

Negotiating Patriarchy and Globalization: Dynamics of Women's Work in an Agricultural Economy*

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Abstract

This study explores the rising control women are beginning to experience as subcontracted workers caught in the intersection between a patriarchal home and the equally patriarchal demands of capitalism as globalizing forces persistently penetrate the traditional organization of the sugar farm. Trends of the study are revealing notions of control over self rising among women from holding a job which allows them to negotiate work quota, including a growing autonomy being felt in the traditional conjugal relation, to the raging indignation of men. Women try to balance the demands which are both imperatives in maintaining a settled family life, although the factor of "homework" to increase earnings intrude into the privacy of the home. The outcome of this dialectical struggle causes unending initiatives among women to negotiate work schedules at home and at work, constantly adjusting the demands of the contrasting spaces of "paid work" and domestic work. Such initiatives among women workers are telling of the manner by which women are gradually re-inventing their identity in the context of the changing circumstances of their lives. They are crafting a narrative of their own selves and in the process are slowly taking on more empowering modes of mediating between their life experiences and traditional societal structures.

Prologue: The Women in the Social Organization of the Negros "Hacienda" Prior to Subcontracting Employment

The sugar "hacienda" has been my research site since my graduate student days. My last immersion was more than a decade ago when I studied the rising entrepreneurship among the sugar landowners in the

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90s. I have decided to revisit the site to explore the impact of the cottage industries that constituted the entrepreneurial activities started by the landowners to provide supplementary income for farm households during the sugar crisis of the 80s. What changes have been happening since then given observations on the continued demise of sugar as an export industry?

Seeing the farms again after many years of absence, everything looked the same. The narrow stony road to the hacienda somehow remained rough and shoddy, bounded by tall sugarcanes towering along each side of the road, defining clearly the fertile productive land from the graveled path where the canes may not grow as well, or may fail to grow at all. Like the decades past, most workers in the field were males, faithfully digging around the canes to give the plant a last ditch for growth before harvest. As tradition dictated, wives stayed home and did all the domestic chores, although briefly, during planting and cultivation before the canes grew taller, women could be called to work in the farm.

Thus the women of the Negros sugar farms did not differ from other rural women in the country in their subjection to a traditional patriarchal culture. Born and raised in homes where the mother consistently modeled a role within a prevailing unequal division of labor privileging the father on account of his role as the "breadwinner" of the family, they took the tradition into their own families. This type of gendered roles differentiating the positions between the sexes placed the burden of family reproduction heavily on the woman, in the context of patriarchal power governing the conjugal relationship. Expected to stay home, the Negros woman faithfully played her role as wife to a husband and mother to her children. To the women, "*ang babaye kinahanglan magsirbe sa laki* (women should be of service to men)."

Waking up early in the morning, the woman in the sugar farm prepared breakfast for the husband who needed to be out in the farm by 6 A.M. before sunrise in order to catch the cooler part of the morning for working in the fields. As the husband worked in the sugar fields, the wife went through the routine of household activities, the nurturing of children, cooking, laundry, care of the subsistence garden if the yard was wide and fertile enough to have one, including feeding the poultry and cleaning

the yard. At about 11 o'clock, she trudged the path to the fields under the heat of the noonday sun to bring lunch to her husband and immediately went back home, to attend to the needs of younger children while the rest attended school. Fetching water was taken care of by the husband upon arriving home from the fields, if he is not waylaid into having a few shots and further seduced into a brief card game by friends in the marketplace on the way home.

After supper, children were sent to bed while the wife waited for the husband to come home. Coming home drunk and almost groping for the bed without supper, he is tucked into bed by his wife to wake up for early breakfast the next morning. However, he could wake up in the middle of the night to ask for food or pick a fight. The wife patiently attended to whatever was demanded of her. Years back, this was a typical day for a woman in the sugar hacienda.

Into the present, entering the sugar fields again, the immediate scenario does not differ. More men are still raking the fields but a different woman has been emerging from the sugar-farming household.

Introduction: Women, Patriarchy, and Globalization

As Center capitalism reels in high production costs in business operations, globalization intensifies in its roaming mode, searching for production sites where labor flexibilization as a key strategy for reducing costs can be facilitated. In practice, this strategy gives rise to subcontracting—in which manufacturers fragment the entire production process, “so that the most labor-intensive phases are assigned to different work sites in the case of local manufacturers, or countries, if products are exports, which pay the lowest wages ... The products subcontracted are those manufactured in a series of stages as well as those which are light and easily transportable, such as semiconductors or cut-up pieces of garments with specified designs....” (Aldana 1989: 4-5). This kind of work arrangement has also given rise to “homework,” which refers to paid work brought home to facilitate completion of work quota.

