourism can be classified by type of expenditure: shopping (primarily for handicrafts), accomodation, food and beverage, entertainment, and transportation. The annual share of shopping in total tourist expenditures from 1982 to 1987 was 37.2%, 38.2%, 30.16%, 33.66%, 27.39%, and 26.82% (Tourism Authority of Thailand). Although the share of expenditures on shopping had declined slightly over this period, shopping still accounted for the largest share. In addition there was considerable demand for local handicrafts and goods within the domestic market.

Similar events happened in the province of Chiang Mai. There was an increase in the production of local handicrafts such as cotton and silk making, paper umbrellas, silverware, laquerware, woodcrafts, and ready-made clothes and embroidery. At the time of the initial promotion by the government in 1977, there was a dramatic increase in production of embroidery and ready-made clothes in the district of San Kumpheang (Sangpradab, 1984). San Kumpheang was the main location in production, distribution and trade of local handicrafts. Products made in this district were distributed to other domestic markets and to other countries.

In 1977 the municipal government of Chiang Mai also established a central market for local handicrafts at "Chiang Mai Night Bazar" in the center of the city. Now this is a landmark in the province. This coincided with a boom in local handicrafts production, which typically was based on the putting-out system. Initially vendors consisted primarily of indigenous people: 70% of these vendors were small businesses/producers who lived in the province, and most other vendors were from nearby provinces rather than from Bangkok (Tourism Authority Thailand, 1987, p 4-12). Thus tourism and handicrafts production played an important role in the local economy. In fact, it was estimated that expenditures by tourists increased local incomes in Chiang Mai by 1,398.2, 1,144.7, 1,541.2 and 1,673.2 million baht in 1973, 1975, 1977 and 1979, respectively (Ibid, p. 4-7). Moreover the share of shopping within tourists' total expenditures in Chiang Mai was relatively high: 33.85% for Thai tourists and 21.18% for foreign tourists (Ibid, p. 4-6).

#### **D. Embroidery Home Industry: San Kumpheang Women and Homework**

As mentioned previously, Thai policies on industrialization, i.e. import substitution and export orientation, reflected the shift in Thai structure of industrial production. This structure shifted from large scale to small scale. In fact it was within the second phase that rural industrialization based on promotion of small-scale home-based cottage industries was implemented. These small firms often minimize investment cost by being labor-intensive and paying below the minimum wage (Pongsapich, 1989, p. 2-10). Thus within this second phase industries based on the putting-out system of production were expanded.

Rural women's participation in the embroidery homework is a particularly

interesting area for research in that it embraces women's roles in both the subsistence economy and the market economy. Consequently, it is hoped that a study focused on women embroidery homeworkers will reveal how capitalist production relations are influencing women subsistence rice peasants in their roles as workers and housewives. Since embroidery work/needlework is considered to be exclusively an activity for women, the study will attempt to demonstrate that women's participation in this homework is an extension of their domestic work and is conditioned by their role in reproduction of the labor force.

The embroidery home industry and its female homeworkers are a significant aspect of the local economy, yet there are no official records regarding this industry. This is partly because this industry belongs to the informal sector of the economy and is classified as a family business (without any industrial or business registration).

Nevertheless there are several studies providing some information on the embroidery industry in San Kumpheang and in the subdistrict of On Nua, which is the site for my research. A study of the tourist industry's impact on local culture in Ban Bo Sang, San Kumpheang indicated that embroidery and local clothing were among the major goods sold to tourists in San Kumpheang (Sangpradab, 1984, p. 22). During 1974-1975, the local embroidery industry was at its peak (Ibid, p. 106). In 1979 local embroidery accounted for 17.6% of the value of all local goods sold (Ibid, p. 107).

The provincial office of Industry in Chiang Mai provided various statistics on the number of registered businesses in the province from 1985 to 1989, and this information provides a partial overview of trends in the general industrial sector of Chiang Mai. In

1986 there was an increase in the number of registered businesses, capital investment and employment: the number of registered businesses increased by 7.54% (from 1499 in 1985 to 1612 in 1986), capital investment increased by 14.38%, and employment increased by 7.34%. However there was a decline in number of registered businesses in 1987 (to 1567). Nevertheless capital investment was 31.47% higher than in previous year. Furthermore there was a decline in the capital-labor ratio, which implies that new businesses registered in 1987 were relatively capital intensive (Office of Industry, Chiang Mai, 1987, p. 101). Of 1567 registered businesses in 1987, 1.53% (24) produced ready-make clothing (Ibid, p. 102). Eight of these producers were located in San Kumpheang (Ibid, p. 104).

According to the same statistics, the industrial sector of the province continued to grow in 1989: the number of registered businesses, capital investment and employment all increased (Office of Industry, Chiang Mai, 1990, p. 14). Moreover number of registered ready-make cloth producers increased by 6 from 1988 and another 3 businesses were obtaining operating permits (Ibid, p. 22).

The directory of industrial factories in Chiang Mai indicated that in 1989 there were 1,588 factories registered legally (Office of Industry, Chiang Mai, 1990, p.304). Among these there were 18 factories producing ready-make clothing, and 8 (44%) of these factories/producers were located in the district of San Kumpheang (another 7 were located in the Muang district of Chiang Mai city). The ready-make clothing industry in San Kumpheang accounted for 6% of all 144 registered producers for the district.

However another governmental source of information provided a somewhat



different account. The directory of handicraft producers in the North indicated 15 businesses producing ready-made clothing in Chiang Mai province in 1988-1989 (Department of Promotion of Thai Handicraft, 1988-1989, pp. 113-129). Only 2 of these businesses were specified as producers of embroidery clothing. One producer was located in Chiang Mai city (Muang district) and the other producer was located in San Shay district, located near the city of Chiang Mai. Of these 15 handicraft producers in Chiang Mai, 7 (47%) were located in Muang and another 7 were located in San Kumpheang. Moreover only 2 producers in San Kumpheang were listed in both the directory of handicraft producers and the directory of industrial factories. As noted earlier, small scale producers are less likely to be registered. Moreover at least one large scale producer of ready-made clothing and embroidery work in San Kumpheang was not listed in either directory. This business (named Tai Huo) employed many of the female homeworkers included in the research for this thesis.

The 7 producers of ready-made clothing in San Kumpheang indicated employment levels of between 50 and 500 workers per business (Ibid, pp. 114-116). Each of the two large scale producers, who were listed in the directory of industrial factories, hired 500 workers. Another two producers each hired approximately 50-100 workers, and the other 3 businesses did not report any statistics (Ibid). Moreover there were 796 households (out of 21,569 households) in San Kumpheang engaged in embroidery homework in 1986 (Ministry of Agriculture and cooperatives, 1986, p. 3, 132).

The scale of the embroidery industry has increased, and this is reflected in capital investment and employment of labor. The industry, which initially consisted of small

family enterprises, has been augmented and apparently dominated by larger businesses employing 50 to 500 workers per firm. At the same time, the location of production has moved from the producers' houses to large factories with investment of 800,000-6,400,000 baht (Office of Industry, Chiang Mai, 1990, pp. 103-105). Moreover in 1987 there was a decline in the number of registered businesses, while capital investment continued to increase. The shift in the size of the industry can presumably be attributed in large part to government plans and policies for rural industrialization and exports of manufactured goods under the sixth national plan (1987-1991). This plan emphasized expansion and transformation of rural-based local crafts to cater to both export and tourist markets. In contrast, in the fifth national plan rural industrialization of crafts was intended primarily to meet tourist demands. Although there is no clear evidence of an increase in numbers of women homeworkers due to these plans, it is apparent that women homeworkers continue to work in San Kumpheang's embroidery industry. Whether they are small home-based enterprises or large factories for Thai-Japanese companies, these embroidery clothing businesses rely partly on the labor of rural women homeworkers.

World demand for Thai crafts increased during this period as indicated by the volume of craft export sales. Thai craft export sales increased from 213 million baht in 1970 to 8.5 billion baht in 1982, for an average annual increase of 38%. This was considerably higher than the average increase in value of all trade (Pye, 1988, p. 79). This implies that the export market for Thai crafts was expanding while its local domestic trade was decreasing, and this reflected a decline in the share of shopping in total tourists' expenses. This trend continued in 1987 as craft export sales increased to 31.9 billion baht

from 20.8 billion baht in 1986 (Thai Handicraft Promotion Division, Department of Industrial Promotion, 1990). This increase occurred during the sixth plan. During the fifth national plan (1982-1986) the value of craft export sales had also increased from 8.5 billion baht in 1982 to 20.8 billion baht in 1986 (Ibid).

In sum, the Thai development policies with respect to rural industrialization and tourism in Chiang Mai have promoted opportunities for rural women in the area, particularly in San Kumpheang district, to earn cash income. Government activities (in terms of assistance, marketing, establishment of the center for Industrial Promotion in Chiang Mai, and creation of the Night Bazaar) has increased the involvement of rural women in embroidery homework.

The early State's actions of monetary taxation pushed peasants into production of rice for the export market. In addition, consolidation of farm land by officials, feudal chiefs and Chinese merchants implied small plots of land for peasants. This tended to restrict peasants to subsistence rice farming. Later irrigation (although initiated by large scale landlords) was eventually extended by the government to peasants. As a result, peasant households could produce enough rice for household consumption and still market a surplus.

Most recently government policies promoting rural industrialization and tourism in Chiang Mai have increased the production of embroidery clothing (embroidery homework) in San Kumpheang. This increase in production was intended by the government to meet tourist demand within the domestic market rather than export demand. Later during the shift in embroidery production towards exports, there occurred

an increase in average size of business, as indicated by an increase in capital investment and labor employment. I will argue that these policies led to a division of labor between young women who engage in embroidery work in the factory and married women who engage in embroidery work within the home.

## **II. An Overall Population Policy In Thailand**

The dominant image of Thai women has been that of motherhood (Keyes, 1984, p. 227, Muecke, 1984, and Kirsch, 1985, p. 305). The social and cultural definition of gender and sex-role rooted in Buddhism has shaped people's consciousness and their worldview. According to the Dhamma - the teaching of the Lord Buddha - human life is described by the principle of Karma. A person's life is determined by the merit accumulated in past lives as well as the merit accumulated in the present life.

However it is possible to change the course of one's life by merit making, i.e. by becoming a monk. However women are prohibited from being monks. A woman can only gain merit by becoming a mother. Thus women gain "maturity" or "social recognition" only through men as they become mothers (Tantiwiranond and Pandey, 1987, p. 138). One study of a village in Chiang Mai indicated that childbearing is rooted in the moral terms of Buddhism in that it improves a woman's karma by (1) providing a winyan ("life principle") with a new body for its reincarnation and (2) assuring a woman's merit as she aged and deceased, through her children's actions (Muecke, 1984, p. 462). The most important action is that of a son becoming a monk.

There are two important consequences of the ideology of motherhood. First women are allocated as producers of children, and the more children they bear the higher

social status they can enjoy. Second it places higher social value on sons than daughters. Such ideology has functioned very well in an agricultural society such as Thailand where the majority of labor is required in labor intensive rice farming. This ideology has had a large impact on Thais in the past (this issue will be discussed in the following section).

Moreover the ideology of motherhood includes women's responsibilities of child rearing and other household-related tasks involving daily maintenance of children and household as a whole. That is women's responsibilities within the home range far beyond the role of childbearing, i.e. biological reproduction. The ideology of motherhood traditionally has been essential to Thai women's role and status within society.

Population policy in Thailand has reflected as well as reinforced this ideology. In the past and prior to 1910 (when the first modern census was undertaken), the state was interested only in increasing the population and decreasing mortality. A similar policy had been maintained throughout the period of absolute monarchy and continued in the period of 1930-50. Particularly, during the Pibulsongkarm era (1938-44, 1947-50), contraceptive practices were restricted (Prasartkul and Sethaput, 1982, p. 237). This was due to the need to obtain labor required for rice production as the state single revenue was from the export of rice. As a result the population increased from 8 million in 1911 to 26.2 million in 1960 (Ibid, p. 235) (table 2.1).

After WWII Thailand had a high population growth rate, for example the growth rate during the 1950's was more than 3 percent, due to a reduction in the mortality rate associated with modern medical technology and a constant high fertility rate (Prasartkul and Sethaput, 1982, p. 237). Accordingly in 1960 the Thai population was relatively

young, with a sex ratio of 100.38 (indicating the number of males per 100 females) and 45% of the population was under 15 years of age (Prasith-Rathsint and Paimpiti, 1982, p. 2). The total fertility rate circa 1962 for the kingdom was 6.5 births per woman over her lifetime (Muecke, 1984,p. 467). This evidently reflected the effect of the ideology designating women as producers of children. In fact, scholars (e.g. Prasith-rathsint and Piampiti, and Muecke) indicated that during the period prior to the national policy on population control initiated in 1970 women with large numbers of children enjoyed higher status than those with few or none. For instance, women in Chiang Mai sought the ideal of a large family as reflected in the old saying, "two children every three years" (saam pii son khon), and thus on average they had 6-7 living children (Muecke, 1984, p.462).

Table 2.1 Population in Thailand, 1911-90

Year	Population (million)
1911	8.3
1960	26.2
1970	34.3
1980	46.96
1990	56.68

Source: Prasartkul and Sethaput, 1982, p. 235 and TDRI, 1992, p. 3

This high population growth rate together with an increased cost of living led to substantial increases in the cost of rearing children. The government began to recognize that the high population growth rate would restrict Thailand's economic development. In

fact as early as in 1958 the international organization, namely World Bank, had recommended that the Thai government a family planning program. During this period a committee was developed to assist the development of a family planning policy. At the same time, birth control actions had been initiated with a campaign, "mee look mark ja yak jon" ( to have many children would result in poverty). Thus in 1965-1967, contraceptive devices such as pill, IUD were distributed to clinics. This indicated that the government was extremely aggressive in its effort to reduce the population growth. Women were used as birth control acceptors. The policy of birth control played on women's socially defined role of the sole responsible person for well being of their children. In this sense women were manipulated to participate in the birth control program.

With the cooperation with the United Nations, the government initiated a national policy on population control within the Third National Social and Economic Plan (1972-76). The government sought to reduce the population growth rate from 3.0 to 2.5 percent per annum during this plan.

Furthermore in the Fourth Plan (1977-81), the government sought to further reduce the population growth rate to 2.1 percent per annum by attempting to reduce the birth rate from 34.5 to 29.0 per 1000 and the death rate from 9.0 to 8.0 per 1000. The population of Thailand in 1980 was estimated to be 46.8 million. 49.8% were women, children under 15 years of age constituted 40%, while those between 15-50 years of age constituted 49% and the rest 11%. Moreover it was estimated that the population in 1990 will reach 55.4 millions, with a slightly older population and sex ratio of 101 males to 100 females (Prasith-Rathsint and Paimpiti, 1982, p. 2). As a result, population increased from 42.96

million in 1976 to 48.18 millions in 1981, with an average population growth rate of 2.2 percent per annum (Sukdis, et al, 1982, p.208).

In addition the policy on population control was continued in the Fifth National Plan (1982-86) which projected the population growth rate to fall to 1.5 percent per annum by the end of 1986 (Ibid). In this plan the more permanent methods (sterilization and vasectomy) were emphasized, particularly in areas with high fertility such as in the Northeast and the South of the country (Prasartkul and Sethaput, 1982, p. 242).

During this period, the population in the North increased more slowly than in Thailand as a whole. In 1983, the population of the Northern region was 10.2 million people, which was 20.5 per cent of Thailand's total population. The annual rate of population increase for the region around that time averaged 1.6 per cent, in contrast to a national average of 2.0 per cent (Chiang Mai University, pp 1-14).

In 1983 Chiang Mai had the largest population in the North, i.e. 1.2 million. The population for Chiang Mai increased at an average rate of 1.8 per cent, which was below the national average but above the average for the North (ibid 1-16, 1-17). Data indicates that over the period 1970 to 1980, labor force participation rates increased for both adult males and females but decreased for children (under 15 years) (ibid 1-21).

Both economic forces and government policy had influenced women's childbearing as the total fertility rate (defined as the average number of children born to married women of age 15 years or older) for Thailand dropped to 4.0 in 1974-75. Based on the 1980 Census data, there was a similar pattern of fertility between urban and rural women. Women engaged in transport had the highest fertility rate of 4.7. Women engaged in



agriculture had the second highest fertility rate, 4.4 for urban women and 4.0 for rural women. In addition housewives had relatively high fertility, 3.1 for urban women and 3.9 for rural women. Women in clerical jobs had the lowest fertility rate, 1.8 for urban women and 1.8 for rural women (Debavalya, 1983, pp. 31-35).

Moreover it was estimated that, in 1981, there were at least 8 million women at childbearing age (15-50 years old) (Prasrtkul and Sethaput, 1982, p. 234). Reduction in the fertility rate is expected to lead to a reduction in the number of women of childbearing age in the future.

Logically, the Thai population policy believed that as women had fewer children, they would be able to participate in the labor force. In 1980, married women without children had the highest participation rate in the labor force. In addition there was a gradual decline in the rate of female participation in the labor force as the number of children increases, particularly among younger women (Debavalya, 1983, p. 31). Muecke argued that women have gradually shifted their ideal role from making babies towards making money as a result of economic pressure and government policy providing ready access to birth control pills (Muecke, 1984, pp. 468-470). As a result (and as indicated in the objective of the Third Plan), Thai peasants have realized the high cost of raising children and child rearing has been perceived more) as less productive than in previous Thai peasant societies. Indeed the plans had reached its objective of reduction in the population growth because it manipulated, exploited and reinforced the division of labor by sex in that it used women as sole acceptor of contraceptive devices since they were directly and solely responsible for the care of children. Whereas men had not viewed by

the plans as acceptor because they were husbands and income earner in the family. In fact the state has apparently influenced demographic trends in order to increase economic growth and industrialization.

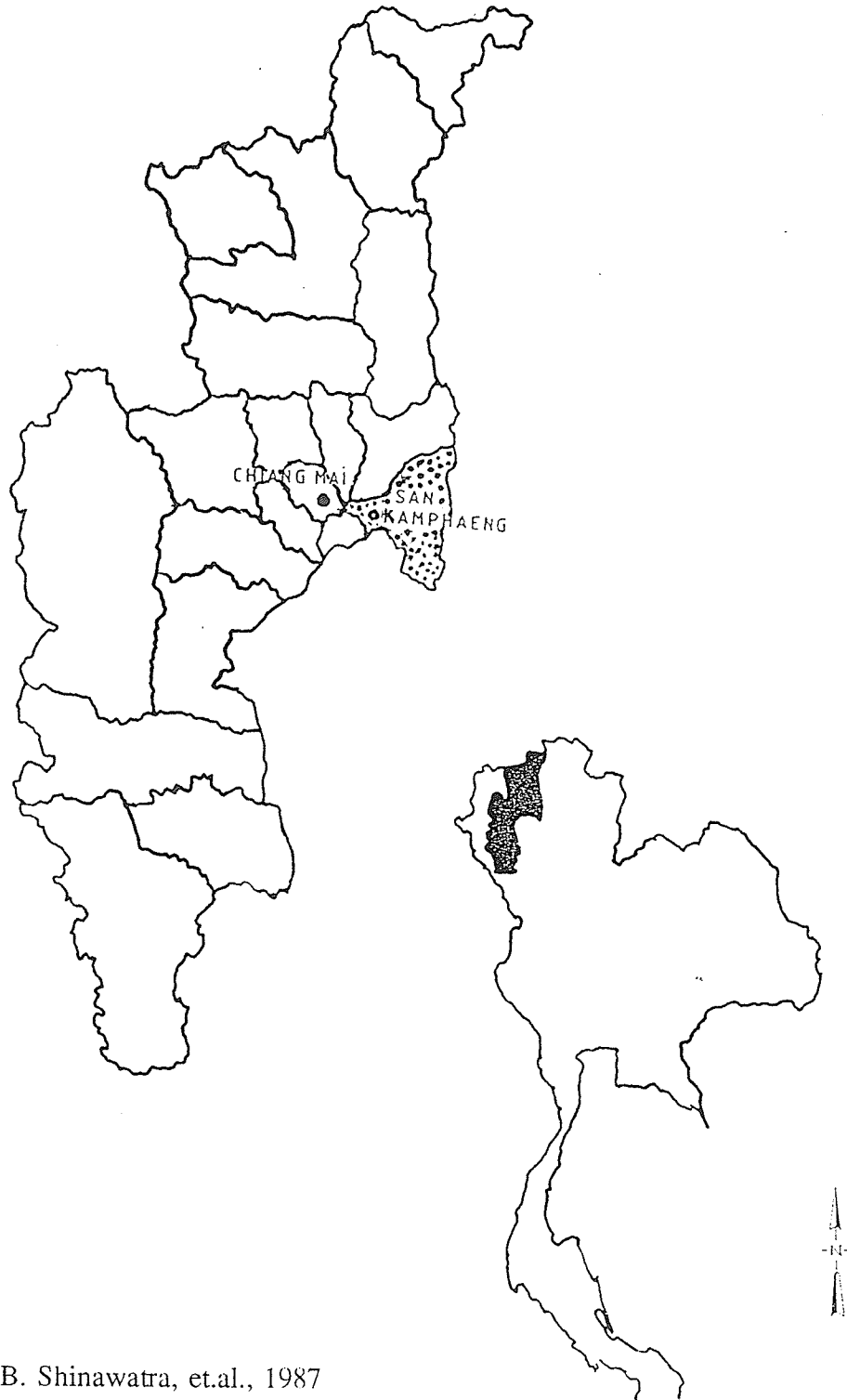
### **III. Village Background**

Two villages in San Kumpheang (a district in Chiang Mai), are selected as study sites (map1 and map2). As of 1989, the province of Chiang Mai was divided into 19 districts or amphoes and 2 king-amphoes (Office of Industry, Chiang Mai, 1990). The term "king-amphoe" refers to an administrative area that is rather large (both in terms of population and area), but is not large enough to constitute a district. In 1986 the province's population was estimated as 1,296,373 persons, with 659,250 males and 637,123 females. This included 412,056 agricultural households (Office of Statistics, Chiang Mai, 1986).

The district of San Kumpheang had a population of 87,941 people and 12,349 agricultural households. The district consisted of 17 subdistricts (tambons) and 131 villages (Hmu Ban). There are at least 9 villages within each subdistrict.

