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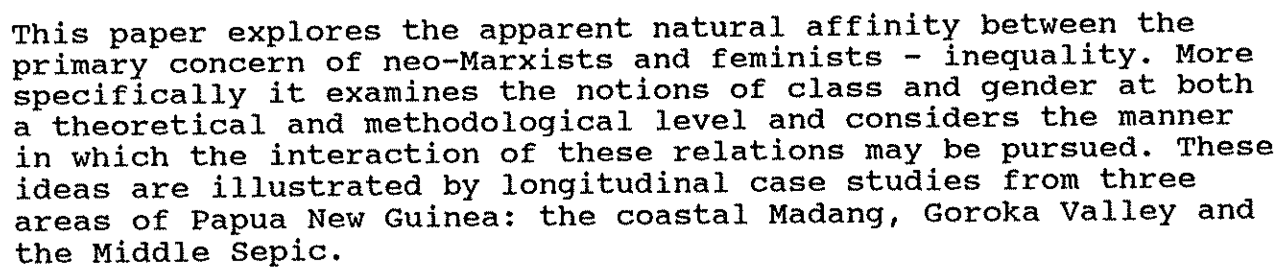
THE INTERSECTION OF EMERGING CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS: THEORY METHOD AND A CASE STUDY FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Stephanie Fahey
Victoria University of Technology
Footscray, Melbourne, Australia

ABSTRACT



This paper explores the apparent natural affinity between the primary concern of neo-Marxists and feminists - inequality. More specifically it examines the notions of class and gender at both a theoretical and methodological level and considers the manner in which the interaction of these relations may be pursued. These ideas are illustrated by longitudinal case studies from three areas of Papua New Guinea: the coastal Madang, Goroka Valley and the Middle Sepic.

THE INTERSECTION OF EMERGING CLASS AND GENDER RELATIONS: THEORY, METHOD AND A CASE STUDY FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

1. Introduction

A frustration of the development literature over the past 20 years has been the simultaneous growth documentation of the importance of gender relations in the development process and the continual neglect of gender relations in theoretical debates. A plethora of case studies point to the ways in which gender relations influence the development process but the convoluted debates between modernization, dependency and neo-Marxist theorists fail to take serious account of these relations. A consideration of gender relations is often "tacked on" to theoretical considerations of development but rarely does it influence the formulation of conceptual categories, the major research questions asked or the agenda for data collection.

This paper explores what would seem the natural affinity between the primary concern of neo-Marxists and feminists: inequality. But the intersection of class and gender relations of inequality often impede socialist-feminist analysis. More specifically, this paper examines the notions of class and gender at both a theoretical and methodological level and illustrates, using examples from Papua New Guinea, how the investigation of the intersection of these relations may be pursued.

The major argument is that class does not consist of empirical categories into which individuals or households may be slotted whereas gender is an empirical and concerns individuals. Furthermore, class is a macro-scale whereas gender is a micro-scale concept, so the investigation of their intersection is plagued by the inherent problems of mismatch of scales of analysis. In order to bridge this gap it is suggested that class analysis should be extended to take account of micro-level empirical complexities. Individuals and households can be conceived of as embodying a combination of productive relations and at the same time, are part of a complex of gender relations.

2. Perspectives on class relations

Within historical materialism, the primary concern is with mutual antagonisms between classes, rather than with the individual or the characteristics of particular stratum as is the case in modernization theory. Class and stratum are "different analytical constructs, each with its own intellectual origins, theoretical underpinnings and empirical utility (Samoff, 1982:112).

A class cannot exist in isolation. Classes are defined by the *relation* between groups of people rather than as categories of people who are grouped together because they possess certain resources. What defines a class is its relation with another class. It is not possible to have a working class without a capitalist class, just as it is not possible to have a tenant without a landlord or a husband without a wife. Class relations are not static but dialectical; that is, by expressing and developing one another, classes form the conditions of each other's existence.

Within the historical materialist literature, at least three different perspectives on class analysis can be identified, that of structure, human agency and value (see Gibson *et al.*, n.d.). Over the past 15 years, some theorists have emphasized one of these perspectives over the others. For example, Althusser (1977) and the French Marxist anthropologists (eg. Meillassoux, 1972, 1981; Rey, 1973; Terray, 1972) argue the case for a structural perspective; E.P. Thompson (1978) and his followers (eg. Hyden, 1980) argue for a human agency approach. Others (eg. Gibson *et al.*, n.d.; Webber, 1987) attempt to illustrate the importance of the labour

theory of value. Even though the particular emphasis of these authors varies, they would not argue necessarily that their approaches are incompatible, but rather that they are different windows on the same phenomena.

Briefly a structural approach depicts society as comprised of elements, relations and contradictions. Social structures either confine or enable human activity. Class relations are a particular set of social relations centered around the capital-labour relation. Central to these relations is surplus output (and how this is extracted from direct producers), property rights, and control over the labour process. These relations translate into conflict between the capitalist class and proletariat. The structural approach at first appeared to clarify the theoretical basis of class analysis but as the debate progressed, it became apparent that this approach was mechanistic and convoluted. Some would argue that the pervasive influence of the structural perspective on class analysis is one of the most unfortunate legacies of Marxian thinking of the 1970s (Kitching, 1982).

A human agency perspective reveals class relations through the actions of people within and against the prevailing social structure. This perspective emphasized everyday experience and breathed life back into class analysis. However, it was not able to come to terms with the dialectic between structure and agency.

Structure and agency reflect different perspectives on social reality and neither approach on its own is satisfactory. The two approaches cover different ground and one cannot be reduced to the other: social structure is more than the sum of individuals actions and similarly, everyday activities which join together to form a particular social world cannot be deduced from the social structure.

The difference between class as structural relations and class as political movements is drawn by Lukacs (1971) who identified 'class-in-itself' (the structural relation) and 'class-for-itself' (a political expression). Within a capitalist society, class structure is ever-present, but the political expression of this structure in terms of active resistance, for example worker strikes or employer lockouts, is intermittent. Furthermore, people may not be conscious of their class position until a crisis for them occurs at the heart of the class relation, for example redundancy. This is not to argue that people who occupy similar places in the relations of production will express political unity about pre-given common interests. Nevertheless, because people may not be conscious of their class position does not mean that the class structure does not exist.

A third perspective on class analysis is based on the labour theory of value, but is a method which generates the data on which class structure is identified. It is the most controversial and least developed of the perspectives. It focusses upon a particular type of production within an economy - the production of use values for exchange (commodities) - hence, this form of analysis is only appropriate within a capitalist economy. It traces the flow of value within the economy which is the material expression of exploitation which connects the classes and is seen to reproduce the other two perspectives: structure and agency.

A difference between the perspectives arises from type of data used. The structural approach focusses on identifying relations of production and reproduction (such as patterns of ownership and control of the means of production) and how they operate within a given society whereas the agency approach focusses on the expression of these relations through the actions of people. By contrast, the flow of value approach depends upon a broad range of economic data compiled on a national basis at a detailed industry disaggregation.

3. Methods for class analysis in Papua New Guinea

Class analysis in Papua New Guinea ideally can be approached from any of these perspectives but the first two approaches are more applicable than the third because of the differences in data requirements. In Papua New Guinea, the structural relations of production, for example the ownership and control of different types of products (eg. copra, coffee, forest products and minerals) are well documented; the activities of human agents in major class resistances such as the Rabaul strike of 1929 (Gammage, 1975), the wildcat strikes of the 1960s in Madang (Stevenson, 1986) and the Bougainville strike of May 1975 (*Post Courier*, 19 May, 1975) are recorded, although the documentation of the day to day expression of structural relations and political activity is relatively patchy. The work on class done by Good (1979) and Fitzpatrick (1980) combines the structural and the agency approach to class analysis but the major emphasis is on structure in both cases. For example, Good (1979:109-119) refers to the structural relations between peasants and big peasants and uses the actions of Sinake Giregire, a Gorokan businessman as illustration of this relation. Fitzpatrick (1980) uses the dialectic between structure and agency in a more sophisticated fashion; his analysis oscillates from one perspective to the other.

The data required for a value analysis are sadly lacking. Value analysis was developed for capitalist economies based on wage labour production for the market and it is not easily transferred to developing economies based on other forms of production such as petty bourgeois production (eg. cash cropping) and domestic village production. Most production in Papua New Guinea is not circulated through the market and hence records of hours worked and costs of production which are necessary for a value analysis are not kept[1]. Value analysis does not take account of 'non-productive' services such as advertising or services provided in the home. Proponents of this approach within capitalist economies, consider this limitation acceptable, but it is this inadequacy which is exacerbated in the application of value analysis to the Papua New Guinea economy, in which a major proportion of production falls outside the commodity sector.