Developing economies, and no other, eventually become the preferred sites where cheap female labor are abundant, with skills precisely meeting the requirements for peripheral manufactures such as garments, household goods and accessories. Women in their subordinate status in patriarchal households have become visible, given their intermittent availability for "paid" work as domestic work equally engages them. This type of availability matches the alternating lean and robust production seasons inherent in the international market, and in particular, in the production of soft manufactures and other peripheral accessories to main products produced in developed economies.

With these developments, women are increasingly being employed as housewives, not as workers, for "paid" work takes on the characteristic of domestic work which is peripheral and irregular as their own availability, although with regularity in terms of its seasonal requirements. This type of production pace requires women to sustain work continuously even during the lean season to build up stocks for the oncoming robust demand. Men have not really welcomed working wives, and have even questioned the growing absence of women at home. An added issue has been "homework" which has liberalized women's work schedule and opened opportunities for them to increase regular factory work, expanding the worksite into the privacy of the home which most of the time further includes neighbors who would like to earn as well, but leave their homes. These are the second or third level subcontractors who share in the quota for homework which regular subcontractors bring home. By working with other women, somehow all of them together challenge the patriarchal value of women's domesticity.

The women in the sugar economy of Negros have not been exempt from this development (Dungo 1997). The prevailing subcontracting as the face of labor flexibilization, has brought these women into its orbit for almost twenty years now since the severe crisis of the industry during the mid '80s. The crisis drove sugar planters to search for alternative income for workers in the "hacienda" to remedy deepening poverty. At the height of the crisis, wives of sugar planters assisted their husbands in thinking of alternative jobs to stabilize the farm households. From their creative ini-

tiatives grew the cottage industries that employed women left in the farm as subcontracted workers while the men were out doing contractual jobs in nearby towns. Now flourishing in Negros, this entrepreneurial business has successfully penetrated the international market today.

While supplementary income earned by women settled the unstable financial maintenance of households, the men have been ambivalent in their reactions toward working wives. Men appear to resist helping out with chores left unfinished by women who are increasingly absent from home. Moreover, women complain that the help they expect from spouses comes in spurts, and very irregularly, leaving older children to take over chores when they come home from school. In most cases, women have to negotiate with their husbands, although they try doing as many chores that can be done upon coming home. They likewise negotiate with work supervisors to adjust their time for factory work to accommodate the morning duties of cooking their meals and preparing the children for school; after which they hurry to the factory, still leaving chores unfinished which they resume doing after work, interspersed with "homework" into the late evening hours. This kind of schedule has overburdened most wives, leaving them with chores that are never finished, and with critical husbands already primed to feel disgust over their wives' absence creating a highly-charged situation of tension between husband and wife.

Yet women are determined to hold on to their jobs and risk their husbands' ire. Among themselves, they share a common feeling of independence from their spouses, of being in control for the first time, prioritizing prevailing family needs for the family budget. This sense of autonomy rising from the regularity of paid work more than compensates for the fatigue that often possesses them. Men appear indifferent and latch on to their privileged position, in general, expecting their wives to undertake home chores alongside "paid" work despite an extremely hectic pace. Such clashing expectations of women create unending domestic conflict, not only in the area of conjugal relations, but in the over-all maintenance of the home. Thus, the home has become an area of dispute over the routines of "who does what" while worksites are where women derive

much of what supplement the material needs of the family as fund short-falls occur more frequently.

The Problem

This study explores the emerging control women are beginning to experience as subcontracted workers caught in the intersection between a patriarchal home and the equally patriarchal demands of capitalism as globalizing forces persistently penetrate the traditional organization of the sugar farm. This condition has triggered a growing demand for women, which has never been so massively felt in the history of female employment in the province. Their subordinate status in patriarchal-dominated homes has constituted their primary attraction as preferred labor, passive and uncomplaining about wages in return for the negotiable time schedules they are allowed, and the choice of doing "homework" when unable to stay longer on the factory work floor.

The same kind of negotiating stance is being used at home to accommodate domestic needs, while often concealing resistance against their husbands' demands. Current subcontracting industries that are mostly of the cottage industry type employ women regularly more than they do men, while local farming needs decrease in employment levels and keep the men more on transient jobs. With this condition, the tensions of performing reproductive work for women increasingly unsettle the home with the men hesitating to contribute more to domestic chores despite their constant presence at home.

Flitting questions arise whether this kind of emerging "spaces" for women as negotiations characterize their adjustments to both domestic and "paid work" are significantly altering the usual subjection to home chores toward allowing more autonomy for self, as wife and mother. Provoked by the expanding range of women's opportunities for employment, women are slowly being led to a kind of dis-embeddedness from their usual domestic chores, more often leaving things undone at home. Tensions are rising as chores necessary in everyday maintenance of the family are postponed in favor of the wife's completion of work quota. However,

some homes can afford domestic helpers, and the tension may not be as intense as in other homes where the support system is lacking, if not totally absent, which brings the issue of increased conflict between spouses to the fore. Is this shifting position of women at home affecting perceptions of control whether at home or at work? What is happening to the concept of labor control as worksites expand to homes, and homes connect with each other in undertaking homework in the community outside the official workplace?