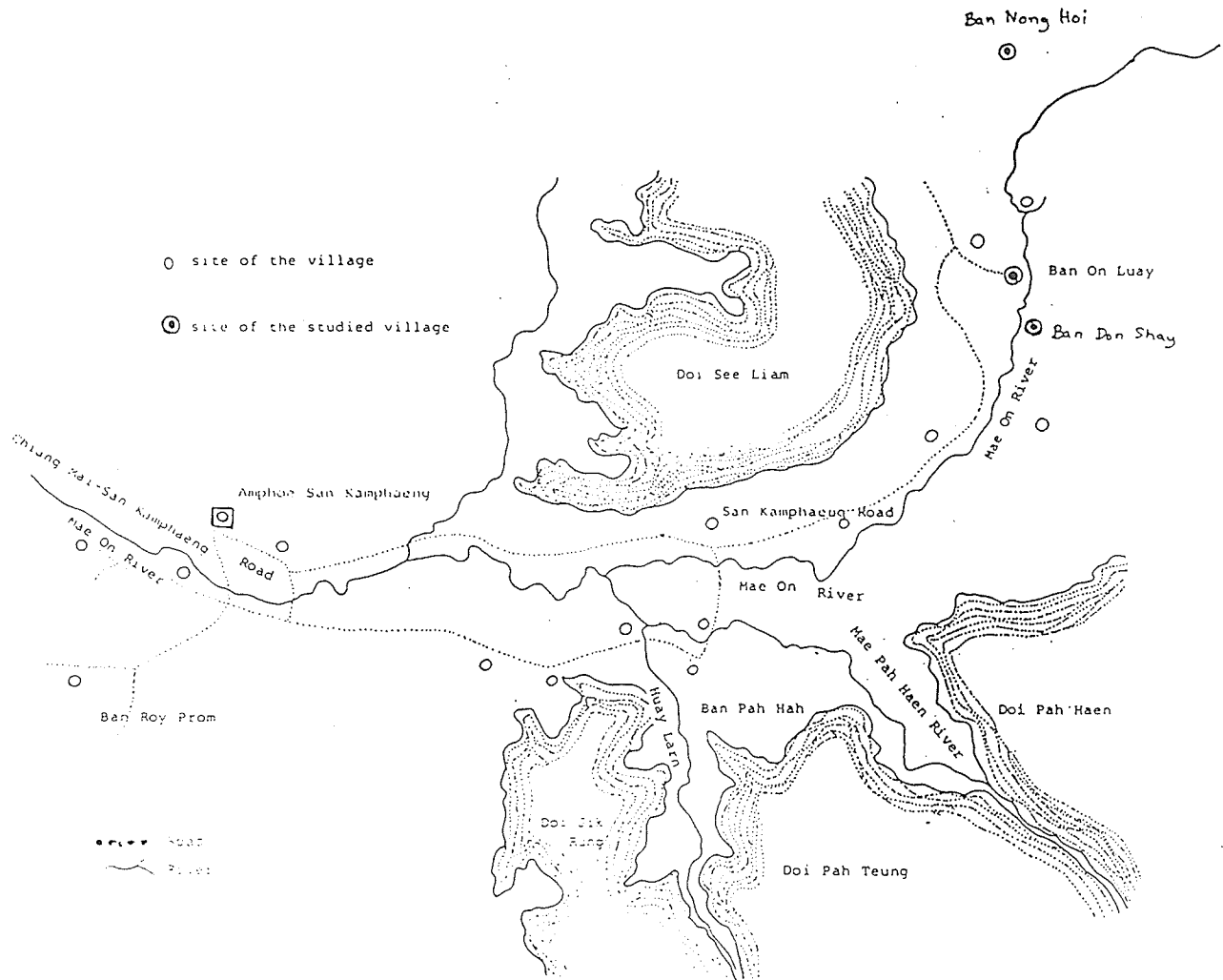
The economy of San Kumpheang has been dependent upon two main sectors, agriculture and cottage industries (Sirivongs Na Ayuthaya, et al, 1979, p. 15). The subdistrict of On Nua, which contains the study sites for this thesis, consists of 14 villages surrounded by mountains and forests. Cottage (home based) industries such as cotton/silk weaving and paper umbrella making were a mainstay of San Kumpheang's economy eleven years ago (Ibid). Embroidery homework was also identified as a major source of non-farm income in one of the villages, Ban Pah Ha (Ibid). The two villages

Map 1 Location of San Kumpeang District, Chiang Mai Province



Source: B. Shinawatra, et.al., 1987

Map 2 Sites of the Studied Village, San Kumpheang



Source: A. Sirivong Na Ayuthaya, et.al., 1979

selected for this study are Ban Don Shay and Ban Nong Hoi.

#### **A. Ban Don Shay (Hmu 8)**

Ban Don Shay is located outside the municipality of San Kumpheang (map2), with a population of 450 people (227 males and 223 females) and 117 households in 1989. The average household size in the village is 3.8 persons. The demographic profile of the village population is as follows: 8% as children up to 5 years, 4% as children age 5-7, 14% as children age 7-14, 8% as young adult age 14-18, 22% as adults age 18-50, and 44% as adults older than 50 years.

The village is situated in the restricted forest area 18 Km from the city of San Kumpheang, with a total area of 2,610 rai (2.5 rai = acre) including 700 rai of agricultural land (NESDB, 1989). The land base is relatively small in comparison to the population. The majority of villagers are rice farmers operating on small family farms, with subsidiary occupations of wage labor in agriculture and non-agriculture. Only 8 of these households earn more than half of their total income from wage labor (Ibid).

According to a government survey of 117 households in this village (NESDB, Ministry of Interior, 1989), 94% of households are classified as owning land and not renting land, and the remaining 6% are classified as both owning and renting land. However different results were obtained in my interviews of 17 female homeworkers in the village. In my survey 2 households (12%) do not own any land, and another 2 households do not own their cultivated land but are able to cultivate other land free of charge. When peasants use land without charge, this land is often obtained from in-law's who are too old to work the land themselves. Then the various parties share the rice

output. Another 2 households rent but do not own land; 4 households both own and rent land; and 7 households own but do not rent land.

Thus there appear to be landless peasants in this village, in contrast to the government report. Six households (35% of the sample) in this survey are landless. Furthermore 3 other households cultivate public forest land to which they have no legal title. Only 4 of the other households have legal title to the land that they cultivate.

For those who rent land, the method of payment depends on whether the land is used for a cash crop or for subsistence rice production. In the first case rent is paid in cash (200 baht per rai), and in the second case rent is paid in the form of rice output. The latter is a common practice ("tam-na-pah") whereby the renter pays for input costs and output is equally divided between renter and landlord. We can distinguish this type of land tenancy from sharecropping, whereby the landowner is defined as paying all input costs of production. In either case there is no written agreement or legal contract, but there are certain verbal understandings between the two parties.

Peasants in this village grow rice during the rainy season, and they also produce other crops for cash in the dry season. These crops include peanut, shallot, cucumber, soybeans and garlic. Some of these crops can be grown twice a year as in the case of cucumber. Cash crops are generally produced on small plots of forest land of less than 2 rai. Only a small proportion of the outputs are kept for household consumption or as seed for the next agricultural season.

The majority of the 100 farm households hire wage labor, particularly during planting and harvesting activities on rice farms when timing is critical in order to avoid

output losses. Wages may be paid in terms of cash or kind, i.e. as unhusked rice. Cash wages ranged from 30-40 baht per day per person. The type of wage payment does not exclusively depend on the type of agricultural production, i.e. whether there is production of rice for subsistence or cash crop production. The two types of wage payment are employed in both traditional and cash crop production. In rice production, labor hired for planting and harvesting is paid in terms of either cash or unhusked rice. In small scale cash crop production, hired labor primarily is paid in cash although there is also some labor exchange. For example, female labor hired to harvest peanuts is generally paid 5-7 baht per Tang (1 Tang of peanuts equals 15 Kgs) for a total of 25-35 baht per day.

Nevertheless there seems to be wage differentiation between the sexes, i.e. hired labor wages in agriculture are higher for males (40-60 baht per day) than for females (20-40 baht per day). Planting and harvesting must be carried out in a very short time due to uncertainty about weather conditions. Moreover these smallholder peasants operate farms that are relatively larger than those of peasants in Ban Nong Hoi and so they need more wage laborers to perform planting and harvesting tasks. As a result peasants with larger scale of operation (5 or more rai) will hire labor in a manner known as "jang moow". In this way many people (4-13 laborers) are hired for a day to accomplish a planting or harvesting task and the group will be paid in cash (420-550 baht). Individual workers will then receive a wage ranging from 32 to 68 baht for the day.

Both sexes may be employed within this framework. However it appears that certain tasks are reserved for female wage laborers, i.e. females perform tasks of planting and harvesting. When female workers are hired, they often receive 40 baht a day for these

agricultural tasks irrespective of whether these tasks relate to traditional subsistence rice farming or cash crop production of peanuts, garlic, shalot or soybeans.

Households that do not produce enough rice for family consumption (and families that do not produce any rice) may receive a wage in terms of unhusked rice grain for household consumption. In this case a day laborer will receive approximately 1 Tang (1 Tang of unhusked rice grain = 10 Kgs) per person. Nevertheless wage differentiation by gender exists when workers are paid in this manner: a male worker receives 1.5 Tang of unhusked rice while a female worker receives 1 Tang.

Another form of labor relation in Ban Don Shay is labor exchange, "ouew moue", among friends, relatives and neighbors. This traditional form of labor exchange persists in both subsistence and market oriented production. Peasants keep records of the number of days and laborers in and out of their own households so that they can return the proper work days to their circle of labor exchange. Labor exchange is most commonly used for harvesting in rice production.

Agricultural wages have not changed substantially in comparison to a 1979 study (Sirivongs Na Ayuthaya, et al). A day laborer received a wage of 10-15 baht, in comparison to a current wage of 30-40 baht. Moreover the labor payment in terms of unhusked rice was 1-1.5 Tang (Ibid, p. 153), which is identical to the current payment in kind.

In Ban Don Shay a group of households is geographically separate from the main village, and this group is known as "Ban Mai Hod". People who live in Ban Mai Hod originally were forced to migrate there by the government from the district of Hod in



Chaing Mai when a large dam was constructed and their village was submerged under the resulting lake. This hamlet was established over 40 years ago and its population continues to increase. Peasants in this hamlet have relatively small holdings and therefore are forced to hire themselves out as farm laborers in Ban On Lauy and within the village.

Peasants in this village also engage in other agricultural activities such as vegetable production (for both cash and household consumption) and raise livestock. According to the government report on the village, there are 50, 2, 110 and 117 households raising oxen, buffaloes, pigs and chickens, respectively (NESDB, 1989, p. 31). Peasants raise pigs, chickens, oxen and few dairy cows. Pigs are generally raised for cash; chickens are raised for both cash and household consumption; oxen and dairy cows are raised for cash and other economic gain.

In this area the traditional practice in raising oxen, known as "Liang-wao Pah", is very common. In the past oxen were the main source of mechanical power used in rice farming; but now the majority of peasants employ tractors (Kwai-lek) in place of oxen labor. Nevertheless peasants continue to raise oxen for the market. "Liang-wao Pah" (pah literally means dividing into half) refers to the practice whereby a peasant's cows are left in the care of another peasant. The caretaker of these cows will also look after his own cows. The caretaker will receive half of the new born calves as his wage, or he will receive half of the cash from the sale of a cow if there is only one new born calf and the owner decides to sell it.

Peasant owned dairy farms are relatively new in this area. The first dairy farm in the tambon (subdistrict) of On Nua began in 1968 in the village of Ban On Luay. By

1979 there were 7 households engaged in dairy farming (Sirivongs Na Ayuthaya, et. al., p. 163). Later a government land reform program established co-op villages in the area near On Nua, and one of these villages includes dairy farms and dairy co-op. Since then dairy farms have been established by many peasants of neighboring villages. This is the case for peasants in Ban Don Shay and Ban Mai Hod. At least 6 households interviewed engage in dairy production, with a range of 2-10 cows per household. Dairy farming offers an economic opportunity for peasants who have small holdings and for landless peasants.

Moreover peasants engage in wage labor outside of agriculture. Both male and female peasants engage in non-farm employment such as construction and trade. Women dominate trade at the village level as they operate small shops in the village. Although women manage shops, they state that these are family owned businesses. Therefore the word operate is used in place of own. Village shops offer daily consumption goods which farm households cannot produce themselves such as detergent, gasoline, toothpaste, candy, fishsauce, salt, etc. Profit from trade varies with the season and the occurrence of ceremonial events, with a range of 20-50 baht a day. Men engage in off-farm employment such as house building and other construction, both within and outside the village. Men earn daily wages of 60-100 baht per day, and some men earn monthly wages of 3500-5000 baht. Off-farm employment is more likely to be outside the village for men than for women.

## **B. Ban Nong Hoi (Hmu 2)**

Ban Nong Hoi is situated in a restricted forest area which is approximately 24

kilometers from the city of San Kumpheang (map2). The population in 1989 was 523 persons, with 261 males and 262 females (NESDB, 1989, p. 7). It includes 116 households which are primarily peasants engaged in subsistence rice farming. Based on survey by NESDB (Ibid), its population was relatively old, i.e. 40% were adults age 18-50 and 29% were adults age over 50 years. When compare its population to that of Ban Don Shay, however, Ban Nong Hoi seems to be a village with higher percentage of population (age 14-50 years) in the labor force. That was about 57% for Ban Nong Hoi in contrast to 30% for Ban Don Shay. There were rather small percentage of young population: 4% as children up to 5 years, 3% as children age 5-7, 6% as children age 7-14, 17% as young adults age 14-18. The average size of household is 4.5 persons, which is larger than the average household size of 3.8 in Ban Don Shay.

Ban Nong Hoi has a land area of 4335 rai, with 2746 rai of agricultural land (Ibid, p. 36, 37). This village is larger than Ban Don Shay in both area and population. Average area per capita is larger than in Ban Don Shay, i.e. 5.3 rai per person versus 1.6 rai per person in Ban Don Shay. Despite its large agricultural area, 16 (14%) of households are landless and therefore earn income solely as wage laborers in agriculture. About 21 other households earn income as agricultural wage laborers (Ibid, p. 18). Only 62 households (53%) own sufficient arable land to produce enough rice in order to meet household consumption needs. Another 38 households (33%) own land but do not produce enough rice for household consumption. Therefore these households rent in additional land.

Most peasant households in Ban Nong Hoi own 1-10 rai of land (Ibid, p.19). However data from the interview of 22 female homeworkers in the village suggests that

46% own and do not rent land (half of these do not have legal title to land and instead use forest land according to customary rules). Approximately 23% partly own and partly rent land, 13% only rent land, and 18% neither own nor rent. There is a relatively high percentage of landless peasants in this village, and there are many households who rely upon restricted forest areas.

Rented agricultural land is typically used for rice cultivation. Only three households rent rice fields for cash crop cultivation. Rent for fields to be used in cash crop production is always paid in cash even in the case of a family who rents from a father-in-law. Rent in such cases ranges from 100-600 baht per rai, and the average amount of land rented is 1 rai. Cash crop production is largely limited to the restricted forest area near the village, with an average of 1-2 rai under cash crop cultivation. For the peasants these small plots of forest land appear to be essential to survival, and they have operated this land for many years. However the government views these forest lands as belonging to the state, and peasants are viewed as illegal occupiers of the land. These peasants are viewed as encroachers to be expelled. Peasants are increasingly being denied renewal of the right to cultivate forest land. "Tam-na-pah" is a common pattern of land tenancy in Ban Nong Hoi. Rent in cash also exists among peasants who rent land for rice production. In addition few peasants use land of other peasants without charges.

Ban Nong Hoi is a typical agricultural community of small subsistence rice farming households. The majority (86%, n = 22) earn their livelihood in subsistence rice farming and other cash crops. The remainder are construction workers (4%), laborers (5%) and permanent workers (5%). In rice farming households both man and woman

work in the family farm side-by-side in most tasks, from planting to harvesting and finally the sale of rice.

In the dry season they also grow cash crops such as shallot, peanut, soybean, local cucumber and a recently introduced variety of cucumber, known as the "Toyo" or "Japanese" cucumber. The area of cultivation ranges from 0.5 to 2 rai. The "toyo" cucumber is a popular cash crop due to high yield and stable price. Consequently it is grown twice in the dry season as it only takes 45 days to harvest. Several years ago a middleman came to the village with this new variety, and since then he has provided peasants with seed, fertilizer and pesticide in the form of a loan. The amount of the loan varies with the size of the plot to be cultivated. Output is to be sold to the middleman at a given price set by him. Then he sells cucumbers to a factory, where they are pickled and exported to Japan.

Peasants refer to the middleman as the "owner" of inputs in production and of the cucumber products. This reflects the patron-client relationship found in Thai rural communities. Peasants perceives this arrangement as beneficial to them by providing security and cash income. By regarding the middleman as the owner of inputs and outputs in production, peasants reflect their loyalty as his clients. In return the middleman is obligated to protect his clients by providing loans in the form of seed, fertilizer and pesticide and purchasing the output.

Peasants in this village also raise oxen, pigs, chickens and dairy cows. Seven of the households interviewed raise between 2 and 13 oxen, and 1 household engages in share-raising of oxen or "Liang-wao-pah". However there is only 1 household with a dairy farm,

whereas in Ban Don Shay dairy farms are popular.

Labor relations in this village are somewhat similar to those in Ban Don Shay. Typical forms of labor relations in rice production are unpaid family labor, exchange labor, and wage labor. Wage laborers are paid in cash or unhusked rice at the same rate as in Ban Don Shay. However, unlike Ban Don Shay, labor is not hired according to the practice known as "jang moow" (a group of workers hired to complete a task in d day). Male and female wage labor in rice production may receive different payments in terms of unhusked rice. Male wage labor in planting, harvesting and transporting rice receives approximately 1.5 Tang of unhusked rice per day per person; whereas female wage labor in these tasks receives 1 Tang of unhusked rice. Similarly the cash wage payments for male laborers are 40-70 baht a day, whereas female laborers receive 25-50. There seems to be a flexible division of labor in terms of agricultural tasks assigned to men and women, but wages differ substantially by sex. This suggests that female labor has a lower status than male labor.

Labor relations in cash crop production are similar to those in traditional subsistence rice production in the sense that the exchange of labor is still a common practice. For example peasants exchange labor in production of "Toyo" cucumber, peanuts, and other crops. In general only women are hired to plant shallot and harvest peanuts. Wages are paid in terms of crop. At a price of 5 baht per 1 Tang for peanuts this is equivalent to 25-35 baht per day.

During the non-agricultural season peasants seek non-farm employment within and outside the village. A few male peasants are wage laborers in the irrigation station nearby

at a wage of 90 to 97 baht per day, and one earns a monthly wage of 2100 baht. One female works in a ready-make cloth factory in San Kumpheang town at a wage of 1800 baht per month. Another is a permanent worker in the city of Chiang Mai at a wage of 1200 per month; whereas her husband (employed at the same place and in the same position, as a general laborer) receives 2400 a month. In addition one woman is a wage laborer at 35 baht per day in a hot spring resort in the village nearby. Nonagricultural employment is typically located outside the village; but off-farm employment for rural women is generally restricted to the village.

### **C. Profile of Women Homeworkers**

While males in the village seem to have better opportunity or are more likely to engage in off-farm employments outside the village, female villagers engage in subcontracted embroidery works in the home. Female homeworkers do not view their work in the industry as a "job" but rather as a way to fill up their "free" time. The majority of women in the village are employed in the industry. In a few households there is more than one person employed.

Forty percent of the 43 homeworkers engage in the embroidery home industry throughout the year while the rest engage in the homework only in part of the year. This is because the primary occupation of the part time homeworkers is in agriculture, which requires intensive labor at the time of cultivation.

Three of the homeworkers are also middlewomen who distribute and collect the finished pieceworks for a large factory and/or subcontract the piecework for other middlewomen operating on a larger scale. As shown in table 2.2, majority of them

(46.5%, n=43) are in the high fertility age group (26-35 years), 39.5% are 19-25 years, and 13.95% are 36 years and older. Moreover most women homeworkers also have additional monetary employment outside the home. The majority earn wages in other fields, and some are employed in petty trade or as food vendors at the home or in local markets near the village.

Table 2.2 Profile of Women Homeworkers

Demographical Characteristics	Percentage of Women Homeworker
(a) Age	
19-25	39.5
26-35	46.5
36-51	14
(b) Educational Level	
Not read/write	5
Primary ed.	65
Secondary ed.	30
(c) Marital Status	
Married	93
Not married	7
(d) Relation to Head	
Wife	90
Others	10
(e) Children	
Yes	94.4
No	5.6



Since homework does not require any formal education or training, the educational level of women does not significantly influence their role within the industry. Few of them (5%, n=43) can neither read nor write and in general they are older women. About 65% (age 26-35 years) have received a compulsory level of education, i.e. 4 years of primary education. The remaining 30% (typically 19-25 years) have a secondary education. The age of women and their educational level are related due to the change in government policy regarding compulsory education over the last 20 years: initially 4 years of compulsory education, then 6 years, and most recently extending to the secondary level.

The majority of women homeworkers (93%, n=43) are married, and 90% of the married women are married to the head of the household. One married woman does not live with her husband since he migrated to Bangkok for employment as a wage laborer in the industrial sector. The majority of women homeworkers (84%, n=43) are wives, 14% are daughters, and the rest are daughter-in-laws of the head of the households.

Among those married to head of household, 94.4% (n=36) are mothers. The number of children ranges from 1 to 3 and the age ranges from 1 to 23 years. Children of age 7 to 12 years are required by law to attend school.

#### **IV. Methodology**

Given the limitations in government statistics and other available information regarding embroidery homework and the embroidery homeindustry in San Kumpheang and elsewhere, this study will collect relevant data through formal and informal interviews and partial observation during fieldwork in the villages. Forty three women were

interviewed based on a questionnaire dealing with general information about embroidery homework, conditions of the work, household information, housework, agricultural work and off-farm/paid work. The SDOL within housework and agricultural work is also obtained. The questionnaire employed here is modified version of a 1989 questionnaire used by the Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute (CUSRI) in an ILO-sponsored study of women homeworkers in Thailand. Homework is defined, according to the International Labor Organization, as "all or part of a production process is assigned from a central unit to satellite units". In addition production activities are typically "distributed and assigned to individuals or groups of individuals who perform the work within their households or domestic premises" (CUSRI, 1989, p.1-2).

Since there is no available list of embroidery homeworkers in the study area or elsewhere in Thailand, a random sample of embroidery homemakers could not be selected. Instead a snowball sampling technique is employed due to the uniqueness of the industry, i.e. this is an underground industry and its homeworkers are in a sense "invisible". These workers are invisible or unobserved in two respects: first these homeworkers do not classify themselves as workers; and second others in society also do not classify these homeworkers as workers. Thus the government can provide little information on these homemakers and does not provide any protection to them as workers. These homemakers are perceived by themselves and by society solely as housewives and unpaid family laborers, and consequently they are expected to receive relatively low wages.

The district of San Kumpheang is known to be the major center of the embroidery

homeindustry. Several embroidery producers and middlewomen known to the researcher were initially interviewed in order to obtain information on the location of homework activities and on the background of the embroidery homework industry in the San Kumpheang district. A list of women homeworkers was constructed from information given by middlewomen. Women homeworkers were then interviewed at their homes.

Since it was not possible to derive a random sample of all embroidery homemakers, results of this study cannot be interpreted as representative of the industry of embroidery homeworkers. However, at the very least, results should indicate the general nature and the extent of the involvement of rural women in the embroidery homeindustry.

Drawing on a theoretical framework and the political economy of Thailand as discussed above, I will analyze the housework and general condition of these women in the subsistence rice farming communities. I will examine data on the households' land tenurial status, land ownership and size, agricultural production and income, division of labor by sexes within agricultural production, modernization of technology, cash crop production, wage labor and household debt, as well as domestic work and homework.

The study will focus more specifically on women's role within the area of reproduction. This will be examined in terms of women's age, marital status, number of children, age of children, size of household, hours on housework and sexual division of labor within the home. Moreover this study will place the women homeworkers from the subsistence rice economy within the context of the social history and political economy of Thailand, the ideology of motherhood, and policies on rural industrialization and

tourism.

