

Mission of the Centre for Basic Research

To generate and disseminate knowledge by conducting basic and applied research of social, economic and political significance to Uganda in particular and Africa in general, so as to influence policy, raise consciousness and improve quality of life.

Women and Work: Historical Trends

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Workshop Report No.2/1992

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	i
Opening Remarks	1
Session I: Gender Theory	2
1. Kinship Ideologies and Socio-cultural systems in Africa and Europe: Theorizing Matriarchy in Africa <i>by Ifi Amadiume</i>	2
2. Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Research on Women and Labour in Peru <i>by Eliana V. Marquez</i>	3
Session II: Rural Production	6
1. The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programme on Uganda Rural Women <i>by Mary Mugenyi</i>	6
2. High Participation Low Evaluation: Women and Work in Green-White Revolution Province of India (Haryana) <i>by Prem Chowdhry</i>	7
3. The Role of Women in Petty Commodity Production and Commerce: A case study of Rural Women in Uganda." <i>by Grace, K. Bantebya</i>	8
4. Women in the Rural Work Force of South Africa: Issues of Land, Labour, Capital and Struggle <i>by Marie Minnaar-MacDonald</i>	9
Session III: Plantation Labour	11
1. Change in work and Household relations: The case of sugar cane plantation workers <i>by Marjorie Mbilinyi</i>	11
2. Women Wage Workers in Plantation Estates in Uganda <i>by Asowa Okwe</i>	12
Session IV : Industrial Labour	
1. Industrial Wage Labour and Gender: Some Notes on Theory and Methodology <i>by Inga Brandell</i>	14
2. Gender and Labour Process: An Analysis of Gender Dynamics in Dynamics in United Garments Industry Limited (UGIL) <i>by Josephine Ahikire</i>	16

3.	Trade Unions, the Democratic Process and the Challenge of Gender in Nigeria <i>by Hussaina Abdullah</i>	18
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Session V: Urban Labour

1.	Increasing participation of Swazi women in the formal sector Employment: Historical Trends <i>by Winnie Sibongile Madonsela</i>	20
2.	The plight of urban women in the informal sector in Dar es Salaam <i>by Nestor Luanda</i>	21

Session VI: Ideology and Representation

1.	Women and Work in Uruguay: Historical Trends and Changing Gender Ideologies <i>by Silvia Rodriguez Villamil</i>	23
2.	Women's Work: Parameters of Representation and Action <i>by Renee Pittin</i>	25
3.	Gender Ideology, Material Production & Popular Culture: Orature and Gender Spatial Struggles <i>by Okello Ogwang</i>	26
4.	Notes on Gender and Modernization: Examples from Mozambique <i>by Signe Arnfred</i>	27

Session VII: Women and Struggles

1.	"We fight for life" women's struggle in Cape Town during the transition from segregation to Apartheid <i>by Yvonne Mutheir</i>	29
2.	The Role of Communication in Transforming the World of Women's Work Through Initiative and Struggle <i>by Eileen Omosa</i>	32
3.	Women and work in South Africa; Transforming the world of women's work through initiative and struggle <i>by Patricia Horn</i>	33
4.	Women's work and Revolutionary politics in Bihar, India, <i>by Govind Kelkar</i>	35

Sum up Session

List of Participants	42
Appendix: Symposium	44

Women and Work: Historical Trends

Foreword

Centre for Basic Research is pleased to have organised the workshop on “Women and work”. It was a fruitful occasion that brought together researchers from around Africa (including South Africa), Asia, Europe and Latin America. There is no doubt that the workshop benefited not only from written papers but also from the rich and varied experiences of participants. The participants strongly felt that the workshop could form a springboard for more collaborative work.

This report organises the deliberations of the workshop by theme. This is followed by a summary of the summing-up session where the major perspectives and positions arising out of the workshop were crystalized. The appendix is a report of the symposium held during the workshop where Women's organisations from around Kampala were invited to give both the participants and the organisations an opportunity to relate research to actual struggles.

Centre for Basic Research would like to thank SAREC for sponsoring the workshop.

Josephine Ahikire
Co-ordinator

**Opening Remarks by Mahmood Mamdani
Executive Director, Centre for Basic Research**

The Director outlined the context in which the workshop “Gender and work: Historical Trends” was taking place. The precursor of the Centre for Basic Research was the group for the Study of Labour. As such its sole research agenda was Labour. As the Group for the Study of Labour expanded into the Centre for Basic Research, so did the research agenda broaden. One of the current research projects is Gender.

Gender is the darling of the year both to donors and the state. A question arises how does one set up a research agenda in this context?

In Uganda, the debate on gender was initiated by National Resistance Movement (NRM) given its social history during the guerilla war. As a policy on political minorities, NRM sought to grant special representation in parliament to Youths, Workers and Women. However, the translation of policy into practice becomes a political issue. And, with respect to the three categories above, the result was different in each case. With Workers and the state it was a stalemate. Workers resisted to-date the state initiative to reorganize National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) as a condition for the election of representatives. With the Youth, the state was able to set up its own youth organization. With women, the state was able to determine the mode of representation in a context where 90% of the electorate are men. The victims of the gender inequality are either unorganized or are organised from above.

Another pertinent issue is the proliferation of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). These are by their nature philanthropic, undemocratic or anti-democratic. They are in no way accountable to their constituency.

In the circumstances one may have to resort to peers as an alternative source of inspiration to shape a research agenda. This is where the CBR workshop comes in. It is an effort to broaden a research agenda on gender by drawing participants and experiences from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

The Gender study group at CBR which had been working for over a year before the conference had identified four basic issues:

1. The question of historical context and perspective. There is a strong tendency of a unilinear evolutionism in gender research. Is the history of gender relations the same in our different societies? Is there in other words a single history of gender everywhere?
2. The Social context. How are gender relations mediated between class, race, ethnicity etc?
3. The relationship of gender based struggles to the broader democratic struggles.
4. The relationship between research and action. What inspires the research agenda of women's action groups?

It was hoped that at the end of the workshop common interests within and without the African context could be arrived at. And, along these could be organized concrete possibilities of networking.

Session I: Gender Theory

1. Kinship Ideologies and Socio-cultural systems in Africa and Europe: Theorizing Matriarchy in Africa, by Ifi Amadiume

The central position of the paper is that African data suggests that there is more than one history of gender, thus supporting Cheik Anta Diop's thesis that the character of gender in European socioeconomic formations was different from that of Africa.

Using the work of Cheick Anta Diop and contemporary African data, the paper attempts to show that there is a matriarchal system in all these varied societies.

The system of Matriarchy was juxtaposed with the system of patriarchy. Since the matri-centric structure of the matriarchal triangle formed the paradigm of the matriarchal system, matrilineality means that there has been a shift of power from mother to son. The rejection of Matriarchy for matrilineality stems from an ethno-centric inhibited analysis of African realities by Eurocentric scholars. The application of the Eurocentric monolithic patriarchal paradigm means that there have been serious distortions of African social histories.

Thus the major problematic of the paper is Matriarchy, not as a totalitarian system, that is, the total rule governing a society, but as a structural system in juxtaposition to another system in a social structure. The nineteenth - century debate on kinship became simplistic when seen as a dichotonised alternative between Matriarchy and patriarchy as determinant of the social structure, and a general progressive evolution from one system to the other.

Yet, it was not the structural relationship of institutions in a society that was studied, but the jural codes, that is the instrument devised for ruling and not the character of the ruled. These studies were however based on indo-European histories but the findings were applied well beyond those very experiences. The central focus of power there was the father with the result that the importance of motherhood in the kinship structure was denied.

Diop maintained that it is the material condition and not race which determined the structure of kinship and its patterns of change or evolution. That the transition from Matriarchy to patriarchy is far from complete. Rather these processes are still taking place today. Kinship, filiation, inheritance, all derive essentially from the privileged social situation of the spouse who remains in his or her clan and therefore hosts the other.

However, the main problem in theories of kinship is the construction of woman as an object to be moved or owned. If kinship is determined through the one constant and certain person - the mother, if we remove the concept of movement and ownership and focus on the African concept of collectivism and usufruct access to land, we are back to the basic matriarchal tripartite structure, the matriarchal triangle consisting of mother,

daughter and son. By focusing on this structure and the wide ranging possibilities of the shift of power it is possible to theorise about structural change and compare the social dynamics of coexistence of different but interacting cohesive systems. No more are we talking about unilinear evolutionism or simultaneous transformations.

Whether a woman is called daughter or sister, would depend on the gender focus. If mother is the focus she is daughter. If son is the focus, the same mother's daughter becomes sister. With the patriarchal shift the reference is to the sister of the uncle in a matrilineal system. In this way there was a transmission of rights and perpetuation of the clan through sisters, who in actual fact, are mother's daughters.

The matriarchal structure of kinship or the matriarchal triangle of power is reproduced in African queendoms as the tripartite power sharing systems. The names of the queens were uttered jointly with those of the kings on the throne to be occupied. Men were not named after their fathers. Genealogy was traced through the maternal uncle and sons of the sister inherited to the exclusion of his own children.

With matriliney, there is already a shift of focus or power in the matriarchal triangle from mother to son, who in matriliney is seen as the all important uncle. Yet he is a son, a brother, a husband, an absentee/invisible father, as well as an uncle.

It is a common error which stems from a definition of reproduction derived from a European patriarchal paradigm which sees woman as an object of exchange. Marriage is consequently presented as a mechanism of physical and social reproduction of the group. Woman in this formulation starts off as an object in a patriarchal exchange and transaction. She is not seen in her autonomous status as mother. Yet the motherhood paradigm is culturally recognized as an autonomous unit in indigenous African constructs of kinship.

Four contrasting African societies the Nnobi, Tallensi, Merina and Jelgobe are examined in order to locate this matriarchal system in their social structure. The most exciting methodological innovation here is that the matriarchal system is located from data that assumed and portrayed a totalizing, monolithic patriarchy in those societies.

In conclusion, numerous issues are raised by the matriarchal structure for African studies. Three of these are of seminal importance. Is Matriarchy to be defined as rule of succession and inheritance and the reign of queens or as the deeper structure of the matricentric unit and its ideological and cultural reproduction in the social structure? How can we reformulate gender models and socioeconomic formations in the light of the centrality of the basic matriarchal triangle in the social structure of African societies? And lastly if the theory is right that the matricentric structure is present in some form in our varied African societies, what are the implication of the absence of this system in African studies?

2. Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Research on Women and Labour in Peru by *Eliana V. Marquez*

Mention is frequently made as to the internationalization of the world economy, whose effects would appear to favour the increasing use of female labour in the

industrialized countries. However, for the nations of the Third World, and Latin America in particular, projections become complex, not only because of the reliability of the statistics and the discriminatory assumptions on which criteria are based, but also due to what is known as the informal sector.

It was only around the middle of the '70s when studies began to appear regarding the situation of women and it was even later yet when consideration was given in Peru to the participation of women in the productive process.

On the basis of present research, one group follows a conceptual framework centred on the participation of women in economic activities, based on modifications of industrial labour demand resulting from modernization and competitive disadvantage for women. Interest is addressed to the identification of factors involving discrimination, depending upon the characteristics of the female population, for their integration in the industrial development process.

Another line of research criticizes the developmental model and demonstrates the incorporation of women into the tertiary sector, mainly as independent workers, in which capital and not gender constitutes the analytical guideline.

In the third group, there is an emphasis on the sexual division of labour, the concentration of women in certain industrial fields and, within such activities, the productive process which utilizes the skills which women have socially assimilated. As a compliment to this approach, there is research which indicates a great variety of determining factors, as to the realities and autonomy of gender relations. From this outlook, capital does not constitute the main explanation of the situation of women in the productive process.

A constant proposal in many studies on women is addressed to an improvement of education levels and technical skills, as determining factors to overcome their marginalized status, the myth of education. The rationality of this proposal is invalidated by the complex circumstances where precisely the least educated women participate to the largest extent in the labour market. If one attempts to provide overall explanations with respect to the participation of women in the labour force, education is seen not to have a unique impact but rather a differential effect, depending on the social class to which women belong. Education may be a determining factor for promotion and social mobility in the middle but not the lower class.

The most significant explanations are cultural and political: cultural to the extent that women continue to be pigeonholed in stereo typed jobs relating them to home activities and characteristics as women and political in view of the overprotection with which labour legislation provides them. Studies clearly show for example a segregated labour market in which women work in large and concentrated numbers in certain industries and not others. Even then women are engaged in jobs having the worst conditions, are less valued socially and most poorly paid.

Sexual division of labour or the logic of capitalist accumulation cannot each by itself prove full account of women's oppression. Any solution proposed would be partial if consideration were not given to the impact of those social and economic processes of

greater scope which determine the oppressive situation of women. This means that it is necessary to confront discrimination through a broader democratization of our societies.