Notions of control over self increase among women holding a job which allows them to negotiate for work quota, and feel a growing autonomy in the traditional conjugal relationship. Which one takes priority: Resolving rising tensions at home that tend to destabilize family relations, or the choice of paid work that stabilize home expenditures? Women try to balance the demands that are both imperatives in maintaining a settled family. But the factor of "homework" to increase earnings intrudes into the privacy of the home, which works against women's judicious time allocation between "paid work" and domestic duties.

The study therefore explores notions of control among subcontracted women workers arising from their adjustment strategies as they confront the competing demands of reproductive and productive work in the context of a patriarchal home and a globalizing workplace. To what extent are these women able to create spaces toward the articulation of initiatives for their own empowerment?

Related Literature

Patriarchal tradition in the Philippines features an unequal division of labor at home in favor of men. Eviota (1992) notes that this gendered division of labor between men and women separates work for wages from household work. In this separation, men as heads of households are considered primary wageworkers and are privileged in this role as they are assumed to be outside the home earning a living, even as their inadequate wages require other family members to do paid work for the family to survive. This kind of division of labor assigns the

greater responsibility for domestic duties to women even when they engage in productive work where they are considered secondary workers earning supplementary income to overcome financial "shortfalls." The burden is made worse by the fact that women need to dovetail availability for productive work to the ongoing performance of domestic chores, requiring the search for more innovative ways to earn the needed supplementary income, including crafting ways to stretch the limited funds available which are often disproportionate to the ever growing needs of the family. To the woman then falls the greater burden of combining reproductive and productive work, mobilizing strategies for household reproduction as income falls and prices rise in the context of the growing needs of the family.

This household condition where women appear to shoulder the heavier portion of the division of labor reveals only part of the domestic scenario. The literature also reveals the hesitation of husbands to take on more of the home chores left undone by working wives, as they tenaciously remain within the groove of patriarchal tradition. In a masteral thesis by A. Pacardo (2003), husbands are helping more at home, but rather sporadically. Husbands help when directly told, or reminded; otherwise, the habitual tendency to fall into the same predisposition to leave chores for wives to do prevails. The author talks of "women carrying the obligation to keep the family in harmony, leading them to make compromises, negotiation and bargaining with their husbands to avoid further disagreements or confrontations in everyday exchanges [*sic*]" (254).

Santiago's 2000 study, on the one hand, reveals that women as domestic workers are positioned at the bottom of the occupational wage hierarchy compared to men. Illo's 1997 case studies, on the other, speak of women working longer hours and earning lower wages than men, at the same time that they perform labor intensive housework. These trends are observed as well in De la Torre's 1991 study in Del Rosario and Torres (1994) on the effects of wage labor participation in the households of married women in a coffee plantation in Bukidnon. Subordinate to men at home, women further occupy an inferior status

relative to men in plantation work, while they render longer periods for housework; men only help in gathering fuel and fetching water. Household tasks left behind such as cooking, housecleaning, etc. were continued after paid work

The 1989 studies conducted by de los Reyes on fisherman's wives, noted that despite their solo performance of domestic duties while fisher husbands did fishing, wives were found to be participating heavily in preparations for fishing trips and in the marketing of catch when the husbands arrived. In a study conducted by Heinonen in Sorsogon province, poor women started to undertake a variety of work-related activities extensively in the informal sector, earning a supplemental income (1996). Yet, both male and female respondents still referred to the importance of men in maintaining a dominant position in marital relationships and acknowledged men's role as primary breadwinners for maintaining harmony in the household.

The same strands from the works by del Rosario and Torres (1994), feminist researchers, show that despite the fact that both male and female are involved in paid work, household chores remain the main responsibility of women. And even while men accept the need for women to have paid employment, certain expectations at home remain unchanging, especially the care of children. Given this condition, the probability of conflict developing continuously in the relationship between husband and wife are likely to arise, particularly when issues of standards in domestic chores prevail, and depending upon the hold certain family ideologies have over the marital relationship (Humphrey 1987: 64).

Indeed, dominant accounts in the literature still speak of the prevailing resistance of husbands to undertake more household chores than what tradition has defined for them. If at all, they undertake more of these chores when forced by the growing absence of their wives and when told to do so. But wives claim, the initial burst of help soon peters out, and husbands fall into the same habit of indifference or resistance (Doyle 1989, Meyers 1997, Cox 1999 in Ward 2003).

In the face of this opposition, women tend to fall back to the traditional role of defusing an incendiary situation.