## **V. Format Of The Presentation**

The presentation of the following chapters is built upon the theoretical framework in chapter 1. In chapter 3 to 5, the three theme questions in chapter 1: feminization of agriculture, the impact of integration of subsistence economy into cash market on women and the SDOL, and implication of population policy on women and SDOL are utilized. That is how these three features of economic development, i.e. feminization of subsistence agriculture, the integration of subsistence economy into cash economy, and population policy (namely, birth control policy), effect rural women with respect to each of these three components of their labor (non-wage reproductive labor, non-wage productive labor and wage productive labor).

Chapter 3 examines women's lives and work within the home involving domestic responsibilities as housewives and mothers. In this chapter emphasis is also placed on the existing dominant ideology concerning women in the Thai society as well as sexual division of labor within the home.

Chapter 4 discusses women and their labor/work in subsistence production as unpaid family laborers and wage laborers in agriculture. The division of labor between the sexes is also discussed.

Chapter 5 deals with women's labor in the embroidery home industry. The conditions of women's work as agriculturalists, unpaid family laborers, wage laborers, homeworkers or/and housewives are analyzed in the context of the following: household status within the community, land tenurial status, main occupation of the head of

household and of the woman herself, household resources and debt. On the other hand women's conditions as such are also analyzed in terms of their roles in the area of reproduction. The component of reproduction of household labor power, i.e. size of the household, number of children and age of children, is employed as the reflection of factors in the sphere of reproduction in shaping women's conditions either as agriculturalists, wage laborers, or/and homeworkers.

The social definition of women as housewives and/or dependent on the husbands/men's economic support is at the center of the analysis in both chapters. Such perception of women homeworkers by the society as well as by themselves is reflected in the women's view of their husbands/fathers as the head of the household, and their view of themselves as unpaid family laborers rather than peasants. The confinement of women to subsistence production reflects the patriarchal relation by restricting women's mobility in terms of type and location of employment.

Finally, chapter 6 summarizes the conclusion of the thesis. It highlights the connection between women's paid employment and their domestic responsibilities. The denial of women's role as peasants or workers appears to be profitable for all groups except the women themselves.

## Chapter 3

### Rural Women: Keeping The House In Order

Women in the home make up the single largest group of Thai workers. Over decades, Thai women have concentrated their efforts in the home as housewives and, at the same time, have assumed responsibilities as laborers. Women's efforts in the home and their domestic labor have been traditionally described as natural, divinely inspired and biologically determined, particularly childbearing and caring.

In the following sections, I discuss the implication of the motherhood ideology on the biological reproduction of the Thai population and women's work in daily maintenance of the labor force through their daily work within the household (childcaring, cooking, cleaning, food shopping, collecting water, fetching firewood, gathering food and vegetables, milling rice and fishing). It is important to note that this analysis treats women's domestic work as separate from their subsistence agricultural work only for the sake of practicality. On the contrary, these two aspects of rural women's work and lives are, in fact, highly integrated in time and space, particularly with respect to food production. At the same time, the ideology is not static and has continuously changed through time within a given historical and socio-economic context.

#### I. Rural Women: Mothers, Wives and Daughters

The age of women interviewed for this study ranges from 19 to 51 years, with the mean age of 28.58 years. The majority (93%, n=43) are married, and approximately 90% (n=40) of these women are married to the head of the household. Most of the subjects (84%, n=43) are wives, 14% (n=4) are daughters and the rest are daughters-in-law of the

head of household.

Majority of the women (94.4%, n=36) married to head of household are mothers. Only 5.6% (n=36) of these women do not have any children. The average number of children is 1.5, ranging from 1 to 3 children per woman. As shown in table 3.1, approximately 50% (n=36) of women married to the head have 1 child, 41.7% have 2 children and 2.8% have 3 children. Thus the majority of these women have 1 to 2 children. However the average number of children per woman for the subjects of this study is much lower than the average fertility of 4.0 children per woman in agricultural rural areas for Thailand in 1980 (Debavalya, 1983, p. 34). The ages of women married to head of household range from 19 to 23 years. In sum women in this study tend to be relatively young and generally have 1-2 children, which indicates that their nuclear families are relatively young.

Table 3.1 Percentage of Women Who Married to the Head by Number of Their Children

Number of Children	Percent
One	50
Two	41.7
Three	2.8
Total	100

When we compare the fertility rate of women studied (1.5 children) to women in Chiang Mai (prior to the population policy in the 1970) studied by Muecke (6-7 children), it clearly reflects the effect of population policy on rural women in terms of number of

children they have. The decline in number of children has been a result of economic hardship felt by people, particularly after WW II.

All of these households are headed by a male (as indicated by the subjects). Household size ranges from 2 to 6 persons, with an average size of 3.6 persons. This is similar to the average size of agricultural households in Chiang Mai of 3.79 persons reported in a study of women's role in farming in the Phrao district in Chiang Mai conducted in 1983 (Shinawatra, et al, p. 9). The households in this study has an average labor force of 2.4 persons, with a range from 1 to 4 persons per household (table 3.2). Only 2.3% (n=43) of these households have one person in the labor force and 9.3% have 4 persons in the labor force. The majority of households (62.8%) have 2 persons and 25.6% have 3 persons in the labor force. This is also similar to the study of the Phrao district where the average number of agricultural workers per household was 2.63 (Ibid).

Table 3.2 Percentage of Household With Respect to Number of Labor Force

Size of Labor Force of Household	Percent
1	2.3
2	62.8
3	25.6
4	9.3
Total	100

The relatively small size of labor force of household (numbers of economically active people in the villages reflects lower population in the province due to migration



and the effect the policy of population control.

These characteristics of rural women and households are important to the lives and work of these women in that these factors partly shape the nature and content of housework, which will be discussed in the following section.

## **II. Housework**

Laboring in the field is a major productive activity for rural women, whether they are peasants or agricultural laborers. Nevertheless they are largely confined to the home in child caring/rearing and household tasks. Since motherhood is socially and culturally described as women's dominant role, it follows that all household-related responsibilities fall to women. In turn since the home is the focal location of their main responsibility, they are confined to the home.

While the tasks of agricultural subsistence work, non-agricultural work and household-related work are highly integrated, the subsistence activities needed to ensure the welfare of the household in terms of food and other basic needs are substantial. In addition these tasks would ensure the productive unit as well as the reproduction and daily maintenance of the labor force.

In fact housework or domestic labor in such an agricultural community contains a higher degree of production - as symbolized by the fact that all stages of food transformation are often carried out in the household. Household-related tasks, moreover, consist of varieties of subsistence activities including water carrying, wood gathering, food transformation, food gathering, food processing, etc. These activities exist side-by-side with agricultural work, since domestic labor and subsistence activities often overlap,

particularly with regard to food production.

Rural women engage in all activities related to food production including land preparation, harvesting, and the marketing of rice. Moreover production of food in an edible form requires substantial effort in (e.g.) milling of rice prior to cooking. In addition water and fuel must be collected before rice can be cooked. Other types of food and vegetables must also be obtained and prepared.

Preparation of food for home consumption is the essential aspect of subsistence agriculture, and in some cases food preparation provides an important source of cash income. All post-harvest tasks related to rice crops, storage and food processing, provision of water and fuel, cooking, cleaning and caring of small children, are almost exclusively the responsibilities of women (and eventually their daughters).

According to 1980 Census data, 3229106 persons were classified as "housewife", and 2490126 were in designated rural areas (Thailand National Commission On Women's Affairs, 1985, p. 65). In addition, 96.6% of females were classified as persons who "worked around house" and were "not in labor force" (Ibid, p. 91). Thus in the national statistics women are predominantly classified in the group of "housewife".

These designations in the national statistics illustrate the general proposition that housewives are considered as persons "not in labor force" or engaged in "non-economic activity". Females also accounted for 45.8% of the designated Thai labor force in 1980. These women perform domestic work as well as taking on paid employment outside the home. This indicates that rural women interviewed, like their sisters all over the country, assume the role of housewife who perform non-wage reproductive work that no one

values/recognizes as "work". In another words, the non-wage reproductive labor has been feminized as well as devalued.

### A. Sexual Division Of Labor Within The Home

These female peasants predominantly perform the tasks of cooking in the household, in addition to agricultural works and wage labor. Most of these women (93%, n=43) report that they perform the task of cooking food in the house, and only 7% report that cooking is done by men (table 3.3). Cooking by women also generates some cash income for the household, e.g. a woman may open a small business as noodle vender at home.

Table 3.3 Percentage of Households With Respect to SDOL within the Home

types of housework	division of labor by sexes			total
	male	female	both	
a cooking	7	93	0	100
b cleaning	0	100	0	100
c milling rice	29	56	15	100
d gathering firewood	69	5	26	100
e fetching water	4	88	8	100
f gathering vegetables	2	95	3	100
g fishing	45	31	24	100
h food shopping	0	86	14	100
i child caring	3	88	9	100

Since this agricultural community has been in a transition period of integration into the market economy for some time, this has presumably led to changes in the sexual

division of labor with respect to reproductive activities. This depends partly on the extent to which this subsistence community has been integrated into the market economy. At least these few cases (7%) where men "help out" with cooking suggest that, although cooking is predominantly female, there is some flexibility when wives are unable to fulfill this duty. Women must obtain supplementary household income earned through cultivation of cash crops on small plots of forest land by means of wage labor. Apparently cooking has become slightly more integrated in terms of gender because the household must integrate into the market economy in order to survive.

Nearly all of the women (95%) in the study with 0 to 1 children report that they are solely responsible for cooking, whereas 87.5% of the other women with 2 to 3 children report that they are solely responsible for cooking. Partly, this is due to the help women receive from their children which tend to be older (8-23 years), namely their daughters. That is the age profile of children influences the constraints and resources available to women for domestic work within the household. About 95.5% of women with younger children (1-7 years) cook meals for home consumption, 88.5% of women with children age 8-14 years cook for the home, and 66.7% of women with children age 15-23 years cook for the home. As women often put it, "my daughter(s) help out with the cooking".

However there is no difference in this respect by size of household, i.e. 92.6% of women from large households (4-6 persons) and 93.8% of women from small households (2-3 persons) report that they are solely responsible for cooking.

In addition female peasants exclusively perform the tasks of cleaning, e.g.

cleaning the house and washing clothes. All of women interviewed say this task is done by women alone.

Concerning the milling of rice, 56% (n=34) of the subjects indicate that the task is performed only by women. About 29% indicate that the task is performed only by men, and 15% indicate that the task is carried out by both women and men. Rice milling is sometime performed by a hired woman paid in terms of the rice bran product. The woman receives the rice bran to feed her pigs or chickens. This occurs for women of landless households, who often perform rice milling for other women/households.

Rice milling is performed solely by women in 46.7% of households with few or no children and in 58.3% of households with more children. Rice milling is performed solely by men in 40% of households with few or no children and in 33.3% of households with more children. Moreover the young households, i.e. households with no children or one child, are more likely to share the task than older households. Thus 13.3% of women in households with few children say that the task is performed by both sexes while only 8.4% of women in households with more children say that it is done by both male and female. Rice milling is done by men in 46.2% of households with younger children (1-7 years) and in 24% of households with older children (8 to 23 years). Rice milling is done solely by women in 46.2% of households with younger children and in 64% of households with older children. This is because women with pre-school children have less opportunity to leave the home for milling rice at the local mill.

Concerning the size of household, rice milling is done by women in 60.9% of large households. Within large households the task is equally likely to be carried out

solely by males (45.5%) and solely by females (45.5%). In addition the task is shared by both genders in 17.4% of large households (17.4%) and in 9.0% of small households.

In sum, the task of milling rice is shared by both genders. In the North this task was performed traditionally by women peasants pounding unhusked rice grain, but today men are highly involved in the task. Rice milling no longer involves pounding; instead milling is done by machine at the local rice mill. Although the task requires physical strength, it is still performed by women. Apparently this is partly because milling is closely related to cooking, which is almost exclusively a task for women.

The task of gathering firewood from the nearby restricted forest area, 69% (n=39) of women interviewed indicated that the task is performed solely by men. Only 5% indicated that it is done solely by woman, and 26% indicated that it is performed by both sexes. Woman carries out the task of collect firewood if and only if she is the only person in the whole household who is able to perform it.

This is related to the fact that women are largely restricted to the village and home, particularly if they have young children. The task also requires physical strength. In the words of one subject, "I collect fire wood from the forest closest to the village. But if it is too far from my village I go with my husband so we can collect a large amount of it and we can carry it home. Otherwise it will be too heavy for me to carry by myself". However a man can perform the task by himself regardless how far the forest is from the village because he transports the wood gathered on the back of a motorcycle or bicycle. This does not mean that women do not ride motorcycles or bicycles. Instead this reflects that women are more confined to the home by their domestic responsibilities and their

young children. Consequently women of households with younger children are less likely to perform this task as compared to those with older children: 19% of women with pre-school children share this task, 33.3% of women with school age children share this task, and 50% of women with older children share this task with male members of households.

About 6.3% of women in small households are solely responsible for collecting firewood, and 3.7% of women in large households are solely responsible for collecting firewood. To the extent that there is any difference between households in this regard, this may be because in larger households there are other adults of both genders who carry out the task. Thus the task is performed by both genders in 25.9% of large households as compared to 18.8% of small households. Similarly men in households with younger children tend to gather firewood more frequently than men in households with older children: 81% of men in households with pre-school children gather firewood, 66.7% of men with school age children gather firewood, and 50% of men with older children gather firewood. This is because older children are more likely to be assigned the task of collecting firewood. In addition older children require less care, which increases the opportunity for women to carry out the task.

On the other hand fetching water seems to be a woman's task. Approximately 88% (n=26) of the subjects indicate it is done solely by women. Only 4% of them indicate that it is performed solely by male who is a boy and 8% by both genders. This task is used to be a woman's task as it was considered to be part of making consumable food. With modern technology, running water, i.e. water is pumped from a well, children (rather than mothers) often perform this task by transferring water from the main tap to other places

in the household.

This reflects in that fact that women with more children (43.8%) are less likely to perform this task than women with few children (70%). All of women in households with younger children (1-7 years) perform this task in contrast to 93.3% of women with older children (8-23 years) since the task is within the home boundary. Half of men in households with older children (15-23 years) tend to perform this task as compared to 6.7% with younger children (1-14 years).

Female peasants also assume the role of gathering vegetables for household consumption and sometimes for sale in the local market. Bamboo shoots, mushrooms, other herbs and spices grow wild in the nearby forest and are collected by women. Bamboo shoots and wild mushrooms are particularly popular and are supplied to the market in San Kumpheang every year.

Vegetables are gathered almost exclusively by women: 95% (n=42) of the subjects stated that women alone are involved in the task. In only 2% of the cases was the task done by men alone and in 3% of cases the task was performed by both man and woman. The task is almost exclusively assigned to women irrespective of size of household and number of children. However men do tend to share this task with women to a somewhat larger extent in the case of large households.

Age of children may be somewhat related to the role of women in gathering vegetables. All of the respondents with older children (15-23 years) are solely responsible for gathering vegetables in the forest, and Particularly, women who have older children tend to go outside village and outside the home to gather wild vegetables and herbs as



compare to those who have younger children. Partly this is due to the physical requirement of the task that take women to forest area and away from the home boundary and responsibilities, namely child care. It is also partly because older children can help look after younger siblings when the mothers are not at home. All of women with older children (15-23 years) gather vegetables, 96.2% with school children (8-14 years) gather vegetables, and 95.2% with young-man school children (1-7 years).

Moreover the task is vital to the survival of peasant households in terms of diversity of food intake and cash income. The significance of wild food gathering is reflected in the fact that the majority of households (98%, n=43) engage in food collecting from the forest area. In fact, two households report that they earned income of approximately 1800 baht from the sale of bamboo shoots in the last year.

In contrast fishing is a task performed by both women and men, although more men perform this task than women. Approximately 45% (n=29) of respondents indicate that fishing is carried out solely by the man, 31% indicate fishing is done solely by the woman, and 24% indicate fishing is performed by both sexes. Since fishing does not necessarily take women away from the village as these two villages consist with fishing ponds and locate near irrigation. It reflects in the fact that age of children hardly makes any difference in terms of women's performing the task of fishing. However this task is relatively sex-integrated activity.

Women are specialized in the task of shopping for food. Most respondents (86%, n=43) state that women alone perform the task of shopping for food in their households. Only 14% indicate that this task is done by both sexes. For example one woman states

that "I go shopping for food, most of the time, but my husband does it once in a while". This "once in a while" occurs when wives are employed outside the home. Thus integration into the market economy leads to flexibility in some cases due to the need to earn cash income.

Majority of respondents (88%, n=33) report that they are solely responsible for looking after children. Only 3% (n=33) indicate that this task is done solely by men. In fact these men perform the task because women are employed outside the home and the children are relatively old (10-12 years). Moreover this is often a simple task since these children are able to care for themselves. In fact it is very common in rural Thailand for children of this age to cook, clean, and look after their brothers and sisters. The other 9% of respondents indicate that the task is performed by both sexes.

Women with younger children are more likely to perform the task of child care than women with older children. About 90.9% of women with pre-school children do this task as compared with 84.6% of women with school children (8-14 years) and 66.7% of women with older children (15-23 years). In households with older children, child care is more likely to be shared by other members of the household since older children (of both sexes) can take on the task. Traditionally girls help care for her younger siblings, but it is also common to see a village boy carrying a younger sibling with him as he plays on the village ground. As such the task is shared by both sexes in 33.3% of households with older children (15-23 years), 15.4% of households with school children (8-14 years), and 9.1% of households with pre-school children (1-7 years). Nevertheless women in large households performed the task somewhat more frequently than women in small

households (91%, n=22 vs. 82%, n=11).

Concerning child care, women with more children are slightly more likely to take care of the children than are women with few children (93% vs. 81%). Men who look after children are from small households rather than large households. In small households (2-3 members) there is no additional domestic help available and therefore husbands must "help out" (as many women stress it) whenever the wife cannot provide care. In addition when men do take part in child care, it is more likely that children are older, i.e. 8-14 years. This indicates that men are primarily involved in child care when children are of school-age, which is when child care requires the least time and effort.

Most non-wage reproductive work is done exclusively by women. This reflects the extent of feminization of housework, particularly those tasks that are traditionally viewed as child care, cooking and cleaning. Closely related to cooking (in the traditional view) is the transformation of food into edible form, e.g. gathering vegetables, transporting water and shopping for food. Cleaning is done exclusively by women even though it requires considerable physical endurance. On the contrary certain houseworks such as milling rice, collecting firewood, and fishing seem to be sex-integrated activities. With the advent of modern rice mills, men now often mill rice. Yet rice milling is still performed more often by women because because food processing is closely associated with cooking as a reproductive task.

The only housework that is predominantly done by men is collecting firewood since it requires physical strength and is done outside the home. This may become exclusively a male task as fuel shortages continue to increase due to deforestation and

legal regulation of forest activities. The implication is that villagers must travel further into the forest and away from the village for firewood; so the task will become more sex-segregated and male dominated in the near future. Another non-wage reproductive task more frequently done by men is fishing, although women also participate in this activity.

### **B. Housework And Working Time**

These rural women spend a maximum of 7 hours a day on household-related works ranging from cooking, cleaning, milling rice, collecting firewood, fetching water, gathering vegetable, fishing, shopping for food and caring for children. Nearly half of them (42%, n=43) spend long hours, i.e. 4 hours, daily on housework. Another 28% spend 3 hours a day on housework, while 16% and 9% of them spend 5 and 6 hours, respectively.

A study of women's housework and their labor time in a rural area of northern Thailand concluded that a wife typically worked longer hours than her husband due to the variety of tasks involved, with an average of 4 hours in household-related work. Given estimates of the monetary value of household tasks, women made higher monetary contributions as well as worked longer hours than their husbands. Women provided 60-80% of the monetary value of housework and 80-100% of the working hours on housework (Thuy and Tip, 1986, p. 22).

Another study of the division of labor between the sexes on farms in Chiang Mai indicated that rural women spent long hours in housework ranging from cooking, shopping, cleaning, washing and fetching water. Women spent a total of 35.1 hours per week as compared to 11 hours per week for men. These rural women spent 12.3 hours

per week on child care as compared to 2.1 hours by men, and 9.9 hours per week cooking meals as compared to 1.4 hours for men. The only type of housework dominated by men is collecting firewood, where men spent 5 hours per week as compared to 3.5 hours for women (Shinawatra, et.al, 1987, pp. 69-80).

These two villages had been integrated into the cash market for some time. For example, the advent of cash crop production and (later) dairy farms in this area occurred more than 20 years ago. What does integration of the subsistence economy mean to these rural women in terms of their domestic labor? Do women in households with cash crop production and/or dairy farms spend less time on housework than in the case of subsistence rice farms?

Most households (91%, n=43) engage in either rice, cash crops or both types of cultivation. Due to the long period of integration of this community into the cash economy, few households (26%, n=39) engage solely in rice cultivation. A larger number (33%) engage only in cash crop cultivation, and the largest number (41%) engage in both types of cultivation. Apparently these differences in cultivation have some effect on time spent on housework by women: 80% (n=10) of women in households engaged solely in rice cultivation spend 4-6 hours per day on housework; whereas women in other households tend to spend fewer hours (i.e. 3 hours) on housework.

This is due to the fact that households engaged exclusively in rice production have relatively large areas of cultivation (2-6 rai). Most of these households own the rice fields. Although many of these households (60%, n=10) also raise livestock, most of the women do not engage in other off-farm employment. Thus these women are able to spend longer

hours on housework. Moreover some of these households receive additional financial support from migrant members who work in the service sector (a daughter who works as a bar girl in Japan) or in the manufacturing sector (daughters who work in a Bangkok clothing factory). This helps ease economic pressure on the households. In contrast most women in cash crop households (92%, n=13) and in mixed cultivation households (81%, n=16) have additional off-farm jobs and consequently spend shorter hours on housework.

Integration of this subsistence economy into a cash economy has changed these rural women and their work. Women in mixed cultivation households have the heaviest work loads (cultivation of rice and cash crops, raising livestock, and wage labor). Women in cash crop households cultivate cash crops, but most do not raise livestock because this would require a large capital investment. Since these peasants only cultivate small parcels of forest land, they cannot use forest land as collateral for a loan to purchase capital. Thus they must rely exclusively on off-farm employment and hence spend less time on housework.

In addition the present study indicates that the number of hours women spend on housework as a whole is associated with number of children, size of household and age of children. Women with 2-3 children tend to spend more hours per day on housework than women with fewer children. For example, 75% of women with 2-3 children spend 4 or more hours per day on housework in contrast to 65% of women with fewer children. This is because the number of household-related chores increases with the number of children, and this increase in chores is greater than any help provided by the older children.

Furthermore, the birth control policy led to a decline in the number of children. This has reduced the supply of domestic help for rural workers. In fact, women who have younger children tend to spend less time on housework than do women with older children. For example, 64% of women with young children (1-7 years) spend 1-3 hours per day on housework in contrast to 55% of women with older children. Thus older children do not necessarily provide a significant "helping hand", particularly in terms of housework. This might be partly due to the fact that 90% of the older children are 8-14 years old and are still in school, so that they are largely unavailable to help with the housework. This reflects that women's resource (their children who are old enough to help with housework) are removed as these children are legally required to attend school.

On the other hand, the 33% of women who live in large households (4-6 persons) tend to spend fewer hours per day on housework (1-3 hours) than the 25% of women who live in smaller households (2-3 persons) (4-7 hours). This is different than the relationship between hours of housework by women and number of children. This is because larger households have more adults (mothers or daughters of women interviewed) to assist women (wives) in housework.