Discussion

Amadiume's paper is a critique of Eurocentrism towards a construction of African methodologies and epistemology. The historical context of the concepts such as patriarchy is re-examined. It is in a specific sense a rediscovery of African history. The point is made that there is no single universal history of gender. And as far as African history is concerned, a matriarchal system of gender exists in juxtaposition to the patriarchal system. To the extent that this is proven even with the same data collected by other scholars, then Amadiume's basic contribution in her theorization of Matriarchy is a methodological one.

Matriarchy is not used to refer to women's total rule, not in that strictly political context. Rather the strategic utilization of the concept is from the point of view of management of resources, the location of the mother in the market, in trade etc, where women voices speak for themselves, the spaces they can afford for themselves and not necessarily in confrontation with men.

Both papers, Eliana Marquez's and Amadiume's, raise the issue of the need for democratization at all levels. What this in effect means is the reconstruction of the notion and process of democracy that is not restricted to politics and a notion of power that is not restricted to the state. Hence the need to dispense with the notion that power is monolithic and patriarchal as this would exclude women's rights.

If democracy, politics and power can be conceptualised not only in relationship to the state and if matriarchy exists alongside patriarchy, this opens up possibilities for the institutional basis of defense of rights eroded by the state. This does not mean however that the state cannot be a guarantor of rights where other mechanisms have broken down.

Eliana's paper initiated discussion on the autonomy of gender relations while at the same time underpinning the complexity of these relations as they are mediated by class, ethnicity, race, caste etc. For example where matriarchal systems dominated, did the different categories of women share equally in the distribution of power and resources? Or how do we explain cultural variations in matriarchal systems or the subordination of women by fellow women in matrilineal societies? It appears that hierarchy and leadership are inevitable to social organization. We can only distinguish between different types of hierarchy for example legitimate authority and power as the distinction is made in anthropology. There was a general tendency to accept that only a multidisciplinary approach would offer a frame of reference broad enough to study gender issues.

Session II: Rural Production

1. **The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programme on Uganda Rural Women** by *Mary Mugenyi*

In her paper, Mary Mugenyi assesses the impact of SAP on Ugandan rural women. The paper begins by highlighting the combined factors that led to the deterioration of the Uganda economy from the 1970 decade to date. These include deterioration in the terms of trade of primary products that resulted into the sharp decline in per capital income; output decline in manufacturing sector; expulsion of Ugandan Asians which deprived the country of skilled business managers and entrepreneurs and the total collapse of the revenue base of the economy. In sum, the decade of 70s and 80s was characterized by economic mismanagement, instability and insecurity of both property and persons. And that the 1980 decade witnessed absence of remunerative producer prices; over-valued exchange rates, gross budgetary indiscipline, bad governance, inadequate agricultural-research and extension services, monopolistic marketing arrangements which all contributed to the internal and external imbalances of the economy.

It was within these formidable structural rigidities and macro-disequilibrium that SAP with its conditionalities of devaluation, de-subsidization and reduction of government social services, was initiated in Uganda by the IMF in 1981.

She argues that the impact of SAP conditionalities when combined with cultural female discrimination makes rural women's production and reproduction roles burdening. Women in Uganda contribute 80% of agricultural work and 90% of the domestic work. The implementation of SAP pays no attention to the social dimensions of adjustment. Thus the women groups have continued to remain unprotected under SAP as their work load have increased, particularly with the pressure to increase agricultural production to export.

Traditional institutions that deny women land ownership and inheritance rights deprive them of the privilege to control income accruing from their production. For although women perform 80% of the agricultural work they do not own the tools, nor do they have access to credit facilities needed for agricultural production.

The NRM government recognized the centrality of women in agricultural production and initiated a commercial bank loan. However, women received only 35% of the scheme fund instead of the 60% hitherto targeted. The explanation being women's lack of collateral, illiteracy, crop price fluctuations and high interest rate (45%). In addition poor marketing and storage facilities too have frustrated women's efforts to produce.

The total impact of SAP on rural women is seen as negative. For increased emphasis on cash cropping has resulted in a shift of resources away from food production to production for income which in turn has affected household food security.

In the sphere of rural women's education the paper argues that cuts in government spending and the increased cost of education reduces women's chances for education. Up to 40% of Uganda women have never been to school, 20% have completed primary

education and only 3% have more than secondary school education. Illiteracy among women in Uganda is three times higher in rural areas (41%) than in urban areas (13%).

SAP - induced economic hardships have particularly affected school - going girls who are withdrawn from schools to participate in household chores.

Lack of medical equipment, drugs and personnel have also affected the health of rural women, and by implication their capacity to perform their production and productive roles.

The paper concludes by calling for the empowerment of rural women. It identifies the agent of this empowerment as government and suggest that "the government should put in place structures that will not only integrate women in production but which will equally enable women to realise the benefits of their production....."; that government should provide more education for women; increase support for women's NGOs etc.

2. High Participation Low Evaluation: Women and Work in Green-White Revolution Province of India (Haryana) by Prem Chowdhry

Chowdry's paper seeks to locate the Haryanavi women with all their regional, class and caste differentiation, in the new political economy of independent India. It covers different aspects and levels of this region's economy with the extent and nature of women's work in two-fold spheres: agriculture together with agricultural processing, and animal husbandry work. The work spheres of two categories are investigated, namely female family workers from land-owning households and female agricultural wage earners from landless as well as cultivating households.

Chowdry's analysis of agriculture and agricultural related work under high-toned demands of a changed economy reveals an increased and extensive use of female family labour which cuts across class, and caste divisions. Similarly, in animal husbandry, the second most important sector of rural economy in the state of Haryana, almost all work from intensive labour to supervisory is performed by females regardless of divisions of class and caste. The analysis highlights the dominant socio-cultural and ideological factors which account for the continued high participation rate of Haryana women, along with the cultural devaluations which regards a woman's work to be inferior/secondary/supplementary to that of the man. The paper argues that the conspicuous emergence of a dominant man in control especially in the aftermath of not only the green revolution but also the white revolution has strengthened this devaluation. This contradiction has had the effect of redefining gender equations in rural Haryana to the detriment of women.

The analysis also shows that the green revolution has not hit the female family workers but the category of female agricultural wage earners. It is argued that the enormous increase in labour requirement in the wake of green revolution, being primarily in male recruitment, has left out female agricultural labour. The women have lesser number of days of employment and drain less than their male counterparts for the same tasks. In addition the capitalist thrust in agriculture has resulted in severe segmentation of agricultural work which in turn has led to reservation of the so-called 'inferior jobs' for women, lower payments and so much lower annual earning capacity. A growing

intrusion of females thrown from lower categories of cultivating households into the wage market, and calculated preference of employment shown to them on caste/community basis has had its own socioeconomic fall-out in terms of reinforcing caste, intra-gender and status/hierarchy differences. It has also had a more dramatic gender implication as distinct proletarianization of certain sections of females is visible in pockets of Haryana. And this, closely identified with the green revolution and its heightened prosperity.

The extensive work participation of females of both categories is then analysed to explore the reasons which have not allowed women to gain any status and recognition. It highlights the existing dominant cultural work ethics which appropriates women's work application without allowing them any economic or social worth. It is argued that this ideology of work ethics based, as it were, on high moral values and hard work has succeeded in making rural women accept and internalise the down-grading of their own contribution, and the imposing of their own subalternism.

3. The Role of Women in Petty Commodity Production and Commerce: A case study of Rural Women in Uganda *by Grace, K. Bantebya*

The last two decades have witnessed an enormous influx of rural women into petty commodity production and commerce in rural Uganda. Bantebya identifies economic hardship coupled with socio-cultural pressures as the prime cause of this trend. From survey data gathered among 300 rural women in Hoima district in Uganda (1991), she discusses the role played by Uganda rural women in petty commodity production and commerce. The study focuses on the factors accounting for the influx of rural women into the informal sector; the nature of products produced and type of merchandise dealt in and the constraints encountered by the women in their business activities.

The paper argues that rural women in Uganda are engaged in a multiplicity of income generating activities. It shows that despite the ease of entry into these activities, economic survival is not always guaranteed for the participants. More often than not this economic status deteriorate even further. The paper identifies many constraints as hampering rural women's efforts towards attaining economic self-sustainability namely: lack of formal education and training; lack of basic management skills; rampant abject poverty among rural women and detrimental socio-cultural ties. It is argued that these constraints affect rural women's income generating activities.

The paper concludes by offering guidelines intended for the formulation of policies aimed at alleviating these rural entrepreneurs' plight; and suggests ways in which the implementation of future programmes intended for the socio-economic benefit of rural women should be undertaken. The guidelines so suggested construct on measures to avail basic education training and credit to rural women with the broad objective of improving their work and, thus the profitability of their informal enterprises.

4. Women in the Rural Work Force of South Africa: Issues of Land, Labour, Capital and Struggle *by Marie Minnaar-MacDonald*

MacDonald's paper discusses the trends affecting rural women's lives under the impact of racial capitalism during the latter part of the 20th century in South Africa. It focuses on the penetration of capitalist relations in the economy, especially in the agricultural sector of the inner and outer peripheries of S.A. Focus is particularly given to the precarious conditions faced by black women in the white farming sector of the inner periphery. This is demonstrated by a dichotomy between white farmers (the landowners) on the one hand and increasing landless farm (wage/slave) labourers and subsistence producers/reproducers (reserve army of labour) on the other hand. The conditions of these women is then contrasted with that of their counterparts in the outer periphery (Bantustans).

The discussion centres around four issues: Who owns and occupies the land; Who constitutes the rural work force; who owns and controls capital; and the implications of all these for the black women in S.A. It is argued that apart from the disproportion between male/female demographic ratios and the skewed racial composition in the inner periphery, the most striking feature is the disproportion between ownership and occupation of land - 60,000 white farmers own 12 times as much land as 14,000 million rural poor; while those blacks who were affected by the 1913 Land Act and the process of land dispossession and who are found to be occupying land in South Africa's white inner periphery areas do so only as wage labourers. The Act did provide the statutory basis for territorial segregation by dividing S. Africa into areas where Blacks could own land (the reserves) and those where they were prohibited from purchase, hire or any other forms of acquisition of land with any other right thereto. So the condition of blacks to land is that of overcrowding and a degraded state of land without the ability to support the Black population.

Women's vulnerability within these conditions have increased drastically over the years as homesteads become less and less self-sufficient. Accordingly many women are today completely dependent on remittances sent by their husbands or sons or single female adults. This economic dependence deeply affects their self-worth; so that in S.A. there exists a triple oppression faced by black women in terms of class, race and gender which are exacerbated by familial ties: husbands, sons and traditional practices.

The paper concludes that with the current negotiations between ANC and the S.A. government, a key question that will have to be addressed is how land rights in the Bantustans can be restructured to redress gender and racial imbalances created by the apartheid system. The question of land; its ownership, allocation and utilization - stands at the heart of negotiating a post-Apartheid South Africa. In fact MacDonald points out that as negotiations continue, there are already rural struggles around land issues - struggles to reclaim and retain some of the dispossessed land. And is centred on two types of communities: "Black spots" or African freehold land, and labour tenants that have lived for generations on "white farms".

What stands out in MacDonald's analysis are broad trends within the process of capitalist penetration of the S.A. agricultural sector in relation to the consequences it had for the increased pauperization of the rural work force in general, and black women in particular.

Discussion

The question of the character of the state must be borne in mind since SAP implementing governments are usually undemocratic. Can the state during implementation of SAP also spearhead women organization?

The presentations on rural women in Uganda reproduce a state agenda, situating women and gender issues in the perspective of women in development.

Secondly, rural women are not a homogeneous unit. For instance, it is important to point out what sections/classes of women benefited from the loans scheme. Even the assumption that SAP has the same negative impact on the different sections of women is questioned. There have been various innovative responses from the various women categories.

In discussing rural petty commodity production it is important to take into account men engaged in the same production processes. Yet this should have been crucial in studying gender relations in there. Likewise the politics of control of productive resources on the farm between men and women is missed. A further dimension was added on the issue of women and gender studies. Some participants wondered if gender studies were not for the west for the moment and women studies for the third world. Because, it was argued, in the West women's basic rights were since resolved whereas in the third world entitlement to maternity leave for example is still seen as a privilege.

There is a victim-oriented approach in the papers - the tendency to view women as permanent subordinates or victims. The papers are a catalogue of injustices women suffer from, a list of weaknesses and negations on their part. Some of these are actually strengths. What are the enabling factors for example in peasant production? What are the resources and forms of control available to women that allow them to enter petty commodity production? This same methodology can even be applied to the traditional cultural values so as to identify those institutions which give women some form of social or economic leverage. In this way, weaknesses in the victim-oriented approach are turned into strengths. For example, if women for some reasons realize low yields (a weakness) these low yields could have meant a difference between death and survival (a strength).