Theoretical Underpinnings

In "The Politics of Production" (1987), Michael Burawoy compares Marx's view of the steady degradation of work under capitalism with M. Braverman's analysis, according to which capitalism changes work conditions, not as described in Marx's classical labor process analysis, but by "its own countertendencies—barriers it casts aside as surely as it sets them up." Thus capitalism, as it expands and subordinates ever greater regions of social life, creates new skills, and with them new craft workers embodying the unity of conception and execution. But with equal consistency, capitalism proceeds to fragment the craft, doling it out again in minute and deskilled tasks" (Braverman 1974: 60, 120, 172; in Burawoy 1987: 56). With control as a major variable perceived by women while they increasingly engage in paid work, the study takes this perspective as relevant to account for the emerging nature of capitalist control as the development of the labor process goes beyond the shop floor through the practice of "homework" activities, which create a secondary level of subcontracted workers in the community, widening the worksite, while embodying more of control of labor through piecework payments of completed quality work rather than hours spent in labor. In this homework arrangement, women train members of the family to assist in the completion of work quota and to request for additional quota to increase earnings. Braverman proceeds: "describing the penetration of capital into the family and community the disintegration, destruction, atomization, irrationality of everyday life outside the factory and office; the eclipse of neighborly feelings and affective ties. The family must strip for action in order to survive and succeed in the market society ... The capitalist mode of production takes over the totality of individual, family and social needs and, in subordinating them to the market, also reshapes them to serve the needs of capital" (56). He says to understand this new occupational structure, is to investigate how capitalism has trans-

formed society into “one gigantic marketplace. Thus capital destroys old occupations, creates new ones, and then subjects these to the separation of conception and execution” (57).

These assertions have become predictive of globalization trends as rising labor costs lead to the flexibilization of labor as a key strategy to overcome the problem. The international division of labor confines high-technology jobs in the “Center” and fragments peripheral jobs into disaggregated sites in developing countries where cheap labor and raw materials abound. Subcontracting as a type of flexible labor arrangement spans homework or “paid work” done at home, to accommodate the intermittent hours available for women to undertake such type of work. This activity through “homework” invariably expands capitalist work sites into the private sphere, breaking down the boundaries between private and public life. The practice, at times, extends to neighbors who are unable to go to the factory, but who get attracted to secure work quota through a factory worker, and in the process, configure a “communitized” work floor. Subcontracting as a development in the current disaggregation of capitalist production system has become a major force that is definitely providing supplementary income for households, at the same time that it is altering the contour of the traditional patriarchal home by connecting it to the public sphere. This condition is unraveling a dispersing effect on the nature of control and power over the labor process, the key transformative factor in capitalism, while generating a communitized worksite. Women subcontractors and subcontracted workers are admittedly accepting of this developing work arrangement as it offers work options on job activity and worksite that combine well with the accommodation of domestic duties in the process of earning supplementary income. That for the first time in women’s lives, the situation is allowing them to make choices appears to alter the traditional position of subordination.

These developments are leading to the theoretical directions of A. Giddens (1991), which he describes as a condition “towards human emancipation, which means being free from the dogmatic imperatives of tradition,” and in the situation of women, it is to move away from the control of patriarchy. Initially, Giddens referred to this potential as emancipatory

politics on the more macro level as it envisions a more organized and collective movement for social transformation. However, later on, he brings it down to the reality of the routine experiences of everyday life (1992) and refers more specifically “to the politics of self-actualization or life politics in a reflexively ordered environment, where that reflexivity links self and body to systems of global scope ...” (214). The scenario highlights the condition of women subcontractors as they negotiate with patriarchal husbands and work supervisors to facilitate work options within the capitalist scheme of labor flexibility. The outcome of these negotiating initiatives characterize the emerging “spaces” which women’s work generate as they creatively and craftily adjust to the constraining as well as the enabling impact of a globalized worksite.

Study Site, Description, and Subjects

The study was undertaken in Negros Occidental and covered selected barangays and sugar farms in the province, where subcontracting factories are located employing women workers in the farm and marginalized urban areas in the periphery of the capital city, Bacolod. With the farms containing about three generations of workers, although increasingly being reduced by urban job opportunities and overseas employment, abundant female labor still remains. With all these converging with the enduring patriarchal value of female domesticity in rural farms, the site unravels the kind of labor, which matches almost perfectly the requirements of late capitalism.

The study utilized the triangulation method combining social surveys, interviews, limited life accounts of selected young (early 20s-early 30s) and older (40s and above) women workers, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The sampling was drawn from the population of subcontracted workers residing in the peripheries or urban poor areas of selected barangays of cities and towns of Negros Occidental. Purposive sampling was also utilized in selecting sugar farms or “haciendas” whose owners are into cottage industries combined with farm work. There were 398 women subcontracted workers interviewed using the survey form. From the sur-

vey sample was drawn participants for the limited life accounts using age as a criterion, while for the FGD, a general invitation for women participants was issued.

The researcher collected life accounts from where specific insights and perceptions of women workers were derived. Selected verbatim responses of women were, likewise, drawn from these accounts and together with other subjectivities evoked by the other qualitative techniques used, they were subjected to interpretation in the context of the prevailing troubled husband-wife relationship. From the interpretations were elicited specific themes that characterize the challenges being raised by women workers to arrive at the nexus of varying levels of accommodation and confrontation with patriarchal demands.