In sum, the role of motherhood largely determines the domestic domain of women in this study. Women spend many hours daily on housework, whether they are daughters, wives and/or mothers. The macro data indicates that Thai women play a significant role in economic activities, but women still continue to perform their traditional tasks of wives, mothers and daughters as well as all other tasks associated with motherhood.

Economic pressure and government action regarding population control (especially

provision of birth control pills) have led to a decline in fertility and in women's biological reproductive role, but the ideology of motherhood and women's role in the house has not changed significantly. Thus women are more free to participate in the labor market, but they must continue their socially and culturally prescribed domestic work.

Non-economic or what may be called reproductive factors such as number of children, size of household and age of children have effects on the nature and content of women's domestic work. This work consists of variety of tasks which vary in quantity and quality depending on the requirements of household members and the extent to which other members of the household can carry out these tasks. However, regardless of household resources in terms of domestic help such as older son, daughter, or other adult members of the household, the women predominantly carry out these domestic works, particularly child care.



## Chapter 4

### Rural Women As Subsistence Producers

#### I. Agriculture and the Thai Economy

The Thai economy has long been characterized as an agricultural economy based on rice production by small family farm units which comprise more than 80% (n=53397745) of the population of Thailand, as indicated in the 1987 Census. Approximately half (49.7%) of the Thai population is female (Thomsen, et al, 1980, p. 13). Rural women have traditionally been active in rice farming since the early days of the Thai corvee system whereby male peasants had to render their labor in the state's public and military service. Today men of age 19 who are not enrolled in an educational institution will be drafted into military service for a period of 2 years. Thus women and other members of agricultural households continue to take on these young men's roles in reproduction of the labor force during periods of service to the state. This includes labor on the family farm and other farms, and other wage work to maintain subsistence of the household.

Government policies promoting industrialization and diversification of agriculture from rice towards production of export cash crops have contributed to the reduction in the relative importance of agriculture in the Thai economy. Although the majority of the Thai population is still employed in agriculture, by 1980 the manufacturing sector surpassed agriculture in terms of share in GDP (table 4.1). The share of agriculture in GDP was 27% in 1970, 24.8% in 1975 and 20.6% in 1980. The share of manufacturing in GDP was 16% in 1970, 19.9% in 1975 and 21.7% in 1980. In fact the year 1980

marked the beginning of the export-oriented policy of the Fifth and Sixth National Plans. The decline in agriculture's share in GDP has continued: in 1987 agriculture's share in GDP dropped to 17.6% while the manufacturing share rose to 22.2% (Pongsaphich, 1989, p. 2-17). The trend continues in 1989 and 1990 as the share in GDP of agriculture continues to decline.

Table 4.1 Share in GDP of Agricultural and Manufacturing Sector, 1970-1987

Year	Share in GDP (percent)	
	Agriculture	Manufacturing
1970	27	16
1975	24.8	19.9
1980	20.6	21.7
1987	17.6	22.2
1989	15	25.5
1990	12.4	26.1

Source: Pongsapich, 1989, p. 2-17 and TDRI, 1992, p.4

These macroeconomic changes have led to a reduction in the share of the total female labor force employed within agriculture. The share of the female labor force employed in agriculture (table 4.2) declined from 87.55% in 1960 to 83.65% in 1970, 74.20% in 1980 and 61.27% in 1987 (Tonguthai, 1987, p. 199, Thomsen, et.al., 1988, p. 13).

Table 4.2 The Share of the Female Labor Force Employed Within Agriculture, 1960-1990

Year	Share of Female Labor Force within Agriculture (percent)
1960	87.55
1970	83.65
1980	74.2
1987	61.27

Source: Tonguthai, 1987, p. 199 and Thomsen, et al, 1988, p. 13

These statistics also indicate that agriculture is still the major source of employment. Moreover the reduction in the share of the female labor force in agriculture has not changed the basic sexual division of labor in these agricultural communities. This is because culturally rice is the main staple of the society and rice cultivation, especially transplantation, is labor intensive. The majority of men and women in rural areas still work predominantly in agriculture, particularly on paddy farms.

## II. Rural Agricultural Communities

### A. Paddy Peasants, "Chao-na"

As indicated previously, the majority of Thailand's population still lives in rural areas. It appears that all three villages included in this study are typical agricultural communities whose main livelihood is dependent upon rice farming based on small family farms. About 93% (n=43) of households in the sample report that the head of the household is employed in agriculture. In 79% of these households the head of household

is employed only in agriculture, while in 14% the head of household is employed in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. The majority (97%) of women in these villages are employed in agriculture, 84.6% are employed in agriculture only, and another 12.8% are employed in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

Households in these agricultural communities rely heavily on small family rice farms. Rice farming is intended primarily for household consumption: 73% (n=26) of households engaged in rice farming during the last agricultural year used rice only for household consumption, i.e. only 27% of households produced rice for both household consumption and market sales. Moreover even in households marketing rice, sales are a small proportion of total production. This can be explained in part by the fact that peasants in the North prefer to eat and choose to grow glutinous rice whereas export demand for Thai rice is primarily for non-glutinous rice. Thus culturally determined consumption habits tend to magnify subsistence rice farming in the North. In fact, over 80% of peasants in the Upper North produced glutinous rice for home consumption (Manarangsang, 1985, p. 258).

Rice farming is not just a form of agricultural production, for Thai peasants it is the way of life. Thai peasants consider themselves first and foremost as rice farmers, "chao-na", irrespective of the amount of rice output or market sales, and even if they did not grow rice in the previous year. For example when asked "what are you?", the first response is almost always "chao-na" (rice farmer) followed by other responses such as "chao-rai" (upland/cash crop farmer) or "chao-suan" (fruit gardener or orchardman).

Consequently, whether these peasants grow rice or not, they call themselves "chao-

na", i.e. they say that rice farming is their main livelihood. In the study all 39 households work in the agricultural sector. Among these agricultural households, 26% engage in rice farming alone, i.e. produce rice but no cash crops. In this study, these households are categorized as being engaged in rice monocropping. About 33% only produce cash crops and are categorized as cash cropping households. The other 41% of agricultural households produce both rice and cash crops, and are classified as multiple cropping households. This categorization of types of cultivation households involved is utilized for the sake of understanding of the extent to which these communities (and households) integrated into cash economy. The effect of the integration of subsistence agriculture is examined in later sector.

The majority (67%) of households engage in rice farming. Rice is both the main staple food and the main agricultural activity within these villages. Nevertheless cash crop production provides a large part of farm household income: the value of rice production (calculated as total output of rice times the village price of rice) per farm ranges from 2475 to 21600 baht, and revenue from cash crops per farm ranges from 960 to 32393 baht during the previous year.

This indicates that these villages are "subsistence rice villages" in the sense that the main crop, rice, is grown for the purpose of household consumption rather than for sale on the market. Furthermore, these villages are rice subsistence "communities" as rice is central to peasants lives despite the existence of cash crops. Since crop yields are uncertain due to weather uncertainty and yields are not perfectly correlated with each other, and since cash crop prices are uncertain, peasants have an incentive to grow at least

some rice (the main staple of their diet) and not depend entirely on cash crop production. As rational agents, peasants are risk averse, particularly since they do not have ready access to credit markets in order to smooth out their consumption patterns over good and bad years.

### **B. Unpaid Family Labor**

As mentioned previously, Thai rice production has been traditionally dependent upon women's labor since the period of the labor corvee system whereby village men were commonly absent from the households and villages rendering their labor to the state. High labor requirements in rice production (especially cultivation) has kept both women and men employed within agriculture. Women accounted for about 50.4% of the labor force in 1980 (Asian Development Bank, 1986 p. 4) and 47% shortly thereafter (ILO, 1992, p. 100).

Most of these female agricultural workers are perceived as non-wage productive workers, known as "unpaid family workers". About 78% (in 1980) and 75.7% (in 1988) of women working in agriculture classified as such (Ibid).

In the village under study, majority of women (89%, n=39) consider themselves as an unpaid family laborer in the family farm. In fact, all (100%, n=35) of women of agricultural households regard themselves as an unpaid family worker. Whereas most of their men (husband/the head of household) are identified as the owner of the family farm operation. Only 5% are identified as an unpaid family worker (this is due to the fact that a young couple still lives with older parents and thus the father is identifies as the owner of the farm).

This indicates that, as in most rural areas of Thailand, these rice subsistence farms rely largely on unpaid female labor. In fact, within this village all non-wage productive agricultural labor is conducted by women.

### C. Land Tenure Status

Since rice farming is a way of life, land is the vital factor for the survival of the household. Although not all households own land, the majority of households own some land. Here forest land that has customarily been used by a family is defined as owned by the family, i.e. the land is owned by usufruct. Among these 43 households, half (49%) have full ownership of all agricultural land used by the farm. Half (48%) of the households with full ownership have land by usufruct and the rest own family farm land with a title of land ownership. About 21% of households use farm land classified as part-own, part-rent. The remaining 30% (13) households are landless, i.e. all of their agricultural land is rented (table 4.3). Approximately 38.5% (n=13) of landless households rent farm land and an equal number uses farm land without charge. The remaining 23% of landless households neither rent land nor exploit forest land, so they are primarily employed as wage laborers.

Table 4.3 Percentage of Households in Relation to Land Status

Land Status	Percentage of Household
Fully own	49
Part own, Part rent	21
Landless	30
Total	100

This reflects the land tenure situation in Northern Thailand where there is a somewhat higher proportion of landless households. According to a government survey in 1981 on agricultural households, in the Upper North (including Chiang Mai province) (table 4.4) 13.5% of households were landless, 31.4% of households owned or rented 1-5 rai of agricultural land, 27.5% owned or rented 5-10 rai, and 27.6% owned or rented more than 10 rai of agricultural land. In the Lower North and part of the Central region, 10.1% of households were landless, 8.1% held 1-5 rai, 9.6% held 5-10 rai and about 72.1% held more than 10 rai of agricultural land (Thailand Developmental Research Institute, 1988, p. 35).

#### **D. Size Of Land Holding**

The average size of agricultural land holdings in Chiang Mai province has been small. Indeed the average size of holding in the province is smaller than for the Upper North region as a whole: in 1982 the average size of holding in Chiang Mai is 8.9 rai per household in contrast to 12.6 rai for the entire Upper North region (Chulalong University Social Research Institute, 1985, p. 2-34). Moreover, average size of holding in the villages under study here are even smaller than for the province: the average holding among the households studied was 3.26 rai per household including rented land, forest land and land used without any charge. The average amount of land for households with full ownership was 3.34 rai, which is similar to the average holding of 3.26 rai for all households. For households that rent but do not own land, the average holding of (rented) land was only 2.05 rai. However, for households combining rented and forest land, the average holding of rented land was higher at 3.6 rai.



Table 4.4 Land Tenorial Situation in Thailand, 1981

Land Status	Percent of Households	
	Upper North	Lower North and Central Regions
Landless	13.5	10.1
Own/Rent (1-5 rai)	31.4	8.1
Own/Rent (5-10 rai)	27.5	9.6
Own/Rent (over 10 rai)	27.6	72.1

Source: TDRI, 1988, p. 35

Majority of agricultural households (72%, n=39) in the study hold 0.25 to 4 rai, and 28% hold 5 to 9 rai of farm land, including rentals, forest and other land (used without charge). Thus the majority of these households hold very small plots of agricultural land, and most plots are smaller than the average holding for the villages. Households may occupy upland in forest area that exceeds the actual area under cultivation. This is because the upland is not suitable for farming, although part of the land may be utilized for cash crops during the rainy season. For example a household may occupy 8 rai or less of upland yet utilize only 0.25 rai.

Moreover size of holding appears to be related to type of agricultural production, i.e. subsistence rice or cash crops farming. Rice farms are in general operated on a larger scale, with an average cultivated area of 3.95 rai (ranging from 2 to 8 rai), than are cash crop farms, with an average of 1.4 rai (ranging from 0.25 to 3 rai). Households usually grow cash crops, typically cucumber, peanut, shallot, garlic, and soybean, on small plots

of land in the upland forest area.

Data on land tenure in these villages indicates that at the moment most peasant households still have access to the means of subsistence, i.e. land. However the availability of land in this region has declined in recent years for several reasons which is reflected in the smallness of farm land, particularly the one located within the forest area. The problem of land is discussed in a later section.

Agricultural land rental rates in the North approximate 30 to 50 percent of crop revenue (Mehl, 1986, p. 32). In the villages under study the rent is paid in terms of rice output as well as cash. When the rent is paid in terms of output, i.e. an arrangement known as "tam na-pha", the rental rate is 50% of rice output which amounted to about 900-3037 baht per rai per cultivation, depending on quantity of output of that year. Most of peasants renting paddy land (64%, n=11) have such an arrangement.

While cash rental is commonly practiced in the case of renting rice field to cultivate cash crop during dry season which ranges from 100-600 baht per rai. Many of this type of rented land are rented from family member or relatives such as father-in-law (wife 's father).

### **III. Agricultural Communities In Transition: The Need For Cash**

Increased scarcity of land (due to forces originating within and outside the village) force peasants to seek other opportunities to earn income. Moreover farm inputs and consumption goods and services have all been commoditized. Thus, in order for these subsistence agricultural households to survive, they must obtain cash income. In the process of integration into the cash economy, the subsistence agricultural community has

been pushed into further dependency on the cash market by the need for supplemental cash income. This income is earned by wage labor, which occurs both within agriculture (on other farms) and outside agriculture. The latter includes homework which is examined in chapter 5.

### **A. Pressure on Land**

The small scale of agricultural production on rice farms, the high rental rates for increasingly scarce agricultural land (rental rates approximate 50% of the market value of rice output), and uncertainty about land tenure status have all pressured peasant households in the North to become more market oriented in order to obtain cash. The competition over farm land between peasants and the outsiders (land developers and/or people who want to utilize the forest land by pushing peasants out) in this area has increased in recent years.

#### **A.1 Pressure Due To Land Status**

In fact security, i.e. land tenurial status of household, over the means of subsistence of households may well determine whether households participate in wage labor market. In this study 15% of heads of landless households, 11% of heads of part own, part rent households and 10% of heads of households with full ownership have their main occupation in the wage labor market such as construction worker and permanent laborer rather than in agriculture. A similar but somewhat more pronounced relationship holds for women: 18% of women in landless households have their main occupation outside of agriculture, 12% of part-timers have their main occupation outside of agriculture, and 5% of women in full ownership households have their main occupation

outside of agriculture. That is the less security the households are in terms of land status, the more likely they (both men and women) are to participate in wage labor market.

On the other hand the participation of peasant households in wage employment outside the family farm is partly shaped by reproductive factors such as the number of children and size of households (since these factors shape the survival ability of households in terms of constraints and resources). Landless households are larger in size, with more children since these are potential labor power to be bought and sold in the wage market. For these landless households a larger number of people contributes to the survival of the household. This in itself means the ability (of the household as reproductive unit) to reproduce. Evidently in this study, 44% of households with 2-3 children are classified as landless in contrast to 25% of households with 0-1 children. While 12% of households with 2-3 children are classified as part own, part rent in contrast to 30% of households with 0-1 children. However, there is no difference between households with few children and those with more children with respect to full ownership of land: 45% of households with 0-1 children and 44% of households with 2-3 children have full ownership of land (table 4.5).

Smaller households (consisting of 2-3 persons) tend to have a more secure tenure status such as full ownership or part own, part rent (table 4.6). Half (56%) of households consisting of 2-3 persons have full ownership of land, whereas 44% of larger households (4-6 persons) have full ownership. About 25% of smaller households are in the part own, part rent class, in contrast to 19% of larger households. Similarly larger households are more likely to be landless: 37% of larger households are landless, whereas 19% of smaller

households are landless.

Table 4.5 Percentage of Households With Respect To Land Status by Number of Children

Land Status	Number of Children	
	0-1	2-3
Landless	25	44
Part own, Part rent	30	12
Fully own	45	44
Total	100	100

Table 4.6 Percentage of Households With Respect To Land Status by Size of Household

Land Status	Size of Household	
	2-3	4-6
Landless	19	37
Part own, Part rent	25	19
Fully own	56	44
Total	100	100

In sum, in small landless households with few children, peasant is employed as a laborer rather than in agriculture. But in landless large households with more children, peasant is employed in agriculture and either rents or utilizes land without charge. Moreover the landless peasant of large household who have more children also hire themselves out for addition income. It means that combination of both security over the

means of subsistence production of the household and the reproductive factors, i.e. size of household and number of children, determine the conditions of peasant households and whether they participate in the labor market.

## **A.2 Pressure On Land Due To Outsider**

Due to expansion of area under cultivation in the North of Thailand, the Forestry department has responded to the nation's deforestation problem by declaring forest area (which is primarily in the North) as restricted (closed), and this has affected peasants who live in and off of the restricted forest area (as in the villages in this study). At the same time the price of land in the country has increased substantially in the past few years, particularly land that is forested and surrounded by mountains as in this area.

The villages and agricultural land except for rice fields are located in the forest area and mountain slopes. Majority of households who own paddy land (80%, n=16) classified here as having full ownership of land (refers to rice land which located in lower level and not in forest) have a document of land ownership known as a "Nor-Sor 3" or an "exploitation testimonial". In general an "exploitation testimonial" is issued to the holder of a reserve licence after 75% of the land has been brought under cultivation (Sirivongs Na Ayuthaya, et. al, p. 111). It is relatively secured type of land ownership. One household has a permanent ownership document, called "cha-nod", which provides the owner with an unrestricted right of land transfer. Another two households have reserve licences which grant the owner permission to farm the land temporarily and is valid for three years.

Pressure of farm land is in part due to a recent government policy to protect

certain forest areas which, in fact, forces peasant households to abandon all rice and crop lands in these areas. In turn this places the livelihood of subsistence agricultural households at risk. As a result scarcity of land leads to tension, as reflected in the 1988 demonstration against the Forestry Department's policy of re-forestation by renting out depleted forest areas to local businessmen with the mandate to replenish the forest while removing peasants from the forest area of San Kumpheang, Chiang Mai. Peasants fear that the area will be developed into resorts and golf courses. The incident ended with local school teacher who help villagers organize the fight killed while land and resort development continued (Lynch and Alcorn, 1990, pp. 45-47).

Since the government policy does not give much incentive for peasant to keep the land (as it is not certain of how long peasant can live off of the land), several households in Ban Nong Hoi had sold their occupied land in the forest area to a land developer who would then turn it into a resort or golf course. Given most peasants occupy forest plots (29 out of 39 cultivated households), this development concerning land tenure in this area demonstrates that the trend of landlessness in these villages may soon become widespread. About 25% (n=40) of households report that recently there have been changes in the size of land holdings of households. Among these households, 10% (n=10) indicate that their holdings have increased because they own an additional piece of land, 60% state that their holdings have decreased due to sales, and 30% indicate that the size of holdings has been unstable because they have farmed land free of charge at the discretion of the landowner, but they cannot predict how much they will be allowed to farm in this manner by the land owner.

Most sales of land involve land in the forest area which had been used for cash crops. One peasant in Ban Nong Hoi sold a small (.75 rai) plot of upland field in the forest area for 70,000 baht last year (1990). Another farmer in this same village sold 21 rai in the forest area for 3 million baht, and one peasant sold 3.75 rai of paddy land for 300,000 baht. In this manner, as a result of the increased scarcity and high price of land, agricultural households are being forced off farm land. This land is being cleared for new golf courses and resorts for tourists.

## **B. Commodification of Necessary Goods**

Furthermore the increasing need of agricultural households for cash income can largely be attributed to a growing dependence on commercial consumption goods and services which cannot be produced within the households. In addition, the ability of households to obtain sufficient rice output for subsistence depends increasingly on the use of inputs which must be purchased in commercial markets using cash. This means that agricultural households must seek ways to acquire cash income in order to maintain the reproductive and productive unit as a whole.

### **B.1 Agricultural Inputs**

Both subsistence and cash crop production require inputs which must be acquired in the market. This means that the subsistence economy does not exist outside the non-subsistence economy. These wage inputs include agricultural fuel, fertilizer, seed, farm transportation, labor, machinery, and livestock. Few households (12%, n=43) in the study incur cash production expenses for fuel, ranging from 35 to 340 baht for the last agricultural year. In addition 67% (n=43) of households have purchased fertilizer,



primarily for production of cash crops such as cucumber, soybeans, shallot, peanuts. Household expenditures on fertilizer ranged from 18 baht to 4600 baht during the last agricultural year. Thirty eight percent of households purchased farm seed at a cost of 40 to 1000 baht. About 30% (n=43) have expenses on farm transportation, ranging from 60 to 700 baht. Another 30% of households hired wage laborers at a cost of 120 to 1600 baht. 62% of households rented farm equipment such as a two-wheel tractor, with annual expenditures ranging from 120 to 3900 baht. Only 5% (n=43) of households rented draft animals, at a cost of 100 to 1100 baht.

## **B.2 Consumption Goods And Services for Households**

In addition to inputs for farm production, households consume items which cannot be produced within the households such as certain food items (e.g. fish sauce, salt, and shrimp paste), education for children, health care, entertainment, clothing, household goods (e.g. toothpaste, toothbrush, detergent, soap, shampoo, powder), gasoline, electricity, and cooking gas. All households spend some money on food ranging from 10 to 95 baht daily. Over half of households (60%, n=43) with school-age children also have expenses related to education ranging from 10 to 2000 baht during the last year. In addition during last year all households had health care expenses ranging from 20 to 6000 baht.

Social ceremonies and functions are very important events to the peasants, since the traditional subsistence agricultural community is closed and members are highly dependent on each other as a form of insurance against instability of production related to weather. All households reported expenses on social functions ranging from 100 to

5000 baht, with 38% (n=42) of households spending 1000-2000 and 31% spending 300-500 baht a year. Social events are religious events in which all villagers participate. Women prepare large meals for people who visit their home and donate small amounts of money. There is an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of hosts and visitors: hosts are obligated to return the donations of money and goods to visitors when these visitors host a similar social ceremony. Such social events and functions, like the traditional practice of labor exchange, serve as a mechanism to balance cash and labor within these subsistence communities.

Only 7% (n=43) of households report any expenses on entertainment, ranging from 60 to 500 baht a year. In these households either the husband and wife are young or there are teenagers who would attend a movie or musical event.

In general, peasant households purchase most clothing once a year, since it is the Thai custom that people will have good fortune if they acquire new clothes on the Thai New Year holiday of April 13. Households with school-age children have higher expenses on clothes since they must purchase school uniforms. Teenagers also demand new fashionable clothes. All households have discontinued the tradition of self-sufficiency in terms of clothes, and expenses on clothing ranged from 200 to 4000 baht last year. Women no longer produce clothes in their homes, but women remain primarily responsible for repair of clothing. This reliance on commercial clothing (shirts, bluejeans, shoes, skirts, sarongs) has made rural households increasingly dependent on the cash economy.

These households also rely on the commercial market for household consumption

goods not produced internally (e.g. toothpaste, toothbrush, detergent, soap, shampoo, and powder), with expenses ranging from 50 to 300 baht a month. 14%, 55%, 17% and 14% (n=42) of households spent under 100 (50-95), 100-150, 153-192 and 200-300 baht, respectively.