In order to calculate surplus value it must be possible to calculate 'socially necessary labour' or that labour required to meet the costs of reproduction of the producer. To measure value production in Papua New Guinea in the commodity sector, the specific information required includes input-output tables to measure inter-industry commodity transfers (circulating constant capital); data on fixed capital investment and the value of the stock of capital in each sector; data by sector on the numbers of 'productive' workers, the hours worked, and wages. Much of this data is available for Papua New Guinea but the time period covered is brief.

Some researchers have gone some way in the quantification of 'subsistence' production in Papua New Guinea - although not for the purpose of calculating surplus value in the Marxian sense [2]. Theoretically, it is possible to use one or a combination of these methods to calculate 'socially necessary labour' in different forms of subsistence in different areas, but there are a number of practical constraints which limit the successful application of these methods. But just because the production of surplus value cannot be calculated does not mean that surplus value is not produced. Kitching (1980:449) discusses the problem of calculating surplus value within the Kenyan economy and agrees that it is extremely difficult to measure, but he adds

that surplus value is being produced because there are those who have accumulated it.

> if there were not surplus labour time being worked in Kenya it would not be possible for money to be accumulated and to become capital. We must look for exploitation then not in the direct relation of surplus labour appropriator to surplus labour source but in the capacity of various strata to accumulate money in the form of capital . . . . Very simply, those who can accumulate money and capital on any scale at all must be in control of part of the product of Kenya's surplus labour. The more and the faster they can accumulate, the greater must be their share of surplus labour (Kitching, 1980:449).

The emphasis on the structural and to a lesser extent the human agency approach in Papua New Guinea is due to the nature of data available rather than because of epistemological considerations. The three approaches if conducted separately would give different but not necessarily incompatible perspectives on class relations. In other words, the different approaches are not alternatives and the ideal situation is the application of the three perspectives to the same case study.

Fitzpatrick's (1980) work provides the broad brush strokes of class relations in Papua New Guinea. In his book *Law and State in Papua New Guinea,* he provides a meticulous historical account of the role of the law and the state in colonial and post-colonial Papua New Guinea. This book represents the first published work in English within a Marxist perspective to be well received by other scholars working on Papua New Guinea (Barnett, 1981; Ghai. 1982; Gregory, 1982; Strathern, 1981).

Fitzpatrick (1980:18-26) outlines a general schema of the national class formation in the Third World which he uses as a model for his analysis of class formation in Papua New Guinea (Figure 1). Although drawing the basic distinction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, he argues that class composition is much more complex. He divides the bourgeoisie into urban, rural and bureaucratic and although these fractions are to some degree competitive, underlying co-operation draws them together. In opposition to the bourgeoisie is the proletariat, the differentiated peasantry and urban petty commodity producers. Some groups are in a 'contradictory location' between the classic position of bourgeoisie and proletariat. For example, the big peasant may be involved in peasant production and may own property and employ labour on a proletarian basis (Fitzpatrick, 1980:24). Similarly, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie may be defined economically as proletariat but politically and ideologically may support the bourgeoisie.

Beyond Fitzpatrick's general schema, it is clear that class relations are not static, particularly in newly developing capitalist societies such as Papua New Guinea. It is argued elsewhere (Fahey, 1988), that with each new round of capital investment hybrid classes may emerge while others fade away or that class alliances may differ even if the basic class divisions are the same. This uniqueness of class formation in different regions and at different times is overlooked by Fitzpatrick. It is only fair to say however, that Fitzpatrick is concerned primarily with the analysis of the national class formation and hence the regional diversity in the class formation is given little attention. But a regional perspective can take account of relations such as gender relations, ethnicity and culture as well as class relations and thus escape the trap of economic determinism so commonly found within class analysis[3].

Spatial analysis which emphasizes the uniqueness of place was not part of Fitzpatrick's analysis -- although he made some reference to particular events in different areas. Questions about the changing combination of production strategies adopted by households were not addressed in detail. Further work needs to be done in order to bridge the apparent gap between the general level of class analysis and the specific level of particular people and communities.

As one moves from the general structural perspective on class analysis, that is, from the identification of relations of production, appropriation, distribution and utilization of social product as a whole to the more specific concrete level concerned with individuals or groups of individuals, the analytical categories alter. In fact, there is a disjuncture between essential and empirical categories. At the abstract level the essential categories of class relations include capital, wage-labour, value, surplus value and landed property. The empirical categories include wages, prices, profits, males and females, urban and rural dwellers, mental and manual work, young and old, and black and white.

Classes as defined within Marxist theory are not boxes into which people fit according to statistics on income distribution or any set of social indicators. This seems a violation of class as a relational phenomenon in the sense that the parts of class are only meaningful in their union. To ask which class an individual fits into is not a very useful question because individuals may embody several relations of production. For example, in contemporary capitalism a wage earner may not necessarily fit into the ideal proletarian category defined as someone separated form the means of production and who has no alternative but to sell his or her labour-power. The individuals concerned may own their own home, produce most of their vegetables in the backyard, and may own shares in public companies. So it appears that individuals and households are located somewhere within a spectrum of combinations between *ideal* household types: the purely subsistence household, the purely proletarian household and the purely capitalist household[4]. In this sense, classes are not empirical categories.

This is not to argue that the individual or the household is unimportant to class analysis. On the contrary, the location of the individual and the household within the spectrum of productive relations is vitally important to the understanding of class action. For example, if wage earners were supported to some degree by domestic food production and have the option of cash cropping, their willingness to struggle for improved wages may be muted compared to wage earners who have no other option but to sell their labour. Similarly, decisions made by politicians about the level of the rural minimum wage may be understood more fully if it were known that the politicians have business interests in agricultural production.

<u>Appropriate unit of analysis</u>

To facilitate the investigation of the intersection of productive and gender relations, the individual is not considered the most appropriate unit of analysis because the main tenets of historical materialism concern production and reproduction and these functions cannot be successfully achieved by isolated individuals over an extended period (see van Binsbergen and Geschiere, 1985:235-289). The appropriate unit is necessarily some group of individuals. The task of data collection in Papua New Guinea would be made easier if those who produced together were coterminous with the groups of reproduction. In the past, more commonality between producer groups and consumer groups did exist, but with the increased dominance of the market economy, membership of the productive and the reproductive group has become increasingly divergent. It is this disjuncture which necessitates the collection of data about people from two perspectives - from the perspectives of the productive unit, and the reproductive unit.

Each productive activity for example, plantation production, timber milling, 'subsistence' gardening and smallholder cash cropping has its own productive unit which consists of those who perform the work. Data collected from each unit may include data on the characteristics of workers, the organization of the labour process, the technology used and the degree of political organization of workers. Data on the productive unit does not faciliate the analysis of strategies adopted by the reproductive unit - the group involved in the daily maintenance and socialization of individuals - except of course when productive and reproductive units

overlap, as is usually the case in domestic food production. The analysis of reproductive strategies must be based on data collected from the reproductive unit.

The most common unit for the analysis of reproductive strategies in Papua New Guinea research is the household. Even though the lineage or the clan is the main land owning unit, most researchers agree that the household rather than any larger group is the basic reproductive unit[5]. However, they differ with respect to the precise definition of the household. There are various ways in which household has been defined in studies on Papua New Guinea[6].

The household for the purposes of this study will be defined as a group that ensures its maintenance and reproduction by generating and disposing of a collective income fund. This definition varies from that of Waddell and Krinks (1968) in that it is not based on a group who produces together, rather it refers to those who share the care and socialization of its membership. As such, the household might be termed more aptly the reproductive unit - but not necessarily in a biological sense as the term implies. The exclusion of co-operation in production from the definition makes it more versatile; it can refer equally to rural households whose members may produce together and to urban and peri-urban households in which some members may be wage earners who produce with members from other households in other productive units.

<u>Organization of data on the reproductive unit</u>

The process of reproduction is obviously more than simply consuming commodities but involves a complex of survival strategies and socialization processes. Research on Papua New Guinea societies and other developing countries has shown that individual reproductive units find the best fit between consumption, necessities, available labour-power (determined by number, age, sex and skill of members) and alternatives for generating monetary and non-monetary income (Schmink, 1979 cited in Wood, 1981). These strategies must be flexible because of changes in stages of the life cycle and socio-economic circumstances. In times of economic crisis, particular households have different options available to them depending on their access to resources. They may extend the area cultivated through some form of tenancy or sharecropping (Chayanov, 1966), they may intensify cropping (Boserup, 1965), increase labour inputs, increase the sale of handicrafts or enter wage labour which may in turn require changes in the division of labour and reallocation of resources within the unit.