In terms of work characteristics, the nature of work, compensation, and type of employment also distribute these women subcontracted workers. There are two types of employment falling under regular and subcontracted categories. More than half of the respondents, 61%, are subcontracted on "*pakiao*" system or quota system (work priced by piece but assigned in volume). There is still a sector of workers who are subcontracted, but observing an irregular work schedule, at times daily or weekly, depending upon their availability. Altogether, regular or irregular, 85% of these subcontracted workers are compensated on a quota basis. The average compensation on a daily basis (per piece) amounts to PhP105.89, while it is PhP676.65 for the weekly basis on "*pakiao*," and PhP2,270 for the monthly basis. Some of the women (34%) have been into subcontracting from one to three years, while alongside are women, 31% of them, who have been engaged in subcontracting for more than seven years.

With agriculture as a dominant source of employment in the province, both men and women are regularly employed, although the women are not as regularly hired as men are. They are traditionally recruited only for peripheral farm jobs such as cleaning up the land after harvest, planting, weeding, and routine cultivation while the canes are growing. Women mostly stay home undertaking domestic work, and constituting a reserve pool of agricultural labor ready to be tapped when additional help in

farming is needed. Harvest season taps this female labor sector regularly within the cycle of sugarcane production.

Emerging Nature of the Dynamics of Control /Less Control in the Formal Work Process

The trends above appear to reveal a changing dynamics of control given the practice of labor flexibilization as observed above. No longer does control demonstrate a classic linear type that flows from the top of the production organization represented by the supervisor/manager who oversees workers at the bottom of the production hierarchy. Flexibility of labor has brought about the practice of subcontracting arrangements that are more liberal for women, given the nature of prevailing soft manufacture jobs. While regular factory work is the practice, entrepreneurs recognize that domestic chores occupy women, and therefore, choice of time, type of work activity and worksite are allowed, and compensation is adjusted accordingly with either payment by piecework or *pakiao*. For both types of payment, only jobs completed are paid for. This work arrangement subsumes "homework" or "paid work" brought home, which deviates from the formal factory workforce that observes regular scheduled hours within a working day and is strictly monitored by the supervisor in the factory site. "Homework" has a pre-agreed volume and deadline. This job arrangement is a popular choice among the women because they can stay home and do chores in between paid work activities, and with a support system to help with both domestic duties and, at times, even with the completion of "homework," they are encouraged to combine productive with reproductive work. However, supervisors are selective of subcontracted workers who are allowed to be homeworkers: that they are reliable not only in terms of meeting the required volume and deadline, but most of all, that they are dependable in producing quality work. Penalties are accordingly imposed for failure to meet quality standards, volume required, and scheduled deadlines.

The range of products produced is varied including embroidery on garments and woven baskets, native jewelry, knitted shirts, baby clothes, painting on garments, crocheted shirts and picture frames, décor painting,

ceramic and pottery molding and painting, household linens, bags, cards for all occasions, houseware, food processing, furniture, and a wide variety of artificial flowers and other home decors. The planter-entrepreneurs requested the help of TESDA for the skills training of workers. The variety of job activities allowed women to be skilled in several types of jobs, giving them a chance to be shifted from one job type to another depending upon which of the range of products are demanded by the market. Work supervisors are strict on quality of work and women are paid only for work that meets the standard quality set by the factory for specific products.

Work guidelines do not bother women. They willingly accept them as part of their employment. The range of practices and attitudes that their work experiences have evoked have become the source of a novel sense of personal competence, accomplishment, and autonomy not felt before. Specifically, these notions of control are coming from the following specific work practices and work attitudes among the women:

- Being able to choose job type;
- Being able to choose work site;
- Being able to learn new skills with the variety of job types, and with multi-skilled workers preferred;
- Being given a chance to create new designs which can be considered as official designs for bulk production in the factory;
- Being able to earn money which they can allocate and make decisions on across the variety of household needs without consulting the husband;
- Being given a chance to secure as much work quota for as long as they observe the guidelines on quality, volume and completion schedule;
- Feeling motivated and satisfied over what they do;
- Being on their own in seeking solutions to health problems.

While adjustments in work schedules, at times, require women to appeal to work supervisors for time extension of work deadlines, or a more flexible work schedule to cope with the pressure of household requirements, or even change of work assignments/schedule to accommodate home nurturance tasks, women admittedly still feel comfortable, raising no complaints. But there are moments when women claim they feel

less control over their work as there is no certainty regarding the supervisor's response to appeals. Nevertheless, women interpret rising notions of control which they gain by holding a job to be positive in slowly overcoming their subordination at home, coupled with being able to appeal to work supervisors regarding work schedule in the midst of tight deadlines to take care of a sick child, husband or mother. All these constantly reconfigure work expectations at work as well as at home. While conflicting expectations drive women into a swirling adjustment between the requirements of home and productive work, the process reconstitutes their identity towards having a new sense of self-esteem, even when they double their efforts complying to prevailing expectations as wife and mother.

