

EFFECTS OF TEA PRODUCTION ON WOMEN'S WORK AND LABOUR ALLOCATIONS IN EMBU DISTRICT

By

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A thesis presented in partial fulfilment for the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts (Anthropology) at, Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi.

August, 1990

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DECLARATION

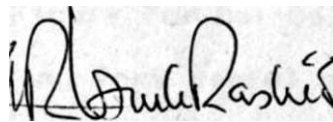
This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for
an academic award in any other University.

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This thesis has been submitted with my approval
as a University Supervisor.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is impossible to name all those who contributed to the completion of this work: the many people who welcomed me warmly into their homes, individuals who spent many hours discussing the various effects of tea production and other forms of commercialized agriculture in their lives and all personnel of KTDA head office and the field staff. To all of them I owe my gratitude.

There are those individuals whose efforts stand out in this work and to whom I am greatly indebted. They include Dr. J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid who

was an enthusiastic supervisor of this thesis since its inception. This work gained tremendously from his constructive criticism, unfailing assistance and encouragement. Although I stubbornly insisted on the last word, he never lost his patience. Dr. N. Kipury for her diligence in critically assessing this study and making very useful suggestions. Dr. Anne Fleuret for her enthusiasm at the onset of this study through her stimulating comments and suggestions. Dr. Pepe Roberts of University of Liverpool for invaluable key references and her critical mind in examining the first drafts of this study's proposal. The entire body of academic staff of the Institute of African Studies for teaching me. Dr. E.H.N. Nieru, Dr. T. Zeleza, Dr. S. Khasiani, Dr. T. Kanogo, Ms. K. Adagala deserve to be mentioned. Mr. E.B.N. Rachuonyo who sacrificed his free time to type and retype this work.

Special thanks to the University of Nairobi for granting me a scholarship and research funds without which this study could have been impossible. In this connection, I am grateful to professor G. S. Were, the director of the Institute of African Studies for his continued inspiration and intelligent guidance throughout the course. The secretaries of Teachers Service Commission and Kenya National Examination Council for granting me study leave which enabled me to attend the course.

Finally^ I wish to thank my husband and children most sincerely for what they very well know.

Esther I. __Njirp

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAWORD	Association of African Women for Research and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEMA	Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association
GNP	Gross National Product
ILO	International Labour Office
KTDA	Kenya Tea Development Authority
N.d.	No date
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
U.K.	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WID	Women in Development
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

MEANING OF KIEMBU WORDS

Agwimi - Professional hunters. Those who stayed away in the wild hunting and thriving on venison from wild animals.

Aka a mitaa - Street Women

Athi - Hunters who engaged in hunting destructive wild animals such as those who destroyed crops. Such hunters were not full-time and when they came home they brought meat which was considered a delicacy.

Atumia - Another name for women which connotates those with scaled lips. Aka is the other name which means builders of a home

Ciondo - Plural of kiondo - a hand woven string basket

Icembe - Similar to Jembe the Swahili name for hoe

Irima - Traditional Labour Group. Asking people to come for a labour group is known as gutumana irima

Ivanga - Plural for kivanga^the machete

Kigori - A skin body cover

Kuguma - A light form of cultivation usually uprooting stubborn shrubs

Kumangaria Mwana - To escort a baby

Kunuguna - To grumble

Kurogwa - To be bewitched

Kutheera - To weed lightly e.g., to cover broadcasted seeds

Kuuna Mugunda - To break earth of a first farmland

Mariika - Age sets and generation sets

Marugia-aka - Derogatory words used to refer to jumping women

Mururu - Cylindrical containers,

Mitaaru - Highways

Mucii - Homestead

Mutungi - A type of cylindrical tank or water container strapped on the head and carried on the back.

Ngamba - An area that had been cultivated but left to be overgrown. (See also Rware below).

garanga - A huge kiondo or string basket

Ngatha - A pet name for an industrious woman

Ngwataniro - Another name for labour groups, meaning fellowship

Nthata - Fruitless

Ruraiyo - Bride wealth

Rware - An old farm land

Samweli - Magical herbs probably a corruption from the name of the person who sells them.

ABSTRACT

This Study examines sexual division of labour and its impact on gender relations among smallholder tea farming households of Embu district. It addresses problems women face as a result of capitalization and commercialisation of production which have been deplored in many studies. Among these are increased workload and remunerations which are not commensurate to their labour input. The justification for this study lies on the choice of the geographical site, the target population and the approach taken.

Embu people, particularly women in commercialized production have not been studied by anthropologists before. The author felt a need to examine the effects of commercial agriculture on women's work allocations along a cultural bias. This is more important currently when cultural approaches to development are gaining popularity in Kenya.

This study is guided by the reproduction model of the Marxist feminists which the author finds appropriate for Investigating and analysing gender roles and relations. In addition, the model has allowance and potential for the identification of the basic tenets and assumptions of role allocations and power between sexes In a historical perspective.

The research design makes use of a variety of ways to collect and analyse data. Documentary sources, participant observation, time-use surveys and interviews were among the methods used to obtain quantitative and qualitative information.

It was found that agricultural activities before adoptions of commercialised tea production in the area has initiated socio-economic differentiations among households. It is these that have been intensified by tea production. Currently, there are relatively more marked hierarchies based on the size of tea farms, use of labourers, the composition and age of a household members-) among others. Consequently, labour prioritisation to livestock, food production and other household activities is in acute competition with that directed to tea production.

Furthermore, although tea production has increased women's workload generally, it has brought some advantages for some. Most tea producing households have relatively more incomes than before, better housing, clothing and other amenities in their houses. Even though tea production has aggravated family conflicts, there are some households in which women have gained influence over general management of family incomes. There were remarkable instances where women have taken advantage of available options to negotiate their rights within their own households. It was clear that most women recognise the importance and relationship between their labour contributions in tea production and their own well being now and in future.

In conclusion, the study revealed that commercial tea production may have a promising future for Embu women, their increased workload notwithstanding

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Many Kenyans depend on agriculture for their livelihood. In its efforts to increase agricultural productivity, improve rural areas and raise the living standards of rural peoples, the Kenya government has encouraged expansion of export crops. Emphasis has also been put on the production of export crops due to severe foreign exchange crisis. Smallholder farmers in rural areas are viewed as an important force of production organization for development of crops for local consumption and for export. Focus on rural areas is justified by the fact that 80% of Kenyans live there and are engaged in small scale farming (Bahemuka 1985:1).

Tea, the well known beverage, has its origins in the orient where it is known as *Chai*. Chinese legends attribute its discovery to Sheng Nung a venerable emperor who lived around 2750 BC. This emperor was a renowned herbalist and healer who was careful in matters of hygiene. One day while boiling his drinking water, some leaves from an overhead tree fell in it. The emanating aroma was so tantalizing that when the emperor tasted it, he found it to be deliciously flavoured. From that time, the tea plant, a species of *Camellia sinensis*, became a treasured plant (Rapley, 1983:7).

European trading companies introduced tea from China to different parts of the world. In East Africa it was grown at the Botanical gardens in Entebbe Uganda in 1900. In Kenya, tea was first grown in 1903 when a few bushes were planted near Limuru. During the 1920's tea plants spread gradually to other districts.

After World War II, European owned estates in Kericho received a boost from scientific research which aimed at modernising the crop's production by improving its planting, plucking and manufacture {Tea Times, 1987:6-7). At that time Africans were not allowed to grow their own cash crops because their labour was needed in European farms, so they did not grow tea. Some African farm labourers, however, acquired skills in cash crop farming. For example many Embu people learnt about tea growing while working on European farms.

Eventually the Swynnerton plan of 1954 recommended agricultural development plans that would accelerate smallholder production in African lands in Kenya including tea planting by Africans (Brown, 1963:3). The tea board that was set up in 1950 under the aegis of the then Ministry of Agriculture, allowed Africans to plant tea on an experimental basis. This sparked smallholder tea farming in Central, Rift Valley and Nyanza provinces. The experiments were successful and the first factory for manufacturing African grown tea was opened at Ragati in Mathira division of Nyeri District in 1957. In that year, Special Crops Development Authority was established to meet smallholder requirements. This body was terminated in 1964 when the independent Kenyan government established the Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA) to hasten smallholder production among Africans.

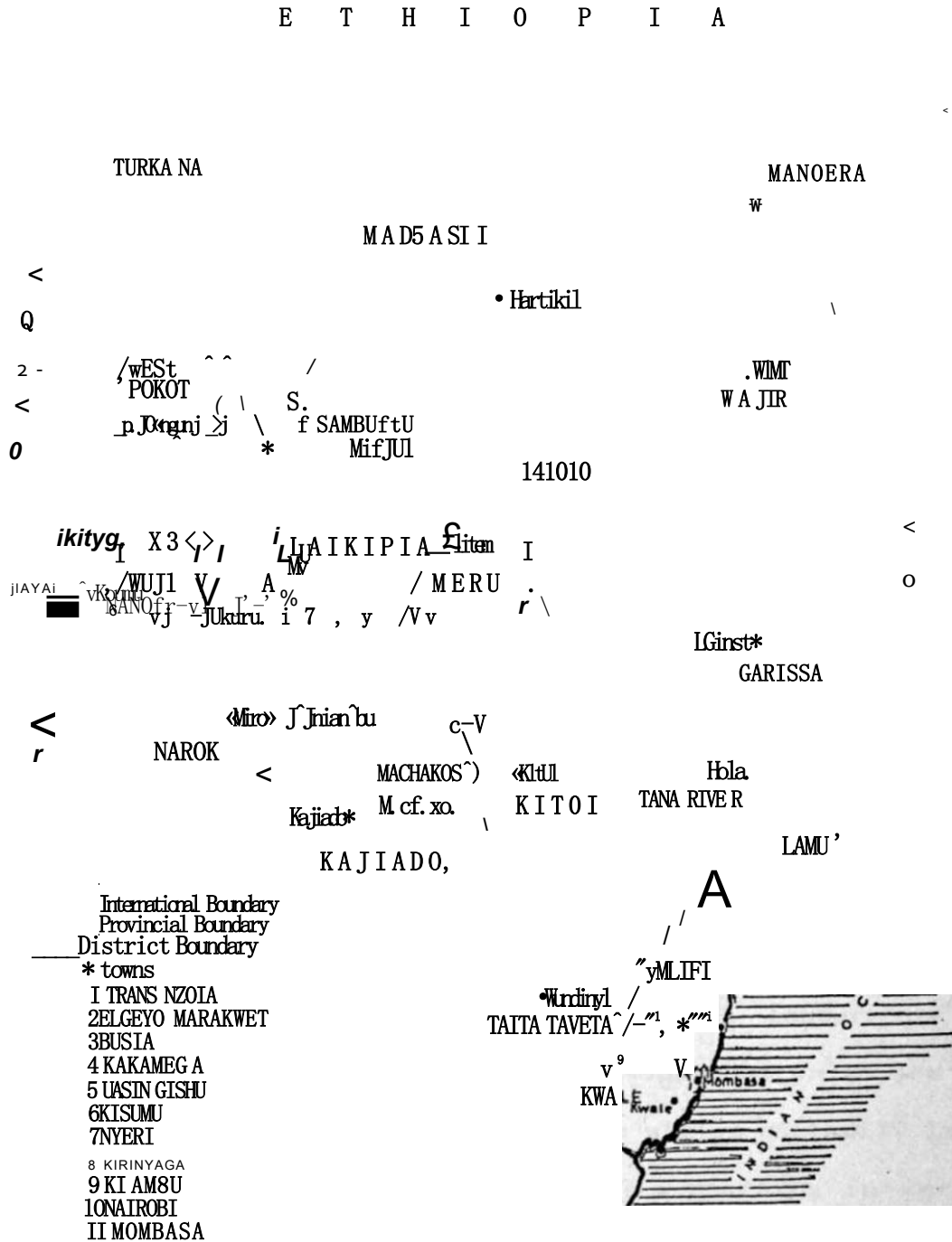
The story of Kenya's tea development under smallholder production is one of unprecedented success (Kamuyu, 1987:1-4). By the mid 1970s, the tea industry had made great improvements. As

Swainson (1977) noted, KTDA has proved that smallholder tea production by Africans was economically viable to the Farmers as it facilitated rapid income redistribution in many parts of the country in comparison to plantation and state farms which require large-scale and high-capital investments. The small holder also incorporates methods of traditional economy whose orientation is production through family labour for household consumption. Smallholder schemes are advantageous in that they provides quality higher yields. In 1988, for instance, smallholder tea growers export contribution was 84,692,559 kilogrammes, 51.6%, compared to that of estates which were 79,339,869 kgs., 48.4% of the national output of 164,030,422 kgs. (Tea Times 1989:3).

The foregoing shows that smallholder/outgrower schemes are the most cost effective way of increasing output in tea at present. Moreover since 1964, tea production and price have steadily increased, unlike the cases for coffee, pyrethrum and dairy products. In 1987/88 financial year KTDA paid KSh. 1.5 billion to small holders in Kenya, which has greatly improved the lives of the smallholder tea farmers (KTDA 1988/89:4).

Embu district, (Fig T page 4), is one of the six districts forming the Eastern Province. As Haugerud (1982:19) noted, since independence the district is marked by a great expansion of cash crops and remarkable changes in land use. Tea growing is within the Tea-agro-ecological zone (see Fig II page 6). All tea farming in Embu is on smallholder schemes except for the recently introduced Nyayo Tea Zone. Apart from the experiments of the early

Fig. I. LOCATION OF EMBU DISTRICT



Source: Republic of Kenya 1989 - 1993

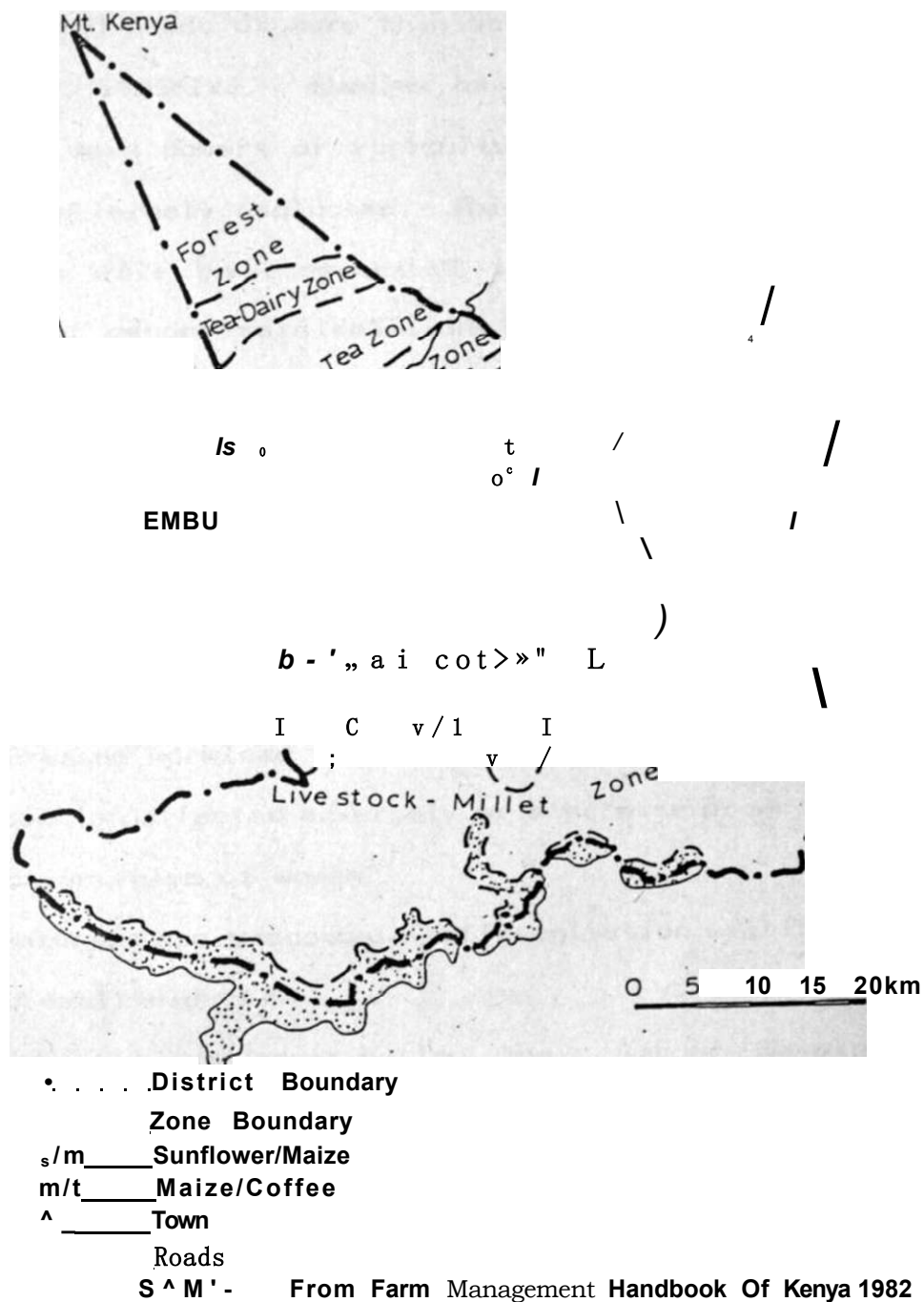
1950s. growing of the crop in Embu was effective after the introduction of KTDA. Enterprising farmers decided to maximize on the utilization of available economic resources (Wharton, 1971:566). Smallholders who are engaged in tea production in Embu grow the crop in their own land and they rely mainly on family labour.

This study is concerned with the way agrarian changes in the form of cash crop production, commercial dairy production and non-farm employment have changed social and cultural aspects of the Embu people. The study dwells on how the process of commercialization and capitalization among these people has brought different effects on men's and women's lives. It is thus not restricted to rural women but addresses itself to the interaction by gender within and among several households in Embu.

Former studies of smallholder schemes in Africa (see Swainson, 1977; Cowen, 1981) have focussed on economic factors as parameters for change and development, paying little attention to social and cultural aspects. Furthermore some studies are biased in that they regard smallholder households as always being headed by males who have the power to control the labour of their families. Households are presented as homogeneous units and women are invisible as they are relegated to the status of family labour.

While it is true to say that women's position in terms of access to and control over labour has deteriorated as a result of modernization in farming, there is need to show how this has taken place. Recently, development planners and scholars have been

Fig. H. EMBU DISTRICT: SIMPLIFIED AGRO-ECOLOGICAL ZONES



concerned with women's roles and differences in the sexual division of labour. The reason for this is the increased awareness of the economic potential and needs of more than half the World's population (Palmer, 1985:IX). Studies have unearthed the fact that women are the main powers of agricultural output yet their potentials have been largely neglected. This study contends that development efforts will be accelerated if and when agrarian changes take note of gender role relations among other factors. This is because women's work is crucial in all production, especially smallholder tea production as was found in this study. In order to know whether or not the new form of production has aggravated the problem of women's marginalization, the following questions were asked and answered:

- What were gender role relations like in pro-colonial Embu?
- Is there increased workload as a result of tea production?
- Has tea production affected adversely or otherwise productive and reproductive roles of women?
- Has tea accentuated socio-economic differentiation within and between Embu smallholders?
- Why do women continue contributing their labour despite inadequate monetary rewards?