In Papua New Guinea, researchers typically have relied on either the Chayanovian theory of utility and demographic differentiation or on strict neo-classical principles derived from the theory of the firm (for example the formalists in anthropology) for the organization of data about the household. Within historical materialism, the analysis of reproductive units must be based on the specification of the relations of production in which they are engaged.

Changes which affect the reproductive unit occur at different levels and it is important to locate the causes of these changes. Some changes in survival strategies of particular households are short-term because they have been caused by short-term events such as seasonal change; other changes are caused by changes in the stage of the life cycle and are specific to individual households. It is this latter form of change which is of major interest here because these are the types of change which incorporate households differentially into the capitalist mode of production.

Elwert and Wong (1980) conveniently summarize some of the broad socio-economic influences on households. These include:

1. intervention of the colonial state
2. the internal monetarisation of traditional social relations
3. an increasing dependency on industrial products substituting traditional self-produced goods
4. the development of new needs
5. the destruction of the ecological equilibrium
6. the disintegration of the domestic economy, social obligations and traditional forms of reciprocal and collective labour into the wider economy
7. breakdown of reciprocity of older children within the household.

These socio-economic influences do not affect all reproductive units in the same way. Variations occur first at the level of the individual reproductive unit and second at the level of geographical area. Particular reproductive units are incorporated into the labour market as suppliers of wage labour to capitalist units of production while others become buyers of wage labour in the process of capitalization. These forms of incorporation most closely represent the process of class formation among direct producers. What is required is a framework which will facilitate the examination of the differentiation process in which reproductive units are engaged.

In their work on the Cajamarcan peasantry of the northern Peruvian sierra, Deere and de Janvry (1979) developed a conceptual model to enable the organization of empirical material in terms of the central processes of the household and the forms of its insertion into the broader socio-economic context.

<u>Gender relations within the household</u>

The framework developed by Deere and de janvry assumes equality within the household. One consequence is that social relations which cut across the household, for example those of gender and generation, are not considered, a point for which Deere and de Janvry's model has been repeatedly criticized (see Wilson, 1985:1018-1019; Folbre 1986:248)[7]. Social relations other than class, such as gender, generation, kinship and ethnicity, are important to questions of social inequality in Papua New Guinea and in certain circumstances appear to be more important than class.

In much of the research on socio-economic change in Papua New Guinea, this household is assumed to be an egalitarian unit or at least based on a system of benevolent despotism (see Folbre, 1986). But national data sets clearly document material inequality between females and males along a number of dimensions: men are better educated than women; men are better nourished than women; men live longer than women and men work shorter hours than women (Nakikus, 1985). These data, although aggregated at the national level, challenge the assumption of 'joint utility' within the household and bring into question a model which uses a unit of survey which overlooks the importance of intra-household relations.

Morauta (1985) argues for Papua New Guinea that in most cases the concept of egalitarian household is appropriate because income is usually pooled within the household. However, she also notes that in higher income households where non-food consumption is more important, a larger proportion of income may go to only one or two members (Morauta, 1985:111). Those who have direct access to the household's cash income through wage employment or sale of cash crops generally have the highest personal consumption level. This inequality usually breaks along lines of gender and men consume more than women. As households become more deeply involved in the cash economy in Papua New Guinea, the proportion of income spent on

non-food consumption will probably increase and so will inequality in consumption by gender. The question remains as to how class relations and gender hierarchy interact.

Research on the intersection of class and gender relations

Much has been written about gender relations in the past 20 years[8] and variety of interpretations of the connection between class and gender have been offered. Many have pointed out the problems of slotting individual women into class categories. The class position of a woman who is at home caring for the home and children and is supported by the wage of another household member is not obvious. Is she in the same class as the wage earner by virtue of her role in reproduction rather than direct production? The answers to questions such as this are just as complex in the Papua New Guinea case study. For example, the husband may be involved in wage employment and the wife may produce much of the food required by the family through gardening and occasionally they both may be involved in the production of cash crops. This problem appears to be more complex for women than for men because of women's continued role in domestic reproduction. As a consequence, the class position of women often varies through their life cycle. Hypothetically, women when they are born may derive their class position from the head of the household. Later they may leave home and enter the work force, even later they may marry and care for children and derive their class position from their husbands, but on divorce or becoming a widow, their position may change once again.

Four interpretations of the relationship between class and gender can be identified in the literature:

1. First, gender relations are part of the superstructure together with religion, ethics, education and the state and the postulated relationship between class and gender draws heavily on the Althusserian approach to the relationship between base and superstructure. According to this approach, sexism is a by-product of class society which will lose its material base under communism (see Guettel, 1974).

2. Second, inequalities between women and men are more profound than class inequalities (Phelps, 1975; Einstein, 1978). Because the male and female experience of class is different, it is argued that gender is the deepest and most fundamental expression of inequality. Since some gender relations cross all classes and cultures, for example the women taking the prime responsibility for nurturing children, they argue that this undermines the importance of class as the major form of inequality[9].

3. Third, Ferguson (1979) claims the middle ground by proposing that the relations between women and men are in fact class relations. She argues that in most cases, the relationship is both exploitative and oppressive: exploitative because the man is able to appropriate more of the women's labour time for his own use than she is of his, and also he gets more of the goods produced; and oppressive because these gender roles are taught to boys and girls to perpetuate the relation (Ferguson, 1979:296).

4. Finally, Foord and Gregson (1986) argue that the concepts of capitalism and patriarchy are discrete and must be considered separately. Utilizing the methods of realism, they propose that the necessary and defining relation of patriarchy is men's subordination of women which is theoretically separate from the necessary relations of capitalism (conflict between labour and capital and competition between capitals). In opposition, McDowell (1986:312) argues 'that the oppression of women is based on the role that women in the exploited class play as reproducers of labour power in a class society'.

Gender inequalities

The approach taken here is that class relations are not the only set of social relations important to the analysis of social inequalities. The most important social relations - the necessary relations - within a capitalist economy are conflict between labour and capital and competition between capitals. These relations which take a variety of empirical forms are influenced by contingent relations - the relations which cannot be assumed to be uniform but are a matter for concrete investigation.

The specific form which gender relations take is contingent, varying through time and space although patriarchy exists everywhere. Youseff (1974) identifies many different forms of sexual division of labour throughout the world and it appears that a particular form of gender relations is not necessary for capitalism although as Murdock and Provost (1973) show, some gender roles are less contingent than others. Furthermore, a particular form of sexual division of labour within a particular industry is not necessary for its operation; in some contexts, only male migrant labour may be drawn upon, in other cases the whole family may be involved while in others, young female labour may be favoured. All that is necessary is that the sexual division of labour permits a positive rate of surplus value extraction.

Gender relations change through time, often as a result of changes in the labour process. Their new form is not completely *ad hoc* but is influenced by what was there before as well as the dominant ideology (see McDowell and Massey, 1984). For example, the particular form of the sexual division of labour in the initial stages of capitalist penetration was influenced by the sexual division of labour which preceded penetration as well as the expectations of the colonisers (Boserup, 1970; Burawoy, 1976; Curtain, 1980; Fahey, 1979)[10].

The contingent nature of gender relations is reflected in the literature on women in development[11]. Researchers have attempted to generalize about the effects of development on the position of women from a series of case studies and not surprisingly, they come up with different conclusions. The differences are partly due to regional variation but also the differences in the conceptual and political perspectives of the researchers (Wilson, 1985). No automatic conclusions can be drawn about the sexual division of labour associated with cash cropping. For example, in some areas, women are excluded from cash cropping whereas in others they are the main cash crop producers. To take the example further, it may be argued that women who are excluded from cash cropping have been left out of development. Alternatively, it may be argued that they are incorporated within the development process but in an exploitative way. Another interpretation is that they have lost control over their labour process in subsistence gardening and have become subordinated to the commodities market. Interpretations are difficult because they require the juxtaposition of factors of different orders. For example, how can one weigh up the advantages of a decreased workload for women in subsistence gardening against their increased dependence on a male's wage? The basis for the evaluation is theoretical.

It is possible to organize in a crude fashion the different theoretical responses within this literature using the categories of mainstream social science, dependency and historical materialist analysis. Within mainstream social science, or at least that based on modernization theory, the position of women is usually seen to improve with development; within dependency perspectives it is seen to get worse; and within an historical materialist approach, a woman's position may either improve or deteriorate because 'development'is a contradictory process which generates both progressive and regressive tendencies.

Research on women in the development process in Papua New Guinea reflects the diversity of the perspectives found in the international literature. In recent years, gender research has considered the implications for social change of a wide range of gender-related issues including

changes in the sexual division of labour, the labour input of women into cash cropping, wage employment of women in agriculture, the emergence of women's groups (Lee, 1985; Shoeffel, 1983), and power relations between the sexes (Mandie, 1985)[12]. A gap in the literature concerns the relationship between class formation and gender relations, although some research has examined the position of women within particular classes, for example the work of Johnson (1984).