Sixty five percent (n=43) of households have a motorcycle and spend 30 to 450 a month for gasoline. Nearly all of households (91%, n=43) use electricity for lighting and running small appliances such as stereo, radio, television and water pump. These households spend 5 to 150 baht a month on electricity, with 55% (n=38) of them spending between 10 and 35 baht. One household uses a gas cooking stove which costs 816 baht a year in fuel.

Due to the increasing scarcity of land suitable for rice fields and the small size of rice farms, 40% (n=43) of households needed to purchase some rice for consumption during the last year. These households spent 800 to 7560 baht last year on rice. Since the study includes some landless households who did not produce rice and earn income only through wage labor, one would expect higher expenses on rice consumption. However both men and women laborers in these subsistence villages are often paid in the form of unhusked rice.

In sum, the increasing need to obtain cash for subsistence agricultural households due to the commodification of farm inputs and household consumptive goods and services has put pressure on the households to integrate themselves further into the market economy by earning additional cash income through wage employments of various forms including homework.

#### **IV. Women's Subsistence Production: The Effect Of Integration On Rural Women**

##### **A. Still An Unpaid Family Worker, No Matter What!**

As mentioned previously, all of the women in this study who live in agricultural households see themselves as unpaid labor working for the family farm. This is true for all types of cultivation: rice monocropping (10), cash crop cultivation (13) and multiple cropping households (16). In this respect, the degree to which the household has been integrated into the cash economy (by cash crop production) has not changed women's condition as non-wage productive laborers.

Of more importance are changes in type of nonwage productive labor for women in different household categories due to integration. Women in rice monocropping households engage in only one type of non-wage productive work, typically rice production. Moreover the majority of these women (60%, n=10) "help out" with the family livestock enterprise which is owned by the head of household (along with the family rice farm).

All women (100%, n=13) in cash crop cultivation households engage in only one type of non-wage productive work, i.e. work in cash crop cultivation. Only two of these households raise livestock because this enterprise requires a large investment in animals and high input costs. This particular group of women also engage in other wage work to help maintain the household (this topic is discussed later).

Women in multiple cropping households (n=16) engage in the most types of non-wage productive work: rice farming (100%), cash cropping (100%), and raising livestock (44%). All this employment is as unpaid family labor.

In contrast to the macro-statistics on the recent reduction in the share of the female labor force within agriculture, rural women have been highly concentrated as non-wage productive labor. This is particularly true for women in multiple cropping households.

### **B. Sexual Division of Labor in Agricultural Production**

These rural women, acting as unpaid family workers, engage in wide variety of agricultural tasks ranging from land preparation, seeding, planting, weeding and general field maintenance, harvesting, packing, threshing, transporting and managing the sale of rice output.

Three methods of rice cultivation are used in Thailand: shifting, broadcasting and transplanting. In the North which is well-irrigated, transplanting is a common practice. This method requires careful preparation of seedbeds on which sprouted seeds are broadcast and carefully tended.

Typically rice farming starts in the period of rain fall around the month of June when peasants begin to prepare farm tools and arrange to hire a tractor to plough the fields. In July to August, water will be drained from the field and then the fields will be ploughed either by tractor, two-wheel tractor, or draft animals. Seedlings are grown in small plots for about 25 to 30 days while other fields are being ploughed and weeded. After seedlings are mature, they will be transplanted. This requires considerable labor.

During the months of August to November after the rice is transplanted, peasants will inspect the rice fields to see if rice plants are developing properly and if there is adequate water. At the same time, peasants may grow other cash crops in upland areas (e.g. cucumbers). From late November to December, mature rice is harvested by cutting

rice straw with a sickle. Harvested rice will be left in the field for 2-3 days to be dried (Sirivong Na Ayuthaya, et. al, p. 77). After this it will be threshed, i.e. the sheaf of rice is hit hard on the threshing ground or on a mat, and rice grains fall off the straw (Rajadhon, 1961, p. 41). Unhusked rice is transported to the granaries at home by hired truck.

After the harvest, from January to May, some peasants also grow cash crops such as peanuts, cucumbers and soybean in the rice fields. During this dry season, peasants also seek jobs off family farms such as carpentry, logging work, and other wage works. A sexual division of labor (SDOL) generally is practiced in that tasks are often assigned to a particular gender. In order to understand women's work and lives in the agricultural community, it is necessary to analyze the SDOL and its effects on women's work and lives.

As shown in table 4.7, the task of land preparation is performed primarily by men. Majority of the households (75%, n=36) indicate that land preparation is performed only by male members of their household, 3% indicate that it is done only by female members, and 22% indicate that it is done by both men and women. Land preparation involves plowing, building up dykes, and harrowing. Plowing requires physical strength. In Thai society, strength is attributed to men, while women are defined as weak or soft. Yet such division can be (and in this case has been) broken if situation is imposed due to lack of a male member to carry it out. As is the case of a woman who must solely perform land preparation task because her husband employs outside the village (building household) at the time.

The extent of male dominance in land preparation may depend in part on the number of children in the household. Approximately 80% (n=15) of men in households with few (0-1) children carry out the task, as compared to 60% (n=15) of men in households with more (2-3) children. In addition 79% (n=14) of men from small households (2-3 members) perform the task as compared to 73% (n=22) of men from larger households (4-6 members). Women are solely responsible for land preparation only if the household contains both 2-3 children and 4-6 members. Women perform the task alongside with their men. About 33% (n=15) of women with more children indicate that both sexes engage in land preparation, as compared to 20% (n=15) of women with few children. This suggests that as the number of children and adult members in a household increases, women may obtain domestic help from other adults or older children. Then they are able to perform the task of land preparation. On the contrary, women in households with few children are relatively young and have relatively young children. Consequently, they are not sufficiently free from child care to assume such tasks in the field.

Seeding is another task that is commonly performed by men. Most of subjects (71%, n=24) indicate that this task is done by men, and 29% reveal that it is performed by both men and women. This task requires no physical strength (in contrast to land preparation), but it is part of the rice growing ritual whereby a man must make physical contact with the seedling rice plants in order for the fields to have a good harvest. For example it has been noted that "the job of scattering the rice in the nursery plot is of particular ritual importance...., a man must do the work or the rice crop may suffer"

(Potter, 1979, p. 57).

Table 4.7 Percentage of Households With Respect To SDOL within Family Farm Works

Land Status	Division of Labor by Gender			Total
	Male	Female	Both	
(a) Land preparation	75	3	22	100
(b) Seedling	71	-	29	100
(c) Pulling seedling	-	5	95	100
(d) Planting	-	12	88	100
(e) Maintaining field	51	11	38	100
(f) Harvesting	-	3	97	100
(g) Packing	4	25	71	100
(h) Threshing	87	4	9	100
(i) Transporting	79	3	18	100
(j) Sale of output	7	73	20	100

Apparently men from households with 2-3 children are less likely to do the seeding than men with 0-1 children. Half of men (57%, n=7) from households with 2-3 children perform the task in contrast to 73% (n=11) of men from households with 0-1 children. The task is performed by both sexes in 43% (n=7) of households with 2-3 children. In these cases there are older children who provide help in the household and free the wife for more work in the field.

Although seeding is still largely dominated by males, it has become more integrated with men and women often working side by side. I suspect that this integration does not reflect a change in beliefs. Instead I think that it can be explained largely in



terms of the high labor requirements for seeding and a reduction in the available labor force per household due to a reduction in fertility rates for rural women over the last decade (refer to chapter 2 for data on fertility rates from Muecke). As a result, all household labor is deployed what was once a male ritual task.

Transplanting generally consists of two tasks: pulling the seedling from the seedbed/nursery and (re-)planting the seedling. Nearly all (95%, n=21) of the pulling and 88% (n=33) of the replanting are carried out by both sexes, side-by-side. Only 5% (n=21) of the pulling is done by women alone. In her study of village life in Chiang Mai, Potter discussed transplanting as follows: "Men are supposed to pull the rice seedlings and women are supposed to bind them into bunches; men carry them to the fields, while the women plant them; then, when all the bunches have been carried, the men join in the planting" (Ibid). Another explanation for the fact that women perform the task of pulling of seedlings is because men are still busy preparing the field. However an earlier study in another village also reports that this task was performed by women (Rajadhon, 1961, p. 41). This indicates that this male dominated task has long been sex-integrated. Now sex-integration of the task is common and not an exception.

Planting is largely conducted by both men and women, and only 12% (n=33) of subjects indicate that the task is performed solely by women. In the case of pulling, women who perform this task are from large households with several children. This is partly because these women have older children rather than infants, so that child care tasks are less demanding. In contrast, women with few children (21%, n=14) and small households (17%, n=12) are somewhat more likely to perform planting than are women

with more children (7%, n=15) and larger households (10%, n=21). This may be due to the fact that both pulling seedling and planting must be done quickly, so that all members of the household must help in these tasks. In sum, the task of pulling the seedling from the nursery has become more commonly sex-integrated while the planting has remained sex-integrated, as compared to practices in a Chiang Mai village studied by Potter.

The tasks of maintaining the fields after planting (i.e. repairing dykes, weeding, maintaining the level of water, applying fertilizer and pesticide, etc.) appears to be largely a male task. Nevertheless a relatively high number of households report that the task is done by both men and women: 51% of household indicate that these tasks are performed only by men, 38% indicate that these are done by both sexes, and 11% state that these are performed solely by women. These tasks require some physical strength and knowledge of the use of chemicals, which traditionally has been assigned to men. Consequently these tasks are assigned primarily to men. However women may perform these tasks depending on household resources, i.e. women may perform these tasks when labor is scarce due to small size of household or other factors. Women are more likely to perform these tasks when they are in small households (14%, n=14) and with few children (19%, n=16) than when they are in large households (9%, n=23) and with many (older) children (7%, n=15).

In addition, the task of field maintenance is done by women when necessary. This occurs when the woman maintains the cash crop field during the dry season in order to permit the man to be employed outside the home.

Nearly all of subjects (97%, n=37) indicate that harvesting is done by both men

and women. While Potter observed that "women cut the rice" at harvest season (Ibid). This indicates that the once female dominated (and thus sex-segregated) task has become clearly and highly sex-integrated task.

After rice is cut, it is put into bunches. About 71% (n=24) of respondents indicate that this task is done by both women and men, and 25% indicate that it is performed only by women. Women tend to participate in this task more than men, i.e. in 25% of households it is performed by women alone and in 4% of cases it is performed solely by men.

Threshing traditionally has been performed by men beating bunches of rice into large baskets (Ibid). This is still the case for this agricultural community. Majority of households (87%, n=23) report that this task is performed solely by men, 4% report that it is done solely by women, and 9% report that threshing is performed by both women and men. Women in large households are more likely to perform this traditional male task than are women in small households. This is in part because women in large families can obtain help in child care and other household tasks. However this task is still largely male dominated and highly sex-segregated task.

Transporting output/crop from the field to the home for storage traditionally has been done by women. Potter indicated that women carried rice home by "using double baskets suspended in balance from a bamboo shoulder stick" (Ibid). In contrast, 79% of respondents in the current study report that in their household this task is performed solely by men, 3% report that it is done solely by women, and 18% indicate that it is carried out by both sexes. This break from tradition may be due in part to the hiring of

a truck/two wheel tractor to transport rice output from the field to home for storage. Consequently women's traditional task of transporting rice (on their shoulders) has been replaced with modern technology, and at the same time men have taken over the task. The new technology requires only one or two people, typically men, to load and unload rice. As in the case of other non-traditional farm tasks for women, women transporting rice are more likely to be from large households, where older children can often assist mothers in child care and housework.

Concerning the task of managing the sale of crop, 73% of households indicate the task is performed solely by women, only 7% indicate that it is done solely by men, and 20% report that it is carried out by both women and men. The preponderance of women in crop marketing reflects the traditional role of Thai women in trade. As Potter argued, "Trading...is a job for women, so much so that a man in the marketplace, unless he is rather a Chinese trader than a Northern Thai peasant, is an uncommon sight" (Ibid, pp. 70-71). For instance, one woman, Dawn, reports that she spends 5 hours daily, i.e. from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m., traveling and engaging in petty trade in a large market in San Kumpheang district.

Market sale of crop is performed by women in 83% (n=6) of households with few children or small size, in 63% (n=8) of households with more children and 67% (n=9) of households large in size. These two roles for women are not in conflict in the sense that both are traditionally female roles. Women can be mothers and at the same time engage in petty trade such as sales of rice or cash crops (vegetables, wild mushroom, and/or herbs) in the local market. The sale of rice typically occurs within the village and often

in small quantities to obtain cash for certain ceremonial events such as the new year holiday. In fact, within the village boundary, a small child goes everywhere with the mother.

These rural women participate along with their men in cash crop production ranging from planting to harvesting of shallot, peanuts, garlic, cucumbers and soybeans. These women are unpaid family laborers in the family subsistence rice production and also in cash crop production. They plant cucumbers, harvest them and arrange to hire additional laborers and manage the household labor exchange with a group of friends and neighbors. Women walk from one house to the next to ask friends to come and help, "cuaj kan". They receive a cash wage, and they are expected to return the favor by hiring the woman and her family when they cultivate their cash crops.

Women whose families own dairy cows also participate in dairy tasks. One woman said "I take the cow to the field to graze", while men go out and cut grass for the cow. In addition women fetch water and feed the cow, while men drive motorcycles to the dairy co-op to arrange a loan on animal feed, medical supplies for the cow, and/or deliver milk. Three women in the study participated in tasks on family dairy and oxen farms.

Pi Nun, a 30 year old mother, told me that when it was not raining, "I wake up early in the morning around 6 a.m. to cook food, clean the house and wash clothes. Then about 8 a.m., I take the family's oxen to the field and bring along embroidery work to do in the field. I stay in the field and look after oxen until about 4 p.m., then I take the oxen home". Although she has two children (5 and 12 years old), she does not provide care for them during the day as the younger one goes to paid daycare in village nearby and the

older one attends school. Thus she takes the family oxen to the field (in his place) when her husband employs in other wage labor.

In Ban Mai Hod, there are similar cases of women participating in their family's dairy farms. Moon, a single woman who lives with her parents, is the main person managing the family's enterprises, i.e. rice and dairy farms. "I gather grass for 7 cows, look after them, milk them as well as deliver the milk to a co-op in the village nearby. It is not that difficult to gather grass from the field nearby because I use a grass-cutter which takes about 1 hour from about 7 to 8 in the morning. But sometimes I spend an hour in the morning and 2 hours in the evening delivering milk to the co-op".

Beauty, a 24 year old woman with a two year old son, cares for the family's four dairy cows. Since she lives with her mother- and father-in-law and these adults help provide child care, she is able to work in the family dairy farm. "I wake up about 5 a.m. and carry out house-related tasks until 8 a.m. Then around 8 a.m. I go to the field near the house to cut grass for our 4 cows and look after them until 1 p.m.".

Women's subsistence production (non-wage productive labor as an unpaid family worker) in these villages involves a variety of activities. These include rice farming, cash cropping, family dairy and oxen enterprises.

Due to the households' needs to integrate into the cash economy, women's non-wage productive work has not decreased. Indeed apparently these rural women are increasingly concentrated in non-wage productive labor. This is particularly the case for multiple cropping households.

Integration of the subsistence economy into the cash economy and the

accompanying increase in off-farm male labor, together with the labor intensive nature of rice cultivation and small size of household, has led to the integration of sexes in various agricultural tasks. Various tasks that are traditionally male dominated (e.g. land preparation, seeding, threshing and transporting farm output) and female dominated (typically the sale of farm output) are now undertaken to a greater degree by both sexes. Indeed some tasks (pulling seedling, planting, harvesting and packing) are now entirely sex-integrated.

Similarly female participation in dairy farms depends on whether or not there is an available man in the household. In all cases in this study, the women gather grass and tend the animals. Only in one case, i.e. in Moon's case where there is no man in the household, is a woman involved in milking and delivering milk to the dairy co-op. This indicates that a division of labor by sex exists for these activities, but there is some flexibility in the system.

As a result of intensive labor requirement and the households' labor deployment of both genders in the family farm, there is no feminization of agriculture, both in terms of subsistence, non-subsistence agriculture and livestock farm.

## **V. Off-farm Employment for Women**

Rural women are pushed into employment outside the family farm because households can no longer survive on farming. Both men and women must seek wage employment within or outside the village. The off-farm employment consists of agricultural work on other farms and non-agricultural work (including construction work, non-farm wage work in the city, trade, and wage work in embroidery home industry).

In this section, I deal with rural women's employment opportunities outside the family farm excluding the homework which is examined in detail in chapter 5.

### **A. Working Near The Home**

About 64% (n=36) identified wage laborer as their subsidiary occupation. Wage laborer was also the subsidiary occupation of 67% of heads of household. During the last agricultural year, 77% (n=43) of the heads of household were employed outside the family farm. Seventy percent of these were employed in the agricultural sector and 30% were employed outside agriculture. Most (70%) were employed within the village and 30% were employed outside the village.

About 70% of the rural women were employed outside the family farm. In addition 7% had two off-farm jobs such as wage labor and merchant in the village. Most of women (93.3%) with off-farm employment were employed within the village and its farms.

Most (87%) of women's employment outside the family farm is within the agricultural sector. The other 13% of off-farm jobs are as merchant in the village, wage laborer in a spring resort near the village, wage laborer in ready-make cloth in San Kumpheang, or permanent worker in the city of Chiang Mai. This higher percentage of women having off-farm jobs within the village than do men reflects the fact that there is less mobility and more confinement of rural women to the vicinity of the village. Women are required to remain near the home, where their domestic responsibilities are and where subsistence agricultural work and household work are highly integrated. Furthermore this concentration of women's off-farm employment in the agricultural sector indicates that



women are more restricted to agricultural employment than are men.

Although village men tend to have non-farm employments outside the village, they do not, by and large, emigrate to work and live outside the community as such. This is, in fact, the pattern of off-farm employment in this province whereby most of seasonal labor commute to find jobs such as construction-related work in and around the city of Chiang Mai. As a result there has not been an emerging of a large scale of male migration out of this agricultural community into industrial sector.

As rural households become integrated into the market economy, they rely increasingly on off-farm employment for both male and female members of the household. Only 30% of women and 40% of men in rice monocropping households work off-farm. In contrast 92% of women and all men in cash crop households have part time off-farm employment. 81% of women and 81% of men in multiple cropping households have off-farm employment.

In addition off-farm employment is somewhat more common for women whose households have debts: 78% of women in families with debts work as wage laborers in contrast to 64% of women in families without any debt. Off-farm employment also is more common for women whose husbands work off-farm: 76% of women in families where the head of household works off-farm also work off-farm in contrast to 50% of women in families where the head of household does not work off-farm.

Off-farm employment by women also appears to be related to reproductive factors. Approximately 81% of women who spend only 1-4 hours daily on housework work off-farm in contrast to 42% of women who spend 5-7 hours daily on housework. About 81%

(n=16) of women with 2-3 children work off-farm in contrast to 60% (n=20) of women with 0-1 children. Moreover 74% (n=27) of women in large households (4-6 persons) work off-farm in contrast to 62% (n=16) of women in small households (2-3 persons).

Since women with more children tend to have older children, these women are more free to seek off-farm jobs because their children need less attention and can often provide assistance in the home. Similarly women in large households have more freedom in terms of off-farm employment because they receive more assistance on household tasks. When women have young children (especially pre-school), the traditional role of motherhood is very restrictive because it is then expected to be the woman's main role.

About 60% of women with more children and larger households work off-farm as farm wage laborers within the village (only one engages in petty trade at home, and she has two small children of ages 1 and 5 years). In contrast, all women in the study with few children and small households are employed in petty trade in the village. One such woman sells food at her home because she is expecting a baby. On the other hand, another woman trades in a market outside her village because her only child is 15 years.

In general rural women tend to be employed in off-farm jobs, particularly those women of households directly involved in cash economy, i.e. cash cropping and multi cropping households. Their off-farm employments, moreover, tend to be within agriculture and within village boundary since such jobs are traditionally for females and are compatible with women's dominant role of motherhood. However, when such conditions are not met, either due to the location of the job or requirements at home, certain patterns may occur. First, if women are young and do not yet have any children, they tend to

engage in non-traditional jobs rather than traditional female off-farm jobs, i.e. non-agriculture and/or outside the village boundary. Second, when the women have very young children, women tend to be employed in the traditional female off-farm jobs such as petty trade at the home and/or within the village. The off-farm jobs must be compatible with the main role of women as mother.

### **B. Wage Differentiation By Sexes: Rural Women as Cheap Laborers**

Most agricultural tasks in the villages under study are performed by both sexes, and peasants of both sexes are employed in agricultural wage labor in a variety of tasks. Women and men are hired to perform tasks of planting and harvesting in both subsistence rice and cash crop production.

About 30% (n=43) of the households hired casual laborers during the last agricultural season. About 50 female wage laborers and only 16 male wage laborers were hired for agricultural work. Among the households hiring casual laborer, 46% did not hire any male laborers and 30% hired male laborers for only one day. Female casual laborers were hired for longer periods, i.e. 31% of households using wage labor hired female workers for 1 day, 16% hired them for 2 days, and 53% hired female workers for 3-10 days.

However, there is wage differentiation by sex: a female wage laborer receives 20-40 baht while a male wage laborer receives 40-60 baht for a day of planting or harvesting rice. Similarly, when the wage is paid in kind rather than cash, a female is paid 1 Tang of unhusked rice while a male is paid 1.5 Tang of unhusked rice for a day of planting or harvesting rice. While men are often hired to transport rice for a daily wage of 1.5 Tang

of unhusked rice, women may be hired to take unhusked rice to the mill in exchange for rice bran to feed her pigs or chickens. In addition women are usually hired to plant and harvest cash crops such as peanuts, soybeans, or cucumbers. Female workers receive a wage of 5-7 baht per 1 Tang of harvested peanuts, which is equivalent to 25-35 baht per day.

Women engaged in off-farm work spend an average of 57 days on off-farm jobs, with a range of 5 to 240 days last year. They earn an average income of 2084 baht off-farm, ranging from 200 to 7425 baht, during the same period. The heads of households (typically men) spend an average of 97 days on off-farm jobs, ranging from 8 to 365 days last year. Men earn an average of 8877 baht off-farm, ranging from 400 to 54000 baht last year. Thus on average, women earn 37 baht per day while men earn about 92 baht per day of off-farm work, i.e. the average daily income for rural women in off-farm work is only one third of the average daily income for men.

Thus, although the sexual division of labor is flexible in the sense that men and women may often perform similar tasks off-farm, the status and value of the labor as reflected in income differs by sex. Whether wage labor is paid in the form of cash or in kind, women receive lower wages than do men. What is important here is not the relative performance of women, but rather the relations and conditions under which women do these tasks. The condition and relation of their work indicates a lower status relative to the labor of men, and this is reflected in lower wages for women in tasks similar to those for men. Wage paid for woman signifies women's role within family farm, i.e. as an unpaid family worker, and that their labor is next to free.

It is clear that rural women's labor within the production of the means of subsistence on rice farms and cash cropping as well as their wage labor and domestic work help maintain the reproduction of the household and of the labor force. It is this work that helps maintain and reproduce the subsistence agricultural economy in the presence of the capitalist penetration into the subsistence economy. Through rural women's labor in family fields as well as in other farms, subsistence rice households are able to balance the requirements for cash income in the labor market and from cash crops production with the household's needs for security and survival.