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Gender roles and division of work in households are topics that have attracted a host of scholarly thought. Since 1975 when the International Woman's Year was declared by the United Nations

Organization, unprecedented research policies and programmes addressed to specific problems of women all over the world have offlarged. Presently, there is a growing body of literature documenting women's problems. The traditional division of labour between sexes is being challenged for it accommodates aspects of inequality, exploitation and subordination of women. More specifically, there is a search for the type of social change necessary to eliminate marginalization of women (Beneria, 1982:XI-XV). Evidence of transformations in gender role relations during the development of agrarian economies of Third World countries has been cited (Boserup, 1970). Excessive dependence on agricultural export commodities in economic systems of most developing countries, has certain effects on gender role relations.

Some studies have proposed that one of the commonest effects of introduction of cash crops in rural areas is the relegation of women to subsistence or food crop production while men are said to concentrate on profitable cash crops production. This author disagrees with the relegation argument. Although it is possible that women are participating to a greater degree now in all phases of production even of food crops, it is the tendency of agricultural policies by many governments to make women central to production of crops destined for the market (Young, 1980:4). In Embu, women in tea growing smallholders farms are involved in both cash and subsistence crop production. This production is on a household basis and women work as unpaid family labour. The

proceeds from their work are controlled by the heads of their households, usually the men. There is need, therefore, to explore how far the concept of dual economy of men engaging in cash crops while women engage in subsistence cultivation is relevant.

There may not be a marked ratio of increase in the percentage of female labour time in cash crop production in relation to time spent on food production, but there is a constant flow of labour between self-provisioning sectors of the rural economy and the more capitalised sectors producing for the market (Young 1980:5). Embu women are involved in both. The relegating of women to subsistence cultivation is equivalent to marginalization of women to food crops. It shows that there is a gap in literature of various societies in the world to ascertain the effects of agrarian capitalist developments on women. This study hopes to fill such a gap by focussing on the effects of tea production activities of women in a tea growing area of Manyatta division in Embu district. In this study, the author argues that women are invincible participants in the entire economic life of certain Kenyan societies, the Embu being one such a case in point. Embu women have been integrated in development and the market economy. The study highlights the specific roles assigned to members of productive units within the Embu traditional and modern economic systems. In examining the Embu productive unit, specification of the place and importance of female roles and how they interlock with those of the males is made. Beliefs and ideology behind the division of labour between sexes are also discussed since they are

reproduced over time.

The author is of the opinion that the nature of productive systems in the area of study prior to integration into the market economy needs to be documented. This provides an understanding of Jkdw it has been modified and how that process has affected ponder role relations over generations. Therefore, each of these effects is a labour process involving aspects of control over the means of production which need to t>e understood. For example, there, is need to know who controlled important elements of the means of production such as land and labour? Did men and women have aqua) or unequal means of access to land and other economic resources ?

Changes in the productive systems during the process of integrating the pre-colonial Embu economy into the market economy and the way tJ^ey affect work patterns are discussed. One of these changes is the Swynnerton plan of 1954 whose effects included the consolidation and registration of land as men's private property. This change from corporate land tenureship to individual proprietorship removed access to communal grazing grounds, free farmlands and bushes where firewood was collected (Pala, 1900:195). It removed the usufructory rights of women and other people in Embu from direct access to land and brought control over their labour by men. The ability to command labour by some individuals over others is an important aspect of economic development and there has been insufficient elaboration of this point in the existing literature. The effects of the introduction of cash crops, wage labour and education may have deprived Embu families of important

labour services of their families. Demands for labour by the modern farming systems may have certain constraints on Embu M0imn.

This study sets off from studies in time-use surveys begun by Oboler (1977) and Dixon-Muellor (1985). The aim is to show how intensive labour processes of tea production impinge on the daily activities of Embu women. It highlights certain cultural issues such as allocation of work, property relations, marriage and the value of children which are affected by all forms of production. The study examines the extent to which those in authority are concerned with balanced division of labour by gender so as to initiate reorganization of production (c.f. ILO 1985). It is important that social expectations of Embu people in regard to key coordinating roles in agriculture which have placed women in subordinate positions be investigated.

There has been an erroneous assumption, particularly during the colonial era, that rural households are homogeneous units within which all members have equal access to and rights over household resources. The agricultural policies of the 1960s were directed at the progressive farmers whose improvement and benefits were expected to trickle down to others. Such progressive farmers or any farmer in general were supposed to be men. Women were seen as the labour force of smallholders and were not considered in decision making policies (Lucas, 1986:6). The benefits of increased production of food as well as commercial crops were supposed to trickle down to them through the heads of their households. It was therefore deemed necessary in this study to ask

who within the households controls the proceeds from tea labour processes among others.

The problem of women's remuneration and the reason why women continue working hard even when they are not adequately remunerated for all their labour needs investigation. This study sought to establish whether women of Embu, especially those engaged in smallholder tea production, are caught up in what Chambers (1983:8-10) called a deprivation trap of poverty, isolation, powerless vulnerability and physical weakness. It was found necessary to probe these women so as to know what forces them to keep up with their work and labour allocations. Pala (1974) has reiterated that it is economically unrewarding for the individuals and the country as a whole for women to be deprived of access to monetary incomes in the homes and from the farms. Planners regard the question of who controls family resources as a family affair and one that they need not interfere with (Wachira 8-11-89). KTDA, for example, recognises registered owners of the land on which tea is grown and they ensure that money accrued from tea is theirs. Thus men in the area of this study may be increasing in absolute powers in decision making on cash outputs from tea. Conversely, women may not be expected to know the monetary outputs of their households. Furthermore, the Embu people seem to socially differentiate between the way males and females spend money. For example, expenditure of household income on alcohol, prostitutes and cigarettes by men is in contrast to strong sanctions against such consumption by women. Thus even women with independent

sources of income are somewhat restricted in the way they spend it. Women's problems are thus further complicated by poverty, mainly in form of lack of money and freedom to purchase what they would wish. Lack of money added to their tight work schedules, leaves them completely isolated for they are not able to buy even newspapers, listen to the radio or have access to any form of mass media from where they could obtain useful information on how to liberate themselves.

There is need to investigate the way in which tea production activities have affected other activities of Embu women such as food production, home maintenance and childcare. In many African societies, women are the main producers of subsistence crops while at the same time they take care of the sick, the elderly and the children. In the area of this study have tea production activities become the major work upon which other activities revolve? Tea may have brought about certain effects on the families' welfare in general. Another question that was asked is: does involvement in smallholder tea production in the area of study concentrate solely on increased yields of cash crops disregarding the subsistence production? It is a well known fact that export crops are so crucial in Kenya's economy that they receive the country's priority of infrastructural allocation, crop research, credit extension and marketing facilities (O'dea, 1982:8). It is therefore essential to show the extent to which market economy has penetrated this tea growing community so as to substantiate the allegation that export crops monopolize the best lands while food crops are relegated to

whatever land is unsuitable for cash crops. Is everyone involved in tea production as a grower on individual or hired plots or as a labourer in the tea farms and Mungania tea factory?

The contention by some scholars (Barclay, 1977; Semeti 1974) that although cash crops have increased incomes of the majority of smallholders, there is a threat of malnutrition in the area where they are produced needs further investigation. There is also a need to explore further the assertion that rural farmers are so engaged in commoditination and capitalization that they have no space on their farms for the planting of trees for fuelwood and other uses (Omosa. 1989:19-23).

The study sought to understand the degree and form of differentiation in socio-economic situations of women in the area of study. It is noted that women are not affected in the same way by the increase in workload or lack of control of monetary resources within households. Hunt (1975:1-10) has stated that Kenya has the highest degree of inequality of wealth and income. This may have come as a result of the unequal structures laid by the colonial economy, particularly the introduction of cash crops, education and formal sectors. These have accentuated unequal distribution of wealth whereby some women may be in a position to hire labourers and replace to some degree, their own obligations as family labour to work in their husbands' tea farms. Others hire themselves out as labourers in other people's farms because the incomes from their own farms are not adequate in meeting the needs of their households. Some women may derive income from control of

their "own account" enterprises such as basket traavinu, employment as teachers, among other activities, while others have to negotiate within their con.iugal contracts for monetary incomes.

The causes of socio-economic differentiation for women are still little understood (Roberts, Oral Communication). This study addresses those areas that relate to an understanding of ••omen's status in .ioint farm management; as heads of households consequent to male migration in search of formal employment, or as widows, or unmarried women and also women in polygynous households (Potash, 1986:2-6). Thus while the general hypotheses remains that women have been marginalized by increased work and labour burdens as well as lack of monetary remuneration, the degree to which these are experienced may depend on the extent to which women are differentiated.

Finally this study examines the way women are perceived in social and political affairs, their involvement in leadership of important institutions within the area of study and in the country as a whole. Sexual composition of these institutions and the conditions of women's access to them have been investigated. Chiuri (1989:5-10) has documented how policies such as the District Focus Strategy in Kenya have ignored the problem of gerKier, a factor that has hindered rapid development in rural areas. So far, there has not been an attempt to find out why women in the area of this study are not included in committees such as the Buying Centre Committees which address tea grower's problems at the grassroots level. Could it be that these women are affected by

their relative weakness in the ownership of the means of production which in turn is affected by their position in the social relations of production which is determined by such aspects as marriage customs of the Embu people? Does the patriarchal leadership in these institutions address such issues as women's access to land, water, education and other necessary inputs? Such practical essentials as electricity, piped water inside the homesteads, fuel wood or its substitutes, for example, may not be voiced in the area committees for they are felt more forcefully by the women who are excluded from deliberating them. Thus women's potential for accelerating rural development may not have been understood or appreciated (Mihyo 1989:1-2).

It is along these points that this study proposes to explore the notion of increase in women's workload among Embu households that were mainly subsistence but who have now adopted tea production as a major cash crop among others. The study examines women's workload in both the period before and after introduction of tea production and other forms of modern agricultural activities so as to document the differences.

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The study also looks at households so as to identify the economic and social aspects of differentiation. The existing power hierarchies between males and females are described. Thus the overall intention of this study is to describe and account for: firstly, the differential consequences for men and for women within the households under consideration, of the development of smallholder tea production. Secondly, the causes and consequences

of differences between women within and between households in terms of their control over resources and amount of labour they contribute to farm and household production. Thirdly, the affects of increased work load on women's other activities such as subsistence production, childcare and the home maintenance tasks.

Fourthly the study investigates reasons why women continue accepting intense labour allocations despite the fact that they are inadequately rewarded.

1.3 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study is based on a localized research on rural women. Its intention is to add to the idea that modernization in rural areas has invariably increased work burdens for women. Increased workload for women has been debated for long but few studies have come up with convincing evidence on the subject. This study propounds that the workload for women in tea growing households of Embu district has increased. This has subsequently decreased the time and energy for women's personal welfare, family nutrition, household maintenance and child care. The rationale for this study is to seek out ways by which women's labour may be relieved in order to stop their exploitation and to channel their energies to activities which are beneficial to themselves and to the society as a whole. For example, women could participate more in politics, planning of national policies and other occupations of high status.

From the 1970s, there has been an increase in studies of women in development. The reason for this is the realization that

successful development cannot be achieved without recognition of women's economic and social roles (Gooyer, 1982). Moreover, since the 1975 United Nations conference on women, there has been concern for situations in which modernization is increasing the productivity gap between the sexes. This study, which focuses on tea production in Embu, hopes to generate empirical data to add to the literature concerning the way commercialization of agriculture has condemned women to low productivity, menial jobs, and has increased their workload.

The study, furthermore, hopes to draw the attention of policy makers to women's plight in the tea industry. The crucial role of improving women's human rights and dignity is essential if development is to be understood as being more than mere passage from poor to rich materially. Changing from subsistence economy to cash crop industry should be a process which includes greater human dignity, security and equality of all these involved (Loufti 1985:8-12).

This study provides data that may be drawn upon for the operative strategies of improving the living standards in rural areas. It is a woman to woman study which has made an effort to highlight women's own perception(s) of themselves, their aspirations in life, their views on which direction development in their societies should take and what role they should play in it. Highlighting of the constraints to women's full participation in development is crucial in women studies (Were 1985:6).

Studies by Pala (1974, 1975, 1986), Nasimiyu (1984),

Himelstrand and Backam, (1985) and Suda. (1986) have revealed the diversity of women's heritage from colonial economic structures. They have not, however, exhaustively dealt with the dynamics of sexual division of labour. Knowledge of gender role relations is specially lacking as far as Embu society is concerned. This is in spite of studies conducted in the area by scholars such as Saberwal (1966), Mwaniki (1973, 1974, 1986) and Nieru (1979). There is need for a study that depicts a historical evolution of the dynamics of gender issues in Embu. Such a study is useful in that it would facilitate the gauging of the differential impacts of change within the Embu society and reveal the areas that need assistance (Mueller, 1985:1-3). Such knowledge may enable evaluation of rural development projects through identification of key patterns in division of labour, especially in relation to agricultural policies.

The study is also justified as a base for intellectual exploration because it generates hypotheses, provides ethnographic data on gender issues such as inequalities in gender relations. Women's participation in economic activities is a topic that has attracted a lot of attention because of its importance in contributing to an understanding of the way in which distribution of income and wealth to societal levels is uneven. There is a tendency to underenumerate female workers particularly those whose work is in rural areas. This negative tendency to undervalue female produced goods and services has been criticized by many scholars, for example, the International Centre for Research on

Women (1980); Roqors (1980); Boneria (1982); Anker (1983); and Dixon-Mueller (1985:2). It is hoped that this study will make a contribution towards a correction of the biases noted by the above studies.

The current study is strongly in line with those who feel that it is high time that strategies of improving living standards in the rural areas included information gathered through anthropological perspectives. This is because anthropological research, among other things, seeks to preserve the wholeness of culture of a given community. This is important if the right conceptualisation of people's problems is to be made and their solution found (Williams, 1967:60). This study attempts to highlight gender issues from the perspective of rural women's own views.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

One of the objectives of this study was to find out how women's work and labour allocations in a smallholder tea farming community in Embu could be measured. The exercise was carried out through the use of different methods as shown in chapter three.

The study identifies the categories of Embu women involved in tea production and documents their production before and after tea was introduced. To do this it was necessary to provide a historical background showing important aspects of the way labour was allocated among the Embu people. The aim is to show how women's roles were conceived and functionally related to those of

other members of the family.

Gender issues in Embu society are highlighted particularly those that, emphasize women's roles in tea production. Important changes in the sexual division of labour and of women's access to land and control over labour, agricultural products and other economically and socially important resources are discussed. The extent to which introduction of tea has benefited women in the area of study is examined.

Another objective is to show the extent to which the sampled women see themselves as overworked. Women are not merely passive recipients of work and labour allocations. They are in the process of change in which they actively negotiate their rights and obligations within their households so as to strengthen their position. In studying the effects of tea production activities on women in Embu, their views, priorities and their bargaining power within their conjugal contracts particularly as they relate to power hierarchy of their households are documented.

Finally the interaction between men and women's roles in productive and reproductive activities are portrayed. , It is shown that households are not homogeneous for they consist of men and women, adults and children, each with particular activities and conflicting interests. The study shows the way households of the smallholder tea producers of Embu are affected by the existence of power hierarchies, conflicting interests of the dynamics of gender and inter—generational relationships.

CHAPTER TWO

.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

.1.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews available literature on gender issues particularly that which pertain to effects of cash cropping where Ionian's work and labour allocation are concerned. These will be reviewed under the following headings:

- Studies on Embu people.
- Significance of women's work,
- Women's Work and dependency theories.
- Gender and division of labour,
- Women's work and control of resources,
- Cash crops and women's workload and
- Women's work, its economic importance.

?1.2 Studies on Embu People

Apart from Crawford (1913) who recorded missionary medical work and travel in Embu, most studies of this district were done as recently as after Kenya's attainment of independence. The pioneer work was done by Saberwall (1966) who dealt with precolonial social structures of Embu people. In this work, Saberwall shows relationships between Embu men and women through his description of polygyny. His treatment of sexual division of work in pre-colonial Embu Society is negatively marked by a male bias manifested by his stress that men's work of clearing boshes.

acquisition, maintenance and expansion of livestock was heavy. Women are said to have been confined to the huts where they merely fetched water, gathered firewood, cultivated food crops and did other "small" duties demanded by the needs of the members of their households. The nature of their daily activities is not shown. This work is too general and portrays a picture of the Embu as they were about a century ago. when among other things, tea production had not been introduced in the area.

Moris' (1970) work, forms a starting point in studies of agrarian change and transformation in Embu district. He stressed the significance of Embu district in this respect as it was one of the first places where Africans were allowed to grow cash crops in Kenya. Although he does not deal much on the effects of cash crops on men and women he adequately covers the way people in the district experienced initial conflicts with colonial agricultural policies.

Mwaniki, one of the first graduate scholars from Embu, has made several useful and detailed studies of Embu people (1973, 1974, 1986, among others). His works deserve praise for the good historical accounting of beliefs, social, political and economic issues of Embu people's precolonial era. This provided a useful background information for this study.

Njeru's studies (1975, 1979) have expanded further from where Mwaniki left by providing an anthropological perspective of two Embu societies. His 1979 work raised points on how ecological factors influence people's behaviour. His attempt to explore for

the first time the role allocations in a given environment provided a stepping stone for this study. There is however a need for another attempt to unearth certain issues that are not yet adequately covered by these authors.

Hauqerud's (1982, 1987) studies have focused on a wide topic of agrarian changes relating to land tenure reform among smallholders in the coffee agro-ecological zone of Embu district. She devotes substantial sections of her work on discussions of gender relations but leaves a lot of necessary details which this study attempts to highlight. Other studies of the district are by Brokensha and Glazier (1973); Hunt (1975) Brokensha and Rilelv (1980), and Glazier (1985). These studies have however concentrated on Mbeere people of southern Embu whose cultural practices are similar to those of the Embu people but nowadays there is a difference in their economic activities which is due to growing of cash crops that require different climatic conditions. There is need therefore for anthropological studies directed at highlighting gender issues. The only anthropological base line study was conducted under the District Social-Cultural Project of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi (Were, 1986). Ironically even this very recent study supposed to pursue a holistic and anthropological approach to the understating of Embu people has not fully tackled gender issues related to women's work and labour allocations. It is these that are highlighted by this study but first a review of gender studies in other areas.

2.1.3 Significance of Women's Work

Presently, there is a lot of literature deploring lack of recognition of women's work. National statistics do not record women's work (Hill 1986 : 140-145; Kayongo - Male 1985 :280-290). These scholars have deplored the way development economists have excluded women's work particularly that done by rural women. Terms such as "peasants", "trader" and "worker" Lend to imply that men are the sole participants in those activities thus manifesting a bias against women's economic activities. Home maintenance is not considered as work requiring expenditure of energy. The arduous tasks of food production, processing of raw products, child care and other home maintenance tasks are not considered in formal economic categorizations of work. Likewise, a formal economic definition of leisure is biased in favour of male concepts and terms. Hill (*Ibid*) contends that there are difficulties which impede attempts to study female economic activities. One such difficulty is brought by female subservience in the presence of men during formal interviews or whenever a third person is present. Women tend to rank men above them and investigators are likely to obtain unreliable information about women's economic activities if they depend solely on women's verbal information (See the cartoon on page 26). Furthermore in many formal interviews women are not often even interviewed about themselves (Kipuri, personal communication).