Background to the case study areas

The empirical evidence for the investigation of the intersection of class and gender in Papua New Guinea was collected at two spatial scales: the intra-regional and inter-regional level. The three regions considered are Coastal Madang, the Goroka Valley and the River Sepik (Figure 2). At the intra-regional level, three sites within the Coastal Madang region are examined: Siar village, Karkar Island and Bagabag Island (Figure 3).

The three regions were selected because they were diverse environmentally, ethnographically and had different colonial experiences. The Coastal Madang region is characterized by a mixture of cash cropping, rural and urban wage employment and subsistence gardening. The Goroka Valley, located in the highlands, is a highly productive coffee growing area which is densely populated. The River Sepik is a swampland with very little cash cropping or subsistence gardening. People survive mainly through fishing, the sale of artefacts or through outmigration in search of wage employment.

Within the Coastal madang region the three sites vary only marginally in an environmental and ethnographic sense, however, because of their relative proximity to Madang town, the impact of capital investment has given rise to variations in contemporary social relations.

Regional contrasts in contemporary class relations in New Guinea

The class formation characteristics of the Coastal Madang region, which is very different to that of the Goroka Valley or the Middle Sepik (Figure 4). In Coastal Madang, there is a weakly developed expatriate bourgeoisie and near absence of an indigenous bourgeoisie. In contrast, the Goroka Valley exhibits a distinct indigenous bourgeoisie and a well established smallholder sector (see Stewart, 1986) while, there is virtually no evidence of class formation in the Middle Sepik.

In the Goroka Valley, most households (94%) grow coffee whereas only two thirds (62%) of households in the Coastal Madang region produce copra. The favourable ecological base in the Goroka Valley allows for the production of a greater agricultural surplus which supports a more profitable commercial sector than in the Coastal Madang region.

The steps involved in coffee processing and marketing (pulping, drying, roadside buying, roasting and export) allow greater opportunities for local businessmen to appropriate a slice of the surplus compared to the system of copra marketing. Copra is usually sold directly to the Copra Marketing Board (a state authority) and then to an exporter. All cherry and most parchment coffee beans are sold to roadside buyers. Five percent of parchment goes to the factory door while only a small amount goes to registered factories on plantations (Hassall and Associates, 1980 cited in ACIAR 1987:5).

In the Middle Sepik, the ecological base severely constrains the production of agricultural surplus which in turn limits the emergence of a class structure. Environmental conditions not only restrict the emergence of a bourgeoisie - be it indigenous or expatriate - but also smallholder producers. Only one fifth of households produced copra in 1980. In order to satisfy

their needs for commodities, many villagers have little option but to leave the region in search of wage employment. Those in search of employment usually go to Wewak, Madang Lae or Port Moresby. To illustrate, 27 percent of the Iatmul population (7,943 persons including absentees) was absent in 1977 and of these, 62.7 percent were male (Gewertz, 1983:126).

Livelihood options for those who remain in the villages are restricted to reliance on remittances (which usually decline over time) petty commodity production and distribution (eg. the occasional sale of artefacts and the sale of fish in market), limited copra production and domestic production. Few wage employment opportunities exist for those who remain in the village. Gewertz (1983:193-194) notes occasions in which Chambri Lakes people employed other Chambri to perform non-traditional wage-labour, for example to manage a trade store, build a tourist hotel, to drive motorboats or care for cattle. However, Gewertz makes no attempt to analyze class formation.

Changing gender relations in the Coastal Madang region

The present intention is to explore how the process of commercialization in Coastal Madang affected women and men differently and dramatically changed the power relations between the generations. These social cleavages are not divorced from class or from each other, so it is necessary to explore the ways in which they intersect. It is true that women and men have different experiences of new productive relations and that gender relations cut across class relations, but it is equally true to say that not all women have the same experience. Not only do women of different classes have different experiences of productive relations, the experiences of married and single, educated and uneducated, and rural and urban women vary.

An analysis of gender relations within the pre-capitalist Coastal Madang region shows that there was little variation within the region, with the exception of the pot-making communities of Yabob and Bilibil in which women made pots and men made other artefacts and traded. In most areas the sexual division of labour in gardening was interdependent (ie. women and men were reliant on each other's labour contribution); marriage was generally endogamous and thereby women could call on protection from their brothers against their husbands; women displayed some control over fertility; and women could inherit land in some circumstances. Nevertheless, forms of male power were exerted through the male secret cult and the ideology of female pollution.

The emergence of new sets of production relations - adjusted village production, smallholder production, wage labour and commercial enterprise - have had different implications for the women of the region. The experience of women varies according to their status but as will be argued, women do not only passively receive changes but actively reinforce or discourage the direction of change.

The impact on gender relations of initial merchant activity in the 1880s is unclear. For instance, it is not known if men only or men and women traded with merchants. The precedent set in the pre-capitalist mode of production was that both women and men were involved in local trade whereas men dominated long-distance trade.

The impact on gender relations of plantation capital invested from the 1900s onwards is better documented. Generally, only young single men were employed on the plantations. Wives and children were discouraged from coming to the plantation because the wage and accommodation was appropriate for the individual. In this way, plantations owners did not pay for the reproduction of the labour force. Until the late 1960s, this was acceptable because labour reserves of plantation labourers still existed elsewhere. As labour supplies for plantations became increasingly depleted, plantation owners/managers encouraged wives and children to live on the plantations to increase the stability of the plantation labour force, to

tap an additional labour supply of women and children and hopefully to reproduce another generation of plantation labourers.

Not all villagers in the region responded in the same way to the investment of plantation capital and similarly, the impact on gender relations varied. In the peri-urban villages, men refused to work on the plantations preferring to supply commodities or work on a casual basis as stevedores or boat crew. This meant that probably only a few men were away from the village for extended periods and village production could continue as before, with only slight adjustments for the temporary loss of male labour. Hannemann (n.d.:35) reports that women took on some of the tasks previously performed by their husbands and that the reverse was sometimes true, for the responsibility for childcare which previously was the sole domain of women was becoming shared to some extent.

The plantation sector in the peri-urban areas involved women in a markedly different way to men. Few women ever worked on the plantation, except as 'rented' wives to the European and Chinese (Hannemann, n.d.:36; Vargyas, 1986:41-53). The villagers benefited from this arrangement. They could call on 'their European' to advocate on their behalf and 'the wife' to redirect commodities to them[13]. Women in temporary marriages with men from other regions would commonly abort. Hannemann (n.d.:37) also suggests that the decrease in population growth before the Second World War was a reaction by women, apparently sanctioned by village men, against producing labourers for whites. In fact, the high frequency of abortions during the early period of the Australian Administration was reported as one of the greatest problems to be overcome (Papua New Guinea, New Guinea Annual report, 1923/1924).

The employment of men from Karkar and Bagabag on distant and local plantations, which was common before the Second World War, made an impact on village production and gender relations. Previously, both women and men within the village were engaged in the production of use-values for the reproduction of the community and there was little separation between productive and reproductive labour. This situation dramatically changed with long-distance male migration. New productive units were formed on the plantation and the old productive units in the village readjusted to accommodate the loss of male labour. The reproductive unit was temporarily split. With employment locally, men divided their energies between the new productive unit on the plantation and the productive unit in the village. In this case the reproductive unit remained intact and commodities provided by the wage earner were fed into the reproductive unit on a regular basis (compared to the *en masse* injection of commodities on the return of the long-distant migrant). The regular injection of commodities undermined the domestic manufacture of commodity equivalents (eg. twist tobacco discouraged the production of leaf tobacco in the village).

The organization of labour in gardening initially deterred long-term labour migration of married men and more often long-term migration was of young men who eventually returned to the village to marry. The interdependence of the sexual division of labour in agriculture in which men are indispensable, exerted a force which inhibited people's long-term participation in new productive activities where the reproductive unit was split. Similarly, once a commitment is made to long-term wage employment, as is now the case in the peri-urban villages, the sexual division of labour reinforces this commitment because it is difficult for the women to continue to produce an adequate food supply, thus increasing the reproductive unit's dependence on the wage. In other words, the sexual division of labour within the region is such that the entry of married men into commodity relations of production necessarily ensures the almost irreversible entry of the family into commodity relations of reproduction.