## Chapter 5

### Rural Women As Industrial Homeworkers

#### I. Subcontracting System

Embroidery industry is part of the ready-made clothing industry. It is built upon a subcontracting system of production where certain parts of the production process is transferred or 'put-out' from the centre of the capital owner to workers in the home, involving middlewomen. The subcontracting system links rural women homeworkers to national and international market. It provides firms with willing and cheap labor, without paying the high overhead costs as in the case of factory work.

Embroidery homeworkers are involved in production of embroidery ready-made clothing (shirts, skirts, pants, dresses) and cushion covers. In this study 37% produce ready-made embroidery clothing, 54% produce cushion covers and 9% produce both types of products. The homeworkers are involved in only one aspect of the entire production process, i.e. embroidery. Other aspects of the process such as sewing, screening the patterns, crocheting, etc., are carried out by other parties elsewhere. The middleperson, also a woman, delivers the work to homeworkers. This usually occurs at the middlewoman's home in the village, but sometimes the work is delivered directly to the homeworkers' home particularly during the peak season when time is scarce. The material, i.e. yarn, needed for embroidery is paid for by the middlewoman, but needles are purchased by homeworkers themselves. The producer/factory determines the type, color and amount of yarn to sell to the middlewoman. Since the middlewoman pays for the yarn, she distributes the material to homemakers with care so that theft is minimal.

Before the finished products are returned to the producer/factory, the middlewoman will check the quality of the embroidery work. The middlewoman may also do embroidery work herself if there are some finishing touches involved such as sewing on a pad. Some styles of embroidery clothing may call for bead work which is done by young women within the factory, since it requires more skill and detail.

For cushion covers, the cloth is first cut and sewed, zippers are added, and the pattern to be embroidered is screened on by other workers. Then the resulting material is delivered to homeworkers for the embroidery work. As in the case of clothes, middlewomen buy the yarn, distribute the work along with yarn, and collect the finished products, check and control the quality of the workmanship and finally return the finished product to the producer/factory. Then the producer/factory will distribute the work to other middlepeople in other villages in order to put the two sides of an embroidered cushion cover together by crocheting.

Among the middlewomen interviewed for this study, one operates on a larger scale than others by also subcontracting the work of middlewoman to another middlewoman in the village (Ban On Luay) and also to one outside the village (Ban Nong Hoi), paying them at the piecework rate of 0.50 baht. Women who subcontract the work of middlewoman would perform all the required tasks, except they do not have to buy yarn. However they are responsible for the quality of the finished products and the delivery of the products to this major middlewoman. Therefore the business of home embroidery is rather competitive at least at the middlewoman level.

The subcontracting system relies heavily on verbal understanding rather than

written contracts between homeworkers and middlewomen. Most of homeworkers (79%, n=43) say that there is a work contract, and 97% (n=34) of these indicate that there is a verbal understanding. Only one woman had a written contract regarding the quantity and quality of the material and product. This is because she is a middlewoman who is dealing with the large factory for the first time.

The majority of homeworkers indicate that the verbal agreements are honored, i.e. homeworkers receive cash when they return satisfactory finished work, and homemakers undo and improve work that is unsatisfactory. This, according to homeworkers, is common practice and in accordance with their understanding. About 28% (n=43) of homeworkers have had finished work rejected on occasion and redone, but the other 72% have never had this problem.

Yarn and needles are paid for by the middlewomen and homeworkers. These same women also have to pay production costs for any extensively damaged cloth, i.e. the cost of fabric and sewing of the garments. In these respects quality control in production is maintained at no cost to the factory owner/producer of the final product. The producer calculates the cost of yarn used in each piece of embroidery work, then adds it to the piecework wage to be paid to middlewomen. As the manager of Tai Hua garment factory indicates, "we (the firm) pay 12 baht per piece of work to a middlewoman for every piece of work to be distributed and collected by the middlewoman. This wage includes the cost of yarn which the middlewoman paid at first. We make sure that the middlewoman makes a profit out of it". The middlewoman then recovers the money she paid for the yarn by taking a small amount of money off the piecework wage received by homeworkers. In



this instance, women homeworkers receive 10 baht for a piece of embroidered product, meaning that the 2 baht difference is the cost of yarn plus the middlewoman's profit.

The peak period for embroidery homework is in March and April. This is because there are large orders for final products during the peak of the tourist season in April, the month of the Thai New Year. Most women homeworkers (86%, n=15) who embroider all year and 32% (n=25) who embroider only part of the year do most of their embroidery homework during these two months in the dry season. This is when middlewomen have the most work to distribute to homeworkers. In order to handle this work, during these months the middlewomen subcontract the work to other middlewomen in the same village as well as in other villages. Through this arrangement the middlewoman loses 0.50 baht of profit per piece of distributed work but she is able to distribute more work and hence earn a larger total profit. In the words of one middlewoman, "I pay 0.50 baht for subcontracting middlewoman's work to a middlewoman who lives just across the road from my house. It is better this way because in total I can distribute the works better and faster. That middlewoman will do all the tasks of middlewoman and she will return finished products to my house. Then I deliver them to the factory in San Kumpheang. I also pay workers who receive the works from this middlewoman the same piecework rate, i.e. 10 baht, as I pay to other homeworkers who receive the works directly from my house. The key is larger quantity in a shorter time and I still make good profit."

Embroidery homework has been a source of off-farm wage work in this area for more than a few years. A village study by Ahba, et al., showed that the cottage industry played an important role in villages, particularly in Ban Pah Hah which is located near

villages in the current study. Ahba's 1979 study also placed embroidery homework as an "employment" and a vital economic activity for these rural households (1979, p. 257). This evidence is supported by the fact that women homeworkers in Ban Don Shay, Ban On Luay and Ban Nong Hoi have participated in this embroidery homework for a period ranging from 1 to 20 years. About 67% (n=43) of the subjects in this study have worked in the industry for 1-5 years, and among these 10%, 48%, 35%, and 7% (n=29) have worked in the industry for 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 years, respectively.

## **II. Embroidery Homeworkers**

As indicated previously, men in Ban Don Shay and Ban Nong Hoi of San Kumpheang district tend to work in off-farm jobs that are outside the villages and hence outside agriculture. On the contrary women are more likely work in off-farm jobs that are within the village and agriculture. At the same time women tend to produce for the immediate consumption of the household and hire themselves out as homeworkers for a small cash income. As they often put it, "the money earned from embroidery homework is just enough for my kid's candy". The involvement of these rural women in the homework has been conditioned by various factors, both economic and non-economic.

### **A. Economic Pressures**

#### **A.1 Land Tenure Status**

As shown in table 5.1, majority of embroidery workers (81%) who live in households that have full ownership of their agricultural land or that part rent, part own their land have been employed in the embroidery homeindustry for 1-5 years. The remainder have been employed in the industry for 6-10 years. In contrast 70% of

Table 5.1 Percentage of Households According to Homeworkers' Work Intensity and Land Status of Household

intensity of participation	land tenurial status of household		
	landless	part rent.own	fully own
<b>I years of involvement</b>			
a 1-5	54	89	67
b 6-20	46	11	33
<b>II annual engagement</b>			
a entire year	46	22	43
b part of year	54	78	57
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>			
a 5-8	31	44	43
b 10-14	69	56	57
<b>IV output per week</b>			
a 3-7 pieces	54	33	29
b 10-25 pieces	46	67	71

embroidery workers who live in households that do not own land (i.e. are classified as landless) have been employed in the industry for 1-5 years, and the remainder have been employed in the industry for 6-10 years.

In part this is due to the general condition of increasing landlessness among peasants in the rural economy. This leads women peasants whose households are in need of cash to increase their participation in embroidery homework.

In addition 46% of female homeworkers who live in landless households are employed in the industry for the entire year in contrast to 37% of those who live in households with ownership of land. Thus women homeworkers who live in households

with ownership of some farm land are more likely to work in the industry for only part of the year.

Female homeworkers who live in landless households are more likely to produce small amounts of embroidery piecework during the peak of the season, than are those who live in households with access to farm land. About 38% of homeworkers who live in landless households produce 10-14 pieces per week in contrast to 56% and 43% of homemakers with full ownership and part rent, part own, respectively.

This reveals that women homeworkers who are from households with full ownership of land are likely to produce 15-25 pieces a week. In contrast, homemakers who live in households that partly own, partly rent land tend to produce 10-14 pieces, and landless homemakers tend to produce 3-7 pieces per week. Consequently the better the household's land tenure status, the more likely it is for female homeworkers to produce large amounts of piecework per week.

The size of land holdings is not related to the proportion of the subjects employed as homeworkers throughout the year as opposed to part of the year. But homeworkers from households with smaller farm land work harder than those who live in households with better economic status. That is about 61% (n=28) of women homeworkers with small land holdings (0.25-4 rai) spend 9 to 14 hours per day on embroidery homework in contrast to 54% (n=11) of women in households with large land holdings (5-9 rai) (table 5.2). Other women spend 5 to 8 hours on embroidery during a day when embroidery is done.

Table 5.2 Percentage of Households With Respect to Homeworkers' Work Intensity and Size of Holding

intensity of participation	size of landholding of household	
	0.25-4 rai	5-9 rai
<b>I annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	35.7	36.4
b part of year	64.3	63.7
<b>II hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	39	46
b 9-14	61	54
<b>III output per week</b>		
a 3-7 pieces	32	46
b 10-25 pieces	68	54
<b>IV weekly income from homework</b>		
a 18-80 baht	61	91
b 100-132 baht	39	9

Apparently women homeworkers with small holdings produce somewhat more embroidery output per week. In households with small land holdings (n=11), 32% produce 3 to 7 pieces of embroidery work in a week, 46% produce 10 to 14 pieces, and 21% produce 15 to 25 pieces. In households with large land holdings (n=28), 46% produce 3 to 7 pieces per week, 36% produce 10 to 14 pieces, and 18% produce 15 to 25 pieces.

As a result women from households with smaller land holdings tend to have higher incomes per week from the embroidery homework. In the case of small land holdings (n=11), 39% of women earn 100-132 baht per week and 61% earn 18-80 baht per week

from embroidery homework. In the case of large land holdings (n=28), 9% of women earn 100-132 baht per week and 82% earn 18-80 baht per week. On the other hand, in both cases the majority of homeworkers earn incomes of 18-80 baht per week from embroidery homework.

Women in households with small farm holdings engage more intensively in homework in part because they are usually from households with small plots of land that produce only cash crops. Such households are in particular need of supplemental income.

In contrast households with larger holdings tend to engage in rice monocropping or multiple cropping, as well as raising livestock. Women in these larger farms obviously have more agricultural work to perform, so they spend less time on homework.

## **A.2 Household Debts**

The financial situation of households, i.e. the extent of financial debt, is (positively) related to the length of time that female homeworkers have spent in the industry. In households without debt, 72% of women homeworkers have been in the industry for 1-5 years, 20% have been in the industry for 6-10 years, and 8% have been in the industry for more than 10 years (table 5.3). In households with debt, 61% of women homeworkers have been in the industry for 1-5 years, 17% have been in the industry for 6-10 years, and 22% have been in the industry for more than 10 years. This data suggests that household debt is associated with and perhaps in part causes longer involvement of women in the home industry.

On the other hand, women homeworkers from households without debts are more likely to work in the embroidery industry throughout the year. Forty four percent of

women in households without debts do embroidery homework throughout the year in contrast to 33% of women in households with debts. Given household debt, women homeworkers do not engage in the industry all year round so that they can also work in other types of jobs when they are available.

Table 5.3 Percentage of Households With Respect To Women's Work Intensity And Debt

intensity of participation	household debt	
	with debt	without debt
<b>I years of involvement</b>		
a 1-5	61	72
b 6-20	39	28
<b>II annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	33	44
b part of year	67	56
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	39	40
b 10-14	61	60
<b>IV output per week</b>		
a 3-7 pieces	44	32
b 10-25 pieces	56	68

In addition household debt and the extent of women's involvement in off-farm work is associated with the amount of homework, in terms of the amount of both labor time and piecework output per day. Half of women homeworkers in households with debt spend 9-10 hours on embroidery homework, in contrast to 28% of other homeworkers.

On the other hand 32% of homeworkers without debts do homework for 11-14 hours per day, in contrast to 11% of homeworkers with debts.

But when controlling for number of days women spend on off-farm employment we find that among women who spend 5 to 30 days on off-farm jobs, 56% (n=9) of those without debt spend 11-14 hours a day on homework as compared to 33% (n=6) of those with debt. Others spent 5-10 hours a day on the homework.

Similarly the amount of piecework produced by women homeworkers per week during the peak season is related to both household debt and the extent of female participation in off-farm employment. At first inspection of the data it appears that women without debt produce a larger quantity of piecework per week. However this relationship is reversed when controlling for differences in number of days women spend on off-farm jobs. Among women homeworkers who spend 5-30 days on off-farm jobs (n=15), 50% in households with debt produce 3-7 pieces per week in contrast to 22.2% in households without debt. Among women who spend 90 to 240 days on off-farm jobs (n=8), 50% in households with debt produce a large quantity of output (10-25 pieces per week) in contrast to 75% from households without debt.

Furthermore, households with debt tend to be small farms owned by the family. These are cash crop and multiple crop households, and women are more likely to work off-farm in the case of these households than rice monocropping households. In other words, households who participate in (are integrated into) cash crop production are also more involved in homework for additional cash income. Moreover when women homeworkers in households without debt do engage in off-farm employment, they tend



to spend less time on it.

### A.3 Occupation of Head of Household

Women homeworkers tend to be involved in the homework industry for slightly fewer years when the head of household primarily works in agriculture rather than as a laborer. As shown in table 5.4, 70% of women homeworkers in households where the head's main occupation is agriculture have done homework for 1-5 years, 16% for 6-10 years, and 14% for 11-20 years. In contrast 60% of homeworkers in households where the head is primarily employed as a laborer have done homework for 1-5 years, 20% for 6-10 years, and 20% for 11-20 years.

Table 5.4 Percentage Of Households With Respect To Women's Work Intensity And Types of Cultivation Engaged By The Head Of Household

intensity of participation	types of cultivation engaged by the head of household			
	rice	cash crop	multi. crop	non-agr.
<b>I hours on homework per day</b>				
a 5-10	100	77	77	100
b 11-14	0	23	23	0
<b>II output per week</b>				
a 3-7 pieces	25	38	38	33
b 10-25 pieces	75	62	62	67

In addition homeworkers are less likely to work throughout the year when the head of household is primarily employed in agriculture rather than as a laborer. Approximately

38% (n=37) of women homemakers in households where the head's main occupation is agriculture do homework throughout the year, in contrast to 60% (n=5) of homemakers in households where the head's main occupation is laborer.

Moreover among women who live in households whose head does not have an off-farm job (n=10), 70% have been homeworkers for 1-5 years. Among women in households where the head does have an off-farm job (n=33), 21% have been homeworkers for 6-10 years.

Whether or not the head of household has an off-farm job is not related to the proportion of women employed for the full year as homeworkers. The proportion of subjects employed for the full year as homeworkers when the head does (does not) have an off-farm job is 39% (40%).

It is important to examine homeworkers' involvement in the industry in terms of the interactive effect of the head's main occupation and his off-farm employment. This is because his type of occupation (rice monocropping, cash cropping only, multiple cropping, dairy farm, laborer) are closely related to his off-farm employment. As mentioned previously a household head engaged in rice monocropping does not work outside the family farm. In contrast, a man cultivating cash crops (either singly or in multiple cropping) does have off-farm employment.

All homeworkers from rice monocropping households (n=4) and non-agricultural households (n=3) spend 5-10 hours per day on homework. In contrast 77% of homeworkers from cash cropping households (n=13) and from multiple cropping households (n=13) spend a similar amount of time on homework.

However homeworkers (75%, n=4) in rice monocropping households produce more output per week (10-25 pieces). This is partly because these women (like their heads of household) do not work outside the family farm. Concerning the few women in such households who have off-farm work, their off-farm job is often a shop in the home. They produce pieceworks that are smaller in size, detail and degree of complexity of pattern to be embroidered.

On the other hand, women homeworkers in cash crop households spend longer hours per day on homework but produce smaller quantity of piecework per week. That is 23% of women in cash cropping households (n=13) and in multiple cropping households (n=13) spend 11-14 hours a day on homework. About 38% of women in cash cropping and multiple cropping households produce 3-7 pieces per week, in contrast to 25% of homeworkers in rice monocropping and 33% in non-agricultural households.

This seems largely because cash crop production in these households leads/pushes these women to enter the wage labor market. Since most are employed outside the family farm, women produce a smaller quantity of output.

#### **A.4 Occupation Of Women Homeworkers**

A woman homemaker's status within the community, i.e. her main occupation, is related to her involvement in homework in terms of years of employment, type of employment, and intensity (hours spent on homework and amount of piecework produced).

Women homeworkers who are primarily employed in agriculture are more likely to have been employed in the industry for a shorter period than are homeworkers

primarily employed as merchants and laborers. Among homeworkers who are primarily employed in agriculture (n=35), 71% have been homeworkers for 1-5 years, 17% for 6-10 years, and 11% for 11-20 years (table 5.5). Among homeworkers who are not primarily employed in agriculture (n=4), 25% have been homeworkers for 1-5 years, 50% for 6-10 years, and 25% for 11-20 years.

Table 5.5 Percentage Of Households With Respect To Women's Work Intensity And Their Cultivations

intensity of participation	types of cultivation engaged by homemaker			
	rice	cash crop	multi. crop	non-agr.
<b>I hours on homework per day</b>				
a 5-10	67	83	77	100
b 11-14	33	17	23	0
<b>II output per week</b>				
a 3-7 pieces	0	42	38	33
b 10-25 pieces	100	58	62	67

In addition homeworkers who are primarily employed in agriculture are less likely to be homeworkers throughout the year than are other women. About 37% (n=35) of subjects who are primarily employed in agriculture do homework throughout the year, in contrast to 50% (n=4) of subjects who are primarily employed as merchants or laborers.

Furthermore 85% of women homeworkers who do not have off-farm jobs have been employed in the industry for only 1-5 years. In contrast, 40% of women homeworkers with off-farm jobs have been employed in the embroidery homework

industry for 6-20 years.

On the other hand, there is no relation between off-farm employment and full year employment as a homemaker. That is 40% of women with off-farm jobs and 39% of those without off-farm jobs engage in homework throughout the year.

Given the focus of this study on the impact of integration of this rural community into the cash economy, it is important to examine how each type of women's occupation and off-farm employment condition homeworkers participation in this particular aspect of the cash economy, i.e. their involvement within the homework.

The majority of women in cash cropping (83%, n=12), multiple cropping (77%, n=13) and non-agricultural households (100%, n=3) spend only part (5-10 hours per day) of their time on homework since these women often engage in off-farm jobs that are mostly farm-related. The remainder spend more than 10 hours per day on homework. In contrast women in rice cropping households often have non-farm employment (a trade or a shop) at home and so they spend longer hours on the homework.

Furthermore women in rice monocropping households who also work off-farm produce more pieceworks per week: all of these women produce 10-25 pieces, in contrast to 58% (n=12) of women in cash crop only households, 62% (n=13) of women in multiple crop households, and 67% (n=3) of women in non-agricultural households. This is due partly to the difficulty (smaller size, less complicated and less detailed patterns) of the piecework that are embroidered by women in rice monocropping households. The remainder of homeworkers produce fewer pieces but the piecework is more detailed.

## **B. Reproductive Factors**

The family unit is the principle unit that is subjected to exploitation. The sexual division of labor is the key to the extraction of surplus where women are mobilized to produce the means of subsistence production and reproduction of labor power for the labor market, while men are employed outside the home, outside the village and outside agriculture as they become semi-proletarians or proletarians.

Rural households are hierarchical structures embodying relations of subordination and domination based upon gender and age. Such relations of patriarchal domination play an important role in women's participation in wage labor within the industrial homework sector. Patriarchal domination and subordination of women in the household is often expressed through restrictions on women's mobility and the confinement of women to domestic tasks or work on the family farm. In fact this is control over reproduction in its various aspects. Such control leads to (1) social definition of women's work and place as being in the household since activities related to physical reproduction are concentrated there, and (2) the restriction of women's mobility. Moreover these further condition what women can and cannot do in and outside the home, including the conditions under which they participate in the embroidery home industry.

Women's reproductive role has been the basis for their association with child care and other domestic tasks related to the daily maintenance of the labor force. The content and nature of these domestic tasks is partly determined by family size, age of children, woman's marital status, etc. and is partly conditioned by the type of production, economic conditions and the degree of market penetration into the rural economy.

In other words, biological reproduction such as family size and household structures is one component of the reproduction of the household stock of labor resources (Deere, et al, p. 101). In addition the number of children is a survival strategy for the household (Ibid, p. 99), and it conditions the content and nature of domestic works and in turn conditions women's participation in industrial homework.

### **B.1 Women's Age**

Women's age determines their involvement in homework. Since the homework is by definition carried out within the home, a high percentage of relatively young married women is likely to be employed as homeworkers. In particular, women who are at the age of highest fertility would be concentrated in the home industry (Beneria, 1979, p. 207). Younger and older women homeworkers are more likely to be involved in the industry for a longer period. As shown in table 5.6, among 19-20 year old homeworkers, 65% (n=17) have been employed in the industry for less than 6 years and 35% have been in the industry for 6-20 years. Among the high fertility age group 26-35 of homeworkers, 70% (n=20) have been employed in the industry for 1-5 years. Among homeworkers 36 years and older, 67% (n=6) have been in the industry for less than six years.

Older women are more likely to work on embroidery in the home for the entire year. The percentages of women by age group doing homework for the entire year are as follows: 50% of women 36 years and older, 40% of women 26-35 years, and 35% of women 19-25 years of age.

Older women also tend to work longer hours per day on the homework. For example, 83% of women of age 36 and older age spend 9-14 hours per day on homework,

whereas 50% of women of age 26-30 years spend 5-8 hours a day on the homework than women of other age groups.

Table 5.6 Percentage Of Households According To Homeworke's Work Intensity And Homeworkers' Age

intensity of participation	age of homeworkers		
	19-25	26-35	36-51
<b>I years of involvement</b>			
a 1-5	65	70	67
b 6-20	35	30	33
<b>II annual engagement</b>			
a entire year	35	40	50
b part of year	65	60	50
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>			
a 5-8	35	50	17
b 10-14	65	50	83
<b>IV output per week</b>			
a 3-7 pieces	35	40	33
b 10-25 pieces	65	60	67

On the other hand, older women do not produce significantly more pieces per week. The percentages of women by age group producing 10-25 pieces per week are as follows: 67% of women 36 years and older, 60% of women of age 26-35, and 65% of women of age 19-25.

Women at the age of high fertility, i.e. 26-35 years, tend to spend longer hours but produce smaller amounts of embroidery work than in other age groups. The apparent explanation is that these women work on relatively large pieces.



## B.2 Marital Status Of Female Homeworkers

All single female homeworkers (n=3) and 67% of married female homeworkers (n=40) have been involved in the industry for 1-5 years (table 5.7). Other married women have been involved in the industry for 6-20 years: 21% for 6-10 years, 13% for 11-15 years, and 3% for 16-20 years.