Fig. III.

THE LIE OF THE LAND



SOURCE: AGROFORESTRY, IN DRYLAND AFRICA 1 ICRAF, NAIROBI. 1988.
COURTESY OF ICRAF

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Afshar (1985) has castigated planners' biases for disregarding women's work. Her study on rural women in Sudan demonstrated the low priority ascribed to them in the modern economic ideology. The perceptions of the division of work in the cotton producing sections of Sudan shows women as belonging to a traditional sector which is a hindrance to development. Men on the other hand, are looked at as the natural participators of modernization in agriculture. Tinker (1979:20) has deplored as irrational attitudes by planners for associating occupations according to sex roles by calling them irresponsible stereotyping of people.

Another problem that has been highlighted is that female activities are allegedly less susceptible to statistical measurements for they are more problematic to systematic observation than male activities. The reason for this is alleged to be that rural women are less frequently engaged in formal employment and are mostly concentrated on the sector of unpaid family labour for their households (Rogers, 1980:47-49).

It is said that women tend to engage in their "own account" work which the economists say is hard to evaluate for they (economists) need arithmetic (Hill, 1986:143-145). This is sheer nonsense for as this study found out, it is because these scholars deal with general productive aspects of work instead of specific roles by individuals. No wonder they experience difficulties in statistical measurement of women's work. The problem may however be the result of difficulties encountered in measuring

pre-capitalist production with capitalist tools (Kipuri, personal communication). This study noted that women's activities as family labour could only be adequately measured by those in authority through time-use surveys. This study investigated how using women's burdens such as carrying of a bag of raw foodstuffs placed on top of a water fetching container *mutun/tf** a load of firewood with a baby tied to the front as they come from farm work can be quantified. In order to identify statistical values of these simultaneous work patterns and labour processes new methods of data collection that are not merely formulated to seek broad task specializations are required. This study attempted to generate substantial data so as to point to the increase in workload and other effects of intensive women's work in the area of study. It was found necessary to review briefly some theories related to women's work and labour allocations.

2.1.4 Women's Work and Dependency Theories

Posnansky, (1974: 61) has argued that subordination of women can be traced to the time human species became bipedal. It is then that human pelvic girdle was unable to support a long gestation and the human offsprings were born extremely immature. This state of affairs necessitated long periods of nurture and socialization of children. Females had to stop hunting in order to look after the infants. This marked the beginning of dependency by females on males for they no longer could go out and hunt but stayed at home where they combined reproduction roles with production for their families. This theory is plausible but it does not adequately and

satisfactorily explain the present situation when people's mode of production is not hunting. This idea is explored later under theoretical framework.

Amin (1980:38-40), traces women's subordination to the early phase of class formation. He however cautions that although there is knowledge of how family organizations interrelated with different modes of production, one cannot conclude from this that women are a class exploited by men. To him, women's subordination arises from the domination of capitalist mode over the peasant mode of production.

Brett (1973), goes further in this argument and asserts that colonial society linked pre-colonial economy to the outside world through the system of capitalism and is responsible for women's subordination. Pala, (1981: 8), reinforced this when she reiterated that to understand the situation of African women knowledge of the international division of labour in which Africa has a dependency relationship with Europe and the United States is crucial. The reason for dependency is unequal economic power-relations emanating from this division of labour whereby African countries provide raw materials for industrial production carried out in metropolitan countries. In another context Pala observes
I
that colonialism intensified this dependency as shown by her study of Kisumu district where she noted.

Women were predominantly responsible for agriculture which, in most African societies with subsistence economies, amounted to food production with relatively poor technology. - the hoe
this meant a monopoly of agricultural skills by women (Okeyo 1974: 13-4).

In another context Okeyo (*Thirl*) criticizes those scholars who argue that women's work can solely be seen in terms of non-agricultural skills, they tend to be subordinated. She suggests that new lines in research on women's activities should define the value of women's work in the household and in the farm placing emphasis on its importance for overall production (Pala 1975:15).

Chinchilla (1977:87-103), states that to understand power relations between men and women one has to see them in the context of their mode of production. How women in the third World are affected by their mode of production is part and parcel of an international system based on dependency.

Allen (1974:61) sees development of African export economy as being dependent on rural women. His analysis of effects of modernisation on African women stresses the way export industries have managed to maintain low wages and make huge profits due to women's contribution to family's subsistence from agricultural production. During the colonial era profits extracted from Africa could not have been possible except for the unpaid labour of the wives of the African male labourers of the colonialists who fed, clothed and cared for themselves and their children.

Meillasoux (1981:94) traces dependency to colonial »settler farming where the wages paid to male workers were barely sufficient to cover the cost of maintaining him from day to day during the period of his employment. He concludes that it is the women's contributions to the welfare of their families which supported the

colonial economic system.

Rodney (1972:248) deplores colonialism's distortion of the
I
role and position of women in African societies. He asserts that
olonialists reinforced exploitative tendencies of the existing
African social and cultural tendencies by setting up institutions
and bureaucracies in which women's entry was effectively barred.
Their anti-feminist attitudes were based on their own ideologies.
The articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist modes of
production at the same time ensured that surplus labour resulting
from women's intensive work was undervalued. Social relations of
production especially in rural areas where women performed a lot
of agricultural activities enhanced their exploitation.

Although these scholars have clearly analysed women's work in
both pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production, they have
not dealt with the issue of who controlled and benefited from what
were identified as key - coordinating labour processes. Hence within
the capitalist mode of production were able to exploit the labour
of women. In this issue of exploitation there was little to
differentiate African and European men for they both controlled and
benefited from the situation. There is need also to point out the
way contacts with Europeans whose ideas about the proper roles for
men and women affected the existing division of labour in many
African societies as evidenced by the findings of this study among
the Embu. There is need to review what other scholars have said
concerning gender and division of labour.

2.1.5 Gender and Division of Labour

It is asserted that division of labour along sexual lines is a strongly ingrained human trait which characterises all human organizations. Oakley (1975), has made comprehensive studies clarifying the distinctions between biological sex, whereby men and women are distinguished by their physical features as well as gender relations where the distinguishing factor is the people's culture. Division of labour between men and women is largely on gender even when it is termed as sexual division of labour. Gender roles are determined by culture and not by biology.

Rogers (1980:158-166) argues that division of labour by sex plays a role in production process of almost all societies. Some societies have a more strictly defined sexual division of labour than others. So far it is acknowledged that no biological factors determine gender role relations. Apart from pregnancy and child birth, there are no other activities that affect women's and men's roles. There are morphological, hormonal and possibly neurological or cognitive differences between the sexes (Schlegel 1985:23), but in this study, these debates will not be considered.

The actual pattern of male and female activities, is devised by each society according to its beliefs about reproductive functions of its members. Rogers (1980: 30 - 56) gives examples of the way western industrialised societies have rationalized beliefs about the central importance of women's role in child rearing. They assume that men are naturally incapable of nurturing children. To compensate for this, men are relatively stronger than

women and are more capable of heavy work. Women's work is seen as somehow "not work" or at best light work. It is these beliefs that led early travelers and anthropologists to see other societies as primitive because they were seen to overwork their women as this observation shows:

women is considerably greater than men's work their labour is much harder
Heavier work ought naturally to be performed by men (Halimowski. 1961 quoted in Rogers 1980:14).

This was a biased view for there are no activities which are exclusively allotted to men or women. There are studies which show that in some cultures women perform what are regarded as men's work elsewhere. The Mbuti of Zairean forests are among those who have less rigid sexual division of labour for even pregnant women hunt (Reiter 1975 : 225). Geertz (1978: 5-10) noted that sexual differentiation is extremely played down among the Bali where equal participation of men and women is encouraged to such an extent that he refers to Bali as a unisex society. Oakley (1975) suggests that in societies with rigid gender roles, for example, the Mundurucu Indians of Central Brazil, and western industrialised societies, have an anxiety problem in their personalities. An examination of the gender roles within western societies are conceived will help clarify their impact on African societies.

Industrialised western societies have gender as the organizing principle of their social structure. Women are depicted as dependants of their husbands particularly for financial purposes. Tax laws in these countries depict women and children as being dependants on men. The social class and

lifestyle of the family are determined mainly by the husband's occupation and he is expected to control what happens inside his family. The husband is even supposed to decide whether or not his wife should have a paid job outside the family's home. Any deviation from this is seen as threatening the man's identity. From a very early age, boys and girls learn what is expected of them in terms of masculine and feminine personalities. This is reinforced by societal norms.

Ropers (1980) observes that masculinity is reinforced by lack of effective social sanctions against men's harassment of women. Also attitudes of men towards women change according to men's convenience. For example, women's frailty was discarded when they were needed to work in heavy industrial and agricultural work when men were engaged in major world wars. After the wars, when men wanted their jobs there was a barrage of propaganda about a woman's place being in the home and the insistence of the woes of maternal deprivation of children. Hence, there is no pattern of gender roles that can be seen as the norm of western industrial capitalist societies and which could be imposed on other cultures as blue-prints. What there is, even in the industrialised countries, is a struggle between males and females for control of their own and each other's personalities, activities and attitudes. It is these conflicts that have shaped the division of labour and the ideology of women's place in these societies.

Morantz describes this situation as not having changed ever since 19th century America. She writes:

A woman's image was riddled with contradictions: as guardian of the race but wholly subject to male authority; preserver of civilization, religion and culture yet considered the intellectual inferior to man. The primary socializer to her children, but given no more responsibility and dignity than a child herself (Morantz, 1974:38).

Feminine roles in western society are those of housewife and mother. The western male ideology is such that girls are psychologically socialized to identify themselves with the home as their primary occupation. Even when they have formal employment outside the home, women grow to be vigorous of their home and family destiny for they are made to believe that these represent the best that life can offer. Anxiety and depression are provoked whenever they think otherwise. The fragmentation of households into nuclear families as a result of urbanisation in developed countries, has increased the need for women to stay at home. Also the fact that children need protection from modern dangerous industrial chemicals and electrical appliances. Hence, the importance of housewife as a career for women. Levine (1966) described women's housework /job as the most unproductive and the most arduous work a woman can do as it is exceptionally petty and does not include anything that would in anyway promote their development. Rice (1939: 14) supports this by emphasizing the enormous burden of housework. She writes:

In the large majority of homes, the woman is the slave without whose labour the whole structure of the family tends to collapse.

Housewife's work is extremely labour-intensive, petty, isolated monotonous and requires virtually unending hours of hard

work which is not quantified for monetary payment (*ibid*). In western societies therefore, house work is considered by both male and females as "not work". This trend can be traced to the beginning of industrial revolution when women lost their economic autonomy as farmers, crafts workers and traders. It is then that they were confined to work in the house and became dependent on men's wages. Their concentration on domestic sphere, divorced them from more public spheres where cash economy is used as remuneration for work done (Rogers 1980:35-37).

Rogers (*ibid*) goes on to say that confining women to domestic spheres was applauded by European social thinkers who justified domestication of women as a way of assuring their (women) emotional destiny. A division of labour in which women are merely shown as domestic workers and men as social workers, who went out of homes to the world, is said to be the main cause of men's monopoly of important socio-economic positions. Men control all the main institutions of policy-making in developed western societies. Law, politics, public administration, armed forces, police, trade unions, banking among others are dominated by men (United Nations, 1989).

It is these notions which were imported to developing countries through colonialism. They have continued into post-colonial era, as western trained African development planners of former colonised countries, tend to treat women differently from men. In Kenya as elsewhere in Africa, women's discrimination is a colonial heritage. Successors of the colonial administrators in these countries are males and no wonder they dominate most of the

top positions of policy planning and administration. African men tend to combine existing pre-colonial male prejudices against women with those of the attitudes of colonialists to deprive women of freedom.

Studies by Mbilinyi (1974); Pala (1975, 1986) and Suda (1986) have revealed the diversity of African women's heritage from colonial economic structures. Introduction of cash crops and pursuit of individualism through accumulation of material wealth have been directed to men. Boserup (1970:219) points out the sharp divisions between sexes which were encouraged during colonialism.

Missionaries for example encouraged a stay at home policy for urban women, on moral grounds. Women were excluded from education and consequently paid employment by prevailing attitudes of colonialists and the African men. Western gender stereotypes of women's frailty, were used to drive African women off the best paid and least strenuous jobs in industries and mines (Rogers 1980: 41). Trade unions were mainly male dominated and they collaborated with men in other institutions to drive women out. Zeleza (1988: 54-84) observes how women were thus left without alternatives for it was only in the strenuous manual work in rural areas that they were found eligible. Agriculture and rural development policies and programmes further aimed at raising the status of the males as heads of the households. It is only the male owners of freehold titles who were given financial credits for agricultural development.

This study expounds on Zeleza's scholarly work by tracing

transformation of gender relations in division of labour along contemporary debates on the structure of households in agrarian rural farmers' economies. One of the fundamental concepts is that a household is a basic unit of society. As such, it is managed and represented by its head who is usually the man. This concept disregards economic and social differentiations among and within households which are based on gender and age and are therefore erroneously assumed.

Gabraith (1973:78-83) has protested to the idea of disguising the role of women in Third World countries in the Western colonialists' concept of a household. He points out that although the households, have several individuals, who have differing needs and preferences, it is the man who is shown as the one who knows them all for major decisions are left to him. The term household head, disguises the authority of the male which he derives from receipt of income in a society which gives power to the person who earns money. Some approximations of the western patterns of nuclear family is usually used. All aspects of development are concentrated on the household head as if the head represented the household. All production attributable to members of the family, or household, is seen as pertaining to the household head. He is defined as the financial supporter of the household following the western stereotype of a bread winner. The man is also considered the most productive member of the household supported by his "family labour". All other members of the household are said to be his dependants. Women are dumped into the miscellaneous

category of children, old people, the sick and handicapped.

Many of the developing countries, have leaders who faithfully follow these stereotypes. Men in rural areas, are regarded as custodians of developmental information and interpretation of communities economic activities. As Gittinger, (1972: 41) propounds, women's work is concealed by the fact that only the man's managerial roles are portrayed to be of economic value. In Embu district where this study was conducted, women in smallholder tea production are perceived by the KTDA male officers as housewives. Lele noted this issue when she said:

Thus the goal of extension services has frequently been not the increase in farm level productivity of women, but rather finding ways to reduce their more home-bound activities. Too often women's extension programmes have been exhaustively oriented towards domestic science and home economics (Lele, 1975:77).

Exclusive concentration of development activities especially extension services on men, has meant that little progress in peoples' living standards is made. It has also increased women's agricultural workload. This study sees the need to go beyond the household in an assessment, of economic production of individuals within these households. By looking inside the households of tea growers, it has been possible to identify the source(s) of inequality between men and women, (c.f. ILO 1981:3).

Loufli (1985) has stressed the need to highlight the nature of forces of interventions that can facilitate an onward progress of women in their roles as workers wherever they are located in the spectrum of socio-economic and political change and

development. Who controls resources?

2.1.6 Women's Work and Control of Resources

The decline of African women's control of resources continued during colonialism when men were offered employment in settler-plantations, mines and even domestic work in the white settler-homes (Kanocjo 1987). This was unlike the situation in Tanganyika where men and women were employed to do strenuous manual work in plantations such as sisal in Tanga, Moshi and Morogoro or wattle and tea in N. iombe (Wembah - Rashid 1990, personal communication). The discarding of traditional land tenure in which women's usufructory rights were recognised, further escalated women's deprivation. Their situation was made worse by the change from food to cash crop production which was part of the implementation of the Swynnerton plan (1954). Ownership of land, a crucial asset in agriculture was vested in men who were classified as heads of households.

In post-colonial Kenya, there have been no fundamental changes in the extent and pattern of women's work. A lot has taken place especially in the last three decades for the betterment of woman. Unpaid farmer's wives are now gainfully employed and there is a rapid service sector which has opened a employment opportunities for women. Improved education and training levels have raised women's productivity and earnings. Yet, women tend to be subordinated to lower occupations. Many women are employed in fields such as teaching, nursing, social work and clerical work.

Excluding these highly educated women, there are very few women engaging in manufacturing, trade and commerce (Zeidenstein 1979: 309-312).

Thus women bear heavy responsibilities and the introduction of cash crops requiring heavy labour has brought an anticipated increase in women's workload while giving them few if any rewards. The consequential increase in acreage under tea cultivation means that women are obliged to spend much of their time in tea production activities. They are unable to work on food crops, attend public barazas or even visit friends. Women have to work on the tea farms as their husbands engage in off-farm employment since money from agrarian incomes is never enough for all the needs of households. Children go to school leaving women alone with all the tasks in the house and in the tea farms. They are not in a position to purchase labour-saving devices or hire additional labour to assist in these tasks. There is need for an understanding of the sexual division of labour in the tea farms so as to recognise the impact of increased tea bushes on women.

Gacheru (1989:1-11) has reiterated that in virtually all societies, women work longer hours than men for smaller rewards than men and many women are shown to accept and defend systems that exploit them. Third world women are said to be the most disadvantaged for they work hardest and yet they are the least rewarded. This study examines such views with a hope of shedding more light on factors which sustain such situations and how women's plight could be improved.

Stitcher (1975/76) has given a historical account of the way Kenyan women lost their rights over control of resources. She blames colonialism with its expanding capitalist system of world market exchange entailing core-industrial economies of a form of production based mainly on wage labour. This established its dominance over pre-capitalist economies bringing about the rise of peripheral capitalism where developing countries export commodities to larger world markets. Frank (1979); Amin (1973) and Rey (1972) have used the concept of core-periphery relations to indicate a division of labour between industrialised and non-industrialised world. In this division of labour, industrialised world dominates over non-industrialised world. It is this phenomenon that Illife (1979:17) observes as having transferred to gender relations in the rural areas of Tanganyika whereby men exploited women and children, for they (men) were being exploited by the colonialists.

Within the colonial labour system Stitcher (*ibid*) goes on to show how, women performed integral functions in production. Although their work was along traditional subsistence economy, it had become part of the capitalist system of production. It is the woman who bore the long term cost of maintaining workers from childhood to maturity and the cost of reproducing the next generation of labourers so as to provide the cheap labour required by colonial settlers. The colonial system exploited the disparity that existed in the pre-colonial division of labour between males and females. Women's roles in production were marginalised and their low social status consolidated. The colonialists sLereotype

of housewives was used, only this time in the case of African women they were required to subsidize their husbands' low wages through either agricultural or trading activities. The arduous tasks of food production, home maintenance and child rearing were combined with agricultural production and yet the women were regarded as jobless (c.f. Boserup, 1970).

Stitcher (1975/76:130-136) contends further that although women's labour contributions in terms of labour time have yet to be quantified, a very large share of it fell to the women. She quotes Wagner's (1939) report of how Luhya women did greater and more strenuous part of the garden labour since hoeing was almost entirely women's work. In addition, household tasks of daily grinding grain, cooking, fetching water, firewood, gathering of edible wild plants, procuring salt and cleaning the house were the women's work. Luhya men only looked after the cattle and carried out all cattle transactions. Humphries (1937), reports that there was a tendency for men to take the easy way out of work leaving women to shoulder the increased work burdens. He compiled a table showing that Luhya men's work ended by midday while the women's work continued the whole day. Observations of increased burdens borne by women during the 1930s were noted by Hay (1984) when colonialists demanded more male labour from the Luo.