There is also a need to develop a framework that looks at household levels and within the household and assess the different survival strategies adopted by the different classes and strata.

During the Green Revolution in India, there was a mindless introduction of a technology that did not take into account gender differences and traditional technology. Men have been freed from the traditional technology while women have been significantly dislocated by the new technology. Along with this differential impact of technology on both genders has been a categorization of types of work and different work

stages as “unskillful” and “non-skillful”. Men do the skillful jobs while women do the less skillful jobs. This categorization however has no correspondence with reality. It is an ideological form that disguises the material exploitation of women by men. The different work-stages described as “skillful” and done by men are paid more while the “less skillful” work done by women is paid less. Yet the Green Revolution lightened men's work but not women's work. The result was that women work hard while men do less work.

This is accompanied by legitimizing ideologies but the failure in the periodization of the paper blocks the contextualization of meaning of the different mythologies and folk-lore. And, while the main text shows efforts by women to alter the status quo, the conclusion reproduces the subordinated passive women. One major contribution of the papers is the awareness of the complexities of our societies. This is a critique of the assumed simplicities of African societies in Western and North American social analyses. But there was a tendency to repeat that India is a more complex situation implying that Africa is a more simpler social setting. This should be abandoned and instead a question be put where did this imagery of simple - complex come from?

Marie MacDonald's paper delimits the discussion to the capitalist phase. So she does not stop to consider how people gain access to land controlled by the tribal chiefs, and what they give back in turn. Women in these areas have started to organize a rural women's movement against the power of the chief in regulating access to land. The Transvaal Rural Action Committee is one such organization but they would have to be more widespread to have an impact.

It would be interesting to know given the level of monopolistic capital development in South African what kind of land strategies could be followed. It is also important to understand how peasants conceive of real independence or whether any parallels can be drawn from Zimbabwe. The debate on appropriate land policy in a post apartheid South Africa is not resolved yet even within the ANC Land Commission.

Session III: Plantation Labour

1. Change in work and household relations: The case of sugar cane plantation workers *by Marjorie Mbilinyi*

The thrust of Mbilinyi's paper is that women and men in Tanzania are having to create new kinds of marriage and extra-marital partnerships, in line with changed circumstances. It is argued in the paper that whereas the specific changes vary according to individuality, class and imperial relations, ethnicity, geographical, social location, certain commonalities seem to be emerging. First, women have become increasingly responsible for provision of cash requirements in the household, as male incomes have declined and the economic base of most rural households has deteriorated. Second, that the impact of women's increased participation in the market economy and wage labour market on gender relations at household level, is mixed, even within one class. In some households, husbands and wives share household responsibilities and have a clear idea of the division of responsibilities eg. in purchasing different essential household items. In

others, the husbands are accused of running away from their 'male' responsibilities, leaving wives alone to provide for household needs. In dealing with these issues, the paper adopts a historical perspective which is a critique of Tanzania's colonial history. It is an attempt at a real analysis of Tanzania's history and at putting in place the salient question in agriculture - the gender question.

Based on the recent experiences of research/education/organization executed in conjunction with the Organisation of Tanzania Trade Unions (Ottu) Mwema projects working with sugar cane plantation workers on the Kilomberu, Mtibwa and TPC in Morogoro, and Kilimanjaro regions of Tanzania, the paper also raises important methodological and epistemological issues.

The whole study is premised in the context of SAP - a "policy of recolonization", whose rationale is agricultural support programme now being directly sent to the three plantations. There is for example ILO support to Mwema. The paper argues that the significance of women in the wage labour force has largely been ignored in the analysis of wage labour. Mbilinyi's findings show that women were hired with children as casual labourers and therefore earn less. She emphasises that far from being merely (understood) as being absent - wife - husband or household relations, gender in fact must be understood to embrace state and imperial, ethnic/racial relations as well. That in Tanzania the state has historically been actively engaged in constructing gender relations through the various forms of legislation right from the colonial onset. The paper critiques this. The major issues on gender at the work place seem to be those raised by the field-working women eg. changing marriage patterns; women sustenance of households and sexual harassment by male supervisors.

In conclusion, the paper argues that within the context of SAP policy and the demands for democratization, the question of ownership and control of former state corporations has real implications for women's employment and provision of social services. The issue, it is argued, goes beyond the debate over "public" or "private" to include the form of privatisation to be adopted under SAP. In respect to the demands for increased democratization, the paper concludes that democratization policies have meant that workers may soon be able to organize themselves in a greater variety of trade unions. And the wider space for organizing in and out of government and other official channels could be used by women workers and others to help organize and mobilize women and men workers for gender transformation at the work place, and outside.

2. Women Wage Workers in Plantation Estates in Uganda *by Asowa Okwe*

Asowa's paper opens with a plea to social scientists studying society to integrate gender related issues in their studies. Particularly paying attention to the question of the position of women in society, their work and the general dynamics of gender in the colonial and neo-colonial periods. In Uganda, the paper argues, the available studies in women carry three sets of arguments: women are the chief agricultural producers; the politico-economic changes taking place in the country are affecting the women, in the

urban and rural areas; and lastly the socio-economic changes wrought by capital and state intervention in the economy is rendering sexual division of labour of residual significance.

The paper thus examines the nature and situation of women wage workers in Uganda's large-scale plantations of Toro/Kahuna Tea States in Kabarole District of Western Uganda and Kibimba Rice Scheme in Iganga District of Eastern Uganda. It describes the different labour activities women are involved in; forms of interaction between labour and capital and among the labourers themselves. The analysis shows that the combined effects of the interaction between capital, labour and the state is the shaping of the labour process, community life and class relations. Locating the women question in the analysis, the paper shows that both social and historical forces have been instrumental in propelling women out of subsistence and petty commodity production into wage labour in the plantations studied. The paper provides an explanation of how women cope with the problems inherent in combining domestic responsibilities with wage labour; and the implications of this for the future of labour in Uganda.

The paper also points out that in spite of the diminishing role of sex in determining who does what task in the plantations, there still remain basic problems which women face. These range from sexual harassment to the failure by the owners of capital to provide protective devices against health hazards. There is a relatively larger recruitment of the female labour force even into tasks which were previously a male domain. There too, they are still paid less than their male counterparts. This underlines the basic process, of capitalist exploitation of gender relations. As the economic conditions become harsher under SAP, women will continue to get more involved in plantation wage labour. The findings show that it is the poor peasantry who are mainly in the wage labour employment and a high proportion of them are women heads of households.

Women participation in the Labour Movement has been minimal. And this according to the paper is attributable to women's low education; inadequate time for participation and sanctions placed on women by husbands.

In conclusion, the study says that although male workers are still numerically dominant in Uganda, the number of women wage workers is on a rapid increase; and that the rate of payment and task allocation no longer regards sex as the principal parameter as both male and female labour now perform basically similar tasks. Domestic and wage tasks continue to overstretch women whose participation in labour movement is consequently constrained by the degree and intensity of work they are compelled to perform at home and place of work. This is coupled with the reluctance of men to let them get involved in such activities.

For that matter women therefore, become victims of patriarchy and capital exploitation.

Discussion

Trade unions were said to be economic and male dominated. Historically they were formed by workers to combat job insecurity and to determine who was to be hired and under what conditions could such labour be fired. As such trade unions became

organizations defending only part of the labour force. Cases regarding sexual harassment, for example, became residual to trade union organization. Hence the need to organize women on a different cultural basis to demand for equal treatment with men in the labour force.

There was an intensive discussion on the question of women and casual labour. Do women receive a lower wage than men even when they are employed as permanent workers or simply as casual labourers? Casual labour is said to be cheaper on the general in which case there are no gender relations involved. State policy to employ women as casual labourers tends further to circumvent gender relations at that level. A question then arises - what is casual labour in gender terms? It was noted that the category casual labour is gendered. It is not a transparent technical category. It is not correct to say that casual labour as such is different from other categories of employees as far as exploitation is concerned. This divides the labour movement. What makes sense is to go down to categories being isolated and divided and study their character. The key issue is to explore the circumstances internal to the category that makes it an object of exploitation. Casual labour faces a double exploitation because in its composition it is largely female.

Lastly methodological approaches to research raised a number of interesting problems. How can research become a knowledge/educational process involving different levels of employees? Who can do research, for whom? Who is the interviewer, who is the interviewee? Implicit among these questions as far as gender studies are concerned is that women are in a privileged position to understand the conditions of their oppression and exploitation and hence by extension the possibilities of the conditions for emancipation. This can be formulated as a problem of difference, identity and transformation. Does one have to be a woman to understand the oppression of women? This question is precipitated by the consideration that a broad feminist movement must draw in support of sympathizers to that cause, men inclusive. Or else, the tendency is to divide or fragment the movement. In other words, difference does not preclude unity, it does not preclude the formation of alliances. The alternative concern from female activists and researchers was a question of position and personal location. That is to say that "male feminists" must realise that they are on the advantaged side of the equation.

Session IV : Industrial Labour

1. Industrial Wage Labour and Gender: Some Notes on Theory and Methodology *by Inga Brandell*

Just like gender studies, the revitalization of labour studies was not only discovering or rediscovering a new empirical field, but also questioning general social science and methodology. But unlike gender studies which are making their way into fields for which the gender concept or approach was unknown, labour as a concept is at the very heart of and contemporaneous with the development of social sciences.

However, the classical vision, built on the experience of proletarianization and industrialization in the European and North American contexts, has been challenged in the last decades by new knowledge about the origins of capitalist industry in the west as well as by research findings from other parts of the world, where wage work industry have been introduced under different circumstances than those prevailing in the first case. The process of proletarianization resulting in the creation of a free and mobile wage - earning labour force implying a different rationality of economics, followed by the independent organization of labour in the twin organization of trade unions and workers' parties, with subsequent profound changes in political and social systems, did not unfold systematically in the third world.

Neither was attained a level of generalization of the wage labour as such where for example as much as 50% of the labour force in the west was at one point employed in industry. This suggests that the industrial working class in the third world will not have such a unifying and dominant role in the whole movement as was the case in early industrialization. Likewise, the pattern of trade unionism has also been questioned with regard to its economic as well as political effects especially with regard to the anti-colonial movements and the post independent era.

Positions in the studies on labour have been divergent but the implicit conclusions concerning the classical formulations of social science were the same: under the international and national circumstances accompanying the introduction of capitalist production in developing countries, the central elements of social science theory on labour were not of any immediate and direct use.

Even from within industrialized nations, classical theories fail in their attempt to homogenize the category of labour and the labour market. Women, children, ethnic minorities and immigrants continue to experience different working conditions. The last decade's important contribution to the labour history in industrialized as well as third world countries, and the debate over the impact of current industrialization have opened up possibilities for a new perspective. It is a perspective which often has its point of anchorage in the concrete labour process and the relations at the work place. It also seeks a broad understanding of the relation between the labour process and the work place on the one hand, and the wider organizational, cultural, political and economic setting of society on the other hand. The perspective permits rich empirical studies which also raise important methodological and theoretical issues.

The paper highlights hereafter the political significance political of the broader movements other than simply the labour movement in the process of change. Some proponents of the new international labour studies point in the same direction by broadening the concept of labour into that of the labouring poor and by stressing the importance of domination in terms of ethnicity and gender as distinct from the classical marxist concept of exploitation. Hence a departure from some brand of marxism which every where and despite everything is waiting for a class conscious proletariat to finally arrive at the centre of the scene and fulfill its historical mission.

At a methodological level we have to live with the fact that the divisions in society are multiform, cumulative, but that no general truth is to be established on the basis of

one of them whether gender, capitalist - proletarian, young - old, etc being more "basic" than the other. Furthermore, although these divisions are general, their combination can differ profoundly. This implies the need for contextualization and the breaking up of those divisions into constitutive processes.

At the theoretical level, a theory of patriarchy, or a theory of proletarianization will necessarily lead to a reductionist analysis and ad hoc explanations if we are not careful to integrate them and their probably infinite outcomes. The empirical field of women in industrial work has the potential for this fruitful and open - ended investigation.

2. Gender and Labour Process: An Analysis of Gender Dynamics in United Garments Industry Limited (UGIL) by Ahikire Josephine

The objective of the paper was to establish the significance of gender in the labour process, particularly how it influenced work organization, struggle and control. In order to achieve this objective, a case study of United Garments Industry Ltd (UGIL), an import substitution factory for making garments was undertaken.