The impact of smallholder production on gender relations is most noticeable on Karkar and Bagabag. The general pattern throughout the region is that men dominate in copra production whereas women are the main cocoa producers. So it is clear that women in the region have not

been excluded from cash crop production, a common observation recorded in 'the women in development literature'. Nevertheless, the expenditure patterns of income from smallholder production vary between women and men. Women generally purchase food, clothing and other commodities required for the daily reproduction of the family whereas men use income to invest in business, pay school fees, council tax or buy beer and cigarettes. It is acceptable for the husband to appropriate income from cocoa if he sees the needs and any surplus is handed over to the husband.

Men returned from plantation labour to plant coconuts and copra production was the first form of smallholder production for export in the region. In the 1960s, cocoa was introduced and became the province of women (even though most of the agricultural extension officers were men). Because of the relatively high status of women in the Coastal Madang region, they were also permitted to earn cash. Nevertheless, it is not clear why this particular form of sexual division of labour in smallholder production has emerged in the Madang region[14]. Cocoa was first introduced on Karkar, the green bean (low valued added) was sold to settlers and returns were lower than for copra. An additional factor was that cocoa is usually sold in small sugar bags which women can handle whereas copra is sold in bags weighing more than 60 kilograms. An explanation given by a Karkar Islander as to why women harvest cocoa is that 'em olsem hookim pawpaw' (the same as harvesting pawpaw) which has derogatory undertones because pawpaw is considered an inferior food which is fed to pigs, dogs and babies. Such transference of status from one task to another by analogy is not uncommon.

Unlike the case noted in the 1920s with plantation labour, pressure to increase fertility was associated with smallholder production because children were considered valuable assets in primary commodity production. Undoubtedly, this was assisted by improved hygiene and medical services. From the limited evidence available from genealogies, it appears that the survival rate of children increased after the Second World War on Karkar and continues to increase. The inter-censal growth rate (1971-1980) on Karkar was one of the fastest in Papua New Guinea. Even on Bagabag among the Badilu people with whom smallholder production is most popular, family size is larger.

This increase in fertility imposes extra domestic pressure on women who may find it more difficult to engage in other social roles, particularly those with an inflexible work schedule. This in turn may lessen their control over certain social resources. The situation is aggravated by the introduction of new domestic tasks for women such as cleaning the house, washing clothes, scrubbing pots and bathing children. Previously, daughters would assist their mothers in domestic tasks but now most daughters between the ages of six and 12 years are in school.

During the 1960s, a new and more lucrative form of labour relation burgeoned: that of employment of Papua New Guineans in town. However, job opportunities were unequally distributed between women and men which increased their social differentiation. In 1966, only 6 percent of Madang town's labour force was made up of women. The segmentation in the labour force according to gender was inherited to a large extent form Australia. The industries which employed most women were the services and primary industry. No women were employed in the industries of electricity supply, building and construction and mining and very few in finance, transport and communication and manufacturing. This was despite the fact that 'traditionally' women undertook much of the manual labour. The most popular occupations for women were farmers (non-wage), domestic servants and in professional and technical occupations (eg. nurses and teachers). No women were employed in administration, sales, transport and communications and mining.

By 1980, the number of women in paid employment in Madang town had increased to 18 percent of the labour force. Between 1966 and 1980, job opportunities for men had increased by 29 percent compared to 231 percent for women. Nevertheless, differential access to wage

employment is still overwhelming and segmentation based on gender is still apparent but to a lesser extent. In 1980, women were represented in all industries, services still being the most popular. The most significant change between 1966 and 1980 was the dramatic increase in the number of women employed in commerce.

In 1980, the most popular occupations for women were clerical (eg. stenographers and in banking), professional and technical (eg. nurses and teachers), farmers and services (eg. cleaners and cooks). The only occupations in which women outnumbered men were in the traditional female occupations (ie. stenographers, nurses and subsistence farmers). In general, there were proportionally more women in 'white collar jobs' (47%) (ie. professional/technical, law-making etc., clerical) than men (22%) which is consistent with the Siar case study.

The employment chances of women are not determined solely by job opportunities. In fact, women in the region have differential access to the employment market. There are more single women in employment than married women. Educated women have a better chance of getting a job than the uneducated because of the dearth of unskilled jobs for women. Those who live within commuting distance of an urban area are more likely to be employed than those who do not. These issues have been developed in the detailed cases of the region.

Power relations between women and men exist between husband and wife, brother and sister and father and daughter. In the pre-capitalist mode of production, the institutionalized basis for this power relationship was the *meziab* (male secret cult). The missions dismantled this basis for power but replaced it by a Christian doctrine which sees a wife as subservient to her husband, just as the Church is subservient to Christ. Nevertheless, women were excluded from the spiritual life of the *meziab*, but in the new Christian order, it was often women who saw visions and were prophets.

Men still try to control women, but their success varies with the generation and the area. For example in Siar village, clan leaders no longer arrange marriage partners, young people 'marry for love'. Young women who have access to cash are involved in drinking parties and go to bars. Older married women on the other hand, are more conservative although they have drinking parties at yam harvests which are all-women affairs. By contrast, Bagabag men still exert a great deal of power over women.

The strings of control are most obvious in the conflicts which arise between the generations. A number of incidents which occurred during the period of fieldwork illustrate this conflict and control. Older men in Matiu 1 village on Bagabag objected to a woman selling sanitary pads in the local trade store. They argued that women were trying to disguise the times at which they were most 'dangerous' to men. But young women acknowledged that they did not believe that they had 'polluting' power. In fact, they tested the assumption by going to the garden and giving food to men when they were menstruating without dire consequences. However, fathers on the island still exerted power over daughters' sexual behaviour and choice of marriage partner. For example, two single women of 18 years had associated with government workers who had come to the island to supervise the installation of a water reticulation system. The father of one of the women was informed and he informed all boat crews coming to the island that his daughter was not allowed to leave. On another occasion, at the harvest of wild *galip*,

a young boy fell from a tree and died. In payment, the owner of the tree gave his daughter to the son of the family as a bride. She objected; she had been to high school on Karkar and had a boyfriend whom she wished to marry. Her arranged fiance had very little education; she tried to escape to Port Moresby but her relatives found her in Madang and brought her back to the island. Eventually, she married to avoid causing her father more shame.

Changes in gender relations intersect with changing power relations between the generations. In fact, the example of fathers' decline in authority over marriage arrangements in Siar stems from their loss of power over younger men. In the pre-capitalist mode of production, younger men were dependent on their elders for land, the inheritance of magic and the organization of marriage. Elders' control over the behaviour of young men was based upon this relationship. However, as young men gained alternative income through plantation labour, elders power began to weaken. The social control exerted by elders deteriorated as increased mobility brought strangers into the area. However, on Bagabag, it is still possible for an old man to publicly scold a man of 30 years and for the latter to hang his head in shame.

Changing gender relations in the Goroka Valley region

Gender relations since white settlement in the Goroka Valley have altered with the investment of each layer of capital. The changes have been different to those in the Coastal Madang region. There is no evidence that gender relations under capital are becoming more homogenous across the country. This supports the theoretical proposition that the specific nature of gender relations under capital is contingent although patriarchy persists everywhere. Hence, no national generalizations can be made about the intersection of class and gender relations.

As in Coastal Madang, women in the Goroka Valley do not own land. They work land to which they have rights through their fathers, brothers or husbands. In this sense, they are a landless group. As far as other valuables in the society are concerned, men are more commonly the owners but this is not always clear or static. For example, Newman (1965:38) states that only men owned pigs in the Goroka Valley community in which he worked whereas Howlett (1973:255) commented that everyone could own pigs. An explanation of the differing opinion could be that men became less protective of the ownership of pigs as money became more important, similarly with shell valuables and plumes in the 1950s (Sexton, 1986:64).

Sexton (1986:56) provides estimates of the time spent by women and men on all productive work in 1933, 1953 and 1977-78 (Table 1). Women and men contributed almost equally to production in 1933 before white settlement. With the introduction of steel tools, men's labour time was reduced to two-thirds of that of women. Twenty five years later, the labour demands on women had also decreased to two-thirds of the 1933 level but in the meantime male labour had again decreased to only 44 percent of the 1933 figure. This latter decrease for males occurred even with the introduction of cash cropping. These data indicate that although the workload of women is getting lighter, men's workload is becoming lighter more quickly. So, not only are women landless, they also work longer hours than men confirming the inequitable relationship.