Fisher (1954:5-15) reports on the Kikuyu whose customs are related to those of Embu people. He notes that precolonial roles of men included breaking up of surface ground, draining of swampy areas and cultivating special crops namely; bananas, yams, sweet

potatoes, sugarcane and tobacco. Women's work was to cultivate food crops for the entire family and process for storage. Grains such as millet, sorghum and eleusine. In addition women were concerned with cooking, fetching water, gathering firewood, grating sugarcane for beer and currying on their backs all heavy loads. By 1950s, more Kikuyu women could be seen doing men's work, for the latter were absent either through arrests or as immigrants for Mageri labour in settler farms). Educated Kikuyu men's attitude to agriculture, was negative as they tended to crave for employment in white-collar jobs. Among the Abagusii, Levine (1966) noted that women were burdened more than ever with agricultural activities in coffee production in addition to their domestic duties between 1955 and 1957.

Wills (1976:10-20) has compiled data from Kenya and Uganda showing that there was a shift in division of labour which occurred in colonial times, in which women were making more decisions in agricultural production, marketing and manual work in the farms and homes, yet they were only de facto heads of households.

Thus, marginalization of women became widespread especially among patrilineal agrarian societies. The unequal male and female relationships were hinged on to control over means of production. Land was the most important resource for subsistence in agricultural communities. The importance of land as a resource, increased during colonialism when it became the accepted asset for securing financial credits. The moment women lost the usufructory rights to land through the new system of issuing freehold titles

For men only, they were conditioned to depend on them. Boserup, (1970: 53-57) notes a number of cases colonial administrators insisted on land reforms which eliminated women's rights. Since post-colonial laws have continued with the colonial style of land reform measures, the erosion of women's rights to land has similarly continued.

These scholars however have not shown how women were being disadvantaged, exploited and overburdened. It is true that issues of land tenure altered women's roles and positions but how did this lead to an increase in women's workload? This study explains in details the said relation of colonial set up to present day women's economic activities as observed among the Embu women engaged in tea production. It is important that effects of cash crops on women's workload be examined.

2.1.7 Cash Crops and Women's Workload

Cashcropping is another form of colonialists' influence on the economic systems of developing countries. O'dea (1982:8-14) contends that cash crops primarily produced for export have become the cornerstone of Kenya's agricultural policy. Coffee, Tea, pyrethrum and sisal are major contributors to Kenya's foreign exchange. He also argues that cash crop production has added significantly to the income of the majority of smallholders. Commercialization of agriculture has however proceeded along the colonial lines of land consolidation and registration whereby women's roles are subordinated. Cash crops have created a new

rationale among rural farmers as there is more value for land as an investment and they have also accelerated activities of cash crop production on individual person's land. Freehold titles to land are valuable documents which facilitate those who own them to obtain loan for improvement.

As owners of land, men also own the income from cash crops a situation which enhances their status (Wilde 1967). Banks and financial lending institutions prefer title deeds of land as well as the cash sales of perennial export crops as collateral. Hence women are disadvantaged for they possess neither freehold titles nor cash from crops. Preoccupation with cashcrop production is said to cause the inability of African nations to feed themselves. This study while agreeing with this view contends that it is the nature of the system of production which matters. The fact that income from crops accrue on a highly inequitable basis is the problem. Lamb and Muller, (1982) have shown that it is only households with stable and reliable sources of incomes which are able to engage in cash crop production. This means that at least one member of the household (usually the man) has to be engaged in an off- farm employment. Thus women and children are left to produce cash crops, food to feed their families and other maintenance chores for the homestead. Cash crops have thus caused socio- economic differentiation between men and women. Women have become more marginalised for they have lost control over major resources. The process of subsuming rural farmers to market economy under capitalism is shown as the ground for struggle over

conditions of production and exchange (Bernstein, 1979).

Adoption of cash crops is such a dominant mode of production that patterns of marginalization can be seen among those who fail to engage in their production. Cassanova (1980) says that after his study of three districts in Kenya, he found that those households who had not adopted cash crops were powerless over the changes which undermine and impoverish their resource base. They cannot prevent these changes and so cash crop production is obligatory in developing countries. Hence no one can escape capitalistic tendencies to exclusively depend on subsistence economy.

Semeti (1974), blames cash crops for diverting land away from food production. He cites the large coffee - growing areas of Tanzania and Kenya with the richest volcanic soils in Africa, excellent rainfall and permanent rivers which would be excellent for cereals such as wheat, maize, horticultural crops and dairy farming. Thus the pre-eminent position that cash crops are given in developing countries needs to be rethought. This is because too many assets of those countries land and labour are directed to production of cash crops. This results in fragmentation of land where food is planted, for cash crops take the best lands. In addition, women's workload increases. Hanger (1973) found out, half of a woman's agricultural work in Mwea was devoted to man's export crop rice.

Kongstad and Monsted (1974; 1978), surveyed a number of case studies and found that the obligations of women and physical work

input had increased as a result of export of cash crops. This increase of women's workload implies less time available for child care and infant feeding for all activities are geared towards the cash crop production. This study, explores the tea producing region to see the extent to which Kongstand and Monsted were right. The way labour processes are scheduled among the Embu Lea farmers was explored in order to see the extent to which tea production had changed social relations. The Question of compulsion to earn cash has an impact on communal labour and perhaps tea has encroached on food production affecting women's labour and income enormously.

Pinstrup - Anderson (1983:1-12) has deplored these arguments by calling them simplistic and misleading. He propounds that production of export agricultural commodities does not necessarily have to lead to a worsening of nutritional situation in the countries of their production. Capital gained from the sale of these commodities should be sufficient to import sufficient food even in excess of the one produced by the people themselves. Thus although preoccupation with agricultural export may reduce food production, it need not reduce availability of food. The best way to ensure that sufficient food is available is to make sure that a large part of the income from cash crops is controlled by members of a household and to monitor food prices. The findings of this study agree with this argument as will be shown later.

There are reports that in Rampur North India, women are worst affected by cash cropping. This is because they do all manual labour while the men do less manual work. An amusing comment by

one scholar's male respondent says, "In this village when it comes to work in the fields we say ladies first" (Gupta, 1976:4-5). Could such be the attitude of the men around the area of this study when it comes to waking up early plunging into dew to cut fodder for animals as well as pluck tea in the chilly morning. Yet reversing the situation when it comes to allocation of the money accrued from these activities.

Although the scholars reviewed here provide an understanding of economic relations between men and women in so far as cash crops production is concerned, they have not shown the increased differentiation of these effects. The degree and form to which women are exploited needs to be discussed in details. This study addresses these issues by examining the way in which women tea producers of Embu cope with their work and labour allocations, the alternatives that exist for them and their abilities to bargain and maintain a balance of power within their conjugal or other contracts. There is need to show the importance of women's work.

2.1.8 Women's Work: Its economic importance

Palmer (1985) examined women's work and noted that despite its absolute importance to families' survival, it is unrecognised and unpaid especially in changing modes of production. Women have been polarized by inequality of exchange so much that their situation resembles that of relationships between rich and poor countries, or between urban and rural areas. Cash crops have given men entrepreneurial roles while women are depicted as

custodians of family labour and as "proletarians". The push for economic growth has tended to emphasize male participation more than females.

Even for the present District Focus Strategy in Kenya, discussions of policies, take place in towns where women are unable to reach. It is notable that although tea production has increased monetary benefits of people in Embu, there continues to be a discrepancy as far as division of labour is concerned. Women have to expend their energies for long hours with little time for leisure.

ILO (1972:1-15) report deplored the constraints that hinder the recognition of the importance of women by showing that it is the arbitrary demarcation between economic and non-economic activities of women that hinder a recognition of their economic contributions. The report however, does not show how this can be rectified. The concern of this study is to highlight the constraints that impede statistical evaluation of women's work, and also how to measure effects of chronic overwork on them. Using the example of women tea producers in Embu, the study attempts to enumerate their working time in hours and show if the physical demands of their work leave them exhausted.

It is fortunate that this study, comes at a time when there are numerous studies on agrarian structures and gender relations. These have provided a basis for measuring how changes in modes of production affect division of labour by gender. It is noted that men who are at the helm of policy - making and administration, are

aggressive in protecting a status quo that ensures their domination. The study avoids seeing women's work loads as individual jobs per woman. This is the way rural women view their work and it makes their labour seem unvalued even in their own estimations. Thus it perpetuates women's marginalization. The challenge which is welcome is that which asserts a more equitable sexual division of labour. There is need to advocate policies where women's work burden are alleviated and they have control of independent cash.

Finally what women need is not more work for they are already overworked. In the words of one scholar:

It is not a question of providing employment opportunity for women in agricultural and rural industries although they are needed, most poor women are already seriously over burdened with work. Neither is it only a matter of raising the appalling low education, training and literacy level of women although that is urgent.... The fundamental issue is the participation of women as well as men in the direction and process of development and its benefits (Loufti, 1985: 5-6).

Such participation in development is not because women are presently excluded from development as some scholars allude. Sampled women were found fully engaged in activities that promote development. The problem is women in Embu as elsewhere need to control their productive and reproductive roles. This will bring about transformations within their society whereby equitable distribution of work and adequate remuneration for work done will be encouraged. Such views are tested in this study and it was realised that there is need for new conceptions of economic activities and labour allocations by gender. Financial

usage and technology should increasingly be directed to women's welfare and not merely to increased commodity production as they are at present.

2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1. Introduction

Numerous attempts have been made to identify and discuss factors that cause inequalities in the division of labour between men and women. Basic tenets and assumptions influencing the roles and power relations between men and women particularly in agricultural activities have been questioned. This has led to formulation of theoretical frameworks that give coherence and meaning to the question of sex roles and status in society. Although these theories explain sex and gender differences, they are in effect theories about human society in general (Kipuri, 1989 : 43). Some of the theoretical frameworks that are outlined in this section are meant to explain perceptions of gender relations among Emhu people.

They include:-

- Nature versus culture theories;
- . Women in Development. School,
- Marxist perspective and the
- Reproduction model

2.2.2. Nature Versus Culture theories

Theories on differential power relations of men and women as discussed in anthropology divide into two broad types: those that

trace inequality in division of labour along gender lines to fundamental biological differences between sexes and those that consider them to be culturally determined.

The former view asserts a position of blatant biological determinism whereby physical features and characteristics of men and women are said to be the basis for their social power differentiation. Men with their large physique are said to coerce women physically and this way to subordinate them. Proponents of this view include Tiger and Fox (1971) who in their book *The Imperial Animal* have advanced a theory of human biogrammers. They define biogrammers as genetically based programmes which predispose mankind in certain ways. Biogrammers are responsible for the inequality in the allocation of male and female roles. Men have aggressive and dominant characteristics which may be genetically inherited from hunting way of life. Women by comparison are allegedly programmed to be docile and passive a predisposition that suits their roles in reproduction and care of children. Since genetic changes are slower than cultural changes, these male-female biogrammers have continued to modern times.

Could it be that men in Kenya have used such postulations to rationalise their monopolised positions of power in the tea industry ? As was found out in this study, chief decision making posts of the tea industry have virtually no women. Even at the household level among smallholders tea growers in Embu, women are engaged mostly in the expenditure of their labour but are largely excluded from decisions that concern cash output. Murdock (1949

:7-9) another proponent of biological determinants of sex roles notes that they arise out of sheer practicality. Inequalities in the division of labour between men and women are brought about by complementarity rather than one being superior to the other. This is essential as an efficient way of organising a society. Efficiency in societal organization, is further explained by Talcott Parsons (1959) in the theory of biology and the expressive female. Building on the concept of maternal dyad, the mother-child relationship said to be the basic family unit. Parsons stressed a woman's role as being primarily that of socializing the young within a family unit. He characterises this role as expressive, providing warmth, security and emotional support to family members.

Since the male breadwinner spends his working day competing in an achievement - oriented society, an instrumental role which is accompanied by stress and anxiety, the expressive female's role is to relieve this tension. Efficiency in a social system according to Parsons is when there is a clear-cut division of labour along gender lines in which instrumental and expressive roles complement each other to promote family solidarity. This is supported by other advocates of the view that mother's role is firmly attached to the female while the male is pre-occupied with outdoor activities.

Although some respondents in this study agreed that men's dominant and repressive characteristics were forcibly expressed on women through physical and psychological coercion these socio-biological postulations are erroneous. Critics of biological determination of sex roles have said, men's power is

building houses which in some societies are considered to be men's tasks are done by women. It is however noted that where such roles are assigned to males, they generally carry more prestige than in those societies where they are assigned to women. This is because of what she refers to as "male dominance" a situation in which men have highly preferential though not exclusive rights to those activities to which society accords greatest value. Such activities entail the control over valued goods and hence are prestigious. Women's roles are regarded as less important as they do not carry the valued goods. This is a result of socialization, for as was observed in Embu, right from their childhood, boys are socialized to regard child care, housework and food preparation tasks as women's activities and hence being of low status. It was observed too, that boys frequently escaped punishment for dalliance on errands allocated to them after school and on weekends. Girls were not able to escape such tasks. These differences in socialization, are a reflection of the differential sex- role expectations, of mature men and women. In Embu, women are expected to be constantly at work, caring for their house, their children their tea farms, their husbands and other members of the household. In contrast men are expected to rest periodically and their work is considered to be harder than the continuous roles of women.

Ortner (1974) denies the claim that women's tasks do not produce valued goods. She claims that it is the way every culture defines and evaluates female biology. Devaluation of female roles

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According to Bandaraaa (1984 : 495-496). two high points in the evolution of women in development (WID) were the publication of Ester Boserup's pioneering study Women's Role in Economic Development in 1970) and the inauguration of the United Nations decade for women in 1975. Since then, various United Nations Agencies the World Bank, US Agency for International Development (AID), Private voluntary agencies, women academics, and Multinational Corporations are identified with this field (Bandarage, 1984: 495-496).

Women in Development school (Hence WID) is said to subscribe to modernization theory with a few modifications. Modernization theory is defined as,

total transformation of traditional or pre-modern society into types of technology and associated social organization that characterize the advanced, economically prosperous and stable nations of Western world (Moore, 1963:91-92).

Smelser, (1971:353-354) has listed several interrelated technical, economic and ecological processes that frequently accompany modernization:

- In the field of technology, the change from simple traditional techniques, toward the application of scientific knowledge and methods.
- In agriculture, the evolution from subsistence farming toward commercial production of agricultural goods. This means specialization in cashcrops, purchase of non-agricultural products in the market and development of agricultural and

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argument that, the benefits of Western development, have accrued to men only. Bandaraa (1984) commends Boserup and members of WIO school for producing a substantial body of literature on women's economic contributions and conditions of women in the Third World. From these studies there is information that women are the backbone of African subsistence production for they are said to constitute 60-80% of agricultural workers in Africa (African Studies Review 1975: 47-70) Some progressive African leaders have recognized the essential exploitation in this system (c.f. Nyerere, 1968 : 106 144). Further more, this WID literature has revealed the existence of numerous female-headed households and those that are dependent on the productive roles of women for their survival. Hence, WID writers make it impossible to deny the centrality of women, in the agrarian economies of the Third World countries. They also show that women's work in these countries is confined to the most underpaid sectors of production, a factor observed in this study, where women in the tea industry are heavily concentrated at plucking and as carriers of tea leaves to buying centres. Hence much of their work is undercounted in calculations of national income productivity such as Gross National Product (GNP) (c.f. Buvinic et al; 1983 and Bandaraqn, 1983a). WID studies, like those done by liberal feminists in the West, have identified women's invisible labour and other contributions by taking into account women's unpaid labour in the domestic and public sectors. By expanding the definition of the term work they have raised an awareness about women's work. Like the liberal feminists they have

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on the basis of socio-biological arguments, already dismissed in the nature versus culture postulations. WIO writers also insist that women's hope for liberation lies in better integration into development processes.

These arguments, do not take account of the WID studies themselves in which it has repeatedly been shown that women are central to the survival of Third World economies (Bandara 1984 : 495-497). Hence, women are already integrated into existing economic structures everywhere, albeit, at the lowest levels. This study found for example that by engaging in tea production activities, Embu women are integrated into a capitalist economy in which their traditional roles are articulated along with their tea production activities. The WID school does not identify the forces that compel the women to go on these arduous activities when they are inadequately remunerated.

Secondly, proponents of the WIO School, have illustrated the way land tenurial basis of agriculture, was altered by colonialism by first limiting the area available for use by Africans, then the crops that Africans could grow and also in terms of usurping usufructory rights of women (Nasimiyu 1984:20, Pala 1974:13-14). They have however not shown how such changes as introduction of cashcrops such as tea, have laid tieavy burdens on women.

Thirdly, according to Bandara (1984:496) another shortcoming of the WIO School is the optimism that they share with the liberal feminists of the West that women will be integrated into more self fulfilling forms of employment, within the

hierarchical politico-economic and ideological structures of capitalist world system (Friedan 1963 : 60). To them.

Women's poverty and subordination are simply aberrations within an otherwise just and equitable social system ascribing sexual inequality largely to traditional values and male ignorance, WID thinkers believe that this could be corrected through legislative reforms, attitudinal changes and intervention projects designed to provide basic needs and income - generating work for poor Third World Women (Bandarage, 1984: 497-498).

Finally, WID school and Ester Boserup have not managed to push for the recognition of women's work in the Third World economies. So far, despite the UN decade for women, there has not been structural changes, which are a prerequisite of social equality, justice and liberation of women . Instead there has been a stress on increased aid strategies a situation that has led to feminization of poverty subsumed in their domestic work within capitalist industrial enterprises (Stallard, 1983). This study, found that women's activities in subsistence economy, house maintenance and child care among women tea producers in Embu are not understood or considered in the final assessment of tea industry in Kenya. Hence the objectives of the WID, school like the rest of western economic ideologies, do not lead to alleviation of womens burdens. As such the WID school is not a force of Third World women themselves but an instrument of propagating Western ideologies. Like other Western development institutions, the WID school has plunged into bureaucracy while the under development of the poor Third World women goes on (Bandarage 1984: 500).

•2:2:4 Marxist Perspective

In recent years, studies of women's participation in economic activities have reviewed Engels' theory of the origin of female subordination. Unlike the liberal perspectives, the Marxists argue that subordination of women, arose not from sexual differences, but rather from structural features, of a social system which puts, profits of a few before human needs of the many (Sacks 1979). A detailed analysis of Marxist perspective as postulated by Engels is hereby reviewed for it does provide a basis for this study.

Working with the data available to him and using Lewis H. Morgan's model, Engels (1942) explains that women's social position has not been always and everywhere subordinate to that of men. Through a historical analysis, he presents how women were transformed from free and equal productive members of society to become subordinate wives. Advances in technology when men gained control of private property in form of domestic animals, led to new relations of production between men and women.

Before this, productive resources were owned communally by all members of a community. Production was for subsistence only and no one claimed individual ownership of property or produced only for exchange. Although women ran households, which were the basic social-economic units, their roles were shown as those of administration of social and public industry carried out by men. Decision making in both economic and political aspects involved both men and women equally. Engels concludes:

the absence of private property made men's productive work and women's household work of unequal social

significance. Men and women were simply involved in different stages of production of the same kinds of goods. the production of subsistence. (Engels 1942: 63 - 72).