It was noted that the factory employs a large female labour force constituting 85% of the total labour force. Two reasons were advanced to explain why this was so. First of all, there exists a cultural belief that tailoring is a women's job. It was argued, however, that the most significant reason for this is that the work involved requires one to sit in one place for at least four hours which men cannot stand. Despite a large female force, supervision is dominated by men

The paper dismissed the argument that wages are low because tailoring is a women's work. It was noted that there is no gender discrimination of pay. Wages are haphazardly determined without a clear relationship between, sex, education or experience. This ambiguity in the pay system was attributed to the influence of non-market determinants such as gender, nationality and age. It was noted that this ambiguity of payment divides the workers and breeds a set of alliances where workers cannot have collective identity.

The paper noted that due to unemployment in Uganda, women as new entrants in the labour market sometimes take employment as a privilege. This is often exploited by management to attach stringent rules on the job. Terms such as loitering, absenteeism, late coming are used adamantly against the workers.

It was noted that due to the gender specific inclination, work organization at UGIL had something specific. Supervisors exploit the probation period to force women into sex. Hence, the probationary period was not a way of testing one's capability of doing work, rather, it was time to please the supervisor. On the other hand, some women in UGIL actually "sell out" in order to influence certain decisions for specific privileges.

The implications embedded in the sexual harassment as noted above is that women are vulnerable to the whims of the supervisors or the employers in the work process due to their gender. Sex abuse is a routine way of dealing with women workers. It is an integral part of the supervisor - subordinate relations. In turn, it consolidates the gender specific ideologies which require women to be feminine, calm and passive in face of their

husbands or sexual partners. Such a relationship has a bearing on the course of strikes as some of the culprits identify themselves with the supervisors and hence can act as scabs in the event of a strike.

The trade unionists who are supposed to defend the women against sex abuse, have instead taken advantage of this position to force women into sex. The Trade Unionists have, hence, aggravated sexual harassment. Faced with sexual harassment from two forces, women workers often opt for the supervisor who has more powers and more economic rewards than the Trade Unionist.

In addition to sexual harassment, there are other harsh actions by management such as beating. Women in addition have been subjected to humiliations during checking in which they are ordered to undress. Given the possibility that some women could make a garment as a pad pretending to be in menstruation period, the exercise of ensuring that it is a genuine pad is very embarrassing to women. Management was also harsh to women workers who had young children, where late coming and absenteeism was most common.

Such actions as mentioned above have been met with daily actions and struggles, including strike action, by the oppressed women in particular, and workers in general. Because of their active participation in strikes and other forms of struggles, some women have earned themselves the name of "Nalukalala", an expression for extreme bitterness. Trade Union leadership, on the other hand, does not ignore women's demands, because they are the majority. Ignoring the demands of women means losing support from the majority of the work force. Apart from being a majority, women have always confronted the union leadership such that they are compelled to act.

As a result of the above struggles, certain successes have been achieved. Allowances, such as housing and annual leave, are given irrespective of gender and not as management had formerly wanted, by discriminating against women on grounds that they were married, therefore, cared for. Maternity leave has also been successfully pushed from the original 14 days to the present 60, 45 paid and 15 unpaid. Management has always argued against absenteeism due to sick children on the account that they should be left in the care of relatives. Workers have, however, resisted this. With such success, the paper dismisses the argument that women's interests are trampled upon because they are not in the leadership of Trade unions.

In conclusion, the paper notes that a struggle against gender oppression should not be viewed to be so distinct from the struggle for the rights of labour. Gender oppression at the place of work is part of the subjugation of workers who are women. The fact that they are women can be exploited even by women employers. In light of the achievements by women within the Trade union, women should strive to strengthen the union, heighten their activity to include and push those demands that concern them as women workers. Women workers should, therefore, view gender as an additional arena of struggle and not as a point of division. On the question of leadership, the paper observes that leadership positions for some few women has not had a major impact on the women's lot. The issue as to whether the question of leadership is irrelevant as far as gender was concerned remained unresolved.

3. Trade Unions, the Democratic Process and the Challenge of Gender in Nigeria by *Hussaina Abdullah*

The paper discusses the gender question in two separate but interrelated contexts in Nigeria - the labour unions and the democratic process. With regard to the first context, the paper examines whether Nigerian Trade Union demands have been gender - neutral or specific in content. For this purpose, trade union demands from 1945, when the first national strike in Nigeria was embarked upon, to 1988 when the most recent national strike action was undertaken are discussed.

The gender-specific demands are identified as needs pertaining to the provision of clean facilities at the work place, the provision of health care for the spouses, taxation relief for those with spouses in the informal sector, maternity leave, pre and post-natal leave and rights to work breaks for breast-feeding.

The above gender issues affecting female workers have not featured in the demands tabled by the labour movement, first because all key positions in the Trade Unions, including Trade Unions such as Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) National Union of Banks Insurance and Financial Institution of Employees (NUBIFIE), Textile and Garment Workers Union, with sizeable female membership are held by the men. Secondly, there is no women department and NLC secretariat, while the women wing of NLC has been dormant since its inauguration. Thirdly, questions of cross contradictions have overshadowed gender questions in the hierarchy of union priorities and *raison d'etre*. In general, however, women workers and unionists are not very active in union activities, partly due to cultural factors, and partly due to individualised approach adopted by women in their bid to solve gender problems.

Owing to the above-mentioned factors, the six strike actions in Nigeria between 1945 and 1988 centred around the general interests of workers (male and female) without a gender-specific demand.

The second part of the paper deals with gender issues in the democratic process. The paper notes that the mobilisation of women in the democratisation process was initiated by the state. Although government has yet to formulate a national policy on women, it established Better Life Programme (BLP) and the National Commission for Women (NCW) in addition to support given to Non-governmental organisations such as NCWS and NAVW. The government has also created women and development departments in the state Ministries of Culture and Social Welfare to enhance the integration of women in the development process. In addition, women were appointed to top administrative and political posts.

The objectives of BLP, NCW, NCWS and NAVW include among others, the integration of women as participants and beneficiaries in the development process, promote healthy and responsible motherhood; enhance women's civic, political and social-economic education: eliminate socio-cultural practices which de-humanise and discriminate against women.

In order to achieve the above objectives, BLP, NCW, NAVW, and NICWS embarked on a number of activities ranging from income generating projects for rural women such as factories, cottage industries, fish and livestock farms, and cooperations by BLP to adult-literacy, vocational education, political enlightenment campaigns and health programmes for women.

Despite the above-mentioned efforts, by governmental and non-governmental women organisations, they have not addressed issues of gender subordination in the Nigerian society, such as the sexual division of labour which is very important in the feminist discourse. This has been due to several factors. First, it is not possible for a regime which is implementing the Structural Adjustment Programme to mobilise or politicise women for genuine liberation and development. Secondly, military regimes, it is argued, are by their nature repressive and undemocratic. Thirdly, both NCW and BLP and their non-governmental counterparts see the continued oppression of women in Nigeria as merely being a result of lack of equal opportunities between men and women, the continued existence of discriminating law against women, and so on. Lastly the organisations are made up of upper and middle class women, whose concerns are with the position of services rather than changing the consciousness of women. Above all, BLP, the NCW the NCWs, and NAVW have assumed new roles of mobilising women in support of the transition programmes of the military government and SAP. At times, they have come out openly to espouse anti-feminist positions that they do not want to antagonise men or claim equal rights.

In light of the above limitations, in order to effect genuine liberation of women (and men) in Nigeria, the following must be done. As far as the democratic process is concerned, women should demand for the democratisation of political parties. They should not only be mobilised for elections and discarded after voting. The women's wing of the parties should not be used for party propaganda, entertainment, or the extension of male ideology and gender neutral development programmes.

On the other hand, the labour movement, or NLC in particular, should challenge the many barriers of gender subordination, both ideologically and in terms of the maternal oppression under which they labour, while not minimising the importance of class solidarity as an organising principle, and the significance of class in effecting both female and male oppression.

In order for the gender issues to constitute part of both the Trade Union movement and the democratization process, there is need for a women's organisation, autonomous of the state, which will re-situate women's subordination as an issue about gender and class oppression in society.

Discussion

The paper on Trade Unions in Nigeria raised a number of contradictory positions. There is in the first instance, the controversial issue of whether military regimes are by definition un-democratic and hence by extension whether civilian regimes are, ipso facto, democratic. The criterion used to characterize the democratic process as electioneering

falls short of the whole idea of democracy. For, absence of elections per se in military governments would essentially make them undemocratic.

We start with a critique of the military regime as undemocratic. This is followed by a critique of the state initiative in organizing the women's movement. Yet in conclusion there is an appeal to the same state to do certain things for the women's movement. The issue at stake then, is a critique of the state that remains statist.

On theory and methodology, the debate swang basically between two positions. On the one hand there was the social movements oriented approach and on the other the traditional position on classical historical materialism. The major problem in the global, structural and holistic theory of which historical materialism is a prototype is their theorization of society as a totalization. History closes in for example in communism or modern society. At the same times these developments proceed, it would seem, from dialectical necessity rather than active human intervention. For this such holistic theories are accused of an evasion from politics and a reassertion of the economic structure.

The social movements approach on the other hand proceeds from the plurality of identities. These identities are also seen as being socially constructed in particular historical situations. Therefore unlike in the previous formulation where there is a central historical project such as the working class or the modernizing bourgeoisie, in the social movements conception there are multiple projects and probable infinite combinations and outcomes. The major flaw in this perspective of openness is inability to give a sense of direction to guide praxis whereby society is presented as boiling of social movements. Otherwise the point was reaffirmed of the plurality of identities and consequent multiple projects, even within the working class or labour movement.

Session V: Urban Labour

1. Increasing participation of Swazi women in the formal sector Employment: Historical Trends *by Winnie Sibongile Madonsela*

This paper sought to provide insight into the pace at which the participation of women in the formal wage employment has been increasing in the post-independence period in Swaziland.

Women constitute a slight majority (52.8%) of the Swazi population according to the 1986 census. Apart from bringing up children and looking after the general welfare of the household, Swazi women play an important role in the economic life of the country. Their contribution is significant mainly in the field of agriculture, manufacturing, health and education. While in 1970 only 17% of the formal wage earners were women, by the end of the decade in 1980, the participation of women had significantly increased, accounting for 25% of formal wage earners.

The majority of women in the private sector are unskilled workers and as a result, their earnings are very low. Even though in the public sector females have tended to dominate the professional field the earnings of women are, on average much lower than those of men due to the fact that they are mainly involved in less rewarding jobs. It is

important therefore for government to ensure that women are given equal chances of climbing up the professional ladder.

Agriculture throughout the post-independence period has remained an important source of employment for the female labour force. Unfortunately the women employed in the agro-based industries are unskilled and as such prone to a high level of exploitation. In most cases, the workers are aware of their exploitation but, since most of them do not have any kind of formal education, they do not have much bargaining position and as such have little alternative but to continue offering their labour power at whatever price their employer offers.

The informal sector has not had much success in improving the position of women. Women find it difficult to get loans under the present credit system. The commercial banks basically grant credit to people who have something to offer as collateral. Since it is rare for women to own cattle and since they cannot own land, which they can use as collateral, they cannot be catered for under the present credit system. To improve the productivity of women in the informal sector, government could among other things, create a special credit scheme for women that would not require collateral and have softer repayment terms. If government would be successful in improving women's informal sector services, there is no doubt that increased productivity would contribute positively towards rural development.

Swaziland presents a relatively good prospect for rapid development in the future. But this can only be realised if, and only if, women issues are made an integral part of the global policies for development because women constitute the greater part of the Swazi population. Also, the government has to realise that women constitute a valuable human resource group and as such national development goals cannot be achieved without the effective participation of women. If women continue to receive peripheral attention in both formal and informal sector activities, then the government's goals of ever being able to achieve self-sufficiency be it in food production or in industry, will remain elusive.

2. The plight of urban women in the informal sector in Dar es Salaam

by Nestor Luanda

The objective of the paper is to discuss the plight of urban women in the informal sector. The paper argues that the worsening economic situation during the 1980's was largely responsible for forcing urban women into the informal sector.

The worsening economic situation in Tanzania in the 1980 was characterized by mass poverty, food shortages, low productivity, weak productive base and immiseration of the working peoples in urban areas. The women who form a subset in the urban working peoples were the worst affected. The impact of the economic crisis on health, education, nutrition and employment - the key areas in which women play an important role become devastating. Under such conditions, women actively participate in the informal sector activities to augment the necessary requirements of urban households. A very big percentage of the people involved are youthful women. These women engage in

local brewing, tie and dye, second hand clothes (mitumba), making and selling cookies and food, kiosks, hair saloons and gardening.