Control/Less Control over Rising Tension at Home

Observations and interviews reveal how often women complain of uncooperative husbands, and their wounded feelings which they keep to themselves, as the men raise issues of neglect of family. Women refuse to accept the accusation of neglect since there has never been an intention to escape or evade the home. However, husbands refuse to believe their wives no matter how they impress upon them that this accusation is unfair. For the women, what they are hoping for, is support from husbands particularly in doing home chores. But most husbands show agitation and express anger over the issue, followed by rushing out of the house in a rage, or by a powerful display of violent emotions at the moment of confrontation. Wives have learned to respond in varied ways from being patient and accommodating to becoming expressive of their anger and disappointment over their husbands. The tension shows in the constant quarrel over domestic chores left unfinished, and the expectation of wives for husbands to take over these chores when they have the time, given that women are equally into paid work as they are. Some men do support their wives especially in the care of children although more frequently, the eldest daughter or a grandmother takes over the younger members of the family in the absence of the mother. With an extended family, members of the family regularly constitute a support system both for reproductive and

productive work when women seek help for rush orders, and some members are skilled enough to help. The support for productive work is possible for homework arrangements.

The practice of homework at times intensifies the tension. Homework expands the shopfloor to include the private space of homes where hours of work go beyond the official hours of work. This practice also attracts other women who cannot go to the factory but are willing to do homework by attaching themselves to regular subcontracted workers. The arrangement requires a regular subcontracted worker to secure a work quota that will accommodate other women in the community who wish to do paid work but cannot be part of the regular workforce in the factory. The outcome of this practice is the interconnection of several households in the community doing homework activities, leading almost to a level of a "communitized workfloor." This development raises the issue of control being diffused into the households in the community, assuming a capillary form, either in terms of "the gaze" of other women subcontracted workers as to whether one is doing the job within quality standards and promptly, or an internalized decision to come up with quality work, and to receive the compensation for job accomplished under specified guidelines.

Data from interviews and limited life accounts tell of women's growing assertiveness to reason out, converse and/or dialogue with husbands with respect to requests for them to participate more in household chores. The following thematic table is constructed to show partly a nexus of accommodation and resistance/defiance that appears to characterize the responses of women on varying levels of confrontation from where can be derived the prevailing dynamics of control at home.

Although subordination appears to dominate the relationship between the spouses, there appears to be an emerging predisposition among the women to create "spaces" both in the restructuring of the traditional sexual division of labor at home which tends to raise more altercations between the spouses as the husband resists the wife's persistence to engage in productive work while requesting him to perform chores left undone. Some women are negotiating, partially complying,

Verbatim quotes	Meaning	Type of Response	Theme
Husb: "Kinahanglan tapuson mo ini!" (You need to finish this!)	Husband expecting wife to finish a chore		
Wife: "Sige lang, himu-on ko na pag-abot ko ..." (OK, I'll do it when I get home). This is the case of a wife responding to a husband's command	Working wife willing to do things for the husband.	Accommodation	Subordination (Full compliance)
Husb: "Ang labada indi mo biya-an dal!" (Do not leave the laundry there!)	Husband wants laundry done.		
Wife: "Subong na, malaba ko dason ma-obra ko karon asta sa gabi-i" (Will wash now and work late tonight).	Wife does laundry before leaving for work.	Accommodation	Subordination (Full compliance)
Husb: "Sigue lakat ka lang kag biya-an mo lang ang balay!" (Go on, just leave the house!)	Husband resisting wife's leaving for paid work.		
Wife: "Dasigon ko lang obra ko. Dason pa-uli ko dayon" (Will try to finish soonest, then will be home).	Complying partly	Negotiation	Subordination (Partial compliance)
Husb: "Indi ka lang ma-obra kay nag-masakit ang bata" (Skip work and take care of the sick child).	Husband tells wife to take care of sick child.		
Wife: "Palihug lang ikaw tan-aw sa iya karong aga, kag pauli lang ko alas dose, dason ako lang." (Please, take care of the kid this morning, then I go home at noon and take over from you)	Wife requests husband to take care of child-in the morning, and she comes home at noon and takes over.	Negotiation	Subordination (Partial compliance)
Husb: "Ginbiyaan mo lang ang bata didto!" (You just left the child there!)	Husband expecting working wife to take care of the child		