With time, production for exchange developed and it soon overshadowed household production for use. Hence the change in significance of women's work. Women worked for their families instead of working for the society. Their labour became a necessary but socially subordinate part of production for exchange. This, according to Marx and Engels, was the first form of class antagonism and the beginning of women's subordination. By controlling mobile property (domestic animals) men's production was valued (Schlegel, 1985 11-14).

From this explanation, the Marxist perspective seems to be analytically superior compared to liberalist's and WIO schools views of women's role and position. The important explanatory value of Marxist theory is the concept that economic power can be translated into social power. The theory also postulates that inequality has a historical development so it is not universal. Sexual inequalities can be explained along concrete circumstances and different situations of women (Kipuri 1989 : 34). They are not simply reducible to socio-biological tendencies such as male egoism but rather to interaction of class oppression and imperialism. Hence, women's liberation requires radical changes in people's values, material interests and social arrangements at both national and international levels.

Clearly women are involved in production, for as was observed in this study, Embu women are fully engaged in tea production activities. Their being crowded at the bottom of this industry however, is due to the fact that they are producing for their husbands and their families. Most women in this study were found to be working in their husbands' tea farms. Their being exploited therefore, is as a result of their labour docility and their agility for repetitive and minute tasks. Labour docility is not a biological or even a cultural condition as respondents among executive officers of KTDA reiterated (Wariama 8-8-89); but rather it is as a result of coercion. There are forces that compel these women to wake at the early hours, go to dewy bushes and get fodder for animals, milk these animals, make breakfast, feed the young children, suckle the babies, nurse the sick members of the household, clean utensils wash soiled clothes, rush to the tea farm; pluck tea and take it to the buying centres, run home to produce and prepare food clean the house and be good mothers

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and wives. Marxism, is correct in suggesting that there are forces of coercion which bring about this situation.

Unfortunately on a theoretical level, the Marxist position on women's subordination has many short-comings: Firstly, Engels fails to explain the way family organization interrelates with different modes of production. Leacock, (1972) improved on this, by saying that women's subordination was due to a transformation in community organization and not simply technological advancement. This thesis of Leacock and Engels does not account for male

dominance in ore-colonial and pre-clasa societies. Why for example Mere the pre-colonial activities of Embu women undervalued?

Clearly as Young (1980) pointed out, the major Question is not who produces for what, but rather who controls Ute product of labour and how this product is used in forming social relationships. Women's subordination does not result from a relationship of goods but rather of social power between persons.

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Sacks (1974 : 212) argues that the more women are removed from involvement in social labour, the less power they exert. Social labour is defined as any work done singly or as part of a group for use or appropriation by someone of another household. This view does not distinguish between participation in production and control over labour and goods. As was found out in this study, women's participation in a highly acknowledged social labour as in tea industry, has not ensured an enhancement of their status. Rightly did Sanday (1974) argue that the crucial factor in determining equality of sex roles is a balanced division of labour in production and not merely in making high or low economic contributions.

Secondly, Marxists explain women's subordination as resulting from abstract forces of capitalism, such as "Commercialization" and "Proletarianization" hiding in these terms, Marxists have not clearly explained exploitation of women by men. The Marxist idea of exploitation that exploitation flows from social relations, rooted in productive forces, such as extraction of surplus value, by capital from wage labour, is not adequate to explain women's

exploitation by men (Bandarage ibid).

Thirdly, Marxists* attempts to relate the notion of female oppression historically and theoretically to class exploitation requires greater details of conceptualization and analysis. This is because women are distributed throughout all classes and their oppression transcends history. As a derivative idea, subordination of women requires cultural and psychological explanations. Institutions of marriage and family cannot be subjected to the same critical analysis as other human relations (Lane, 1976 p 4-25).

Fourthly, Engel's suggestion for the liberation of women which he said entails bringing,

The whole female sex back into public industry and ... this in turn demands the abolition of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society ... emancipation of the woman and making her the equal of man ... is an impossibility so long as the woman is shut out of social production labour, and restricted to private domestic labour. The emancipation of women will only be possible when women take part in production on a large social scale and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant part of her time (Engels, 1942 : 66-148).

Such viewpoints show that Marxism does not understand exploitation of women under different modes of production such as are found in developing countries. Women especially respondents of this study, articulate both pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production. As a Marxist Critic Eisenslein (1979) reiterates, Marxists analytical categories pertain to the realities of early industrial capitalism and have no relevance to the changing conditions of advanced capitalism (see also Jaggar and Rothenberg - Slruhl. 1979). It is not clear at which state of capitalism

developing countries are in. Marxist have also not explained women's subordination in socialist and communist countries. As Milchell (1971: 95) pointed out oppression of women is intrinsic to the capitalist as it to the socialist political systems. This is not withstanding Nyerere (1967)¹

As such general Marxism is not able to explain the situation of Embu women who find themselves actively involved in the expenditure of their labour in tea, a cash crop of national and international importance. Despite spending most of their time in tea production activities, and consequently spending insignificant time on domestic work, these women, have not been emancipated as Engels (ibid) predicted. There is need to show the way in which changing relations between men and women as they engage in different aspects of capitalism has led to the subordination of women. Marxism has not fully explained exploitation of men and women in peripheral capitalism as is discussed in this study.

2.2.5 Reproduction Model

Marxists' silence on these issues has led to the evolution of an explicitly women - centered marxist-feminism. This radical feminism is concerned with the structure of male dominance and women's subordination, a structure that they call "Patriarchy" (Bandarage 1984 : 501-507). Proponents of this model include Beneria (1978. 1980), Young (1978; 1980), Maria Mies (1980) and Deere and de Leal (1981) among others. The fact that their model

has paid attention to the entirety of women's domestic, public and intimate social relations which were ignored by both liberalism and ordinary Marxism, makes it most suitable for this study. Their thesis postulate that,

the focal point of women's economic activities is given by their special role in the production of the labour force. It can be argued that this role is at the root of the different forms that patriarchy take in different societies. Women's participation in production, the nature of their work and the division of labour between the sexes can then be viewed as a result of women's reproductive functions, and conditioned by the nature of the productive process and by the requirements of a given pattern of growth and accumulation (Beneria, 1980: 11).

This is an important observation for whenever liberation of women is discussed, freedom from household chores is said to be the key to women's participation in social and political life. Enumeration of household chores shows that child rearing is most significant and it is always one of women's activities. In most societies including that of the Embu, child rearing is believed to be eternally a woman's job. Now while other household chores can be altered, child rearing the means by which the society recreates itself, cannot and this way child rearing becomes a source of women's oppression it also makes women's oppression be of entirely different nature from other oppressions and exploitations that traditional Marxism defines.

Reproduction model is discussed by Beneria (ibid) under sub-topics of patriarchy and reproduction; production and the sexual division of labour and lastly the dynamic perspective of the sexual division of labour.

2.2.5.1 Patriarchy and Reproduction

Patriarchal forms through which male domination manifests itself and the essence of male domination as a whole has developed around the need to control reproduction in its different aspects. Reproduction means the transmission of control of resources from one generation to the next. As Engels pointed out, the subordination of women is linked to institutionalization of private property. This generated the need to identify heirs. Since maternity was always identified by the community, men had to control women's sexuality so as to be sure of paternity. This led to strict control over women's reproductive activities as is depicted in almost all societies in the world. Patriarchy was expressed through cruelty to women, savage punishments for female adultery, jealous guarding of female chastity and virginity, the ban on women remarriage; wife beating a common practice in Embu, female circumcision and genital mutilation among others (Service, 1978 : 82; Hosken 1979). Restriction of women's mobility in such institutions as seclusion and segregation of sexes are other forms of ideological and religious aspects of patriarchy's control and rationalization of women's oppression.

Patriarchal control over women's reproduction is two fold:
Private and Public:

At the private level, it includes the family and corresponds to a range of customs, traditions and other expressions of civil society. At the public level it includes the apparatus of state institutions dealing with order and political power. In modern

Limes, both these spheres interact a lot and attempts to split them may result in increased contradictions. Two consequences derive from the control exercised over women's reproductive activities: firstly, the focal point of their role becomes the household since it is in the household that the activities related to physical reproduction are centered. No wonder the traditional division of labour sees the domestic activities as being exclusively women's domain. Secondly, restricting women's mobility becomes necessary. This is seen in most societies, varying only in degrees of intensity.

2.2.5.1 Production and The Sexual Division of Labour:

A Dynamic Perspective

Types of activities performed by women and men in a given society are not static but are best understood within a perspective of an economic system in the process of transformation. Beneria (1980: 14) has identified four key factors that help in the analysis of women's roles. These are changes related to: Agrarian structures and modes of production, availability of labour resources and development of labour markets, the process of economic growth and accumulation, linkages between the local economy and the national and international markets.

First. the relationship between agrarian structures and women's roles in rural economy is as shown by Boserup (1970), varied according to land tenure and the mode of production

generated by the patterns of land ownership when she says that: While women in some cases work shorter hours than men, much more frequently they work longer hours or more per day and per year in agriculture (Boserup, 1970: 20 - 21).

Second, availability of labour resources has been affected by the pattern of predominant male migration in search for wage employment and school for children. This trend tends to increase women's workload as they take over activities previously performed by men and children.

Third, women's work is influenced by other dynamic forces behind a process of growth and accumulation. In this study, penetration of market to subsistence agriculture and the introduction of the commercial crops such as tea have undermined the status of Embu women in subsistence economies. Strengthening of private property through land demarcation and private registration during colonialism has removed communal land tenure rights dispossessing women in Embu of access to land. Their control over productive resources has also decreased as men are recognized as new owners of land and all that is within it.

Finally, women's activities have to be linked to national and international markets for it is only in this sense that their role in the accumulation process and perspective are fully incorporated. It is also in this sense that an analysis of sexual division of labour can best be understood. This study focuses on tea, the cash crop whose national and international market is renowned. To exemplify the way in which commercialization of crops has affected

women's work differently from men's work in Embu.

Hence, patriarchy is shown in two ways: domestic work and non-domestic production.

Domestic Work:

In almost all societies in the world, the extent to which home maintenance is considered women's work is overwhelming. The reasons for this are found in their reproductive functions for it is said:

The inter-relationship between reproductive and productive activities at the domestic level makes it very difficult to draw a clear cut distinction between the two when analysing in detail the breakdown of women's activities and gender related division of labour (Beneria, 1980: 12).

As Meillasoux (1931) pointed out, production is part of the overall process of reproduction. In subsistence economies and even in the cashcrop economy of the Embu, women are involved in all production. Domestic work, contains a high degree of production and reproduction geared to the household's own consumption. Such activities as fetching water, gathering firewood, food cultivation, processing of raw food before cooking and other activities are centered around two integral functions namely: one. physical reproduction or rather the reproduction of the labour force; two, production of use values. The way these two function depends upon factors that transcend the household. For example among the respondents of this study, women had to go to the market to purchase raw food or actually cultivate it in their farms as well as engage in tea production activities. As such, women's domestic activities should be analysed within the context of a

process of transformation since economic systems are dynamic.

Hon - domestic Production

Although every society defines what is considered women's work, and men's work outside the household, it is possible to make some generalisations about women's economic tasks along the following types:

Firstly, activities compatible with women's reproductive functions which imply a low degree of physical mobility due to mothering activities as well as patriarchal control exercised over women's sexuality. Women tend to perform tasks close to the household such as taking care of the children, young domestic animals and food processing.

Secondly, rural women are not a homogeneous group and their activities differ according to rural class hierarchies. Hence they are not affected in the same way by patriarchal institutions. Differentiation among women include their access to productive resources of their households. For example, in households where agricultural workers are hired, women tend to concentrate on domestic activities rather than agricultural work.

Thirdly, there are the productive activities of women which are considered as extensions of their household work. Such tasks include weaving baskets, fetching water gathering firewood and looking after babies. Even when such tasks as carrying a tank **Butun/i* of water on the back require a great deal of physical strength, they are still considered to belong to the weak females rather than strong males.

Fourthly, activities subordinated to men's work are also subject to age hierarchies. It is usual for men to marry women who are younger than them and an age-related division of labour was observed in this study both in household as well as in non-domestic tasks.

Finally, even when women work as wage earners as was observed within the area of this study in Mungania tea factory for example, they are concentrated on the least permanent and less paid activities. Men are considered to be the ones primarily concerned with production. Women's involvement in production is viewed as secondary to their pre-productive activities and this forms the basis of their marginality and secondary role in production. Consequently women's earnings are viewed as complementary to those of the men even when they are not related. Only male earnings are seen as the primary source of a family income. Hence the basis for women's low earning and wage discrimination. Some women respondents in this study working in Mungania tea factory, complained of having their sexuality exploited whenever the issue of promotion was raised. (Interviews with women workers in Mungania Tea factory 3-2-90). Among growers granting of scanty cash by men to their wives was justified by some male respondents as,

women are capable of stressing a little money but if you give them too much of it they become spoilt (Kicnuru 2-1-90).

This was another way in which women's secondary role in production is emphasized.

2.2.5.2 Reasons for Suitability of Reproductive Model

This model is suitable for this study for the following reasons:

Firstly, it points towards the fundamental importance of reproduction in determining modernizing division of labour between men and women inside and outside a household. This implies that all types of policies intended to bring about changes to the position of women in social production should focus on the limits inspired upon them by their reproductive roles. Hence factors such as nutrition, population policies, school attendance and adoption of farm and household innovations are mere variables which depend on the restrictions placed upon women by their role in reproduction. Thus rural development planners must review the reproductive role of women in any given society so as to identify ways of eliminating women's subordination.

Secondly, the model provides an understanding of the dynamic forces that affect the structure of production. This way, an analysis of economic activities through a historical perspective is facilitated. Such analysis enables the identification of the changes in division of labour by gender and the way in which the position of women is affected in any given society.

Thirdly, the model makes it clear that gender roles are subject to change and they should not be viewed as "given" or 'natural'. Viewed in this perspective, traditional division of labour related to women's reproductive activities which the Embu

people of this study regard as static is bound to change (Nieru 3-12-89).

Finally, this model provides a category of changing socio-economic realities from a perspective of "poor Third World Women". Such a perspective deviates from esoteric Eurocentric viewpoints provided by Marxist-feminists which (Bandarage (1984: 507) rightly deplores. This study attempts to test this model by documenting the varying responses of Embu women engaged in tea production in the area of this study.

2.3 HYPOTHESES

After identifying this study's research problem, reviewing related literature and theories as well as methodological framework of data collection, the following four hypotheses were formulated for this study:

Tea production in Embu district has brought about a differential sexual division of labour in which women's workload has increased relative to men's. In this hypothesis, changes that have affected women's status, access to and control over agricultural labour products and other resources are examined.

Increase in labour burdens for women has affected other aspects of life such as child care, home maintenance and food production. A detailed account of these effects is shown.

The degree and form to which these women tea producers experience the effects of increased work-load and lack of resources is determined by factors of differentiation within and

between households.

There are reasons why women continue supplying the intense labour activities despite their lack of adequate monetary remunerations. Women are not just passive recipients to increased workload and in most cases they are aware of their rights and obligations within their conjugal contracts.

Footnotes

1. Some African countries whose political adherence is socialism have in theory although not in practice declared that emancipation of women is central in their countries. This shows that scientific socialism has so far been an ideal and not a (Note: Nyerere's own ideas on this subject as expressed in his work Freedom and Socialism. Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press 1968).

The most effective of these expressions about including women at the fore of a country's development are by Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) and by Guinea Bissau (see Hafkin, Nancy and Edna Bay(ed) Women in Africa Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1976).

2. This argument does not mean that the central thesis of this study has changed from the argument that sampled women in this study are oppressed by the conditions created by tea growing to simply by motherhood. This author found that motherhood is a unique situation that affects women.

CHAPTER THRRR

RESEARCH MRTHODOTiOGY

3.1 Tnt.rodect.ion

The purpose of this chapter is t.o dirCiirr the research design of this study, various reRenrch methods and data collection techniques lined and to redefine and validate information gathered from respondents. Tn this chapter measurements that were lined to operationalise key variables of this study are shown.

3.2 Stages of This Study

The following are the stages that were followed in this study:
Archival and library research.

- Field work consisting of: identification of research site and target population, sampling procedure and data collection techni ques.

Write up operations including, data analysis and documentation of the study.

3.2.1 Archival and Library research

Archival and library research formed the initial stage in this Rtn dy. Information from written literature was particularly important, as it facilitated formulation of a conceptual frame work hy which various aspects of this study were understood. Literature concerning women's work in agrarian economies especially that which relates to cash crop production and women's labour force was studied. This culminated in identification of the research topic

Effects of tea production on women's work and labour allocation in Emhii diwt.rict." Archival data was mainly from KTDA head

office** in Nairobi and in the field office* in Kmh. Kenya National Archives also provided materials related to the history of cash crops in Kenya. Rot.h archival and library sources were useful in providing for both documentary and content analysis (Paden and So.ia 1970: 617). From these sources literature review, theoretical framework and research hypotheses were formulated in relation to the identified research problems. Consultation of written sources continued throughout restructuring of this study and were a crucial source of data besides the use of other methods.

3.2.2 Research Site and Target Population

Identification of a suitable research setting and target population was the next step in this study. F.mhu district was the place and the area of study is what is known as the Tea-diary agro-economic zone (see fig TT on page 6). This is one of the pronounced agro-ecological gradient zones that run across Embu district and are determined by climate and relief of that area. This area covers one-third of Embu district and it is within the high potential area of agriculture according to the Republic of Kenya (1989 - 1993: 5). In this zone, tea milk and coffee are the main cash-generating products.

F.mbu district was until the time of the study divided into three divisions namely Runyenjes, Gachoka and Siakago. During the time this study was going on, Manyat.ta division was formed from

Runyen.ies division. The divisions are subdivided into 19 locations and 73 sublocations. The latest administration boundaries up to locational level are shown on Fig. IV page 04.

The research site for this study is located in both Runyen.jes and Manyatta divisions which are both in Northern Embu. The site transcends several locations namely Kacjaari North. Gaturi North. Nqandori and Nqinda. Fig. V on page 85 gives a close up focus of the routes to buying centres of Munqania leaf base as well as of the research site.

Embu district rises from 515m above sea level at river Tana in the east to over 4570m on top of Mount Kenya. The research site has an altitude of approximately 1500m above sea level. The area around Kian.iokoma market centre where the Munqania leaf base and tea factory are situated, is dissected by steep-sided river valleys containing fast running streams (Mwaniki. 1973: 1-5).

The research site falls within the pattern of the district's two rainy seasons per year. The short rains are from October to December. April and November are the months when heaviest rainfall is experienced. Dry spells are in January and February, then June to September. Farming activities corresponds to this bimodal rainfall. Annual rainfall in the research site is above 2.000 mm. June. July and August are the coldest months of the year while the hottest months are January, February, September and October. The average minimum temperature is 12° C while the maximum temperatures range between 20.4° C and 27.1° C. (Republic of Kenya, 1989-93:1-5).