Female members in the informal sector engaging in poultry keeping, and hair saloons, usually come from well-to-do families, a sign of internal differentiation within the informal sector. What is common to all women in informal sector despite the internal differentiation is that very few of them have access to credit facilities. Most of them got their initial capital from salary savings, inheritance and from husbands. However, this was typical of Manzese, a low income area. In Makongo, relatively, well to do residential area, some women had access to bank loans. The major constraint to women access to credit are lack of property and illiteracy,

Despite their involvement in the informal sector, this cannot be conceptualized as one step further along the path of liberation. Women in the informal sector manifest the extension of the commoditization process. As long as Tanzania continues to operate within the globally dominated imperialist system, women, and men will continue to suffer under the yoke of capitalist exploitation. In such a situation, women are worse off because certain institutions of pre-capitalist African customary law reinforce female exploitation and subjugation filtered under the dominating relations of capitalism.

Discussion

The discussion which followed revolved around three issues. First whether a change from unpaid to paid labour constitutes a step towards liberation. That is, whether the informal sector can be constituted as a liberating force for women or whether it exposes women to and deepens capitalist exploitation of women.

Secondly it was observed that women in the informal sector should convert economic gains from the informal sector into political power.

The third issue was on gender stratification in the informal sector. It was observed that gender has a class dimension and class too has a gender dimension. Relating this to the informal sector, it was observed that whereas some women in the informal sector sell their own products, others are labourers selling for people who may be in the formal sector. Because of this it was noted that it is important to revisit the relationship between the informal sector and the formal sector. Above all, there is a high degree of specialization in the informal sector based on gender. Women tend to specialise in saloons, food vending and local drinks while men in the informal sector specialise in commercial mechandize.

In response to the first question, it was generally accepted that though capitalist exploitative relations exist in the informal sector, nevertheless it was observed that transition from unpaid labour to paid labour is progressive.

Session VI: Ideology and Representation

1. **Women and Work in Uruguay: Historical Trends and Changing Gender Ideologies** *by Silvia Rodriguez Villamil*

The paper offers a general view on women and work during the different periods of Uruguay history so as to define the basic characteristics of their participation in the labour market. At the same time it analyzes the most striking features of dominant gender ideologies in order to establish the relations and correspondences that exist between this ideological dimension and the reality of women's work. It is in this context that changes and continuities concerning women's work and experiences and their social representation is evaluated.

Some theoretical propositions have been put forward about the link between women participation and economic development. In this context some authors suggest a direct relation between feminine participation and economic expansion. To some this process is linear to others curvilinear. These models spring from the centre. And in addition, they do not question coherently the general social and economic model which produces and reproduces discriminatory mechanisms against women.

None of these hypotheses can convincingly be applied to Uruguay although it is possible to observe a permanent but not uniform increase of women's participation. At another analytical level emphasis is laid on the short term quantitative and qualitative variations of the feminine working population, in relation with economic and social dynamics. From a Marxist point of view it has been affirmed that women constitute a "reserve army" of the labour force, ready to be hired or fired according to the needs of the system and the cyclical fluctuations of the economy.

The paper periodizes the evolution of both women's work and the corresponding gender ideologies. In the pre-modern stage there was a relative feminine autonomy. Under circumstances characterized by an extremely low population density and a nomadic lifestyle of men, there is evidence enough to suppose that very often women were the heads of their families, living temporarily together with different men, with whom they would have a number of children and who would finally leave them. The high male mortality rate during the struggle for independence and the following civil wars contributed to this long absence of men.

This must not be misunderstood as the absence of a system of markedly masculine values. However, for the period it seems important to hint at the existence of these margins or remainders of autonomy that permitted the participation of some sectors of women in the areas of work and social life.

Women's participation in paid employment increased with the beginning of modernization. Different testimonies confirm however that the level of women's wages lay continuously below that of men, even for equal work. Furthermore, offices considered "feminine" were the worst paid, and at times wages were 50% below those conceded to men. Another general remark, that can be made about this period, nearly all working women were working class and lower classes in general. The very low degree of women's

participation in more qualified jobs is evidence for the very limited activity of middle class women. It is only during the first decades of the 20th century that a middle class as such started to constitute itself.

In the wake of modernization serious debates flourished on the question of women and work. Within a framework of subordination and oppression of women, there was an influx of ideological conceptions and social practices marked by a patriarchal vision which stipulated the marriage career and maternity, both within the domestic sphere, as the natural field of fulfillment of the female sex. As women are supposedly the weakest part of society, some argued, outdoor work would offer them an option to illicit relations that would mark the first step on their way towards prostitution. Nature and God, urged the catholics, impose the maternal mission and domestic work as exclusive tasks for women. In the case of combined schools and workshops for girls from poor families, their education should be adequate to the social position of these homes and avoid the transmission of knowledge considered "superfluous".

Even liberals who were of the view that women should receive an education to suit various offices added that they should also receive moral support as they might be exposed to indecent behaviour. Only the internationalists at least at a discourse level proposed the establishment of an egalitarian society between men and women. Otherwise elsewhere three dominant models; mothers, workers or prostitutes represent the different social functions or possibilities in life assigned to women of the lower classes.

There have occurred some qualitative and quantitative changes in the nature of women's work in the mid 20th century. But for the first three decades a conservative and subsequently traditional and uncompromising way of thinking with respect to women dominated. It basically insisted on the triad of the family, home and maternity. For this reason a number of initiatives with respect to women led to an absolute rejection of the conservative position - a position constituted by the father's authority (Paternalism), women's submission to some kind of natural determinism.

As a departure from the dominant discourse was philosopher Vaz Feniera whose ideas still constitute part of the paradigm on gender perspectives in the Uruguayan society today. The ideal could not rest in equalizing the condition of women and men but in the correction or compensation of inequality - a "feminism of compensation". Women should work outside the home as long as this requires part-time dedication given that they have to carry out a series of "untransferable jobs" in the home qualified as physiological. Hence a modernized version of a patriarchal ideology which emphasizes domesticity while presenting itself as a sort of feminism.

The more radical political sectors, such as anarchism and socialism - at least at the level of discourse - advanced different concepts which were linked to the transformation of society as a whole, and the dominant model of the family as well. Although they had less incidence, they influenced some sections of the working class and the intellectuals. They generally perceived the double subordination (of class and gender) suffered by working women.

Within the dominant gender ideologies and the feminine symbolic universe, certain changes are taking place that are yet to be studied in depth. These changes have come

about as a result of a long historical process, under the influence of a number of factors. In this aspect the importance of women's increasing participation in the labour market and the resulting broadening of their knowledge and perception of the world cannot be overestimated. So also must be emphasized ideological influences such as the appearance of a feminist discourse at a time appropriate to its assimilation by women who had been able to gain the necessary practical experiences.

2. **Women's Work: Parameters of Representation and Action** *by Renee Pittin*

The paper considers the meaning and perceptions of women's work in relation to dominant and subordinate discourses. The work which women do, and the work which they are seen to do, figuratively and literally, is selectively recognized, relating to and reflecting particular interests within the household, community and state at a given point in time. Thus, the very recognition and valuation of work are historically constructed and differ also even within a given synchronic social context depending on considerations such as gender, ethnicity and class.

At the same time, the continued work of women as mothers and wives maternal/uxorial daily labour, obligation and responsibility - is not only reduced but is in fact in part celebrated and reified through structures which forefront women as wives, and which emphasize in particular power obtained through conjugal ties.

Women's work may be differently represented even when the form and nature of that work has not changed; and that, conversely, even when the work has indeed changed, the context has changed and the needs and requirements of the woman have changed profoundly, the representation of her work may not have been modified, or may be refocussed in order to reify a particular discourse. In the contemporary context also, one finds this re-representation of work as demonstrated from the research findings on Muslim Hausa women in the Katsina State in Nigeria. The ideology of work, and the expressions of strands of gender ideology, in relation to different requirements and interests of the state, the community, and the household, which are themselves also internally differentiated. In this connection also there is need to establish the importance of women's multiple identities as far as women's interests are concerned. A distinction is made between women and hence also the need to deconstruct the category of "women". That is to say, women involved and engaged in multiple but different kinds of work, women of different economic resources, with different sectarian interests, etc, are a heterogeneous group. While women are categorized analytically in relation to forms of income-earning labour in which they are engaged, it is noted that within as well as between these categories, the women are perceived and act in relation to multiple identities and interests.

Multiple discourses, concurrently and often in contradiction to each other espoused by the state provide some space for women, but within a framework which suggests also pitfalls and loss of options. Ostensibly secular and bound by the constitution in relation to gender discrimination, the state presents a variety of images and agendas, demonstrating very different sides at and within, for example federal and state government levels. In

relation to the state, even where the improvement of women's situation is the organizing basis for action, there are contradictions which reflect dominances both between the voicing of the discourse and the identity of those who speak; and between the ostensible meaning of the discourse and its implicit intent.

The continuation of SAP and the current severe economic crisis, increasing reference to and expansion of more fundamentalist religious ideologies, and the particular programmes and controls exercised by the present regime are linked, both with each other and with the broader international conditions and trends which affect and are imbricated in the Nigerian context. Within this context, women act - in relation to economic crisis, political proscriptions, prohibitions, pronouncements and promises, and changing obligations and opportunities.

Although women are not usually organized around work oriented issues, they take various positions as actors within and against society. In this context, women will forefront particular identities as wives, as workers, as mothers etc. or a combination of those for particular ends. They work within a situation of constraint, bargaining with patriarchy in a context of changing conditions to support their interests.

3. Gender Ideology, Material Production & Popular Culture: Orature and Gender Spatial Struggles *by Okello Ogwang*

The paper argues that popular cultural forms are arenas for gender material and ideological contestations. It asserts that Orature as a form of popular culture does not present the exception. Yet considering Orature's multiple facets e.g. social, aesthetic etc., the forms of cognition, representation and stereotyping social relation, there is need to differentiate the facets, and to relate them to the material contexts and situations.

It is argued that gender relations and ideologies as are represented in Orature have a material basis. It is also further argued that even then its aesthetic dynamics may render its relation to the material and social instances indirect, ironic and subtle. It is even possible that aesthetic factors may in given moments overshadow the social and especially gender issues so raised.

As a result of these considerations, it is suggested that it is insufficient to gather data on gender stereotypes without taking into account the specific material and social imperatives that shape the gender relations and ideologies. Material and social considerations apart, the aesthetic dimension of Orature may make the latter irreducible to basic material instances, hence the call for a methodological focus that does justice to these complex interlocks.

Using the case of a village in Apach in Northern Uganda, the paper observes how in the formulaic forms (e.g. proverbs, proverbial sayings, riddles) the general gender stereotyping cast women; in contrast to the men, despite the material and social realities prevalent. Explanations for this are found in the patrilineal ideologies and structures that have persisted over time and continue restructure the cognitive perception of the society in question. The other reason seems to lie in the relatively stable forms of aesthetic character of proverbs and proverbial sayings.

In the song-forms the flexibility in the gender stereotyping seems both relatively absent and present at the same time. Absent, because of the relative persistence of song forms and their being ideologically and structurally shaped by their milieu. Present, because as one sector represents and seeks to restructure the perception of society or part of it, the underprivileged or malpresented gender category also struggle, directly or ironically, to challenge and restructure the cognition of social, and in this case gender perception.

The point to note is that gender relations and material processes do always have a direct relationship. Equally true, the reception of the class and gender category, in relation to material and social processes is not passively done, and tends to “rewrite” the ideological cognition, and the material factors that the ideologies contest.

Gender ideologies in Oratures may have a material basis. It is often difficult to draw a clear distinction between the material component and the Aesthetic character of Orature. But over and above anything else the aesthetic character, entertainment, may in given moments override the gender relation, struggles and ideologies.

The malrepresentation of a gender category versus another must also be given a class dimension. Furthermore, the very malrepresentation may not mean that its reception is wholesale. Sometimes the reverse is even true, considering how in Orature, “praise-denunciation” is a technique which gender and class category can challenge and irrationalise the others' perception. These calls for a methodological focus that takes into account these complexities, so as to avoid mistaking a stuffed lion for the real one.

4. Notes on Gender and Modernization: Examples from Mozambique *by Signe Arnfred*

The paper is about women and gender relations in Mozambique. It argues that seen from the vantage point of women, whether it is socialist or capitalist development that is pursued makes no great difference; the fairly regular pattern of relative loss of status for women still holds true.

A distinctive feature of women's sexuality in Mozambique is female initiation. However what in different parts people referred to as female initiation rites were not, or were longer, the same thing. And, presumably because of this, a marked and systematic difference from North to South exists in the attitudes of women and men to female initiation rites. These differences are arguably the result of the differential impact of modernization.

In the proper course of events the women's initiation rites would be preceded by small girls learning how to manipulate their small vaginal lips in order to pull them longer. They were also taught stylized sexual movements to please the man. As said above the actual practices varied between the three different regions, the North, Central and South. In the North it was a socialized experience of female sexual self-determination. It was an actual passing out into womanhood in a manner comparable to the rituals accompanying the passing out of age-sets where such systems exist. The culmination of the female initiation rites would be a ritual defloration, just to make sure

that the girl was well-experienced sexually. And certainly, she should not pass through the maturity rituals and remain a virgin. For the adult women initiation rites had a double function. They were initiation for their daughters into womanhood. At the same time this was a time when women had fun and games among themselves. These women who in the presence of men always behave with delicacy were determined to compensate and temporarily shake themselves free from all the burdens society had laid upon them.