Table 5.7 Percentage Of Households According To Women's Work Intensity And Their Marital Status

intensity of participation	marital status of homeworkers	
	married	single
<b>I years of involvement</b>		
a 1-5	65	100
b 6-20	35	0
<b>II annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	57	0
b part of year	43	100
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	37	67
b 10-14	63	33
<b>IV output per week</b>		
a 3-7 pieces	35	67
b 10-25 pieces	65	33

All single women work in the industry for only part of the year. About 43% of married women work in the industry part time and 57% work in the industry throughout the year.

Married women tend to spend more hours per day on homework and produce more output per day than do single women. That is 63% of married women work 9-14 hours per day on homework, whereas 67% of single women work 5-8 hours on homework. Similarly 65% of married women produce 10-25 pieces per week during the peak season, whereas 67% of single women produce 3-7 pieces. Married women are more involved in the homework industry because they are more restricted to the home than are single women. In other words single women are less confined to the home and agricultural subsistence labor than are married women, and so single women are less involved in embroidery homework.

This wage work must be compatible with reproduction, i.e. with child care tasks. Women with young children (who depend on the mother's care) are highly concentrated in the home industry because it permits them to work and simultaneously care for their children. Consequently, the homework industry primarily employs women homeworkers from nuclear households in the early stages of the family cycle, where there are young children to care for but there are no older children to assist in domestic tasks including child care (Beneria and Roldan, 1987, p. 23).

### **B.3 Size Of Household**

The household size ranges from 2 to 6 people. About 35% of the households include 3 people, and 35% include 4 people. Thus the majority of households in the sample are at the early stage of a nuclear family rather than an extended family. Other members of households include daughters/sons, daughter-in-law, mother-/father-in-law, grandchildren, and other relatives. This helps shape the nature and extent of women's

work within and outside the home in terms of deployment of labor within family and constraints on women's involvement in the wage market.

Most (81%, n=16) women homeworkers living in households of 2-3 people have worked in the industry for 1-5 years (table 5.8). In contrast, 41% (n=27) of women in larger households (4-6 people) have worked in the homework industry for 6-20 years.

Table 5.8 Percentage Of Households According To Women's Work Intensity And Size of Household of Homeworkers

intensity of participation	size of household of homeworkers	
	2-3 persons	4-6 persons
<b>I years of involvement</b>		
a 1-5	81	59
b 6-20	19	41
<b>II annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	37	41
b part of year	63	59
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	44	37
b 10-14	56	63
<b>IV output per week</b>		
a 3-7 pieces	31	41
b 10-25 pieces	69	59

Women in larger households may be slightly more likely to do homework throughout the year. About 41% of the women in larger households (4-6 people) do

embroidery homework throughout the year, and 37% of women in smaller households (2-3 people) do homework for only part of the year.

Homeworkers in large households may work slightly longer hours on homework. In households of 4-6 people, 63% of homeworkers work 9-14 hours per day on embroidery homework, and 37% work 5-8 hours. In households of 2-3 people, 56% of homeworkers work 9-14 hours, and 44% work 5-8 hours.

In the case of large households, 41% produce 3-7 pieces per week during the peak season, and 59% produce 10-25 pieces. In the case of small households, 31% produce 3-7 pieces and 69% produce 10-25 pieces. Women in larger households produce in smaller quantities since they work on smaller and less complicated pieces of embroidery work.

#### **B.4 Number Of Children Of Women Homeworkers**

Half of the female homeworkers married to the head of the household (n=36) have only one child. Only 5% of married homeworkers have no children, 42% have two children, and 3% have three children. The discussion in this section concerns the homeworkers married to the heads of their households (n=36).

As shown in table 5.9, majority of homeworkers (78%) with less than two children have been employed in the industry for 1-5 years, in contrast to 56% of homeworkers with two or more children. About 22% of homeworkers with one child have been employed in the industry for 6-20 years. Whereas 50% of homeworkers with no children and 44% of homeworkers with 2-3 children have worked in the industry for 6-20 years. Approximately 45% of women with one child work in the industry full time, whereas 50% of women with no children and with 2-3 children work in the industry throughout

the year.

Table 5.9 Percentage Of Households According To Women's Work Intensity And Number of Children of Homeworkers

intensity of participation	number of children of homeworkers	
	0-1	2-3
<b>I years of involvement</b>		
a 1-5	75	56
b 6-20	25	44
<b>II annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	45	50
b part of year	55	50
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	35	31
b 10-14	65	69
<b>IV output per week</b>		
a 3-7 pieces	25	44
b 10-25 pieces	75	56

Women with few children tend to spend fewer hours per day on homework than do women with more children. About 35% of women with 0-1 children spend 5-8 hours a day on homework, 40% of these women spend 9-10 hours on homework, and 25% spend 11-14 hours on homework. In contrast 31% of women with 2-3 children spend 11-14 hours on homework.

Women with few children tend to produce more pieces during the peak season.

That is 55% and 20% of women with 0-1 children produce 10-14 and 15-25 pieces a week, respectively. In contrast 44% of women with 2-3 children produce 3-7 pieces per week.

The data indicates that many embroidery homeworkers are in young nuclear families with small numbers of children. This reflects the high degree of compatibility of this industrial homework with female homeworkers' role as main care giver to children and other domestic tasks. The concentration of women in the domestic sphere (child care, cooking, cleaning, food shopping and gathering), previously discussed in chapter 3, supports this point. At the same time data shows that very young families with zero and one child tend to engage in the homework very intensely (in terms of labor time and piece output per week). Women with larger numbers of children (2-3) tend to work less intensely in the industry. Thus the number of children shapes both the nature and the content of women's domestic works. More children implies more domestic responsibilities and tasks. Consequently there is less time to spend on embroidery homework, so these women spend shorter hours per day on the homework and produce fewer finished pieceworks per week.

### **B.5 Hours of Housework by Women Homeworkers**

The amount of time women spend on their housework duties does not seem to be related to the length or type of employment in the homework industry, but it is associated with hours spent on homework. The more hours women spend on housework, the less likely they are to spend long hours on embroidery homework. For example 50% of women who spend 5-7 hours per day on housework, 39% who spend 4 hours, and 31%

who spend 1-3 hours, work only 5-8 hours per day on embroidery homework (table 5.10). About 42% of women who spend 5-7 hours on housework, and 39% who spend 4 hours, work 9-10 hours on homework. About 39% of women who spend only 1-3 hours per day on housework spend 11-14 hours per day on embroidery homework, in contrast to 22% who spend 4 hours on housework and 8% who spend 5-7 hours on housework.

Table 5.10 Percentage Of Households According To Women's Work Intensity And Time Spent On Housework

intensity of participation	hours homeworkers spent on housework per day		
	1-3	4	5-7
<b>hours on homework per day</b>			
a 5-8	31	39	50
b 9-14	69	61	50
<b>output per week</b>			
a 3-7	23	39	50
b 10-25	77	61	50

Similarly hours of housework per day is negatively related to the number of products produced per week. The more hours women spend on housework, the less likely they are to produce many pieces of embroidery per week. For example 50% of women who spend 5-7 hours per day on housework, 39% who spend 4 hours, and 23% who spend 1-3 hours, produce 3-7 pieces of embroidery homework weekly.

Since the majority of women homeworkers are married and hence restricted to the home, hours of housework is directly and clearly related to degree of involvement in

homework, i.e. hours spent on embroidery homework per day as well as amount of piecework produced per week. This also reflects the compatibility of the homework and of the domestic responsibilities which confine women to the home in the first place.

### **B.6 Age Of Women Homeworkers' Children**

The age of a woman's children influences the nature and content of both domestic and paid work. In particular young children require considerable attention, and the mother's work patterns must be adapted to this.

The following discussion is based on data for women who are married to the head of the household. The number of children ranges from 0-3, and the age ranges from 1-23 years. Younger women tend to have relatively few children and their children are relatively young. As shown in table 5.11, 41 percent of women with younger children (1-7 years) have been in the industry for at least 6 years (6-20 years), in contrast to 31% of women with older children (8-23 years).

Fifty two percent of women with older children (8-23 years) and 45% of women with younger children (1-7 years) do homework throughout the year. With older children, women are more free and have a more flexible time schedule concerning domestic responsibilities. Consequently these women can do embroidery homework throughout the year and still have time to work in other off-farm jobs within the village. Similarly women with older children tend to spend slightly more time on homework per day than do women with younger children and produce slightly larger quantities of output per week.



Table 5.11 Percentage Of Households According To Women's Work Intensity And Age Of Their Children

intensity of participation	age of children of homeworkers	
	1-7	8-23
<b>I years of involvement</b>		
a 1-5	59	69
b 6-20	41	31
<b>II annual engagement</b>		
a entire year	45	52
b part of year	55	48
<b>III hours on homework per day</b>		
a 5-8	36	31
b 9-14	64	69
<b>IV output per week</b>		
a 3-7	41	38
b 10-25	59	62

### III. Rural Women As A Source Of Cheap Labor

The costs of embroidery production have been kept low by the system of subcontracting production to women homeworkers. The owner of capital does not have to pay for overhead costs as in the case of factory based production. Furthermore in the case of homework, the owner of capital does not have to follow the labor law in terms of minimum wage (about ??? baht in 1989 and 1990), worker compensation, or any other benefits and protection of workers.

All of the embroidery homeworkers in this study reported that they were not provided any assistance in terms of training, nor any loans in terms of materials needed

for production. The skills for embroidery homework were learned in the traditional manner from female members of the family or, in the case of younger women, needlework was learned in school as part of a home economics course taught to girls in school.

Embroidery homeworkers are paid a piecework wage which ranges from 3 to 11 baht per piece. The piecework wage depends upon the complexity of the embroidery task as well as the amount of embroidery work involved in the particular style or pattern. In the case of a simple and small pattern, the wage is 3-4 baht per piece. However work which requires more embroidery and involves more complexity of colors and skill will pay a higher wage, e.g. 10-20 baht per piece.

During slack periods in the embroidery homework season, female homeworkers earn 6-30 baht a day. 27 of these homeworkers engage in the work during the slack season. Among them, 26%, 41% and 33% earn income of 6-9, 10-19 and 20-30 baht for a day of embroidery work. Most of the women who earn 20-30 baht a day receive an income of 20 baht while only one person received 30 baht.

During the peak of the season, however, the average wage is relatively low, ranging from 2.57 to 18.86 baht per day of embroidery work. Fifty three percent of the women earned 2.57 to 8.57 baht per day, with 35% of these 23 women earning an average of 5.71 and 26% earning an average of 7.14 baht. The other 47% earned 10 to 18.86 baht per day, with 60% of them receiving an average of 14.29 baht.

Women embroidery homeworkers earn a low wage. First, a daily wage is lower than the minimum wage set by the government, i.e. 40 baht per day. Second it is lower

than the wage for male agricultural labor of 40-60 baht per day, and it is also lower than the wage for female agricultural labor of 30-40 baht per day. Finally, it is lower than wages in the garment factory, which are approximately 50 baht per day for female factory workers and 70 baht per day for male factory workers. Female wage workers in the particular garment factory associated with the material of these homeworkers perform similar tasks with the homeworkers, i.e. they embroider the garments.

According to the factory's manager, the embroidery work done within the factory requires more skill and supervision from the manager such as sewing on pads or doing bead work. Therefore female factory workers receive a higher wage than do homeworkers. For male factory workers, "they are being paid more than female factory workers because they perform more 'difficult and heavy' tasks which require physical strength". Although female workers spend an entire day on tedious work which requires great concentration, they are paid less than men because their work is perceived by the producers as an "easy and light" task. This is true for all female workers whether they are working at home or in the factory. It is the consequence of society's valuation of women and their work/labor, i.e. as not equal to men and their work, and hence deserving a lower reward. Such an ideology is used, reinforced, recreated and appropriated through the stratification and differentiation of work and in terms of wages paid by the capitalist.

#### **IV. Embroidery Homework: An Extension Of Domestic And Subsistence Work**

"Don't bother to interview me. This is not my 'work' or 'job'. I only do it to fill my free time. but I will take you to the woman who does this for living". This was a typical first reaction of the homeworkers interviewed in this study. In fact they were quite

embarrassed to be interviewed since they perceived their work as "non-work", i.e. as something they do to utilize their free time when they are not doing agricultural and domestic work.

A village man came to listen to the interview and laughed since he did not consider the work of women to be a job, and to have an outsider interview these women in a serious manner seemed comical. He asked "Why are you asking them about the embroidery work? Are you bringing them some garments to embroider?". After an explanation of my research and my interest in the subject matter of women and their work, regardless of the amount of income earned, he nodded his head. He said "it is a woman's leisure activity and they do not do this as a real job. They do not make any real money from it. All they get is small cash for a kid to buy candy at school".

Embroidery homework is viewed as something less than work within the society and by the women themselves and their husbands. The social definition of women's labor as "housework" is illustrated by the fact that the majority of homeworkers do not report their work within the embroidery industry as an occupation/employment, i.e. as either their main or secondary occupation. None of the homeworkers perceived their employment in the home industry as their main occupation. Furthermore only 11% (n=43) of them reported their employment in the industry as a secondary occupation. All the women view their participation in the industry as secondary or supplementary to their husbands' incomes, and as secondary to their main occupation (primarily as unpaid family laborers in agriculture) and to domestic tasks (especially for married women with young children).

Reasons for women to be involved in the embroidery homework reflect the points indicated above. About 30% of embroidery homeworkers indicate that they work in the industry because they need additional income, 37% work in the industry because they lack other employment, 7% of them are employed in the industry because they have no other job and want cash income. The remaining 26% of these women work in the homework industry due to their domestic and reproductive responsibilities. The majority (73%, n=11) in this last group of women do embroidery homework because they have young children, while the remainder indicate that they do embroidery homework because it compatible with their domestic and agricultural tasks.

Most (93%, n=43) homeworkers indicate that they like the work. Their reasons for liking the work illustrate the social and cultural images of the Thai woman. About 18% (n=39) indicate that they "love" needlework. However it should be stressed that peasants of this agricultural community have not carried out the task of cloth making for home consumption for sometime which is reflected in household expenditures on clothings (discussed in chapter 4). While 31% indicate that it enables them to utilize free time to obtain cash income, 15% indicate they need additional income, 15% indicate the work is easy and paid, 10% say it is a light task and convenient, 8% say they love needlework and have young children, and 3% say they love needlework and it is a good way to turn leisure into cash.

Thus 31% (n=39) of the responses express the idea of a housewife spending free time or leisure in making cash income. The "love" for needlework reflects the ideal of women's work/activity. They love the needlework because they have been socialized to

feel that way. Embroidery/needlework is central to the traditional image and identity of a proper "lady" (Kulsatri). Ladies performed these tasks at home since they were considered "soft" or "weak" (auaun) and unconcerned with social advancement for themselves, i.e. they worked only to solidify the household unit (Hanks, 1962, p. 1256). The image of women as soft is also reflected in statements by homeworkers that they prefer embroidery work because it is easy and light.

Given that motherhood is the main role of Thai women in society, 19% (n=43) of respondents state that they do embroidery homework because they have young children whom they must raise. These women work in the industry due to their traditional role of motherhood. Another 7% indicate that they work in the industry because embroidery homework is compatible with their domestic labor and subsistence agricultural labor. Both domestic and subsistence agricultural labor are traditional tasks for rural Thai women, particularly if their children are very young. Women's role of motherhood seems to be more flexible when children are older: when children are attending school, these women may work outside the village and in non-agricultural jobs.

The compatibility of homework and women's work in agricultural production is demonstrated by their pattern of employment over the year. Among the two thirds of homeworkers who do homework during only part of the year, 84% (n=26) indicate that they are "part-time" because their primary occupation is in agriculture. Homework generally is limited to the months when they are free from agricultural labor: 72% (n=26) work in the home industry in the months of January and February when there are no agricultural tasks, the dry season of March and April, and October and November. Even

among "full-time" homeworkers (who work all year in the industry), 86% (n=15) tend to concentrate on embroidery homework during the dry season (March and April), 7% concentrate their homework during the months of October and November, and another 7% do most of their homework during the rainy season (May and June).

Irrespective of the pattern of homework over the year, embroidery homework is closely integrated with agricultural labor and household-related work of the women. Women spend long hours on embroidery homework, ranging from 5-14 hours a day. Women work day and night, including weekends and holidays. They embroider between domestic tasks as well as between agricultural tasks. They move in and out of the embroidery work as their domestic and agricultural tasks require their attention. Young mothers embroider while they look after their young children. One woman says that when the sky is clear and there is no rain, "I embroider in the field while I look after the family's dairy cow". Most of the women say they do the embroidery work at night during the peak agricultural season.

Most of the women spend 7 to 10 hours on embroidery homework: 11%, 16%, 26%, and 11% of the women spend 7, 8, 9, and 10 hours per day on homework, respectively. In addition 9% spend 11 hours per day on the embroidery homework while another 9% spends 12 hours per day. These homeworkers do not have free time to rest as they say they neither spend time on recreation nor entertainment. However they often do embroidery work in front of the television at their neighbor's house. Thus 60% (n=43) of homeworkers do not work alone, and instead they work in the company of relatives and neighbors. Moreover 88% (n=26) of the women who work in a group say they do so

in the context of a "social" setting such as gossip, talk about family, friends and neighbors or talk about the exchange of labor in agricultural production. Since women homeworkers can do the work while they socialize with friends, relatives and neighbors, everyone (the public, husbands, and the women themselves) perceives women's participation in the industry as "leisure" rather than work.

In sum, it is clear that rural women are involved in the embroidery home industry due to the need for the integration of subsistence agricultural production into cash economy (economic hardship: increased debts and needs for cash), households' abilities and internal resources, and constraints on women's participation in wage work within the industry. These constraints on participation in the industry are related to reproductive factors, which involves the daily maintenance of the household and the labor force and is predominantly performed by rural women (tasks range from cooking, laundry, house cleaning, caring for children, and carrying out subsistence rice production side-by-side with their men). Women's abilities to achieve these works are partly conditioned by their marital status, age, numbers of children and children's age.



## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

In this final chapter I will review the major interpretative themes indicated in my previous chapters. The subsistence economy, and hence agricultural communities and particularly rural women, are being incorporated into the market economy. The chapter closes with a discussion of conditions of embroidery homeworkers' lives and work due to further transition from a subsistence economy as the rural economy becomes increasingly intertwined with the larger economic system.

#### **I. Subsistence Economy: What Next?**

The concept of subsistence economy encompasses "sectors of domestic agricultural activities in which family-type units engaged in the process of production with the aim of ensuring, from one cycle to another, the reproduction of their living and working conditions", meaning the reproduction of producers and the unit of production itself (Schejtman, 1988, p. 366). Although this subsistence economy can produce (from its own inputs) levels of its main staple (rice) that meet consumption needs and provide some extra cash, and most of its inputs (i.e. major foods such as vegetables and herbs) are still obtained from within the rural community (i.e. the village forest area), this rural economy has ceased to be self-sufficient as various specialized inputs and consumption goods from the external economy have been purchased in the market using cash. Consequently subsistence agricultural households have become participants in the market for goods and services, typically as producers of foodstuff, crafts and/or of labor power.

Farm operations are generally small in size, due to the system of Sakdina and its

conjunction with the state's actions transferring the rights for large fertile plots of land from peasants to aristocrats. As a result, subsistence agricultural households have been gradually losing their means of production, i.e. land. Furthermore in the last five years, there has been a gradual reduction in size of peasant landholdings due largely to the sale of "suan", i.e. plots of land in restricted forest areas used for cash crops. This gradual reduction in peasant landholdings is partly conditioned by changes in the price of land and by instability of households' ownership of forest lands resulting from government policy on forestry. These recent changes in land ownership are still limited to forest land, "suan", and do not yet apply to rice fields. This indicates that households are so far still having an access to rice land, i.e. the means of production of subsistence for the households.

However the penetration of capitalism into the subsistence economy, through the growth of commercial agriculture and wage labor in these subsistence rice farming households, has not yet led to "feminization" of subsistence agriculture as in parts of West Africa or Latin America.

Only a few men (husbands) in this study have migrated to work in the cities of Chiang Mai (a man commutes to work there) and Bangkok. In addition most men who have off-farm jobs outside the village commute daily to work only during the dry season, so they still are able to perform agricultural tasks in the family farm. Thus it appears that the phenomena of male migration, which is generally viewed as a major process leading to the feminization of subsistence agriculture, is still relatively insignificant within these rural subsistence communities. Evidently both women and men in these villages are

predominantly rice farmers and cash crop producers using small plots of family-owned land. That is these subsistence agricultural households rely heavily on family laborers of both genders. Presumably the out-migration is low partly because output is high relative to the size of operation, so that peasant households can meet their consumption requirements without out-migration.

Moreover these subsistence farming communities based on wet rice production rely on a transplanting technique of cultivation which requires intensive labor. Given the decreasing access to an already small base of arable land for subsistence rice production, wet rice production requires increased employment of female, male and child labor (the local school is often closed during periods of transplanting and harvesting when labor requirements are high). These periods of intensive labor for both sexes restrict the patterns of outmigration. Indeed during these periods it is also necessary to hire non-family labor either through the traditional exchange of labor or other forms of wage labor. Thus the requirement for intensive labor in rice production partially explains the absence of feminization of subsistence agriculture in these Thai rice communities of San Kumpheang.

Both subsistence and cash crop production require inputs which must be acquired in the market. The commodification of farm inputs and household consumption goods and services reflects the integration of subsistence agricultural households into the cash economy and implies greater dependency by households on cash markets, in particular the wage labor market. This greater dependency apparently leads some households to send a young daughter into the sex service industry (in this study one young female working in the sex industry in Japan sends money to support the family). Other households

respond by sending young daughters to work in ready-made clothing manufactures either in Bangkok or Chiang Mai. Another household sent a son to work in the city. All households in this study have responded to the need for additional cash income by participating in the embroidery homework industry and in other wage work within the village.

## **II. Triple Burden: Rural Women And Work**

The subsistence economy is becoming integrated into the market economy, the commodification of consumption goods is increasing, commercial agricultural inputs are more common, and the land base per household is decreasing. As a result, rural women carry a "triple burden" of work: non-wage reproductive, non-wage productive and wage productive labor.

Given the decline in population growth and fertility in Thailand and policies to diversify agriculture and promote industrialization, women remain an indispensable source of labor power. This is partly because rice subsistence production remains so important in the economy and requires intensive labor. Women in this study assumed nearly all of the housework. Rural women have limited resources in terms of domestic help as they have fewer children due to reductions in the birth rate. Moreover these children can provide less assistance to mothers in non-wage reproductive work because they are required by law to attend school.

One effect of this integration is the incorporation of other types of economic activities into subsistence production, which means more activities for peasants of both sexes. Consequently, it would seem logical that both genders would now perform

housework. However sex-integration of housework seldom occurs, irrespective of the degree of integration of the household into the cash economy via cash crop production. Women are responsible for almost all non-wage reproductive work, particularly cooking and tasks associated with transformation of foodstuff into edible form, cleaning, and child caring. On the other hand the division of labor by sexes within household shows some flexibility, for example if the wife is employed outside the home then the husband or son may perform female tasks such as cooking and caring for children.

In addition to housework, rural women work as unpaid family laborers on rice farms, cash crop farms and/or livestock farms. At the national level, changes in population policy have been accompanied by a slight reduction in the percentage of rural women classified as unpaid family workers, but this has not been apparent in this study. By and large women see themselves as unpaid family laborers working on the family farm. In fact, as manpower has become limited, there has been an increase in the variety of non-wage productive labor by women. Women in rice monocropping households provide non-wage productive labor in both rice and livestock enterprises. Women in cash cropping only households provide labor to production of cash crops in both the rainy and dry seasons. Women in multiple cropping households working in rice and cash crop enterprises (perhaps twice during the dry season) and in livestock enterprises.