Fig. IV. EMBU DISTRICT: ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES



Source: Republic of Kenya 1989/93 : 9

Fig. V. MUNGANIA LEAF BASE - AREA OF STUDY



FIG. V- MUNGANIA LEAF BASE - AREA OF OPERATION

Source: Compiled from own notes.

Most of the area studied is covered with rich mountain soils which are developed from Olivine basalts and ashes of older volcanoes. The soils are well drained, very deep with thick acidic and humic conglomerates (Were, 1986:2).

Combination of altitude, climate and underlying geology, make the area of study the most suitable for growing tea. Tea requires an average temperature of 18 degrees centigrade, no frost, 1400 mm annual rainfall, 4 hours of sunshine daily and well drained acidic soils (Kenya Tea Board:1988).

Target population for this study was identified from the districts local population of 263,173 according to the 1979 Census and the district data handbook. With an annual growth rate of 4.18% the population was estimated to be 389,797 in 1988. Runyenjes and Manyalla divisions have the lion's share of this population with an estimated population of about 219,456 while Gachoka and Siakago have 113,821 and 56,520 respectively (District Data Handbook, (1987). Kakaari North and Ngandori locations have the largest population.

Since this study is concerned with effects of farming and household activities on women in Embu, an age-sex population composition of Runyenjes, division within which the research site is located were considered useful as shown by table 1 below:

Table 1- AGE-SEX COMPOSITION OF RUNYENJES (MANYATTA)

DIVISION 1988 POPULATION

Age	Males	Females
0 - 5	27,375	26,580
6 - 14	31,343	30,884
15 - 59	45,137	50,029
60+	3,376	4,730
1- (15 -49)	41,458	45,054
TOTAL	148,689	557,223

Source: Embu District Development Plan, (1989-1993:17)

Republic of Kenya (1989-1993) further explains the sex ratio in the district as 96 males to 100 females. In some age groups this ratio varies. In ages 0-5, 6-14 there is an excess of males over females with sex ratios of 103 and 101 males to 100 females. For 15-59 and 60+ age-groups the situation reverses with an excess of females over males. The suggested reasons for this trend are: search of secondary schools by male children of ages 6-14. In the labour force age group (15-59) search for employment outside the district by males who leave their females to tend their farms is said to be a possible reason. It is interesting to note that females of 15-49 who constitute the reproductive age group form about 20% of the districts total population (ibid).

Agriculture is the main economic occupation of the Embu People. Among the cash crops produced are coffee, tea, horticultural and other subsistence crops. Animal husbandry is

also practiced. (See table below).

Table 2 DISTRICT LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT PROFILE: 1987 - 93

	1987			1993
	Number	% of Labour Force	Target Annual G/Rate (%)	Number
Population	374,858		(3.9)	472,059
Labor Force	137,519	100	(4.5)	179,300
A. Non-Agricultural wage Labor				
Public Sector	9,557	6.95	1.94	10,668
Large scale Firms				
Medium/Small Scale Farms	2,609	1.90	10.00	4,623
B. Business (Commercial) Self-Employed				
Small-Scale	7,295	5.30	17.0	18,713
Informal Sector	3,836	2.79	15.0	6,339
C. Agricultural/Livestock Employment				
ADC Farm				
Large Farm/Ranch	756	0.55	7.54	1,100
Co-op Farm				-
Landless Households (1,014)	2,603	1.89	-3.1	1,577
Destitutes (1,220)	3,133	2.28	-6.83	1,849
Small Holdings (46,503)	102,360	47.43	4.0	129,520
Pastoralist				-
P- Others				
Out-migrant Wage Labour	4,490	3.25	6.61	6,186
TOTAL	136,639	99.34	5.37	180,575

Source: Embu District Development Plan 1989-1993 : 34

This study focuses on tea farmers who are said to be of two categories: active and dormant (Wachira, 1989). Dormant farmers are those whose names were originally registered as tea growers but have not engaged in active cultivation of the crop. This study is concerned only with active tea farmers who supply tea leaves to Mungania and Rukuriri the two tea factories in Embu district. Non-tea growers were used as a control group in this study.

Those tea farmers who supply Mungania Tea factory were chosen for this study because:

- Mungania Tea factory and leaf base were established before Rukuriri. The tea farmers who supply them with tea therefore have a long experience with tea and can easily assess its impact in their lives.

- Mungania factory has an interesting history. According to some information, it was prophesied by a certain Embu seer known as Mungania who saw an elephant fall at the factory's site and people around the area were seen eating portions from it (Njiru 2005). The history behind the development of this factory has several other interesting points. According to KTDA's Annual Reports (1970-1973; and 1974-1975), the Japanese government requested the Kenya government to construct a tea factory as a step towards reversing trade imbalance between the two countries. Kenya-Maruzen Tea company limited- Kiambu Green Tea Factory was constructed and it started operating in November, 1972. Relationship between this Japanese Company and the smallholder tea

growers in the area was one of mutual suspicion. The Japanese paid Embu tea farmers very low rates for delivered green tea. Kenya government had to intervene and force the Japanese company to declare its dividends. When the company declined to do this, the factory was closed in 1975. Such a relationship exemplifies the way developed countries exploit communities in Third World countries. In its place KTDA established the present tea factory and leaf-base which were greatly welcomed by the Embu tea growers. Another factor for choosing the area around Mungania Tea Factory and leaf base is that there are more active tea farmers in the area than around Rukuriri tea factory as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: ACTIVE TEA GROWERS IN EMBU BY JANUARY 1990

Factory and leaf base	Number of Tea growers	Number of Tea bushes	Number of hectares
Mungania	5113	13,733,739	1576.235
Rukuriri	2889	9,002,944	1033.277
Total for Embu district	8002	22,736,683	2609.512

Source: Own data gathered from tea office in Embu.

According to this table, the main respondents for this study were derived from the over 5000 tea growers living around the area shown on Fig. V Page 85.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

In order to examine the effects of tea production on women's workload the sampling universe constituted all tea farmers in Embu District. Time and financial constraints could not allow a study of each one of these and it was imperative to select a representative sample of this universe. The ideal sample unit for this study was found to be the tea farmers' household unit. The bulk of the sampled respondents were women involved in tea production. These were mainly wives of registered male smallholder tea growers; women working in the tea factory and those engaged as leaf collection clerks.

To obtain a comparative account of sampled data a systematic sampling method was used. Also certain units of observation within the area of study were identified and discussed.

3.2.3.1 Systematic Sampling

As already noted women whose husbands were the registered owners of tea farms formed the bulk of respondents of this study. These women do not constitute a homogeneous category. Each had their own way of organizing their time and activity for each has their own living conditions and lifestyles different from others. In order to establish relatively uniform categories of lifestyles and facilitate this study, it was found necessary to control some variations among the respondents.

By subjective purposive sampling three socio-economic groupings were established. These groups were determined by the

number of tea bushes each household owned. Three categories were identified, namely;

- Those with over 5,000 tea bushes (large scale owners)
- Those with between 2,000 to 4999 tea bushes (medium owners)
- Those with less than 2,000 (small-scale owners).

After visiting each of the 35 buying centres of Munqania tea growers lists of these three categories of tea growers were made. Each grower was allotted a number and these numbers were written on small pieces of paper, folded and placed in a bag. They were then shaken and tossed on a table for random selection of 3 growers per buying centre. A final list of 105 respondents was compiled and arrangements were made to contact them for interviews (only 100 were interviewed). Apart from these, the author got information from respondents from various women's groups as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. NUMBER THE NAME/SITE OF THE WOMEN RESPONDENTS

	NUMBER OF WOMEN	WOMENS GROUP
	85	Kiarungu womens group
	48	Thicingi Church Womens group
	79	N.iun.iui Womens group
	40	Kavutiri womens group
	70	MwiLeLhia womens group
	90	Kibogi womens group
1	60	Kian.iokoma women group
i	100	C.P.K Church Seminar for women
i	20	Women in the open air market
i	10	Women walking along the road
i	4	Women given a lift for 30 kilometers
	TOTAL 606	i

It is not all the women in these groups who responded to this study but many of them were observed. A purposive sample of 100 tea farm households was used for the administration of the questionnaire. Thus one can see that over 10% of the target population was represented in the sample.

Selecting households according to the size of the tea farms enabled the author to have a representative sample of women with varying economic status. It is through the questionnaire that the management type of these farms was established (Saud 1985). The selection of farms from each buying centre was not merely random as already noted. The universe of this sample is not restricted to one location for the tea farmers supplying Munqania tea factory transcend four locations. The sample does not purport to generalize to all of Kenya or Africa but rather to illustrate sex differences within a sample which may be suggestive for other parts of Kenya or Africa with cash crop agricultural economies. The sample was seen to be judiciously representative of a cross-section of tea farmers in Embu. Non-tea growers were also observed as shown on table 5 below:

Table 5: ACTUAL COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLD TYPES IN THIS STUDY SAMPLE.

(Household Type i	Number of Households	CaLegory of Household
j > 5.000 tea bushes i	34	Large Scale Owners
j Between 2,000 & 4999 i	33	Medium Owners
j < 2,000 j	33	Small Scale Owners
1 Non Tea growers i	20	Non Tea Growers
Total Respondents	120	All Respondents

3.2.3.2. Units of Observation

The Embu community of smallholder tea growers and tea production activities are the basic units of observation in this study.

The Embu smallholder tea producing community

Embu attitudes, values, beliefs, and customs can to a great extent be shown to affect the way women's roles and position are conceived. The Embu social organization is both patrilineal and patrilocal. Exogamy is their form of marriage. Traditional division of labour was according to sex and age. Men would clear the virgin forests and then be engaged in animal husbandry as well as protecting crops from wild animals women followed their men and further prepared the land for planting, weeding and harvesting.

Nowadays men's work of clearing forests has already been done for there are no more virgin forests to clear. Tea production and dairy farming have become the ma.ior farming activity of the Embu

people who were addressed by this study. Since in many cases land preparation and planting were already done by the time this study was conducted, men have assigned themselves other activities outside the farm. Women are left to do not only the farm activities of producing tea and taking it to buying centres but also the household maintenance activities and child care.

It is however important to note that women's increased labour burdens arising from their participation in cash crop production precede the introduction of tea (Bulow and Sorrenson 1988: 3). Thus increase in women's workload relative to that of the men cannot be explained by the introduction of tea, alone but must be seen as a consequence of a number of significant changes in gender role relations which have been taking place in Embu and Kenya as a whole. Besides tea, dairy production, horticulture and the introduction of wage labour predominantly among men has affected changes in gender role relations and the consequent inequalities in the sexual division of labour. The pattern of control of resources by both the sampled men and women is discussed later in this study.

The stated form of Embu household consists of a man, his wife (wives) and their children. In most homes there are other dependants usually the man's parents, his brothers and sisters or other relations who are dependent on the nuclear family. In the research site, many men were found living within their households but they tend not to engage themselves in farm or household activities as already noted. Hence even in the households where

men are around, women are the defacto heads of households. This means that it is the women who decide on labour allocations for both the farm work and household activities.

Tea production activities:

Tea production is a compact phrase meaning the entire labour intensive management and cultivation activities of tea production. In Kenya management of tea industry is by the organizations shown on fig.VIT page 120. From a brief visit and enquiries concerning the personnel of these organizations it was found that women, are remarkably excluded from all administrative and policy - making levels- even within the KTDA the body responsible for small holder tea Farming, women play no part at all in the administration and formulation, of policy as was found out.

The bulk of women in the tea industry are in what Etherington, (1973 : 98) referred to as "establishment", "maintenance" and "harvesting" field operations. So far, only Russia and Japan have mechanized their tea harvesting operations an aspect which is said to lower the quality of tea drastically. In Kenya, all activities of tea production except factory manufacturing, utilize manual labour. This study found out that this labour is mainly that of womenfolk. This labour includes digging, planting, pegging and mulching, all which are known as establishment, weeding, application of fertilizer, pruning and tipping activities which are known as maintenance. Plucking and delivering to buying centres, are known as tea harvesting activities.

The ground on which tea is grown has to be dug and cleared of all roots. Wealthy tea farmers may choose to use chemical products. When tea was first introduced, seedlings were produced in central nurseries and after two years were pulled up, pruned and distributed to growers for planting. Later, the tea research institute through KTDA emphasized vegetative propagation of tea bushes. The cuttings were to be planted in holes of about 5.08cm deep and 22.86 cm wide. The time between the holing and planting should be as short as possible to prevent the entry of pests. Planting therefore is a period of extreme labour intensive activities which includes shading and mulching. Application of fertilizer as the plant grows enables higher yields which are also dependent on formation of a strong spreading frame of the lower branches. It is crucial that these are developed during the early years of planting. Frame formation helps to suppress the natural upper growth of the tea plant and it encourages the maximum possible sideways spread. Maintaining a frame is a technically demanding task as incorrect pruning in early years of tea plant is difficult to rectify later. Mature branches are periodically pruned to stimulate growth, maximize yields, remove unproductive wood and bring the plucking table down to manageable height. Pruning is supplemented by tipping which is a form of light prune designed to give a plucking table parallel to the slope of the ground. Harvesting takes place in between prunes. Left to grow naturally, the tea plant, can become a tree of great height. It is pruning and continuous plucking which maintains the proper height

of tea bushes.

Since the tea bushes are planted closely, the mature garden looks like a luxuriant well kept lawn raised 1.044 metres off the ground. The flat raised surface of the tea farm is known as the plucking table. Plucking is a skilled task which requires the identification by the plucker of two young leaves and bud (Fig. VI page 100). These are broken between the thumb and forefinger and when the hands are full, the leaves are placed in a basket usually carried on the plucker's back. The plucker must recognize the correct shoot and break the dormant shoots a process known as rejecting *ban.ih*. The rejected shoots are dropped very fast a process which requires considerable manual dexterity. As will be shown later, plucking continues throughout the year except for a few months when the climate affects the yields. A typical farmer with about one acre of tea bushes starts plucking at about 8.30 a.m. and ceases at 12.30 p.m. when tea is taken to buying centres. Buying centres are located along the roads to facilitate quick transportation by KTDA lorries to the factory. A farmer is responsible for carrying the bulky green leaves in special wicker-work baskets known as *mluru*. At the buying centres they are responsible for selecting their leaves for quality and weighing them in KTDA's standardized bags. This marks the end of the farmer's responsibilities for the tea crop. The rest of the work is done by the factory workers and machines.

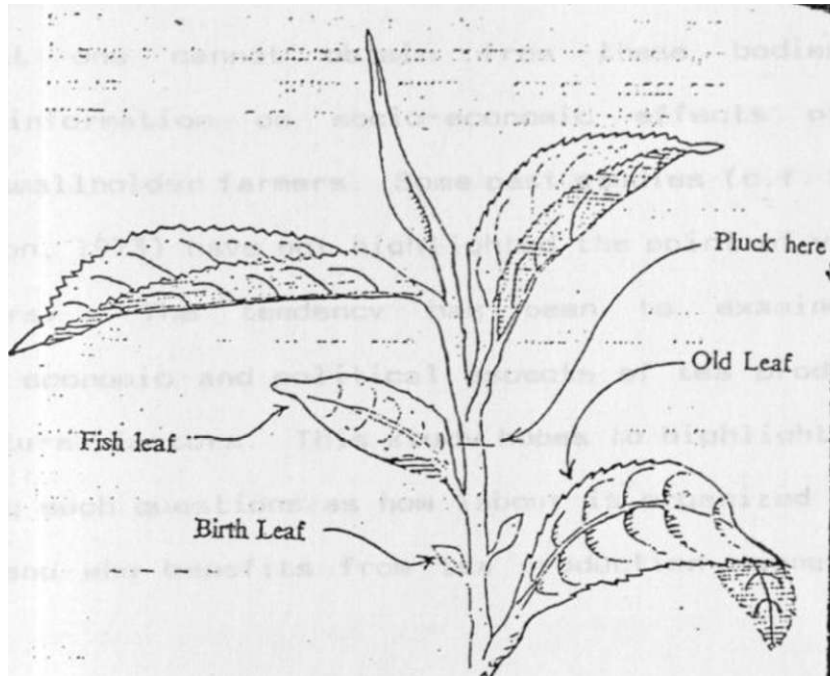
Presently KTDA's policy towards growers in Embu is liberal in that anyone who wishes to is free to enter tea production unlike

in the past when there were restrictions. In reality however many poor people are not able to enter tea production as they are resource poor both in terms of land and money. According to an interview with the tea officer in Embu town, those with small land holdings are discouraged by present agricultural policy from engaging in tea production. The aim is to encourage diversification and balanced agriculture and discourage tea farms which are not economically viable. Generally however one can say that there are no limitations on the number of tea growers in Embu. An established grower can extend his/her farm as they wish by using their own clones. Tea growers are left on their own until they deliver green tea to buying centres.

The procedure of becoming a tea grower is that a farmer buys tea clones from K.T.D.A. nurseries or from another farmer who has established a nursery. This farmer is registered as a new grower by the leaf officer and is shown the buying centre where to deliver their tea when it is matured. Since 1985 the registration procedures were computerized and the data kept in KTDA head offices in Nairobi. Each tea grower who was registered then, has a bank account to which cash from sale of tea is credited. There are some growers whose names were not computerized and have to be paid through local cheques issued by leaf officers in a monthly pay-off programme (Miriti 15-2-90).

In conclusion one can say that K.T.D.A. and other organizations structures shown on fig VII page 115 function quite well and have succeeded in organizing smallholders tea producers

Fig. VI. INSTRUCTIONS ON TIPPING AND PLUCKING



- (b) Plucking should *never in any circumstances be below the level of the table*;
- (c) : A shoot should *never be plucked off below the fish leaf*, if there is one. Breaking back below the rudimentary leaves is only done occasionally if essential to restore the evenness of the table.
- (d) Hard plucking should be continued until the bush begins to show signs of 'crowfeet', i.e. the appearance of numerous twiggy stems near the surface of the table—and a falling off in yield. As soon as these symptoms of over-plucking start to show, the bushes must be rested and the top canopy of maintenance leaf renewed by raising the level of the table, as described in paragraph (5) (b) below.

Source: Etherington, 1973 : 128.

in the area of this study and elsewhere in Kenya. However they lack detailed information of the effects of tea production activities on the tea farmers. Ayako *et al.* (1989:10-11) has raised the point that one cannot obtain from these bodies any comprehensive information on socio-economic effects of tea development on smallholder farmers. Some past studies (c.f. Stern, 1961; Etherington, 1973) have not highlighted the point of view of the smallholders. The tendency has been to examine the organizational, economic and political aspects of tea production leaving out cultural factors. This study hopes to highlight these issues by asking such questions as how labour is organized in the area of study and who benefits from tea production among other questions.

3.2.4 Data Collection Techniques

This study's research combined quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection namely, participant observation, ethnographic research, survey method consisting of formal and informal interviews, lime use surveys and key informant techniques.