Table 1

Mean Percentage Time Spent by Men and Women on all Productive Activities in the Goroka Valley, 1933, 1953 and 1977/78

Year	Men	Women
	Mean % time	Mean % time
1933 *	80.0	82.0
1953 *	50.0	82.0
1977/8	35.4	53.1

* Salisbury (1962:108) Source: Sexton (1966:56)

Table 2

Proportion of Daylight Hours Spent in Different Activities by Gender, 1977/78 in the Daulo Pass, Goroka Valley

Activity	Men	Women
Subsistence	19.4	45.0
Income generating	15.5	10.0
Civic activity	9.5	2.6
Ceremonial activity	6.1	5.7
Total	50.5	63.3

Source: Sexton (1986:49)

The gender allocation of labour time to different activities also shows a distinct gender bias (Table 2). Women spend nearly half their daylight hours in 'subsistence' production whereas men spend a greater proportion of their time in income-generating and civic activities, a division which is compatible with the thesis of public versus private spheres of women and men (Engels, 1972).

The major responsibilities of women are food gardening, coffee gardening, pig husbandry and child care. As coffee is becoming more important in the community, pig raising and to a lesser extent food gardening are becoming less important especially among the indigenous bourgeoisie. When the first whites ventured into the Goroka Valley they reported huge pig populations, whereas today households may buy pigs rather than raise them (Sexton, 1986). This change releases women's labour from gardening as well as caring for pigs. It appears that food gardening especially of women within the indigenous bourgeoisie class has become less important. In 1973, Shannon (1973:13) reported that 'big-men' claimed they continued to keep gardens because they thought that the money may run out. Today, wives of the second and third generations of indigenous bourgeoisie described by Finney (1987) often run one of their husbands' trade stores rather than work in the garden.

Undoubtedly, some 'traditional' activities are declining in importance due to peoples participation in new productive activities. In an attempt to maintain some of these activities in the transformed context, the sexual division of labour is altered. For example, men used to be the sole planters of taro and yams but now it is left to women if they wish. Other tasks of tying the sugar cane are also left to women (Shannon, 1973:9). Men by preference tend livestock, for example cattle, pigs and poultry, and even cultivate sweet potato where it is regarded as a business.

Nevertheless, most food marketing is done by women (Barnes, n.d.:276). Vegetables were first purchased from women by Leahy and the missions in the 1930s (Leahy and Crain, 1937:109). A food market was established in Goroka in 1955 in order to regulate the supply of European vegetables which were previously hawked around the streets (Jackson and Kolta, 1974:3) but subsistence vegetables soon replaced European vegetables and are now the major commodity. By 1967, 67 percent of vendors in Goroka market were women, a proportion which increased to 92 percent in 1973 (Barnes, n.d.:277).

Women often share the income from marketing with their husbands. Men, in their capacity as Goroka Town Councillors have tried to capture some of the profits from this predominantly female domain by charging sellers fees to get into different markets. Women responded by leaving the market to sell elsewhere and on different days (Sexton, 1986:66).

Gender relations are reflected in the spatial rearrangement of productive activities. Gardens have been moved from the hills to grassland plains (Sexton, 1986:39) where they have a minimum life of three years and require less labour input from men. Also, the importance given to cash cropping over domestic production is reflected in the relative proximity of coffee planting to the village in order to avoid theft (Sexton, 1986:12).

Unlike copra production in Coastal Madang, women in the Goroka Valley do a substantial amount of work on the coffee blocks, although they do not receive a large share of money. Anderson (1977:53) found that of the total labour days observed in highlands coffee production, men did 45 percent, women 42 percent and children 13 percent. The workload in the harvest was evenly distributed between women and men. Women on average did more of the harvesting while men did most of the pulping, weeding, washing and drying. During the flush, women did 49 percent of the harvesting, while men did 38 percent and children 13 percent. This is curious when one considers that coffee extension in the highlands was pursued because men were perceived to have extra labour time with pacification and the introduction of increased

technology. Anderson's (1977) study shows that coffee cultivation increased women's work day as well as diverting male labour.

Women's involvement in smallholder coffee production also spills over into wage employment on coffee plantation. Women in the Goroka Valley work on plantations mainly as pickers. Data on the gender of workers in the Valley are not available but of the permanent pickers on plantations in the Eastern Highlands (resident for more than 9 months), 50 percent were women. Of the non-permanent pickers employed during the flush, 41 percent were women (ACIAR, 1987:33). This is in contrast to the plantation sector in Coastal Madang where women are rarely employed.

It appears that plantation capital does not need a specific form of sexual division of labour to operate. Women's involvement depends on the ideology surrounding the task rather than their physical abilities to carry it out, ideology which may be transferred from either 'traditional' or Western culture. For example, coffee picking is seen as a woman's task because supposedly women are more suited to tedious, careful work whereas copra production is suitable for men because some steps require heavy lifting. Also, coffee picking is more compatible with child care: a baby can be carried in a string bag (*bilum*) suspended from the mothers' head whereas the smoking or carrying heavy bags of copra is less compatible with child care.

As in most areas in Papua New Guinea, there are very few business women in the Goroka Valley. Women who run trade stores or are in other management positions usually have achieved this position in conjunction with their husband's activities. During the 1960s, the *Wok Meri* (women's work) movement started in Chuave and spread eastward to the Goroka Valley but during the 1970s enthusiasm waned (Sexton 1986:128). The movement consists of a cluster of up to 35 women who meet regularly to save money earned from selling vegetables, coffee and occasionally their labour (Sexton, 1986:1). Some women involved in *Wok Meri* have pooled their money and invested in trade stores, trucking ventures and other small businesses.

Each group has a male chairman and bookkeeper to show them 'the way on the road' (Sexton, 1986:134). A large component of the movement is ceremonial; as they dance along the road in a show of strength men who laugh are fined. Women demand immediate payment from men who ridicule them and threaten physical retaliation if their demands are not met (Sexton, 1986:139). In order to secure payment women use the same technique as men often use to control women's behaviour, that is the threat of a public haranguing and threatened physical force (Sexton, 1986:140).

Sexton argues that the *Wok Meri* movement was a protest by women against gender inequality.

> Although women spend considerably more time working than men, they do not have proportionate control over the products of their labour because men have jural rights to most wealth . . . I interpret *Wok Meri* not only as a protest against women's circumscribed property rights, but also against their restricted involvement in the most highly valued activities of the society (Sexton, 1986:71).

Although the goals of *Wok Meri* were to control a greater proportion of available wealth, to participate in the prestigious economic sphere of ceremonial exchange, and to engage in the newly prestigious business sector of the changing economy, their gains have been incremental. Attempts by the Goroka Women's Investment Corporation, which started in 1975 with assistance from the government as International Labour Organization, were also less than successful. The corporation operated on a small scale with a coffee shop at the airport, and a takeaway food shop and coffee shop in town.

There are no business women in Goroka of their own right, perhaps with the exception of a woman who inherited a service station after her husband's death. Those women more likely to succeed in business are the wives of big-men who have been relieved of the task of gardening (Barnes, n.d.:281). For example, the women in charge of *Wok Meri* are usually wives of 'big-men.' The chairperson of the Board of Director's of Goroka Women's Investment Corporation was the wife of the chairperson of Gouna (Barnes, n.d.:281).

Several other differences exist between gender relations of the Goroka Valley and Coastal Madang region. Although precise data for the Goroka Valley are not available, women of the Eastern Highlands have a lower participation rate in education than in the Coastal Madang region. Only 32.6 percent of primary enrollments in the Eastern Highlands in 1978 were females (Barnes, n.d.:280) compared to almost even numbers in the villages studies in the Coastal Madang region. Perhaps education is not a high priority for women in the highlands because their labour is more valuable in productive activities which do not require formal education (eg. coffee picking, food gardening and child care).

Casual observation indicates that there is more domestic violence in Goroka Valley than in the Coastal Madang region. Part of the explanation rests in the different system of marriage. In the Goroka Valley brideprice and exogamous village marriages are the norm. Women who have married into other villages do not have the same degree of family support as those women in Coastal madang who commonly marry within the village. The return of a brideprice acts as a deterrent to family interference in domestic disputes. Gorokan women who marry into a distant village are viewed with suspicion and are often lonely. Coastal Madang women who marry within their natal village have the company of their age mates and often the protection of their brothers against 'unnecessary' violence from their husbands.

Earlier, four theoretical interpretations of the intersection between class and gender in the literature on gender were outlined. The first argued that gender inequality was a by-product of class-society which will lose its material base with the demise of capitalism. The second argued that gender inequality is a more fundamental expression of inequality than class. The third argued that gender relations are class relations. The fourth proposed that capitalism and patriarchy were conceptually discrete.

As tools to assist in the interpretation of evidence presented here, the first argument is not convincing because gender inequality was found in both pre-capitalist Coastal Madang and Goroka Valley and so is not specific to capitalism. The second and third arguments claim that gender divisions are at least as important, if not more so, than class relations. These arguments are more challenging. The data show that gender divisions are certainly profound in Papua New Guinea but to conflate class and gender obviates their intersection. Women are not a homogenous group; they occupy a variety of class positions. To argue that gender inequality is more profound than class inequality would require further theoretical and empirical investigation. The fourth argument is of little theoretical usefulness here.