Although it is true that rural women perform all agricultural activities in the field alongside men, certain tasks requiring physical strength and traditional knowledge are generally performed by men since women are traditionally viewed as weak. While the demographic changes (reflected a shift in the ideal role of women away from motherhood

and towards making money), the traditional roles of rural women within agriculture and as mothers have not diminished in importance. It means that women are more free to perform male tasks. Evidently, agricultural tasks have become sex-integrated, particularly, in certain situations: a small household may have to make maximum use of all of its laborers, and at certain stages (when there are no young children) women are not restricted to the home and child caring. At the same time many tasks (transporting output) are still predominantly male while others (managing the sale of output) are predominantly female. This indicates that reproduction, i.e. demographic change or birth control policy (biological reproduction) and women's role as housewives/mothers (reproduction of the labor power on daily basis) and production have conditioned women's participation in the family farm.

The nature and content of child care tasks and housework is determined by the size of household, number of children and the age of these children. In turn, these partly condition women's participation in paid employment. Consequently, sex-integration (of tasks) within agriculture, does not imply equality between the sexes in the sense that the same task provides different wages for men and women even if productivities are equal. Typically men receive a higher wage than women in farm work both in terms of cash or kind. Rural agricultural female wage workers are being paid wages that reflect their histories as "unpaid family workers", regardless of their effort.

### **III. Rural Women: Working At Home**

#### **A. Agricultural Wage Work**

As the transformation from a subsistence to a market economy has occurred,

subsistence agricultural households have responded by seeking opportunities for cash income. Both men and women engage in cash crops production and wage labor and other off-farm work. Women's participation in the labor market (women's work in the wage productive labor), i.e. as a response to the process of capitalist transformation, is determined by their ability to control, utilize and dispose of economic and non-economic resources. Women's participation in the wage labor market is conditioned partly by the intrafamilial labor deployment. This is because women are perceived as housewives, and not as main providers, who are primarily responsible for child care.

On the one hand, women's participation in off-farm work is conditioned by their economic resources. In particular, women in households with debt tend to hire themselves out in order to obtain additional cash income that can help reduce or service the debts.

On the other hand, women's participation in off-farm work is also shaped by their role in maintenance of the household and reproduction of the labor force on a daily basis. The data indicates that (in contrast to men) women tend to occupy off-farm jobs within traditional occupations, i.e. agriculture, petty trade and merchant, and these jobs are within the village. These restrictions on women's off-farm work indicate that in some respects there is a feminization of agriculture within these communities. On the other hand the division within rural off-farm jobs between women and men (where women predominate in agriculture and village jobs while men predominate in jobs outside of agriculture and the village) indicates that the sexual division of labor (SDOL) within paid jobs is based on and reinforces the traditional SDOL, whereby a woman is a housewife and her duties should generally confine her to the home. Consequently women who spend fewer hours

on housework per day tend to hire themselves out as they have more time available for this purpose. Moreover women with larger numbers of children generally have off-farm jobs because these children tend to be older (8 years and older) and are in school, which makes more time available for off-farm employment. Thus off-farm or paid employment outside the home for women must be generally compatible with their domestic tasks, particularly the main role of motherhood.

Older children and relatives living within the household often help with domestic tasks and thus permit women to work outside the home. Otherwise even if there are economic hardships (household debts) which require both women and men to seek paid employment outside the home, women's economic participation is constrained by their role within the home. This is reflected in women's confinement to off-farm jobs within the village boundary and agriculture. Part of the historical basis for this pattern is the system of labor corvee which required that men render labor to the state and (in accordance with the Thai ideology of motherhood) left women with the tasks of subsistence rice production at home. This long tradition whereby men work in the public domain and women work in the domestic domain still leaves an imprint on rural women's lives and work, including their off-farm employments. Evidently these rural women are predominantly employed in off-farm jobs within the village and agriculture, such as agricultural wage work and/or petty trade or food venter at home. Both sexes are employed in off-farm jobs within agriculture. This reflects the limited number of off-farm jobs outside the agricultural sector that are compatible with agricultural labor needs.

Women's agricultural subsistence work, non-agricultural work (such as food



vender and petty merchant) and household-related work are highly integrated in time and space. As Thai women are "thaaw lang" (hindleg) of an elephant, they maintain responsibilities for providing all domestic work which holds the household unit together. Evidently the amount of time women spend on off-farm jobs is positively related to the number of children since these children are older. Thus women are able to spend more days on off-farm work outside the home in comparison to women with few children whose ages are less than 8 years. Moreover off-farm jobs must be compatible with women's domestic responsibilities, as is reflected in the negative relation between hours women spend on housework and on off-farm employment. Women have off-farm jobs outside the village and/or in the non-agricultural sector when their main role of motherhood is not compromised. This occurs when the women do not have young children or have support in the household with domestic tasks.

### **B. Embroidery: Workers Without Factory**

Given the ideology of motherhood, women's participation in paid labor is expected to be physically bounded by their domestic labor. Women's involvement in embroidery homework is clearly a case of conjunction between reproduction and production spheres. As the production of embroidery clothes has been organized on the basis of the putting-out system or subcontracting arrangements, women engage in the homework at the home and are perceived as housewives rather than as serious laborers. Thus they are paid a low wage rate for piecework. This particular connection between reproduction and production spheres, i.e. rural women providing wage labor within the home as part of their domestic service, has permitted women to generate supplementary income for households without

altering the existing SDOL.

The increasing scarcity of land and the increasing dependence of households on cash is partly responsible for rural women's involvement in embroidery homework. Women in households with small land holdings (0.25-4 rai) spend more time on embroidery homework and produce more embroidery output than do women with larger holdings. This is partly because smaller holdings are usually for cash crops whereas larger holdings are for rice, and cash crops are less intensive in labor. At the same time, cash cropping only households are less secure in terms of its subsistence (rice) and thus its women are forced to work more intensely.

Household debts are negatively related to years of involvement in embroidery homework and to hours of homework and quantity of output. This is partly because women without debts spend less time working off the farm and so are able to spend more time on homework. When debts are low, there is less need for women to seek wage employment off the farm. In other words, in comparing embroidery homework with off-farm employment, there is a tradeoff in terms of income and compatibility with the role of mother: homework generally provides a lower wage but is more compatible with domestic tasks. Households with low debts are less concerned with additional wage income relative to domestic tasks than are households with high debts, i.e. the level of debt influences how a household evaluates the tradeoff between cash income and domestic tasks.

Women in the high fertility age group (26-35 years) tend to spend shorter hours on homework and produce less output than other age groups. This is because these

women must spend considerable time on child care and domestic services.

The number of children is positively associated with the number of years in the homework industry, the duration of the year allocated to homework, and the number of hours per day on homework. Yet women with many children tend to produce smaller quantities of output. This is because they embroider larger and more complicated pieces which require more time.

Since so much of a woman's time aside from agricultural tasks is spent on either housework or homework, there is a negative association between hours of housework and hours of homework or quantities of homework output. Older children generally provide assistance with housework. Thus women with older children are more likely to do homework throughout the year, to spend longer hours on the homework and to produce more output than women with young children.

Women's involvement in embroidery homework has been consistent with and has presumably reinforced the existing traditional SDOL and gender relations. According to the traditional SDOL, the husband is the head of household and the major bread winner, whereas the woman is a follower and a secondary source of income. Homework uses, creates, recreates and reinforces the traditional SDOL within the Thai society. Gender relations continue to be described by "a husband is the forelegs and a woman is the hindlegs of an elephant". In other words, women can "help" earn income for the household as long as they know who the real providers are, i.e. they only earn supplementary income. As many women in the study said, "...I only make enough money for my kid's candy at school". Alternatively they indicate that their involvement in

homework is not essential "because the head of household makes enough money for the household".

#### **IV. Concluding Comments**

I have argued that the subsistence rural agricultural economy is in transition towards being incorporated into a market economy. The cash market has become increasingly important in meeting production and consumption needs of peasants. Subsistence agricultural households have expanded their activities to include cash crops production and wage labor. In a few cases, the male head of household and/or young daughters/sons have left subsistence agriculture for wage labor in a big city. However by and large the feminization of agriculture has not emerged. Rather the penetration of capitalist economy into subsistence agriculture has brought about the generalized rural poverty resulting from the growing lack of the means of subsistence production (land), and thus the growing proletarianization of landless peasants or the poorer group of peasants. While peasants with larger holding are able to take advantage of the integration into cash economy and thus are less likely to be forced into low paid wage labor as they have other cash earning opportunity such as dairy cow. In some sense, this reflects certain degree of social differentiation among peasantry.

Due to increasing difficulties in maintaining subsistence agriculture (and the need to obtain cash), most women and men search for cash income through off-farm employment. Women are most commonly employed in off-farm jobs within agriculture and the village boundary.

On the one hand I have suggested that women's wage labor is centered around

their role within the home. Due to their role in reproduction, women are often restricted to the household. On the other hand I have also demonstrated that women's participation in the wage market, either in terms of off-farm work or embroidery homework, is partly determined by general economic conditions in the rural communities as well as in the larger economic system.

Furthermore I have argued that the SDOL within the home is closely connected to the conditions under which women enter the wage labor market. Household organizations, gender ideologies rooted in Buddhism, and labor deployment within agriculture limit women's participation in off-farm wage markets and encourage women to engage in wage labor in the form of embroidery homework, which is consistent with the existing traditional SDOL (whereby women are largely confined to being mothers and reproducing the labor force). Employment of women in homework extends the traditional SDOL to new activities. In this sense women's involvement in homework reinforces as well as is consistent with the traditional SDOL.

In sum, changes within the SDOL exist only in ways that the reproduction of the labor force and subsistence production are not altered, i.e. women continue to carry these works. The pattern of SDOL within the home is strictly sex-segregated while SDOL in subsistence is more flexible since labor intensive is required to maintain the subsistence of the household. Yet in the wage productive labor, SDOL is much sex-segregated, particularly that within the homework which reinforces women's role in the area of reproduction of labor force. This type of paid employment for rural women is pushing women back into their socially define position, a "housewife".

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## Appendices

## Appendix I

### Table of Conversion Unit

22 baht (Thai currency) = 1US\$ in 1982

2.5 rai (measure of land unit) = 1 acre

1 Tang (of unhusked rice) = 15 kilograms

a day wage (minimum wage) = 54 baht in 1980 and 90 baht in 1990

Note: In 1983 it was estimated that peasants of the North (with average cultivated area of 23.58 rai) produced an average rice output of 445 kg per rai which amounted to net income of 285.38 baht per rai. This means that an individual household earns income from rice farm of 6,729.26 baht per agricultural season, i.e. during the period of 5 months. Consequently on average rice farming household has income of 1,345.85 baht per month, during rice farming season. Given World Bank's defined poverty line which was 12,578 baht per household per year, majority of peasants in this region (including peasants in this study) who hold less than 10 rai would live under the poverty line as such (Manarangson, 1985, p. 35, p. 138).

**Appendix II**  
**Questionnaire**









4. Land tenure

4.1 Status of the household head with respect to land tenure.

1. own all land used.
2. own some plot (indicate amount of money paid on rent.....baht
3. rent-in all land used.
4. do not own any arable land.
5. other.....

4.2 Did the size of your owned land change in the last 15 years?

Yes..... No.....

4.3 If yes, please check the following reasons that apply:

(1) It is bigger now because.....

1. Sell
2. Give some the children
3. lost mortgage
4. Others.....

(2) It is smaller now, because.....

1. buy additional land
2. inheritance more land
3. Others.....

4.4 Is the size of your total holding (land owned + land rented in-land rented out + land used without ownership title) now different from What it was 5 years ago?

Yes..... No.....

4.5 If yes, indicate main reason for change in size.

1. Own new peice of land.
2. Rent in more land
3. Rent out more land
4. Sell, lost, or give
5. Let other people use land without charge.

4.6 Farm size and land use.

Unit: rai, %

	Owned	Ownership title	Rented in	Rented out	Used without ownership title	Operated	% of agricultural land
1. Arable land							
2. Land under tree crops							
3. Pasture land							
4. Agricultural land (sub. total 1+2+3)							
5. Wood land							
6. Other land							
7. Total land (4+5+6)							
8. Land under wet season irrigation							
9. Land under all year irrigation							
10. % of operational holding							





8.1 Household expenditure and agricultural expenditure during the last agricultural year.

Expenditure in agriculture	Value (baht)
1. fuel	
2. fertilizer, ehseaticide	
3. seed	
4. storage repair	
5. repair engine/machine	
6. buy engine/machine	
7. transport	
8. wage for labourer	
9. wage for machine	
10. wage/rent for animal	
11. other (specify).....	



8.2 (Con't.)

Household expenditure	Value (baht)
1. food	
2. education of children	
3. health care	
4. social functions	
5. recreations	
6. extertainment	
7. clothing	
8. household goods such as detergent, soap, body power etc.	
9. Others	

9. Labor force.

9.1 Did you have any permanent employees (hired for more than 180 days per year).  
during the last agricultural year?

Yes..... No.....

1. If yes, complete the following table.

Sex	Number	Total no. of months hired	Place of origin of majority
Male			
Female			
Total			

2. How do you pay them?.....

3. Rate of pay.....

4. Did you hire casual laborers to work for you during the last agricultural year?

Yes..... No.....

9.2 If yes, complete the following table.

Sex	Number	Total no. of days hired	Place of origin of majority
Male			
Female			
Total			

1. How do you pay them?.....

2. Rate of pay, explain and give equivalent in baht if payment in kind

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----



10.1 Tree crops

Kind of fruit	No. of tree	Total production				Units retained on farm last year	Units sold of bartered	Where sold	To whom sold
		Last year		Average last 5 year					
		Local unit	Kg.	Local unit	Kg.				

10.2 Do you think you are getting the best results possible out of farming on your land?

Yes..... No.....

10.3 If not, what are the reasons

1. lack of knowledge.
2. lack of investment/money to invest.
3. lack of water.
4. lack of labour.
5. inconvenience in repairing modern farm technology.
6. inconvenience in marketing.



12. Sexual division of labour among members of household.

12.1 In agriculture production.

Tasks	Female	Male	Both
1. land preparation			
2. seedling			
3. pulling seedling			
4. planting			
5. look after			
6. harvesting			
7. packing			
8. threshing			
9. transporting to storage			
10. sale of rice			
11. Other.....			

12.2 Other division of labour within the household.

Tasks	Female	Male	Both
1. cooking			
2. cleaning			
3. milling rice			
4. <sup>collecting</sup> fire wood			
5. <del>fetching</del> <sup>fetching</sup> water			
6. finding vegetable			
7. fishing			
8. shopping for food			
9. look <sup>on</sup> after children			
10. others.....			

13. Indebtedness and poverty.

13.1 During last agricultural year did your household have any debt?

1. Yes, approximate.....baht
2. No.

13.2 If during the last 12 months of the last agricultural year you have had debt, who did you borrow from?

1. Bank of Agriculture and Cooperation.
2. Co-op.
3. Merchant who buys agricultural products.
4. Merchant who provides one with the subcontracted work.
5. friends/relatives/other villagers.
6. Other

13.3 Did you pawn any of your valuable things - What are they?

1. gold
2. silver
3. land
4. rice
5. other.....

13.4 How do you normally manage rice output which you produces?

1. Sell all of them and buy milled rice for annual consumption
2. Keep all of them for household consumption without selling.
3. Keep some and sell some portion.

13.5 Do you normally harvest enough rice for your household annual consumption.

1. Enough
2. Not enough and have to buy the rest



13.6 Does your household have to borrow money every year of the last fifteen years?

1. every year
2. borrow in some years
3. never borrow

If borrow, what do you do with that money? (reasons for taking loans)

1. consumption only
2. investment only
3. social function only
4. health only
5. other.....

13.7 Normally, who makes decision in borrowing money?

1. head of household.
2. wife.
3. make decision together.

13.8 Are you always able to service your debt on time?

1. able to service debt evry time
2. Never be able to do so
3. able to service debt most of the time

Part 2

Conditions of Employment/Work

1. What product do you contact to product?.....
2. How long have you employed in this subcontracted job?.....
3. Why do you agree to this subcontracted work?
  1. want additional income.
  2. do not have any other work.
  3. it provides good income.
  4. can do spend time on other domestic or agricultural works.
  5. other.....
4. Before you have this work, did you ever employ?
  1. No.
  2. agricultural works.....
  3. wage labour.....  
where.....
  4. merchant.....
  5. other.....
5. How long have you occupied above work (specified on 0.4).  
- .....
6. Do you still employ in that work? (mentioned in 0.4)
  1. yes
  2. no, Because.....
7. If you did not employ in any other work (besids this subcontracted work), do you have any ~~other~~ job for additional income?
  1. wage labour outside the local area
  2. wage labour within the local area.
  3. merchant.....
  4. agriculturalist.
  5. Other self-owning work.....

8. What is the process of subcontracted work that you involve?

1. do only part of the whole.
2. involve in the final product.
3. whole processing.
4. send order to other for finished product and then buy the final product.
5. Other.....

9. How do you get this subcontracted work?

1. the employer contract me directly
2. I contact middlemen.
3. others tell me to contact employer.
4. I am an employer
5. Other.....

10. Do you work with anyone?

1. I work alone
2. Myself and children
3. Myself, my husband and children
4. Myself and relatives
5. Myself and othr female villagers.

11. If you work together with other women who are not member of your household, how does this occure?

1. I am a middlewomen
2. I give some work to other women without charge
3. Each of village women gets works from employer by herself, but bring them to work in group
4. I am an employer and contract other women to work for me
5. Other.....

12. How do you spend you income recieved from this subcontracted work?

1. on myself
2. on family
3. both

13. Do you like your present subcontracted work?

- 1. yes, because.....
- 2. no, because.....

14. If you do not have this work, could your household face any difficulty

- 1. yes, because.....
- 2. no, because.....

15. Do you engage in the subcontracted work all year round?

- 1. yes, when do you concentrate on the work?.....
- 2. only in certain season because....., when.....
  - (1) primary occupation is agricultural
  - (2) have difficulty with employer concerning.....
  - (3) other (specify).....

16. How do you spend for time daily?

-----

Time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

-----

- housework (e.g. cooking,  
cleaning, shopping etc.)
  - subcontracted work
  - recreation
  - entertainment
  - other.....
- 

17. Who contact you concerning the work?

- 1. employer for export.
- 2. merchant or owner who producers for distribution
- 3. middleman
- 4. I am an employer
- 5. I am a middleman

18. If you are middleman, how many contracts do you work for.....

19. What is the procedure?

1. employer provides raw materials only.
2. employer only buys products from you.
3. employer provides raw material and buy final products.

20. Does employer provide any of the following?

1. yes            2. no
- .1 training.....
- .2 loan.....
- .3 equipment

21. Do you have any work contract?

1. no
2. yes, which is
  - (1) non-written agreement
  - (2) written agreement

22. Do you have any agreement with your employer regarding the following matters?

1. yes            2. no

	quantity/day/ month/year	quality	delivered by paid by
raw material			
product			

23. Does the employer honor the agreement?

1. yes,
2. no (explain).....

24. How many peieces of work do you produce per day and sell/diviler to your employer during each season?

Time/Number of peice	at the slack produce deliver/sell	normal produce deliver/sell	at the peak produce diviler/sell
day			
week			
month			

25. If the amount ~~of~~ the product produced was not equal the amount delivered/sold, why has this occuded?

1. product was damaged/employer rejected.
2. keep some products for own use.
3. other.....

26. Did employer ever reject your products?

1. no
2. yes, approximately.....% of all products of that particular divilery.
  - How big was such rejected products?
    - (1) big amount
    - (2) small amount
  - How often did the employer reject your product?
    - (1) frequently
    - (2) fewtime

27. What action for such an unacceptable product did employer take?

1. replaced by worker.
2. worker get lower pay.
3. improved and delivered again
4. other.....

28. How much do you get for one peice of work? .....baht

29. How many employers do you produce for?.....person

30. Do you have any problem with these following aspects of work?

1. materials (specify).....
2. equitment.....
3. employer.....
4. private.....
5. family.....
6. Other.....

31. Are you satisfied with such agreement?

1. yes, because.....
2. no. because.....
  - (1) the delivery of raw material is not on time.
  - (2) the quality and quantity of material
  - (3) employer complains of final products
  - (4) low wage
  - (5) do not get pay regularly
  - (6) other.....

32. How many hours per day do you spend on this subcontracted work?

(you and other member of household).

Member of household	Time (hour/day)		
	Slack	Normal	Peak
1. Respondent			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

33. How long do you normally spend on these following activities?

1. packing the products.....hour
2. transport the products to employer..... hour

34. Are there any health disturbances due to this work?

1. no
2. yes

35. If yes,.....

1. headache
2. eye disturbance
3. back pain
4. other.....

36. Did you ever seek medication?

Yes,..... No,.....

37. Where medication is obtained?

1. hospital
2. clinic
3. trod doctor
4. midwife
5. other.....

38. Who pay for the cost of medication.

1. own cost
2. contractor
3. middleman
4. factory
5. free

39. Did you ever get aid to enhance the work?

Yes,..... No,.....



46. If you are an employer, how many workers do you hire to work for you?  
approximately..... persons

47. Where are these subcontracted workers?  
1. most of them reside in the same village.  
2. they live in different villages  
3. other.....

48. Do you know who your employer sells the products to and at what price?  
1. no  
2. yes, the employer sells products to.....  
at the price of..... baht/product

49. In the case of subcontracting through middleman, do you know how much  
the middleman receives per peice of product?  
1. no  
2. yes, the middleman receives..... baht/peice.

50. How do you involve in this job?  
1. friend  
2. tradition  
3. employer  
4. own will  
5. husband  
6. economic prosure (need cash income)  
7. relatives  
8. gov. officer  
9. motivator/middlemen  
10. others.....

51. Who gives the assignment?  
1. factory  
2. contractor  
3. middleman  
4. others.....

40. Whom did you seek ~~the~~ aid from?

1. government
2. NGO
3. individual: middleman, contractor
4. other.....

41. Do you use the aid for consumption.

Yes,..... No,.....

42. If yes, What types of aid did you obtain?

1. food-clothing
2. child-education
3. money
4. other.....

43. Where aid is obtained?

1. family
2. neighbour
3. contractor
4. middleman
5. factory
6. money-leader
7. other.....

44. What is your plan for the future?

1. continue working on this subcontracted work
2. change to other type of work (what? specify).....  
why do you want to change? (specify).....
3. other.....

45. In your village, are there many people engage in this subcontracted work?

1. many (approximately)..... persons
2. few (approximately)..... persons

52. How do you get the assignment?

1. get it myself from factory outside village.
2. get it from middleman outside village.
3. get it from middleman brings it and distribute it in the village
4. other.....

53. Did you ever change work?

Yes,.....

No,.....

54. If yes why.....

1. low wage
2. no assignment
3. find better work
4. other.....

55. Do you know how much this factory pay for the assignment at the factory rate?

Yes,.....

No,.....

56. How much do you get? How much factory pay?

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57. Why don't you get assignment directly from the factory?

1. no transportation.
2. do not know people at factory.
3. I have contracted with the middleman for a long time.
4. I feel that I owe him for giving me the assignment.
5. other.....