3.2.4.1 Participant Observation

In this method a researcher is immersed into the activities and culture of the community to be studied with the aim of describing wholly the way people conduct, their lives in the context of their ecological and social cultural environment (Williams, 1967 : 22 - 28). The main advantage of this method is to provide an in-depth picture of the problem and a high degree of accuracy in regard to actual everyday life practices. The main disadvantage

of the method is that it takes too much time to be useful for a programmed study such as this one. Fortunately for this study, a part from the few days of residence and participation in production activities around the research area, the author also utilized her knowledge of having grown up in that area. She had thus no problems in understanding the language customs and the general behaviour of the respondents. It was possible therefore to get information by overhearing conversations, recalling events, besides the formal interviews conducted in this study. Participation in day to day activities was also not difficult because as a woman from the area of study, it was easy to participate in women's activities without raising suspicions. By actually participating in all tea production activities the author was able to gather a lot of information from overhearing conversations and verbal expressions of the respondents. The author also attended women's church seminars, women group meetings and Lea field days where a lot of indepth information concerning women's workload and the way labour is allocated as well as use of their time was gathered. This way detailed quantitative and qualitative data about activities of sampled women was gathered.

3.2.4.2 Ethnographic Research

Ethnographic research is that method of historiography which was suggested and popularized by Vansina, (1968). It consists of constructing the past by combining information from a variety of memories. Notable among these are oral traditions consisting of

memories and stories passed from one generation to the next (Kimambo and Temu 1969:2). This method is suited to anthropological research for it highlights all aspects of a given culture including the economic activities of a given society. Sources of ethnographic information include artifacts, customs and beliefs and other cultural aspects held by a group of people which testify to their early usage in the past (Vansina, 1969:98). This study used ethnographic research to focus on Embu people's division of labour particularly the roles assigned to women before tea and other cash crops were introduced. The information so obtained was important in determining the extent to which women's work burdens have increased compared to those of the men. Other information gained through this method is the way Embu people conceptualise farm and household activities.

Focused ethnographic research was found to be of advantage for it facilitated data collection within a relatively short time. Focus group interviews were done as part of focused ethnographic research. In this study, focus groups were guided group discussions aimed at exploring the issue of increased workload for women among other things. About 6 - 10 respondents were asked questions that tested their reactions about the burdens of tea production activities and the way they related to other activities done by women. Views collected from these focus groups were used to check information gathered from individuals. It is from these focus groups that information about men and women's activities both in the farms and in the household was gathered. As Margaret

BenLley (not daLed paper) noted, focus groups have Lhe advantage of group dynamism which is often a catalyst for obtaining information LhaL might not emerge from face Lo Face interviews. BenLley, (Ibid) goes on Lo say Lhat. Lhe focus group has Lhe disadvantage of the respondents reporting upon idealised patterns of behaviour which do not reflect their aLual aoLiviLies making Lheir information unreliable at some points. There is also Lhe issue of whether Lhe respondents are representative of the larger population. These problems however can be overcome by a careful selection of sites for the composition of these groups. In this study. Lhe focus group discussion were carefully planned by making sure LhaL Lhe siLes for Lthese groups were varied. They included churches. Lea buying centres, open air markets and along the roads. Women and men respondents in these sites were from varying socio-economic ranks and age groups. The author raised Lopics related Lo Lhe subject matter of women's work and labour allocations. Discussions were carried out freely and notes were recorded.

3.2.4.3 Survey Method

Survey method was the main technique used to extract data from respondents. BoLh formal and informal interviews were carried out. Formal interviews entailed making recorded schedules which were administered to Lhe respondents. Interview situations were found to be useful for they allowed Lhe author Lo repeal, questions thaL were not properly understood by Lhe respondents. IL was also

possible to observe non-verbal behaviour and assess the validity of the respondent's answer. Furthermore an interview situation allowed greater reliability as all respondents were asked exactly the same questions in the same order and their responses were therefore comparable. A written questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions was the main instrument of data collection for all the structured, formal interviews. The questionnaire also formed a pretest model from which key respondents were identified for further interviews. There were questions that related to all activities performed in homesteads, the tea farm and personal activities. Nine major themes were explored all together namely: respondent's household identification, land-use patterns and the sexual division of labour among respondents, respondent's household level of living, crop patterns in the area, activities of tea production and other forms of farm work, decision-making patterns, perception of leisure and general views about increased workload for women (see appendix I for complete questionnaire). It was found that this questionnaire was too long and cumbersome for it took too long to interview a single respondent. The author had to shorten the questionnaire but maintain the themes of the long questionnaire. The household census survey form provided information covering the name, sex, age education, number of tea bushes, number of children a respondent had. The respondent's marital status and the division of labour in a given household. This information was useful in categorization of households into the already stated socio-economic status.

A farm's household wealth was measured by collecting data using questions about income generation activities, material inventory and expenditure. Information that was obtained provided data on useful findings such as levels of ability to hire labour, income generation, ability to purchase land by various households. Information about the crops grown purely for cash and those which are grown for food was also gathered. This information provides insights into variables that were thought to affect women's work and labour allocations.

Material inventory questions provided data on the material wealth of the sampled households. Observation of houses, the value of construction materials and the number of rooms were indicators of respondent's income. An inventory of personal possessions such as radios, motor-vehicles, sofa sets and other items belonging to members of the household provided data concerning the way income is spent by respondents (of Lucas 1986:7-30).

Questionnaire on financial management of household income was directed to the key informants who included 26 households of the entire sample. Other questions furnished specific data concerning the respondent's perception of leisure. Leisure activities were probed in order to determine the respondent's time allocation (see appendix II for actual questions).

Informal interviews were also carried out in this study. These elicited data through relaxed conversations usually in groups of 2 to 3 women who were walking along the road. Respondents discussed their views on social and cultural changes brought to

their lives by introduction of cash crops particularly tea.

3.2.4.4 Time-use Survey

Oboler (1977: 4-3) reiterates that time-use survey was pioneered by Barker and Wright who studied socialization of American children. Recently they have been used by Allern (1976) for social anthropological research. Information concerning the way people use their time is difficult to collect because of three main problems:

Firstly, people lack awareness of time on the clock. As was found out in Embu, people working on the farms or in any other activities do not wear watches to measure the length of time they engage in a particular activity. Instead time is estimated through recall. This brings about what Oboler, (op *nit.*) noted as the problem of bias which is not intended by the respondent but which creeps through as everyone devises their own definitions of work.

Secondly, respondents had problems in deciding when one activity ended and the other one started. Activities in both tea farms and in the households are not clear cut. There are times when respondents found themselves performing two or more activities at the same time. Simultaneous activities are difficult to measure in terms of time.. For example a woman could be carrying a baby while peeling potatoes and throwing the peels to the cows. These are three activities: of child care, food processing and animal husbandry done at the same time.

Finally, since the total time cannot exceed 24 hours per day

and night, it was difficult to record information on time spent in all activities including sleeping. Using multiple methods of data collection such as direct interviews, using recall and respondent's record-keeping may not yield accurate data.

To cope with these problems, "random visits" were made to observe directly respondent's actual activities during substantial part of their daily activities. About 16 respondents who were living close to the author's residence were observed. Random visits involved going to these households at random and recording the activities of adult members of the household. Use was made of activity schedules and time-use charts whereby a full range of possible activities that a respondent engaged in throughout their waking hours were made. Aggregated activity categories were displayed as shown by chart IV in the questionnaire (see appendix I). The recorded activities formed time-use profiles which were used to calculate average time in hours each respondent devoted to each activity per day and whose findings are shown in chapter five of this study.

It was found out that even though some details were lost concerning time used in certain activities, the random visits were useful in giving accurate approximations. This method facilitated I the author to compile labour profiles based on current day activities of respondents. Probe terms such as "throughout the day", "most of the time", "sometime", "rarely" were used to determine how frequently the respondent performed certain tasks. This helped in collecting data that showed fluctuations in activity patterns

for both man and women in this study.

Waking hours were divided into four: 6.00 a.m. - 10.00 a.m., 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m., 1.00 a.m - 5.00 p.m., 5.01 - 9.00 p.m., 9.01 a.m. - 5.59 a.m. Each household was visited twice a week but even from the farm where the author resided, it was possible to observe about five households all the time.

Time use surveys enabled collection of data useful in measurement of women's workload. The flow of their work throughout the day, weeks and years could easily be calculated. This information was also useful in analysis of differentiation in time-use patterns according to individual households. The full range of possible activities that were covered by time-use surveys are shown on chart IV of appendix I. They covered the following areas:

- Farm activities: These included tea production activities.

The most regular being plucking of tea leaves and carrying to buying centres. Only a few respondents were found working on tea nurseries, applying fertilizer and pruning.

Animal husbandry ranked second among farm activities. The main method of animal husbandry is zero grazing which entailed regular activities of getting fodder and milking.

Subsistence farming was practiced by many respondents. Since most of their land is filled with tea bushes subsistence crops are planted in the swampy valleys. Vegetables and other horticultural crops are cultivated.

- Household Activities: These were mainly food preparation tasks which included peeling, grating, pounding, sieving, fetching firewood and water, lighting fires, cooking by boiling, frying/roasting, serving the food and washing utensils.

House maintenance tasks include sweeping, washing of cemented floors, smearing the earthen-floors with cowdung, dusting the house, clearing the compound, washing clothes, ironing and storing linen.

- Childcare Activities: These are numerous tasks which are usually taken for granted. They include feeding of babies and young children, minding their cries, washing their soiled clothes, dressing them, nurturing and socialization tasks for all children and even grown ups.

- Personal Care: Women's personal grooming was observed. The aim was to see what their conceptualization of leisure was and what they did in non-work periods.

3.2.4.5 Key Informants

After the administration of the questionnaires a small number of respondents about 26 in this study were identified as key informants. These were selected mainly from the older women who were grown up by early 1950s. These were able to give information concerning women's activities before tea was introduced. Such respondents were able to evaluate the effects of tea production activities in their own lives compared to that of their mother's

time, and her expectations for her children (Houston 1979:131-133). It was possible to note social changes as reflected in the cultural norms of Embu people. From these key informants, respondents' perceptions and evaluation of such activities as tea production, subsistence production, child care and personal welfare were sought. Information about women's work in the dynamic background of changed land-tenureship, labour resources and individuated mode of production that has come since colonialism were sought.

3.2.5. Data Analysis and Presentation

Analysis of quantitative data was done through statistical methods. A number of statistical analyses were performed. To begin with a code book was prepared by coding data onto computer sheets for analysis. The data was analyzed by using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) computer programming. This established frequencies of variables, correlations. Various types of tables were constructed to show the way tea production activities have affected women's workload.

Information collected by time-use charts and activities schedules was computed by hand showing percentages of women whose workload is most affected by tea production. The results of the foregoing data analyses facilitated the presentation in chapters four, five and six which are details of this study's findings.

documentation of information in chapters four, five and six wherein are details of this study's findings.

3.3 Operational Definitions of Variables

Introduction

In this section definitions of variables utilized in this study are made. This is important for terms have varied meanings and defining them clears any confusion that may arise in the minds of readers. Defining of variables is also important for it shows the way these variables are conceived in the task of operationalising and measuring them to determine validity of the study.

3.2.5.1 Independent Variables

In this study. Independent variables include: smallholder tea farmers, tea production activities and production and reproduction activities.

Smallholder Tea Farmers

Smallholder farming is a form of agricultural production which is organized around family labour. Except for Nyayo Tea Estates, tea production in Embu is on smallholder basis. KTDA contracts farmers in the area by registering and supplying them with the technical services of extension workers, tea clones and credit facilities for fertilizer. Men being the owners of freehold titles to land, are the registered tea growers. The contract to grow tea

used to be symbolized by a disc on which the smallholder's number was written. Smallholder tea farmers were expected to grow a specified quantity of tea which is marketed by KTDA. This study examines the smallholder tea farmers supplying tea to Mungania leaf base and factory.

Tea Production Activities

Tea production activities include all the labour processes performed by this major agro-industrial concern, of the ministry of agriculture in Kenya whose organization structures are shown on fig. VTT page 119. From interviews with senior officials of this industry, it was noted that women are excluded from its top hierarchies. To examine the participation of women in tea production one has to deal with them either as wives of smallholders or as the manual labourers of the Mungania tea factory. The activities that this study dealt with are those already explained.

Production and reproduction activities

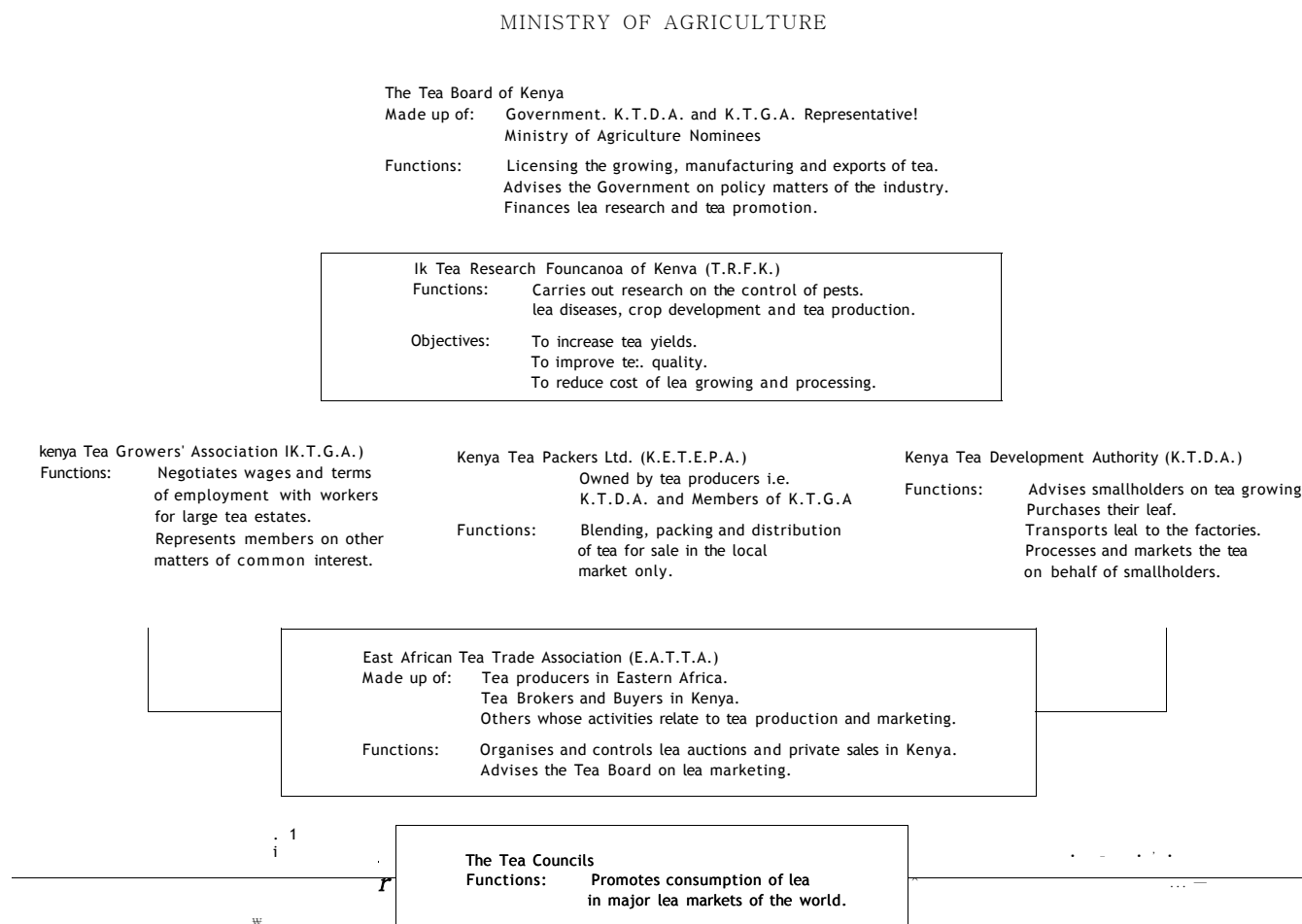
Hornby, (1974) define production as the process through which goods are manufactured, or crops grown or living things born. Work in tea farms as well as in the homes is referred to as production. Reproduction implies transmission of control of resources from one generation to the next. Child care in all its different phases is a form of reproductive activity (c.f. Gerrad, 1984 : 97). Beneria (1982), says that reproduction is the breeder/feeder roles of women. This study examines the effects of tea production

activities of the reproduction roles on Enhti women.

3.2.5.2 Dependent. Variable*

Dependent. variables were identified as the effects or consequences of tea production activities on women in the area of study. These effects were studied around, gender role relations, women's workload, marginalization of women, subordination and gender ⁴ symmetry.

Fig. VII. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE TEA INDUSTRY IN KENYA



Source: Tea Times, 1987 : 3

Gender Roles and Relations

Gender is a term used to distinguish masculine and feminine and neuter classes. Gender is culturally determined as opposed to sex which refers to biological features of males and females. Each society defines what is done by males and females. This is the division of work by sex through socialization processes of a given society which ultimately defines the roles each individual is expected to play. Such roles are determined by that society's culture. Culture in this case is what Edward Tylor defined as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a given society (Tylor, 1958). Gender and age are in most Kenyan societies the determinants of roles. In time, gender roles are a specialized and an important tool of efficiency in any production system (Rogers, 1980:12-20). It was found that, there is no natural connection between conditions of human gestation and appropriate cultural practices (Mead, 1935). Hence, the actual patterns performed by males or females are devised by each society according to their cultural practices and beliefs.

F.ihu people among whom this study was carried out had a traditional division of labour which tended to resemble that of their mixed economic activities. Women were socialized food producers while men engaged in animal husbandry. Legal and ritual rules were the means by which these roles were made rigid among the F.ihu people. A breach of such rules could lead to individual's adversities (See Were, 1986:34). It is this division of labour

by sex and the gender perceptions that were affected by the introduction of tea as is shown in this study.

Women's Workload

On page 2fi is a cartoon which illnstrat.es partially what is meant by women's workload. As shown by the cartoon even women are unable to precisely tell what their work is all about. Tt is the entire multiple labour intensive, time consuming work performed by women hot.h inside their homes and outside in their husbands farms. Home act.ivit.ies include arduous tasks such as fetching water, gathering and ferrying firewood, clearing both inside and outside their houses and taking care of children and all the sick in a household. Farm activities include cultivation, preservation and processing of food crops. Fach of their tasks involves a series of other sub-labour processes such as threshing, winnowing, selecting and picking (See Date-Rah in Hay, 1984:17-20). These tasks are performed using rudimentary tools which makes them tedious, wasteful and time consuming. When tea production with its intense labour requirements was introduced, it added to these activities of women in Fmbu. No appropriate technology has accompanied tea production or any effort made to reduce other tasks of women and hence their work has greatly intensified. Among the women interviewed, a further constraint in form of shortage of fuel was identified. They have to travel long distances in search of fuel wood as their own bushes were cleared in order to increase tea farms. Tea production may have exploited the

tasks of women and hence their work has greatly intensified. Among the women interviewed, a further constraint, in form of shortage of fuel was identified. They have to travel long distances in search of fuel wood as their own bushes were cleared in order to increase tea farms. Tea production may have exploited the pre-capitalist economic structures leading to adverse effect on women's productive and reproductive roles.

Marginalization of Women

Marginality has been defined by Wisner. (1978) as the status of being so poor, in such a way and in such a place. the individual is effectively cut off from participating in political processes and from access to important socio-economic and physical infrastructure. Many women in third world economies, fit in with this definition. This study contends that women involved in production of tea particularly those around Mungania Tea Factory in Fmbu district, are marginalized. This is because despite their contributions of labour in maintaining tea industry, they are not recognized except as family labour. They are not included in the national planning nor are they involved in decision making about the income accrued from their manual labours.