The contradictory part of the story is that the same women were very stern with young ones and beat into them self-control and submissiveness to men.

In the Central region this collective socialized experience was missing. It was an individualized preparation to please the men. It was the same exercise of pulling vaginal lips and some individualized teachings on sexual movements during intercourse. There was no sense of community celebrations of the North. The driving force seems to be a fear that the men would not be pleased with them and would thus stay unmarried.

Moving further South there is very little remaining of anything that might be called initiation rites. There is no sexual preparation at all, female a - sexuality being the modern ideal.

The initiation rites reinforce female gender identity and sexual self determination but in context that in itself confirms a traditional gender relationship with strictly limited gender spheres, and with clear, pronounced hierarchy structures. These are not necessarily gender hierarchies: men over women, but certainly age hierarchies; older men over young men and women, and older women over young ones. The rites cultivate female sexual and gender identity, but at the same time they are restrictive and authoritarian, preparing women to a very confined and prescribed social role.

There is a matrilineal system in the North while a patrilineal one obtains in the centre and the South. This suggests there is a relation between matriliney and strong traditions of female initiation rites, and patriliney and fading female initiation rites. Yet the relation is not direct nor simple. 50-60 years back there were strong female initiation rites even in the patrilineal South. The different kinship systems seem to have reacted differently to external modernizing influences, affecting economic as well as ideological structures.

The paper thereafter assess the various processes of economic and social modernization - as they have occurred on Mozambique from the vantage point of women. The main conclusion is that the greater the impact of modernization, the less life there is for women, with women's sexual self-determination taken as a cardinal point.

Discussion

The discussion which followed revolved around four issues, which included a critique of "natural family" and tradition; social construction of women identities; a discourse on the popular sector, private and public space and a critique of the state as a monolithic entity and its policies.

The following questions were raised in relations to the above issues. First, what is the discourse about men? Secondly, what is the feminist discourse about tradition?

Thirdly what interests and identities do women carry and what practices are generated of these identities? Lastly, how do the institutions of both the family and marriage affect gender specific oppression, exploitation and other regulatory roles.

In response to the above questions, it was concluded that women identities are multiple and change over time, and are socially generated. It was concluded that there should be a shift from an analysis of the economy to an analysis of politics especially the question of power with regard to women. There should be a shift from the analysis of exploitation to the analysis of oppression. The analysis of society in terms of power relations embodies the idea of struggle. This struggle can be construed within the context of a popular sector, which is an inclusive category which embodies workers, peasants and women. It was also concluded that tradition, if used selectively can be useful as a mobilizing force by both men and women in the defence of their positions.

Session VII: Women and Struggles

1. "We fight for life": women's struggle in Cape Town during the transition from segregation to Apartheid by Yvonne Muthein

The paper examines the daily struggles of black class working women in Cape Town between 1939 and 1965 by exploring:

- (i) the social conditions which shaped particular forms of resistance during the period;
- (ii) various forms of resistance and struggles which emerged during that time; and
- (iii) the interplay between these women's struggles and mainstream liberation struggles in the transition from segregation to apartheid.

In examining women's resistance during the transition from segregation to apartheid, the following observations were made.

On the whole, resistance took the form of a creative evasion of punitive measures, such as the pass laws, by women, as well as peaceful mass protest which included marches, rallies, petitions and demonstrations of a non-racial character.

The different material conditions prevailing between 1939 and 1965 produced different forms of resistance. In the 1940s due to declining living standards, women were solidified around bread and butter issues. As the apartheid state launched its major state offensive against blacks in the 1950s, the grassroots struggles of the 1940s made way for the mass national campaigns of the 1950s and local issues were overshadowed by campaigns which struck directly at the South Africa state. However, the result of diverting political energies away from grassroots struggles to mass national campaigns in the 1950s was to demobilise many women who were centrally involved in fighting daily local issues that impinged on their lives. The racial selectivity and differential impact of the apartheid laws made it difficult to mobilize people across racial boundaries. Hence the non-racial nature of the women's marches in Cape Town, on issues which largely affected

African women, was remarkable in itself. This was facilitated by the multiracial structure of the congress Alliance of the ANC, the congress of Democrats, the coloured people's congress and the Indian congress.

The Langa and Sharpeville massacres of 1960 turned the ANC towards armed struggle. Conditions necessitated a smaller, tightly -knit vanguard structure for Umkhoto we Sizwe, which on the whole demobilised thousands of ANC members, and moreover limited the numbers and roles of women in the liberation struggle to primarily that of support. Furthermore, in examining the incorporation of women into the liberation struggle - the appeal was more to their roles as "mothers of the nation" and women's organisations were often expected to fall in line with the national campaigns of mainstream organisations like the ANC. Yet women played a considerable role in the underground activities of the ANC. The story of the women's role in Umkhonto was Sizwe since the 1960s remains to be written.

Hence while women's resistance proved to be defensive against a racist state determined to attack black civil liberties, it also considerably disorganized the state at the point of control, and forced the South Africa state to continually devise new measures to control the movement and presence of African women in urban areas. Hence the Apartheid regime embarked on major social engineering in the 1950s and 1960's to establish a national system of pass control institutions, but ultimately became locked into a continuous expansion of its repressive and securing institutions, to ward off the continuous and combined resistance of black people in South Africa. This interplay between resistance and the formation of new or expanded institutions of state control, constitutes a much neglected but nevertheless crucial aspect of any understanding of resistance and transformation in society - in Gramsci's terms, an interplay of hegemonic manoeuvres and counter hegemonic struggles, between 'war of position' and 'passive revolution'.

In her paper, Muthien critiques the literature on collective resistance in South Africa. She argues that most of the available literature on this subject tended to focus on organizational and campaign history. Thus, it fails to account for a considerable degree of informal or non-formal organizational resistance, reflected in the daily struggles of ordinary people to survive in a hostile environment. Secondly, that it undervalued the importance of women in the struggles that have taken place in South Africa thus far (particularly women's creative strategies for family survival).

Her perspective on resistance without perceiving the apartheid state in South Africa as monolithic and cohesive, argues that widespread resistance set a series of transformative processes in motion as the ruling classes were compelled to respond to resistance from below. The paper is an examination of the daily struggles of black working class women in Cape Town between 1939 and 1965. It explores the social conditions which shaped particular forms of resistance during the period; the various forms of resistance and struggles which emerged during that time; and the interplay between these women's struggles and mainstream liberation struggles in the transformation from segregation to apartheid.

The paper discusses the social conditions in Cape Town in the 1940s and 50s. It locates the impact of migration in the urbanization process and rural households. A gender breakdown of migration into the cities shows that the rate of urbanization, for women exceeded that of men for the period. Rapid urbanization the paper argues, gave rise to squatter settlements in Cape Town where by 1952 up to 74% of African families were living in squatter camps. The response of the state to this trend, however, was to institute very severe punitive influx control measures. It was, in fact, the influx of women which were systematically targeted by the apartheid state. So that the survival measures women undertook to remain in the cities became a source of resistance in themselves and persistently confounded the attempts of the colonial state officials to control the so-called "illegal population" in Cape Town.

The paper also argues that even the pass control measures in Cape Town were particularly targeted at women. Women were rendered vulnerable to the pass laws, as their presence in urban areas depended on their status as wives or daughters of permanent residents in the area.

Confronted with all these control measures, the black women in Cape Town engaged in different forms and levels of resistance in the country such as "we fight for life" food campaigns in the 1940s, squatter resistance, township protests and the anti-pass campaigns. The paper points out that women's resistance during this period generally took the form of creative evasion of punitive measures as well as peaceful mass protest which involved matches, rallies, petitions and demonstrations of a non-racial character. It observes that the different material conditions that prevailed between 1939 and 1965, did produce different forms of resistance. In the 1940s, given the then rapidly declining living standards, women were solidified around bread and butter issues. In the 1950s as the apartheid state intensified its major state offensive against blacks, the grassroot struggles of the 1940s made way for the mass national campaigns and only then were local issues overshadowed by campaigns which struck directly at the South Africa state.

However, the result of diverting political energies away from grassroots struggles to mass national campaigns was to demobilise many women who were centrally involved in fighting daily local issues that impinged on their lives. The situation in the 1960s was even more different. The conditions of the 1960 decade necessitated a smaller, tightly knit vanguard structure for Umkhonto we Sizwe, which on the whole demobilised thousand of ANC members and particularly limited the numbers and roles of women in the liberation struggle to primarily that of support.

The paper concludes that while women's resistance in South Africa proved to be defensive against a racist state determined to attack black liberties, it also considerably disorganised the state at the point of control, and forced the South Africa state to continually devise new measures to control the movement and presence of African women in urban areas. This interplay between resistance and formation of new or expanded institutions of state control constitutes a crucial aspect of any understanding of resistance and transformation in the South Africa society.

2. **The Role of Communication in Transforming the World of Women's Work through Initiative and Struggle** *by Eileen Omosa*

Omosa's paper examines the actual struggles through which the gender-based nature of work relations have changed. The paper looks at the efforts which have been made by women through individual and group organizations, and particularly how communication has enhanced or hindered their struggle.

The paper argues that in most African countries women have been oppressed and accorded third position on the traditional social structure. For that matter information from a woman was taken as unacceptable gossip. Such an attitude has continued to persist to the present day. The paper discusses the changing trends in women's work, labour structures and communication channels from the pre-colonial through colonial to the neocolonial period. It is argued that while during pre-colonial times information on what was expected of each society member was passed through music, dance ritual ceremonies, folk stories and riddles, the advent of colonialism brought a variety of change in both the division of labour and how information was communicated to the target audiences. The introduction of forced labour and a cash economy were perhaps the most disruptive type of changes.

The paper argues that in the case of Kenya, these changes brought about the creation of rival women groups amongst the initially united women. Class differentiation, economic disparities and inequalities created women groups with different goals, hence competition and enmity arose between and among the different groups. There were those who remained united in the old traditional common goal of providing labour for labour and were rural-based. Then there were groups composed of those who provided labour on other people's farms and houses for cash pay. These too were rural-based, but come more to urban areas to work and get back to their rural homes. Lastly was that group of women who had gained some education or were illiterate but married to literate husbands. These prospered economically and, therefore, were able to keep hired labour in their homes.

These developments later intensified in the post-colonial times. The period has seen very intense change in the character of women's organizations. The women's organizations have since become groups of particular class of women (the affluent class) who can afford to pay annual subscription membership fees. Hence it is literate urbanites and the enterprising rural women who are the beneficiaries of these transformed women's organizations. This, the paper argues militates against the formation of a broadbased women's movement in Kenya.

The paper concludes that in this entire history the so-called national media channels of communication today are basically for sensitization and awareness creation and, this, fit for use by policy makers and not a poor and illiterate population. The need for indigenous communication channels is seen as ideal for rural areas. "To be able to disseminate the right message to the right people and the right time; there should be a proper match between the message, medium and the audience". This should be achieved

through testing of all communication materials prior to widespread dissemination so that the right message can be prepared for the right audience.

3. Women and work in South Africa; Transforming the world of women's work through initiative and struggle *by Patricia Horn*

The paper is a tentative analysis of women's work in South Africa, and suggests ways of transforming the world of women's work through organization in the formal sector of the economy, in unpaid work and in self-employment in the informal sector.

In the formal sector, the actual jobs done by women of different racial groups within each sector and industry differ widely. There are also marked differences in the type of jobs in which men and women are employed. Most women are employed in service, clerical, sales and professional jobs. Within these broad categorizations women are again congregated in specific jobs. 46% of the women in professional jobs are in education and 27% in nursing. 39% of the clerical and sales workers are general clerks, 23% typists and 18% sales people. Expressed as per centage of the total work force, women constituted 94% of the non-farm domestic workers and 96% of farm domestics, 75% of clothing operatives, 75% of bookkeepers, and 67% teachers.

In the Bantustans, the conditions of women workers is even worse. Wages are sometimes less than a tenth of those being earned by organised workers during similar work outside the Bantustans. Companies investing in the Bantustans are by and large labour-intensive attracted by the presence of large numbers of captive unemployed and impoverished potential workers, by an un-unionised work force and state incentives. They specifically employ women because of the low wages they feel they can pay them. The majority of farm workers and domestic workers are women. These areas in addition to being poorly paid, are virtually unprotected by any laws governing conditions of work, health and safety. Farm and domestic workers, are, therefore, prone to worse exploitation than other members of the formal work place.