Verbatim quotes	Meaning	Type of Response	Theme
Wife: "Dali lang na, mag-undertime lang ko" (Will be quick, will work undertime).	Wife meeting husband halfway.	Negotiation	Subordination (Partial compliance)
Wife: "Kung ma-untat ka inom, kag buligan mo ko dire sa balay, indi ko maddala obra sa gabi-i!" (If you stop drinking, I will not bring homework to do!)	Wife asking husband to stop drinking in exchange for not doing homework	Compromise	Dialogue
Husb: "Tan-awan ta kun matuod na" (Let's see whether you can really do it).	Husband does not fully agree but shows willingness to agree.		
Husb: "Ano! Ako na lang ma-obra dire, na-buang ka na gid!" (What! I will be the one to do the chores, you're crazy!)	Husband totally resisting doing domestic chores		
Wife: "Ga-obra ko, indi ko buang. Ikaw gid ang buang. Ga-pabulig lang ko sa imo!" (I'm working. I'm not crazy. Just asking for your help!)	Wife disgusted	Resisting	Contesting
Husb: "Gasabat ka na sang todo. Layas ka gid!" (You are now disagreeing with me. Get out of here!), said in anger.			
Wife: "Wa-ay man ko ginahimo mala-in. Gabulig gani ko sa imo. Ikaw gid, luyag mo lakat, sigue lakat, indi ko!" (I'm not doing anything wrong. I'm helping you in fact. You leave, not me!)	Wife clarifying but husband angry.	Resisting	Contesting

trying to arrive at a compromise, clarifying issues, or even resisting patriarchal demands. The household has lately evolved a dynamic that is slowly opening certain crevices where women are locating themselves with their rising agency.

On the other hand, reinforcing this trend are the claims among women about a growing sense of productivity as they experience how their sharpening skills at work contribute to the rising capacity of factories to meet market demands, as more and more, product orders increase, and factory managers increasingly rely on women's capacity to meet their work quota promptly. The women share their excitement over this as they share how happy and satisfied they are over a new sense of their person. Knowing that this capacity now allows them to contribute to household income, wives are observed to be less passive in accepting their degraded status; although generally compliant, they are now reacting to the husbands' pressure on them to perform domestic chores combined with paid work. Women counter this pressure with an equal demand for men to participate more in undertaking domestic chores, in exchange for their increased contribution to household income. Wives claim husbands do not easily accede to this demand despite their visible inability to cope with both domestic and productive work combined. However, women are determined to pursue subcontracting and further claim that not even their husbands can prevent them from doing "paid work."

Such clashing expectations of women create unending tensions, not only in the area of domestic chores but in the other aspects of conjugal relations. While domestic tensions rage, women at work are consumed by the work quota that equally creates anxieties at the workplace as supervisors strictly demand completion of quota on schedule. The women of the sugar industry, indeed, are caught in the web of patriarchal control both at home and at work, and this kind of reality continuously creates the tensions between productive and reproductive work.

Conclusion

With homes and the larger community becoming part of the configuration of the new production organization, the emerging processes of capitalist control are now intruding into the privacy of individual lives. Earlier instances of conflicts cited especially among women engaged in “homework,” represent how the invasive control mechanisms of capitalist logic of maximum production with the least costs, enters the home and converges with patriarchal control, socially locating women into a kind of position where options seemingly appear extremely limited, deepening subjugation in the midst of the impoverishing circumstances of their lives. Some women feel a little discomfort on account of unfulfilled home chores as admitted during interviews, saying, “*gamay pa ko, gintud-luan na ko magsirbe sa bana parehas sang ginahimo sang nanay ko sa akon tatay* (in my younger years, I was already taught to serve a husband, the way my mother served my father).” And realizing how productive work deprives the home of their necessary participation makes women feel guilty. This view is so telling of how deeply embedded patriarchal values have been during the years of formative socialization that they remain an enduring part of their persons. For this reason, many of them admit a sense of guilt which remains as a caustic, yet buried feeling that keeps disturbing them. However, women also admit that the rewards of paid work overcome the feelings of guilt after a while.

As the new process of control expands beyond the factory into the privacy of homes, continuing on to the public sphere of the community, the power that control exudes in the lives of women takes on a Foucauldian character, “capillaric” in its manner of penetrating and proliferating within the spheres of women’s involvements in reproductive and productive work. This form of expansion transforms, thereby, the singular source of control in the classical Marxist sense into more varied forms while work relationships take on a network pattern via organizing homes, neighborhoods and communities as the expanding worksites attract more varied labor. Inherent in this novel process within Foucault’s bias for unraveling “differences” in contrast to the totalizing unity of structuralism, is the rise

of more plural and multiple forms of accommodations and resistances as relations are configured and reconfigured, both in the private and public areas of women's engagements. The outcomes arising from this situation which women confront unravel tensions, risks, accommodations, fulfillment/satisfaction as well as resistances in women's practices as they simultaneously struggle to fulfill the requirements of two different sites that have lost their boundaries with the regularity of women's homework.