Changing gender relations in the Middle Sepik region

Class relations amongst residents of the Middle Sepik region are poorly developed and it is in this context that gender inequality appears to be a more fundamental division within the society. In this respect, the regions is different from the other two regions. The discussion of gender inequality must be prefaced by two contextual factors: women were clearly the major producers in the pre-capitalist social formation, and today 52.0 percent of the Middle Sepik regions's populations is female compared to 47.2 percent in the Goroka Valley (excluding Madang town). The dominance in number by women results from the high outmigration of men to work elsewhere. Regardless of these two facts,it appears that women receive fewer of the benefits of development.

Although Gewertz's income-expenditure data for Indingai village is not necessarily representative of the region, it suggests that women on average earn slightly less than men. Most male income comes from artefact sales, remittances, livestock sales and motor boat rentals whereas most women's income comes from fish sales, remittances, artefact sales and market produce sales. Women also earn money through the sale of surplus domestic production including betenut, lime, plaited carrying baskets, mussels, tortoises, eels, water-lily seed-pods and wild fruits. A strong sexual division of labour exists in fish sales, crocodile skin sales, market produce sales and motorboat rentals. Returns to men are generally more than to women. For example, Indingai men on average received $36.19 from remittances during 1974 compared to $26.91 received by women (Gewertz, 1983:167). Also, even though more women sold artefacts, men earned more individually (Gewertz, 1983:165).

Expenditure patterns indicate that most women's income goes on providing the needs of the family whereas men's expenditure also includes capital investment and luxury items for themselves (Gewertz, 1983:170). Most women's expenditure was on trade store goods, sago, other food and transport. The gender division in expenditure patterns was that men solely were involved in outboard motor purchases and repairs, beer purchases and loan repayments whereas women alone purchased sago which consumed 94.1 percent of their earnings (Gewertz, 1983:162). Men spent slightly more than women but still men had more surplus to invest. On average, Indingai women spent all but $69 of their income whereas men saved $145 in 1974.

Conclusion

It is argued that a pre-requisite for the analysis of the intersection of class and gender relations is the adjustment of conceptual categories of class and the unit of analysis. The extended focus becomes the embodiment of various productive relations by the household and within the household, the form of gender relations.

It is concluded that the sexual division of labour within capitalism is contingent although patriarchy occurs everywhere. There is no consistent relationship between class and gender. Sometimes gender relations actively determine the way in which relations of production develop within capitalism, while at others they passively adjusted to the new relations of production.

Notes

1. Value analysis in developing countries is still in its formative stages and there are few examples of its successful application. Attempts have been made by Kitching (1980) in Kenya and Davila *et al* (1985) in Mexico.

2. At least three techniques can be identified and usually a combination of these are employed: they are based either on time allocation to various forms of production (eg. Clarke, 1971; Waddell and Krinks, 1968), the cash assessment of returns from production (eg. Fisk, 1975) or the estimation of the calorific value of production (eg. Clarke, 1971; Rappaport, 1968).

3. It could be argued that the national scale for the analysis of class formation in Papua New Guinea at this stage of its development is less appropriate than the regional scale because of the continued strength of regional diversity. Some of the most recent work on class formation in mature capitalist countries stresses that spatial factors are important in the formation of class relations (Cooke, 1985); Massey, 1984; Walker, 1985).

4. The mismatch between a general social concept and its empirical applicability is not uncommon within social science. For example, the concept of ethnicity has meaning at a general level but at the specific level it is more problematic. What is the ethnicity of an individual whose mother is of Papua New Guinea ancestry and whose father is of Anglo-Celtic ancestry?

5. Waddell and Krinks (1968) show that in the mid-1960s amongst the Orokaiva little time was spent in activities outside the domestic unit and that consumption within the household was more important than between households. Moreover, Morauta (1985:110-111) argues that even though poor households rely predominantly on transfers from other households, these transfers usually come from a number of households rather than from a larger, more stable group.

6. See Yanagisako (1979:161-205) for a general literature review of the family and the household. Also Casley and Lury (1981:186-188) and Preston (1986).

7. Deere (1976) in her earlier work considers the role of women in class formation but her focus is on women within broader structural relations such as the capital-labour relation rather than within the household. Unquestionably, the way in which women fit into the broader structures is important but it is argued here that gender relations and how they operate within the household also need to be linked to the wider theoretical debates.

8. This research falls into four different categories:

    1. The productive and non-productive character of domestic work (Gardiner, 1975; Harrison, 1973; Molyneux, 1979; Seccombe, 1974).

    2. Sexual segregation of the labour market (Beechey, 1977); West, 1982).

    3. Women in development literature (Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1984; Boserup, 1970; Deere, 1976; Harris and Young, 1981; Nelson, 1980; Palmer, 1977; Papanek, 1977; Young, 1978).

    4. Theoretical perspectives on the position of women (Eisenstein, 1978; Ferguson, 1979; Folbre, 1986; Macintosh, 1984; Phelps, 1975; Vogel, 1983).

    It is the last two categories which are most pertinent to the present discussion although there is obvious overlap between the categories.

9. Murdock and Provost (1973:207-210) found that although gender relations varied across cultures, some varied less than others. For example, those tasks which were exclusively masculine were lumbering, trapping, stoneworking and mining. Those which were mostly masculine included butchering, land clearing, soil preparation, herding large animals and housebuilding. Those tasks which were mostly feminine were fuel gathering, dairy production, spinning, laundering, water fetching and cooking. Those tasks performed by either gender were crop planting, harvesting, milking, burden carrying, care for small animals, loom weaving, clothing manufacture and pottery.

10. Boserup's (1970) comparison of the way in which plantation labour was recruited in Africa and Asia demonstrates how the sexual division of labour varies within a particular industry and is influenced by what was already there. In Africa, the agricultural system was dominated by female labour. Since women's subsistence agriculture supported the family, plantations and other export oriented industries were able to recruit male workers at wages insufficient to provide for the worker's reproduction. In Asia, the predominant type of subsistence agriculture required full familial participation. Therfore for Asian plantations to be assured of a sufficient labour supply which could reproduce itself, whole families were recruited.

11. Within the women in development literature, Bourque and Warren (1981) identify four major areas of research: separate domains of males and females, the sexual division of labour, class analysis and social ideology.

12. A great deal of literature has been produced on women in Papua New Guinea. Johnson (1982) prepared a comprehensive bibliography on women in development in Papua New Guinea to which the reader is referred. The 1982 Waigani Seminar in Port Moresby focussed on women and the proceedings have been published (see King, Lee and Warakai, 1985).

13. The 'renting' of wives continued in an amended form into the 1980s. Marriage between men from other regions who were employed in Madang town and peri-urban village women was encouraged for the same reasons.

14. By contrast with the Tolai in East New Britain, cocoa is the province of men. Cocoa was introduced systematically and cooperative fermentries were established which allowed increased value to be added to cocoa by smallholders.

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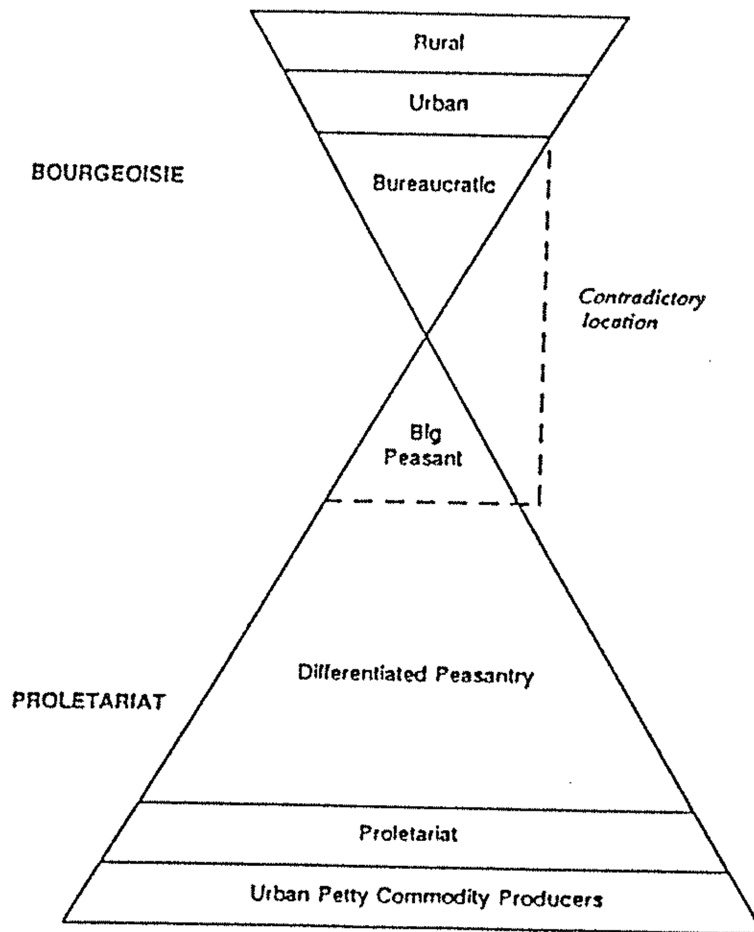
Figure 1

Fitzpatrick's Schema of National Class Formation in Papua New Guinea



Source: After Fitzpatrick (1980).