As a result of the marginalization of women in the formal sector, their wages are generally low in relation to men's wages. This situation is reinforced by the incorrect assumption that all families are headed by males with a dependent female partner and that the resources of the family are used for the greatest benefit of all members.

On the other hand many women seek employment in the informal sector partly because they cannot find jobs in formal sector, or because their jobs are poorly paid below their necessary labour. The rise in unemployment and the increase in the number of people living in informal settlements have contributed to the growth of the informal sector. Many women especially single parents, are forced into the informal sector because of not having somewhere to leave their children if involved in a formal job. The majority of people involved in the informal sector are probably women. Like the formal sector, women in the informal sector tend to concentrate in a narrow range of poorly-paid activities.

The other area of women's work in South Africa is that of unpaid work. Based on migrant labour, the women who stayed behind, while their husbands migrated to places

of work, had to do unpaid work on land in order to produce food for their families. This gave the South African capitalist economy an excuse to pay very low wages to the men, resulting in a situation where black workers were paid much less than white mine workers to whom a family wage had to be paid. Despite the demise of the migrant labour system and the influx control laws, 70% of the African women are still in the rural areas (including the Bantustans). Most of them are engaged largely in unpaid work which would include the production of subsistence goods as well as fetching water, firewood, domestic and household tasks. The new privatization process of the South African economy has the effect of increasing the amount of unpaid work done by women in caring for the children, the sick, the aged, the disabled in their homes. This is in addition to the more routine unpaid domestic work such as cooking, cleaning etc.

In the process of transforming women's work in the formal sector, trade union struggles have started changing women's work. The major area of change being in the area of job security during child-bearing years, which now exists in some work places and industries as a result of union agreements containing provisions for maternity leave in excess of basic legal requirements. The unions have a responsibility in pushing for the transformation of women's marginal role in the formal sector. However, unions tend to have the same patriarchal character as the rest of society. This means that in trade unions, it is not always easy to give priority to gender issues. Even where some gender issues are dealt with it is almost impossible to get a real commitment to fighting all aspects of gender discrimination in the way in which there is a commitment in the progressive trade unions in South Africa to fighting all aspects of race discrimination. Paradoxically, the level of gender sensitivity is often lower in unions with more women members than those with few women members.

For the above reason, it is important for women's fora to continue being active within all trade unions. Most gender issues which are taken up by unions originate more easily in women's fora than other union structures which are normally male dominated or heavily influenced by male organisers.

As regards unpaid work, all laws and practices and ideological apparatuses which uphold patriarchy or in any way give an inferior status to women, have to be tackled and ultimately abolished or transformed. In addition, there has to be strong organizations of women - not necessarily in a single organization. Up to now, mass-based women organizations in South Africa have largely concentrated on anti-apartheid demands, state and vigilante violence, high costs of living, bad health and education facilities etc. There is need to focus on some of the strategic gender interests if patriarchal domination is to be challenged, and if the transformation of women unpaid work is to be undertaken.

In the informal sector, the most popular modes for the transformation of women work is the building of producer or worker co-operatives. For people in the informal sector to be collectively empowered to determine their own destiny, it would be necessary for them to be collectively organized in (an) organisation(s) democratically controlled by the members. For such an organization to cater for the needs of the most disadvantaged people within the informal sector, it would have to be able to avoid being led by those members on the upper end of the informal sector who are in the small business people

bracket. One way to do this would be to organise women into an informal sector women's organization. In addition to co-operative enterprises, such organisation should concentrate on the four major types of activities commonly undertaken by women in the informal sector, viz commercial sex work, service work, petty trading and home-based piece of work. The gender character of the informal sector dictates that any democratic organisation of people engaged in this sector would have to concern itself seriously with women's specific gender concerns. Many people in the informal sector involve various members of their families in their economic activity. For women concerned to be the ones eligible for membership of an informal sector organization would be a way of ensuring the empowerment of women working in this sector rather than of their male intermediaries.

A possible model of organization for transformation can be drawn from the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) based in Ahmedabad, India. SEWA aims to empower women through development action, thus strengthening their economic base and bargaining power. A similar organization in South Africa could be a vehicle for developing the collective self-empowerment which would be necessary for struggles and initiatives for the transformation of women's work in the informal sector. In order to place the struggles of self-employed women within the broader context of class struggles in South Africa, such an organization would need to develop the capacity to forge class alliances within the women's movement. It should develop the mechanisms to represent its own members and their interests in political and economic negotiations in South Africa, would probably find it necessary to be in some sort of alliance with the trade union movement so as to be able to unite around common areas of concern in relations to corporate capital, small capital and the state. Such an alliance would be an important buffer against the manipulation by capital and the state of the informal sector versus the organised workers in the formal sector. Alliances with women's organisation would be important for strengthening the struggles of self-employed women in the informal sector against patriarchal oppression.

In order to be able to play this kind of role, such an organization should be autonomous, controlled by its own membership through democratic structures, along much the same lines as the shop-floor control which is practiced by the democratic trade union movement in South Africa. It should develop its own organic leadership so as to avoid the system of patronage which often characterizes the relationship between the informal sector and other sectors of the economy, NGOs or interest groups. It would need to develop a decisive presence as an integral part of the liberation movement in order to play a leading role in the transformation of the world of women's work in the informal sector.

4. Women's work and Revolutionary politics in Bihar, India *by Govind Kelkar*

The paper is a modest attempt to examine a set of socio-political issues concerning women's work and their access to land/economic resources in the context of people's movement in Bihar, India.

The role of women in Bihar is influenced by class and caste factors. One of the features of the caste system is a strict endogamy. However, the subordination of the lower castes to the upper castes, also resulted into the general sex availability of the lower caste women to large land-owning upper caste men. Rape and sexual assaults on the lower caste women, particularly Chhatis and Musahars were considered the privilege of Rajput and Bhumihar landlords. The Dola custom (forcing every bride of the lower caste to spend her first night following marriage with the local landlord) had prevailed in the villages of Bhojpur and Rohtas districts. Their practices caused much anguish among the lower castes, but the latter could not oppose the former because of their socio-economic dependence on the upper caste landlords.

As regards women's participation in work, class and caste factors also criss cross. The upper castes follow a strict system of seclusion, the more the seclusion, the higher the caste. Even among the poorer sections of the upper castes, where the family needs to do some of the agricultural fieldwork, this work is never done by women. In addition to the traditionally defined household work, women also do the major share of work of processing agricultural goods but this is done within the courtyard (angan).

Among peasants of the backward castes, women participate in all kinds of agricultural field labour on their family fields (the only exception being tabooed ploughing). Whereas with poor peasants the income from the family fields has to be supplemented by wage labour on other fields, the women do not do the wage labour.

In Dalit, there is full participation of women in all non-household work. In the agricultural labour families, women performed as many days of wage labour as men, besides being solely responsible for household work. Despite the equal remuneration acts however women generally get 40 to 60 percent of male wages. In addition, women are given the more labour - intensive tasks such as weeding, transplanting and harvesting. Women's work is absolutely essential to the existence of the family and tends to be very tedious and time consuming, yet it does not provide them with much autonomy concerning decisions in the home with regard to the disposition of their earnings.

The grading of these tasks is neither based on volume of work nor on the number of hours of their performances, nor valued in production terms. The logic of superior and better paid work for men derives from the fact that they are assumed to be household heads and thus responsible for the family. Women's work is ignored as unpaid housework and the contribution to production is regarded as secondary or supplementary to men's contribution.

The other question is that of access to land, in particular the rights of women agricultural labourers. There are two aspects of this question. First, the class of agricultural labourers itself getting access to land, through a redistribution of land; and secondly, within the mass movements, an attempt to get joint and separate allocation for women.

No fundamental change has been brought about. The state in India never set out to fundamentally change gender relations in society or enable women to have access to land/property and other resources. Through its construction of family centred programmes, in its assignments of productive, reproductive functions, and above all, its

land/property holding and technology control functions to the (male) heads of households, the state seems likely to erode even further, the rights which women earlier enjoyed. The state machinery actively collaborated with the rural rich in perpetuating inequality in land ownership patterns. In its land policy the state preferred those who were already working on uneconomic plots rather than those who were not working on land at all. The policy, therefore, cannot be compared with the Chinese land reform where preference in land was given to landless peasants both women and men. The effective exclusion of women from possession and control of land is largely the basis of their subordination and dependence on men in rural India.

Due to the above problems, there was a substantial participation of women in peasant struggles, ranging from 25 to 60 per cent of the male activists engaged in the struggle. Women participated both directly and indirectly in beating up the landlords and police, in snatching arms from them as well as receiving bullet injuries, in protecting and sheltering peasant movement activists for months in their homes, in hiding their arms from public visibility as well as providing food and sustenance to the people in the struggle. Some of the women were killed by the landlords or the police. Many women were in jail. Most of these women were in Dalit and backward castes or agricultural labourers.

During periods of crisis, they would maintain a close watch on the activities of landlords, protect the activists by letting them sleep in their homes during the night and would gather glass pieces, bricks and stones to protect themselves against the attacks of the landlords, in addition to organizing meetings of peasant movement activists. Such roles of women in the peasant movement strongly suggest the necessity for a reconceptualization of the 'indirect' participation of women in a popular movement, which is usually considered a passive activity and even regarded as non-participation.

Significantly, women did not negate the agrarian struggle or the men's 'movements work'. In their struggle they repeatedly stressed dignity or *izzat* and higher agricultural wages in addition to demands for land.

The agrarian struggle and peasant movement however could not effectively shake off the patriarchal bias in the treatment of women members. The entire experience is riddled with glaring contradictions between the women's demonstrated capacity as well as determination for political/organizational work and their inequality and subordinate status both in the family and in the decision-making process in the movement. Women activists of peasant movements lack a concerted, organised effect to assert their combined struggle towards the attainment of their familial dignity and achieving a satisfactory settlement of their demands for wage parity and equal access to land rights. This is, however, an important step in building rural women's movement. A great majority of poor, poor landless and poor peasant women participate in social action outside the family and have shared collective identities with peasant associations, engaged in political and socio-cultural conflicts.

Discussion

Like other social movements there are two perspectives on women's struggles even within feminist discourses. The one perspective underlines the democratic potential and capacity of women's struggles even where such struggles are orchestrated by the state and liberative of only certain section of women. The romanticization of women's movements partly finds explanation from the fact that they had been previously downplayed. It is in other words a form of affirmative action on part of the researcher to accentuate the various women's struggles. The other perspective reproduces the subordinated woman orientation and is, therefore, unable to take cognizance of women's efforts towards liberation. In this latter perspective, social struggles are studied from the point of view of organizational history. The formal organizational history is the history of the men. Women's roles are seen as secondary and, therefore, only supportive and residual. Once again they are victims.

We are interested, however, in the politicization of the new women's roles in these struggles. This is the whole idea about the multiplication of political spaces. In this perspective, women's roles must not be seen in a necessary hierarchical arrangement with those of men but political spheres in their own right.

Another issue arising out the discussion is the question of gender, race, class, caste and ethnicity. In light of the fact that there are hierarchical orderings in each of those identities, what is the strategy of the feminist movements? For example about class, it is clear that there is more harm in lumping together than differentiating between the various class categories. So what is the strategy on race, caste and ethnicity?

There was also a problem of conceptualizing the genesis of social movements. Reacting to the situation in India, it was questionable as to whether a single instance such as a rape case could be at the centre of the explanation of the genesis of the women's movement in India.

Summing-Up Session

As a sum up of the workshop, the following observations considered pertinent were raised. They would in essence constitute a substantive part of the future collaborative agenda.

1. Production and Reproduction

It is important to examine the relation between production and reproduction. Not only is the sphere of reproduction critical to the exploitation of labour- ie. workers are paid below the minimum subsistence level as capital feeds off the reproduction strategies/survival strategies of the household - but it is an important site of struggle. The sphere of reproduction is as important a site of exploitation as the workplace.

2. Unpaid - Paid Labour

Is the shift from unpaid labour to paid labour incorporation into market or wage relations liberative? Compared to the chronically unemployed many people might well consider it a privilege to be exploited. The crucial question is how does the women's current position compare to the previous one? An independent income can often be the means for greater independence and self-worth.

The problem is not only between paid and unpaid labour. There are, for example, questions surrounding domestic service, sex workers and child labour which too are gendered.

3. Women as Victims vs Women in Struggle

Debate often appears to swing between the two poles of viewing women as victims or celebrating (often romanticising) their struggles. Clearly our analysis requires both - ie. the constraints or burdens that women bear, as well as the spaces they forge for themselves often amidst the most oppressive situations. In this connection, what is the relevance of state feminism in the context of state patriarchy?