With the fusion of public with private spheres in women's lives follows the intensification, therefore, of the plural and conflicting demands on them. Home demands merge with paid work requirements, private with public spheres. Within this context, the demands of husbands are no longer met with passivity and subservience; rather with a more active assertion of an agent slowly realizing her capacities, and being enabled by a range of plural possibilities given the chance to intersperse paid work with homework. Subcontracting provides options for women and parallel possibilities with respect to work arrangements can be visualized within the major guidelines defined by the factory. Generative of these pluralities would be both the positive and negative outcomes of the rising control mechanisms within the structure of women's condition. Women are still agricultural workers and harvest seasons call them to work in the fields while they continue subcontracted work as homeworkers. Especially among "hacienda" residents, a woman's loyalty to the sugar planter will prevent her from refusing to work in the farm. There are times, therefore, that women are both into agricultural and non-agricultural work, the latter taking the form of homework.

The crucial issue in this process is the location of women as objects in structures constituting them into subjugation from where they are reconstituting themselves as subjects. The responses of women are varied and can be displayed along "a nexus of accommodation and resistance" which characterizes women who remain dutiful to traditional expectations, then stretching to various shades of compliance to resistance, in between which lies differing degrees of compliance and non-

compliance to tradition. This type of response takes on the nature of women's responses in the 1998 study by Petchesky and Judd, which raised a rising alternative to the usual subservience of women to the issues of reproductive rights. In this case, women are demonstrating a show of control over their own capacity to make decisions independently of their husbands.

That this process highlights women's initiatives to reinvent themselves is seen in how they handle and manage themselves in defiance of patriarchal values that used to dominate them in their own homes. The site of a new identity construction as a subordinate is at the same time the site of resistance and struggle for the reinvention of the self. These "differences" in the responses of women within their location in dominant structures represent those potentials, which traditionally were muffled and locked deep inside the privacy of their lives, and which are slowly surfacing as paid work enlivens the release from within such initiatives in reconstituting their identity.

At this point of the work dynamics, the nature of the rising "capillarie" control that governs the communitized workforce entraps women in the confining requirements of paid work. The work scenario appears constrained until the women themselves share how their break periods translate to opportunities for them to talk to each other about their experiences as women; their frustrations with their husbands, and their attempts to counter patriarchal demands with resistances when such demands become unreasonable. Being women among women, they discover a friendship that allowed them to exchange views about their personal experiences and derive learning and insight from each other's life story. Problems and issues at home are shared, talked about and given a range of solutions; older women give advice to younger women on how to relate to husbands, altogether creating "spaces" for them from where to derive strength to face unresolved problems that constantly disturb everyday life. Thus, from work, the women go home with a renewed vigor to face the tension of home relationships made vulnerable by paid work.

Within the spirit of sharing, women's position has become animated by Anthony Giddens' (1987, 1991) conception of social life as not merely determined by social forces. At the same time, he indicated that human agency and social structures are in an interactive relationship with each other, and it is the repetition of the acts of individual agents referred to as practices which reproduce the social structure. Giddens views societal structures as "constituting rules, resources and relations as organized properties of social systems that govern human action" (1987). With individuals as knowledgeable actors (human agency), and the potentials of non-adherence to rules which no longer serve the purposes of human needs, human practices may take the form of resistances which may occur in everyday actions and which represent the reproduction of new forms of practices more relevant to the constant flux of social life. The moments of sharing among the women brought about by paid work opened channels for expressing themselves from a common position of subordination from where initiatives to counter dominant structures of relationships are processed and possibilities are visualized in the reconstitution of new identities as women.

Armed with new insights, women go home reanimated in their negotiating strategies with husbands, and at work with work supervisors, while even more determined to pursue paid work in the midst of prevailing resistances. With a new perspective regarding their capacities to create visions for themselves, and "spaces" from where to rise with increasing notions of control and innovative tactics, the women in this study are willingly confronting the struggle against the subversion of their position. The use of the concept "space" comes from Baudrillard's transformative sense of geographical experience; "mediating the experience of environments beyond themselves, transforming the wider world ... and revealing what it supposes to reveal...and what it succeeds in revealing in the process" (Baudrillard 1983: 25, 174). Women create these spaces as they reason their way out of the routine problems of combining reproductive and productive work. Spaces, whether at home or at work, as experienced by women subcontracted workers, are intended to be seen as sites of

power where women can visualize, configure and initiate the range of possibilities in negotiating within structures that dominate in the process of unleashing empowering initiatives in constructing a new self-identity. This kind of space is where women can innovate, alter or modify practices that inhibit or restrict the actualization of new constructions of the self.

This condition of women's work is historically specific as the globalized tendencies of capitalism endure. Labor flexibilization is definitely reconstructing the shop floor, and sharpening the domination of spaces, endlessly privileging capitalism, while increasing its contradictory development as disaggregation of production apparently moves worksites and workers away from the control of the capitalist gaze. Depending upon the further development of the material infrastructure surrounding capitalist production, there is no certainty to what extent the processes of negotiation will erode patriarchy as spheres between private and public boundaries continue to collapse, intensifying the merger of domestic and productive sites, and further reconfiguring women's work and women's identities.

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