Figure 2

Location of the Coastal Madang, Goroka Valley and Middle Sepik Regions

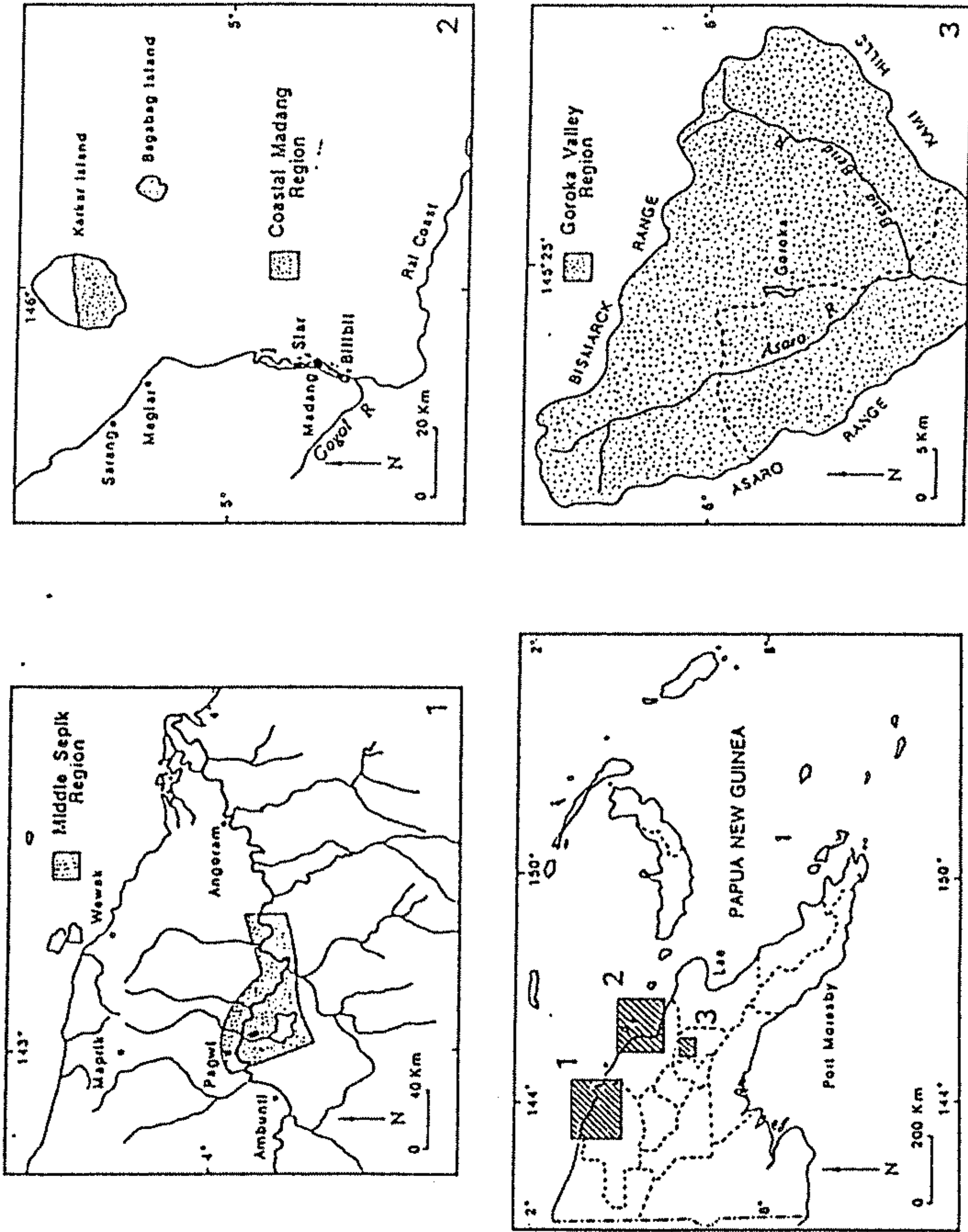


Figure 3

Place Names of the Coastal Madang Region and Surrounds

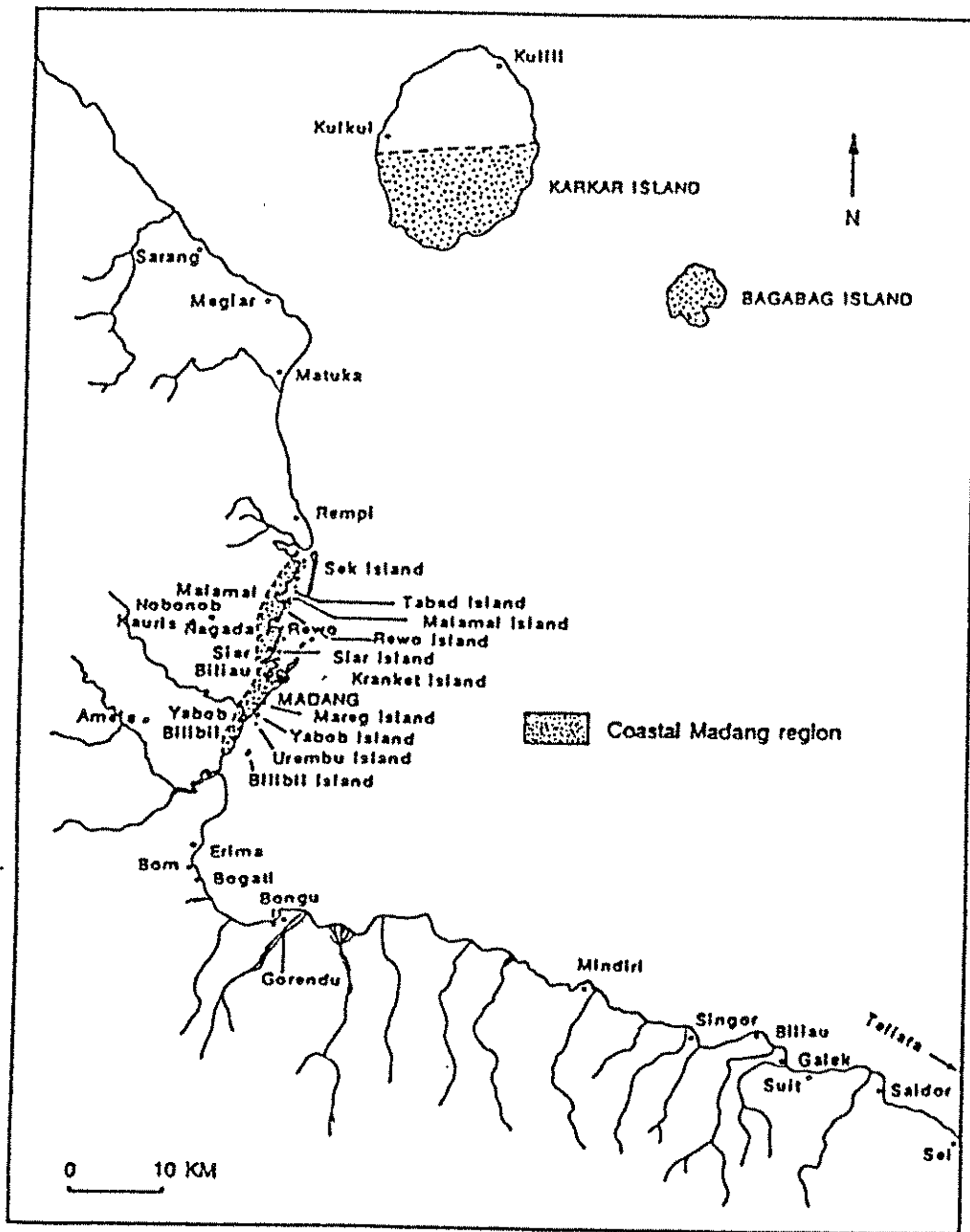


Figure 4 Schematic Representation of Regional Class Compositions in the Coastal Madang, Goroka Valley and Middle Sepik Regions, 1980