4. Representation

The issue of representation ie. who speaks for whom is crucial in redressing the legacy of the past. The differential oppression and advantages different sections of women face in a particular country heavily influence who gets to speak in the first place. Hence the need to create conditions for broader fora where the most oppressed and exploited can speak. Broadly, this is a question of difference and commonality. What possibilities are there for instance, for male feminism?

Women world wide have had a task to reconstruct a democratic and non-sexist society. In South Africa there is an additional task ie. of the dismantling racial barriers. The peculiarity of the South African experience is further enhanced by the fact that the country has been cut off from the rest of the world especially the rest of Africa. So when the South African experience is told the point is to echo the women's movement experience in the experiences of the rest of the continent and also to draw lessons from those very experiences.

5. Research and Activism

The research questions posed and the analytical frameworks engaged derive from imperatives to further concretize women's struggles. That being the case women activists or general political activists must transcend the limits of pure scholarship and fundamentally search for alternatives and guidance in their specific struggles.

6. A View on Cross-Cultural Understanding of the Women's Question

Any examination of the women's question must look for possible connections between the growth of women's movement and course of socioeconomic change and its implications for the family and society. The gender relationship of dominance and subordination is a political relationship which derives its legitimacy from a traditional culture.

Women have to be studied in the socioeconomic context in which they are placed. Social research and action milieu where class, caste, race ethnicity and gender issues are considered mutually exclusive must be abandoned. The class/caste/race/ethnicity framework of analysis and action has to be expanded and reformulated to include the dimension of gender and patriarchy. Patriarchy and the interplay of gender with social relationships and forces of production should inform theory and practice in the women's movement.

Women do not constitute a class, caste, race or community and tend to share most characteristics, interests and identities with their men, and not with women from other sections, in complex processes of social, economic and political competition for power and resources. And, yet for women there is a universal experience of subordination and invisibility of their role, non-recognition and undervaluation of their work and internalization of their subaltern existence under patriarchal system. Hence the political agenda of the feminist movement.

There is a close link between women's propertylessness/resourcelessness and gender-specific violence. The family constitutes both the ideological and material ground for the structure of dependence and gender difference that strengthen the patterns of inequality and women's oppression. A women-centered development perspective rather than a social analysis tradition seeks to generate answers to the above issues. It condemns the ideology of patriarchy and provides support to the women's oppression in society.

7. Gender Studies

There is a need to recast gender studies in Africa in light of the developments:

- a) Internal to the discipline. There was a general agreement that in terms of theory and methodology, gender studies on Africa have been largely Eurocentric.
- b) In the women's movement itself. Women have been at the centre of social struggles in Africa. Yet because of the Eurocentric patriarchy - oriented methodologies, they have been theorized out of existence or reduced to marginal participation.

This issue raises a number of other questions. For Example:

- i) Is there a difference between women studies and gender studies?
- ii) What distinction should we make between the class character of gender and the gender character of class?
- iii) What are the interests of the different interest groups managing women in development and developing women studies?

8. The Family

There is need to critique the traditional institution of the family, the mediation of power relations in there and the complicity of wives in the reproduction of the conditions of their domination.

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Appendix: Symposium

Representatives of women's organizations around Kampala were invited to a symposium during the conference. Participants were to discuss the nature of their organizations to the extent they were engaged in gender oriented practices, what their demands, strategies and alliances were, the relationship between research and practice, between researchers and activists and the gender tensions within their organizations.

Four participants discussed experiences in Nigeria, Uruguay, south Africa and India. The Ugandan women's association in attendance included Action for development (ACFODE), FIDA, NOTU (Women's wing) and University women's organization and the Department of Women's Studies.

Nigeria

1987 saw the formation of the Better Life Programme although this was in no way the beginning of the women movement. In 1989 the National Commission for women was set up by the state to integrate BLP. In terms of their class character, these women's organization are strongly middle and upper class. They have a strong state connection which in the first case is responsible for their existence. The Better Life Programme BLP is in the office of the President. The first lady is the chairperson. The National Commission of Women is chaired by the wives of the state Governors in the respective states. They are directly funded by the state and businessmen. Their role is to formulate policies within the context of national development ie. in line with Structural Adjustment Programme.

There are also women NGOs but their character is also basically middle class. They are social welfare oriented. This stems from a developmentalist ideology oriented towards liberalism, pushed by the West under SAP. This is the whole thesis of women in development that women are backward because of lack of participation in the market. They are opposed to any democratic demands. They oppose anything against the state and are inimical to women academicians. For their support of the state they have been derided as "AGIP" meaning they support Any Government In Power.

The only alternative non-governmental perspective on women's organization has been WIN (Women in Nigeria) formed in 1982. It has accommodated in its definition of the problem of the articulation between gender and class. It has included in their political and research agenda issues such as rape in marriage inheritance and incest. The leadership is also basically middle class especially university women. They have done research and published about the women's conditions in Nigeria.

South Africa

There have been women's struggles in South Africa for a long time. However there is a fairly new women's movement in South Africa in a specific sense. The unbanning of political parties like the ANC, PAC and the South African communist party created new dynamic. It is a period when the women's movement start to see beyond a post apartheid

South Africa. During the present phase of its development, the women's movement is part of the political movement in South Africa. The ANC Women's League was set up by members while in exile in 1990. PAC has the African Women's organization whereas Inkatha freedom Movement too has as its women's wing, Inkhata Women's Brigade. Even the Nationalist Party of De Klerk has moved all of a sudden to ratify the UN convention on Women.

The other site of organization of women has been in labour organization especially trade Unions. In COSATU women had to fight long struggles to get women fora. They also in the process became militant in their demands for job security, unpaid labour etc.

On the whole women's organizations have put the women's question high on the political agenda of the liberation movements gauging from the experience of other liberation struggles in Africa. Views are being collected in the whole country from all categories of women to draft a Charter of Women's Rights to be incorporated in new constitution in the post Apartheid South Africa. The new constitution is also to take care of customary law and its prohibitive feature on women eg. the inheritance patterns. It is also in this connection that women' land ownership is to be raised in the Post-Apartheid South Africa.

There is some tension between researchers and activists. There is however a current massive campaign for participatory research between researchers and political activists.

Uruguay

From the Latin America case the Uruguay experience seem to show that the women's Movement here is rather recent. Erupting around the beginning of the century the Movement was engulfed into the civil rights Movement with the effect that for long gender issues remained unraised. The development of the Women's Movement in Uruguay has thus been intrinsically linked to the democratic struggles in that country.

In Uruguay, there are those women's organizations which are interested in productive activities for household subsistence involving artisans, weavers etc. who are organized through women co-operative groups. The other type of women's movement in Uruguay is concerned with raising gender consciousness through publishing feminist literature and magazines. Others are concerned with offering legal training and health services to women. Other groups are organized as movements against domestic violence and are concerned with women health and sexuality.

In the main these women organizations are non-governmental. There, however, exist non organized women's movements which are linked to the state such as the Women's Institute which exist in the Ministry of Education but which is basically ineffective.

Alliances between the different women's organizations are sometimes forged, albeit temporarily, to fight, for example, equal opportunity for employment. One effect of such united struggle by the women's organizations in Uruguay has been the initiative by the State inaugurate a Bill legislating for equal opportunity for employment between men and

women. Although this could be seen as a big achievement by the Women's Movement, its practicability is a different matter; particularly so given the conservative nature of the national government.

The Women's Movement in Uruguay also have popular fronts upon which they can count as allies. These include parties on the left with their women's wing - the Women's Commission which monitors cases of domestic violence in the city; and the individuals in the state party and universities. The unfortunate part of the story though is that no party in Uruguay has come out to stand for the promotion of gender issues.

On the relationship between research and women organization the Uruguay experience shows that research in fact preceded the formation of Women's Organizations; and that Uruguay being a small country there existed interpersonal relationship between the researchers and the organizations which made it easy for the research issues to be identified.

India

Suppression of women and the militancy of women movements were two major issues identified in relationship to India. In respect to women suppression, a strong relationship exists between state violence, class and caste system. Women in lower caste and poor classes are more open to state violence.

The women movement on the other hand was born in 1976 after an incident where Matura, a 14 year old girl was raped by two police officers. In the judgement, the court had concluded that the girl had consented since there were no physical injuries. The case was therefore, dismissed.

The above rape case became an instance from which a women movement was born. This movement protested against state violence and against the Evidence Act, particularly on the assumption of innocence. The movement later addressed to issues of dowry, power relationships with the family and religious fundamentalism which further subordinates women.

Like most women Movements elsewhere, however, the women Movement which emerged in India, in 1976, is essentially urban centred and composed of the middle class. It is political in nature, and more linked to the left. Above all, the women question is considered as a political question.

The lower caste and poor class women organizations in the rural areas, on the other hand are non political in nature. They do not question the gender relations, or patriarchy in the Indian society. They are more engaged in income generating activities.

The women movement has not achieved much. Dowry still continues, according to the Evidence Act, a person is guilty until he is proven innocent, the judiciary has not changed and power relations in the family remain the same.

Uganda

1. Four local women organisations in Uganda from the many which participated in the symposium presented briefs that were the experiences of their organization. They included: The Uganda Women Lawyers' Association (FIDA). The National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU); Action for Development (ACFODE) and University Women's Association.
2. The objectives of the organization varied but basically included raising gender consciousness among Uganda women and assisting women and children to overcome gender related problems. To achieve these broad objectives the women organizations are engaged in a number of activities which covered the following:
 - i) Networking with rural women;
 - ii) Family life education;
 - iii) Adolescence counselling;
 - iv) Legal counselling;
 - v) Publications on gender related issues;
 - vi) Health education;
 - vii) Lobbying for jobs for women;
 - viii) Simplifying the law and interpreting to the women folk;
 - ix) Operating legal aid clinics to handle cases involving single mothers; broken marriages and orphans in their struggles over property rights;
 - x) Adult literacy campaigns in both rural and urban areas.
 - xi) Identification of income generating projects for the women groups;
 - xii) Conducting research on gender issues.
 - xiii) Fighting against domestic violence, child abuse; defilement and rape.

However, a number of obstacles were also identified as inhibiting the fast attainment of the objectives. These included:-

1. The organizations, except for NOTU, and dominated by middle class women; and are largely active in urban areas; which means that even the demands made by organizations reflect the interest of the urban middle class women.
2. The organization have remained largely apolitical and, therefore, have not been able to come into alliance with the rest of civil society organizations so as to forge a democratic mass movement.
3. Even though NOTU is free from these limitations, still the leadership positions are dominated by men with only the position of Director of Women filled by a woman. The women wing of NOTU has no agenda to overcome this imbalance. In addition the power struggles which have characterized NOTU in general have even made it more difficult for the organization to address specific women issues.
4. The other big weakness identified as affecting the organization is financial donations from outside.

The discussion focused on the following issues:

1. Child abuse: There was a need for further sensitization of society as far as child abuse was concerned. FIDA and ACFODE raised concern over the attack by men on young girls as though they were AIDS free. In India there was a problem of the differential treatment of children. Female children are neglected to the point of death during early childhood. Mothers do share in this ideology. This raises two interesting methodological and theoretical issues in research on patriarchy. Firstly, is the critique of the traditional institution of the family in the perpetration of patriarchy. Secondly, the complicity of women in the reproduction of the condition, of their oppression must be on the agenda in theorizing patriarchy.
2. With respect to Uganda the failure of the women's movement was closely identified with the failure of networking between the different women's groups. In the absence of such a united front these organizations lose their political character. Moreover the experiences in all the countries except South Africa point to the apolitical nature of women's organizations. They are usually service or development oriented and do not pose any threat to gender inequalities.
3. In South Africa two pertinent questions arise. If women in the labour movement specifically trade unions are participating actively in political party activities, what will happen to the trade unions. Should these parties take power in the post-Apartheid period? And yet a standard critique of trade unions is that they are economic.
4. When do we talk of a women's movement? Can a single issue spark off a women's movement or must it be a broad articulation of class, ethnicity race and gender relations?
5. The disillusionment of elite organizations - The focus of women's organizations has shifted away from movement politics to group interests. At the level of discourse these urban middle-class organizations see their *raison detre* as that of "helping", "teaching", "assisting" etc the rural poor women, in a manner reminiscent of the colonial mission of "civilization". The rural woman is in need of "training" usually implying a denial of the already acquired knowledge and experience.

CBR Workshop Reports

1. **Pastoralism, Crisis and Transformation in Karamoja**; Report of a Workshop Organised by CBR and held at the Faculty of Science Makerere University, August 14 - 15, 1992, by Joe Oloka-Onyango, Zie Gariyo and Frank Muhereza; 26p.
2. **Women and Work: Historical Trends**; Report of a Workshop Organised by CBR, and held at the Faculty of Science, Makerere University, September 7-10, 1992, by Expedit Ddungu, James Opyene and Sallie Kayunga; 61p.