Subordination

Subordination means subjecting a person to an inferior position, rank, grade, class or order. Such a person is made dependent on the authority and power of another. Subordination of women is defined as the way

men have denied women's sexuality or forced it upon them so as to command and exploit their labour as well as control

their produce _____ to prevent their movement, to use them as objects in male transactions, to cramp their creativeness or withhold from them large areas of society's knowledge and cultural attainment (Gouah 1975:70).

Gender Asymmetry.

This is the inequality of relations between males and females in a society. As Schleuel (1985), pointed out, defining gender asymmetry is problematic for some people view women who are confined to domestic activities, having little bearing on their communities' economic and political life as equal to men in status. Some studies even show women who amass more property than men but have no voice in community decision-making machinery as being greatly valued. This is because such studies are ignorant of tenets of stratification in which gender asymmetry is found. Social ranking include rewards, prestige and power. Of these three, power is the most crucial in determining gender asymmetry. Power makes cognisance of terms such as domination and subordination which describe the differential control of one sex by the other. Gender inequality in the power dimension does not constitute a simple univariate phenomenon but rather a composite one of power, authority and autonomy operating within social spheres (ibid). Gender asymmetry is shown by the way men have the power to exert over women's domestic and public spheres. This authority is socially recognized and legitimized. Gender asymmetry is concerned with the following questions:

In what sphere and under what conditions are women or men in control of their own personal activities and products of their

labour as well as the personal, activities and product.* of labour of the other sex? How do areas of female control compare with those of male control? Do areas controlled by women include institutions that are central to social organisation?

Such are the questions around which this study discusses the effects of tea production on Fmhu women's work and labour allocations.

3.2.7 Documentation of the study.

This was the last, stage of this study. After documenting the findings of research methodology and making appropriate corrections the study was printed, bound and submitted.

3.4 Limitations of the Study.

In conducting this study this author encountered some constraints especially during the time of data collection.

One of the constraints was that a few respondents did not oblige to be interviewed because of a variety of factors: some found the questionnaire too long and the interviews were interrupting their working programmes. Others wrongly concluded that the author was part of presidential commission investigating KTDA's activities and they were full of irrelevant, information about the shortcomings of KTDA staff. The author explained her position as a researcher from the University but even the educated respondents were not convinced. Informants who were grown up by 1950's and therefore conversant with the state of affairs in Fmhu

purpose of this study in terms of what benefits they were to expect. During rainy weather transportation was difficult.

These constraints however did not hinder this study. The author also found respondents in rural areas extremely generous. In every household the author was eagerly welcomed and at times people had to be restrained from leaving their work to make special meals. During Christmas respondents expected gifts but the author's financial constraints was an embarrassment.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Introduction

In order to Identify and discuss present day women's work and labour allocations among smallholder tea growers in Embu, it is essential to understand not /just how their economy is now but also the way it was before tea was introduced. Commercialization of agriculture in Embu is rooted in pre-colonial mode of production of Embu people. As many scholars have pointed out (Bahemuka 1985; O'dea 1982) types of activities performed by men and women in a given society are best understood within a perspective of an economic system which is in a process of transformation. Embu people like others in Kenya, have experienced changes which have brought about present day division of work by gender.

In this chapter, data concerning the background which brought about present day division of work by gender in the area studied is discussed. An understanding of Embu people's social organization, the nature of their social institutions and the way they have changed over time is necessary for one to gain depth in the way gender relations interact with the process of agrarian changes. Interaction between social systems has fundamental implications for development of women's roles in agriculture and in their homes. The way introduction of tea growing has affected gender roles of Embu people is an example of such agrarian change in the area of this study.

Data in this chapter is discussed along the following topics:

Firstly. Embu peoples' pre-colonial mode of production and the place of women in it. This includes the following sub- topics:

- Origins and socio-economic history of Embu people,
- The place of women in Embu Socio-economic structures.
- Division of labour and patterns of work allocations.

Secondly, integration of pre-colonial Embu economy into market economy. Included topics here are:

- Effects of commercialization of agriculture,
- Effects of wage labour employment and
- Effects of education on Embu women among smallholder tea growers.

4.2 Origins and Socio-economic History of Embu People.

Embu people are said to have several versions of their origins the famous of which are documented by Mwaniki (1973), N.ieru (1979) and Were (1986). None of these have mentioned the historical opinion recorded by Harlow (1965) who classified the Embu as belonging to Bantu stock. The Bantu entered East Africa in a south westerly direction towards the coast. The central bantu settled at a place known as Shungwaya from which they dispersed northwards following the course of river Tana. In Present North Eastern province, their northward migration was repulsed by Galla who forced them to move southward. They settled in their present homelands in Meru, Embu and the districts of Kikuyu people. There are only slight differences in customs and

editions of these ethnic groups and they have from time to time
rtxsd political and economic alliances. In the 1950s they
^arheaded the Mau- Mau rebellion and formed the defunct Gikuyu
. Embu - Meru - Association (GEMA) in post colonial era. Relations
•«L*een these three ethnic groups are marked by shifting alliances
.«d opposition, competition and envy.

Originally Embu people were hunters and gatherers. After a
*nes of events they changed from pure expropriation of nature to
*come agriculturalists. By the end of the 19th century,
tariculture was the main economic base of the Embu people,
jjltivation of crops was supplemented by animal husbandry, hunting,
^keeping, gathering of wild vegetables, fruits and roots.

Land and livestock were and are the main means of production,
•toy are regarded as the focus of social relations. Clan elders
controlled all land and supervised its allocation to lineage
•embers. Holdings were fragmented within and between ecological
ones for people wanted to avoid the risk of crop failure and
wisure diversification of crops grown. People of the same affinity
'•ollectively cultivated portions of land and all cultivated land
•as known as rware or ngamba. Clan lands were scattered and only
'te elders knew their actual borders often marked by rivers,
Mils, large trees and in some cases 5% large stones (Ngai
M2-89). Although land was communally owned, ownership of
activated parcels was finally passed on to the head of the family
the husband.

4.2.1 The place of women In Embu Socio-economic Structures.

Features of the traditional Embu social organization included, age-grade system or marllka, lineages, phratries and moieties. In these institutions an Embu man was the pillar of the home and to complete his authority he required land, wife (wives), children and livestock in that order. Wealth was generally measured in terms of livestock which had a strange definition encompassing cattle, goats, sheep and daughters ! Stratification in Embu was along the possession of socio-economic properties such as cattle, women and children. To maintain relative wealth, a person was careful to instruct his daughters not to marry from poor families.

These features have lost their previous social value but certain cultural aspects of Embu people have continued to this day. This study restricted its scope to those aspects that affected the way women's work and labour allocations were conceived: Sexual relations, marriage, the cultural value of children and concepts of household and family which are discussed in the following section.

4.2.2.1 Sexual relations:

Sexual relations in Embu society were very restricted and people respected the rules governing these relations (Run.ii Ndwiga 4- 11- 89). They were limited to married couples and even in marriage, there were circumstances when they were controlled. Informants gave examples of the period after giving birth which Mwaniki (1973) says was as long as the mother had milk in her

breasts. The consequence for default was reddening of the sucking child's hair which would be followed by the child's death. Pre-puberty and pre-marital sexual unions were regarded as abominable and heavy fines were imposed on those who could not exercise control. Rapists, adulterers and fornicators were severely punished.

These restrictions were especially severe to women. Any premarital sexual relations which resulted in a pregnancy brought severe problems for the girl who was sent away by the parents to stay with her grandmother or distant relations until the birth of her child. Such a girl would have to accept less attractive marriage offers either from men who had several wives or from old, poor and disabled men. Little or no bride wealth was paid for her. If she remained unmarried, she was considered an outcast. She was riled and ridiculed by everyone and if she stayed with her parents it was on a grace and - favour basis. Nowadays children of unmarried girls are entitled to inherit from their grandfather but in most cases the girl's brothers force her to marry whoever is available. This forces her to leave with her child(ren) for her brothers loath competition for land with their unmarried sister's child(ren).

4.2.1,2 Marriage

Today as in the past, marriage is the main aspiration of Embu women for their status and prestige are to a very large extent determined by their roles as wives and mothers. These roles are

linked to their role as food producers. It is this situation which is exploited by men in order to appropriate their labour as will be discussed in the next chapter. Marriage and social roles for men and women in Embu have undergone a number of changes. While for women marriage was the main avenue for their social value, men could achieve relative status and prestige through their roles as warriors and cattle owners. These days Embu men are no longer warriors and cattle-ownership has diminished in social and economic importance. Instead land ownership and agricultural production have become important. Men therefore gain status and prestige mainly through activities which enable them to earn money. However the majority of women continue to be wives and others in addition to assisting men in farming and other income generating activities.

The economic role of marriage among the Embu is shown by the criteria of virtues that young men were advised to look for while choosing a woman as marriage partner. Eligibility for marriage was for pragmatic factors which the Embu people designated as "love of virtue". Respect, obedience and hard work were the chief virtues that were observed in a woman who was found suitable for marriage. Like the French of Creuse the Embu men may have said.

It is ... neither graces nor beauty that constitute the merit of country girls, they are sought after by young men on the basis of their good reputation as good labourers, as hard workers ... (Flandrin, 1979 : 115).

The Indicators for the proven capacity for hard work and passive obedience were according to one respondent, "horny hands and a stoop." These were marks that a woman had used the panga and lembe quite frequently. As one scholar noted.

women in East Africa and for that matter the Embu women are brought up to consider men as leaders and themselves as of secondary status. Women are brought up to obey their husbands rather than to develop a relationship of companionship in marriage. They learn to do housework, take care of children and farm. The biggest events in a woman's life are coming of age, marriage and child bearing (A quote in Naslmiyu 1964 : 41).

This was the situation in Embu. As elements of productive force and Instruments of labour, women were rarely envisaged as companions. They were rather considered at their best as the silent builders of their husband's homes. Hence their names atumla which literary means silent people and aka which means builders. Up to the time of this study women were seen working in their husbands' farms, taking care of livestock and also struggling alone at house work and child care which are considered women's chore

Following the principle of patrilocal and exogamy. Embu girls left their parental homes at marriage to live with their husbands. Sons were allocated land by their fathers where they settled down with their wives (Mwen.ii 4-12-89). This practice is so up to the present. Fathers delay the sharing of their land among their sons. Even married sons of forty and above live in small parcels of their father's land without their own title deeds. They are still dependent on their fathers for their families' livelihood.

This is contrary to the pre-colonial concepts of marriage. In Embu for then marriage enabled a man to establish his own household, claim part of his father's land and property long before legal inheritance after father's death took place. Marriage also enabled individuals to engage in sexual relations and have children. It was the only way that a man gained access to a wife who would bear his children and work for him. As the leader of the family, the husband could demand obedience and respect from his wife. Marriage furthermore ensured legitimacy of children as offsprings of the husband regardless of whether he was the biological father or not. This suggests that after marriage, out of marriage sexual relations were accepted openly or through clandestine means and women were more free than in premarital period.

Married women in Embu had their right of access to land clearly defined and safeguarded by customary practices. If a husband did not give his wife land, she could invoke the intervention of clan elders. An industrious woman was always praised by such pet names as ngatha. Such a woman could pressurize her husband to give her more and particularly that of a given category but first she must satisfactorily prove her competence by having completely cultivated her first portion (Nglma 12-11-89). Thus like Luo women studied by Pala (1980). Embu women too had usufructory rights to land by virtue of being wives. These rights were corporate proprietor rights to land ownership through their husbands' patrilineages. As Willis reiterated. "... a woman

as a member of her lineage" and in the Embu case that of her husband's lineage:

enjoys all advantages of a man In respect to rights of usufruct throughout her span of life____as a wife or daughter, she assumes full responsibility for the management of her farms and in practice, she is free to lend sections to her kin and friends. Thus, land tenure often meant that both men and women had the right over the land they were assigned to cultivate (Willis. 1966:47).

Seen in this perspective. Embu women possessed a measure of power in the pre-colonial economic structures. Their access to land, a basic productive resource was also protected by customary laws as was observed:

Under customary law. women are dependent on their spouses for access to land and social sanctions operate to prevent men from interfering with this right (Barnes; 1978 :63).

Even unwed girls who are of marriageable age. were allotted their own strips of land for cultivation. Their produce was usually stored together with that of their mothers. An Important fact to emphasize is that most of the land for farming was given to married couples whether or not the wife plays a predominant role in agriculture. Even today an Embu man must be married to be considered as an adult. Thus in regard to access to economic resources marriage today as in the past plays an important role for both men and women in Embu. As Bryson, (1981 : 33 - 40) noted, unmarried men are regarded as having a right to be fed by their mothers and so have no need for land of their own. This may be the reason why unemployed single men in urban areas refuse to return to their rural homes for even there, they are not able to initiate

economic developments.

Marriage in Embu was and still is symbolized by an act in which the man delivers some material items known in Kiambu as ruraiyo to the family of his Intended bride. The family of the bride - to - be receives four to fifteen goats, one to four cows, one to two bulls and a ram. In some cases the male fiancée worked for the family of the future wife for a given period. Delivery of ruraiyo in form of livestock was misunderstood by missionaries such as Crawford, (1913 : 125 - 136) who saw it as enslavement of women through buying and selling of women like property. This is a misinterpretation of bridewealth for, the girl was not open to everyone as is the case with the process of selling and buying merchandise. Only serious suitors who were acceptable to her family had their bridewealth accepted. In addition it was an agreed matter that should the marriage break up, the girl's family were prepared. Deliveries of stock and exchange of items was spread over a long period sometimes transcending two or three generations. Proceeds of the transactions were never used for personal enrichment by the girl's people but for securing another wife for a male member of the girl's family, a way of replacing a person by another person. Also the flow of proceeds was not in one direction even the girl's father paid one to two goats for the girl to tie in her hut (MUru 29-11-8).

Today monetization of bridewealth has adverse effects on the situation of Embu women. Payment of bridewealth in cash more closely approximates a commercial transaction. There is fear that

„t>men can amass the necessary cash through saving if they are allowed a lot of say In cash output especially from tea. This has •ed to increase of bridewealth to figures which are beyond women's ncome so as to forestal a situation where women can buy themselves off marriage.

About 90 % of respondents, especially women expressed that carriage relationship today is a type of slavery in which a woman perseveres all her life. They bemoaned the present situation in which men treated them as fools when it comes to the question of cash output. As one respondent said:

Men expect us (wives) and children to be obedient without question even when they do not fulfill their roles as providers of food, clothing and other items necessary for the maintenance of the household (Gichuku, 2-2-90).

Men also complained of the Increase In cost of living, lack of opportunities for supplementary wage labour and the increasing problem of land shortage. These were not clearly understood by their wives,

- without appreciating the constraints that hindered men from being efficient husbands” (Ireru, 3-2-90).

All respondents that were observed displayed a distant relationship between husbands and wives. This tendency may be

traced to Embu traditional marriages. Traditionally, both husbands and wives despite their marriage, remained members of their own lineages as long as the marriage lasts. Although patrilineal rule forbids women to be incorporated into their husband's family, women still retain certain links with their natal family. In case of a divorce, the woman returns to her father's or brother's home since incorporation to the husband's family is conditional on the "life" of the marriage. It is the children who are considered to be of her husband's lineage. After marriage and even after giving birth and rearing children, women's ties to their natal family are important. They are maintained by provision of land by the woman's relations for cultivating food crops. Women also take regular gifts to their natal family and if they are employed, they send financial help.

Another factor which accounts for the often distant relationship between a husband and wife in relation to their tea farm and other properties, is polygyny. In Embu, polygynous marriages were considered ideal for wealthy males. Nevertheless it is not many people who had more than one wife. As Dorjahn (1965 : 104 - 105) observes, the incidence of polygyny in Africa does not exceed 35% of married men. Only about 2% of respondents in this study were polygynous yet nearly 30% of women respondents who were first wives however recognise that their monogamous marriages can be the first step to polygynous ones. Even as they engage in tea production activities as well as other income-generating work, women are concerned about this issue and they keep a record of

their property separately in anticipation of problems which could arise with the arrival of a co-wife. Harrying another wife was accepted as a way of bringing in an additional labourer and the first wife participated in polygynous marriage because the new wife would reduce her workload tremendously.

4.2.1.3 The cultural value of children among the Embu.

There were several reasons why children were greatly regarded in Embu society. Firstly, they were valued because they brought completeness in marriage. Childless marriages were considered miserable and eventually a failure. Childlessness was usually blamed on the woman. Whenever a couple failed to have children after several seasons, the woman was taken to her family to consult diviners and seek ways of correcting her condition. Barrenness was shown as resulting from being bewitched kurogwa, breaching of traditional prohibitions, venereal diseases, tuberculosis and oromiscuity of a girl (Ngembi. 26-11-89). A childless woman was taunted by everyone and openly called nthata meaning barren. This term nthata was very hurting as it was used for a fruitless tree which was worthless and only useful as firewood.

Secondly, procreation enabled the expansion of the family, the clan and society in general. Children especially sons were regarded as more permanent members of the family who ensured continuity of the family name. Male posterity ensured clan solidarity. Sons were the means of security for the family In that they hunted dangerous animals, brought delicacies like meat home

and safeguarded family property. Sons were also a source of economic, social and military strength for the Embu. Like the French of Limousin, Embu people had a custom of,

... considering only the eldest son and looking on the younger sons as of small account, and the daughters as of no account at all. If one asks a woman whether she has children, she replies quite seriously, "No I have none"; and a moment later she tells you that she has three daughters; for a daughter is merely a daughter, whereas only a boy has the privilege of being a child. (Flandrin. 1974 : 113).

In Embu. sons were the means by which an Embu woman could gain access to land and other property she had worked for, after the death of her husband.

Thirdly, children were not difficult to rear. There were no economic and personal constraints in bringing up children for the mother was not left alone as in present day nuclear families. She was assisted by the members of the extended family, the clan and neighbours. Nowadays there is an Increase in the number of women . with children out of wedlock a phenomenon which has brought about conflicts among smallholder tea growers in Embu. Despite the decline in morals and relaxation of the rules of premarital sexual relations most women know that marriage is their only means of ensuring that their children have access to land and property.

2.1.4 The concept of household and family

Households and families were other socio-economic ,restitutions that were observed in this study. There are many jdfinitions of the term household, but in this study a household is defined as,

A person or group of persons living together under one roof or several roofs within the same compound or homestead area and sharing a communallty of life by their dependence on a common holding as a source of income and food which usually but not necessarily involves them in eating from a "common pot". For a person to be a member of the household she or he has to be resident within the household compound

(Integrated Rural Surveys 1974 - 1978 : 20-30).

In pre-colonial Embu society, such a definition would not have fitted for women, children and the aged would have constituted a household while the men formed another. The homestead MucU. is the nucleus of a household. In Embu. a man with one wife had a homestead which consisted of five buildings namely: the man's Private house, the kitchen, the millet store, the grain store and a cattle shed. These were enclosed by a hedge to form a man's homestead. Embu people feared staying in large villages for those could be annihilated by enemies. It was durlnq Emergency that the colonial government forced the Embu people to stay in villages for the purpose of curbing all assistance to Mau-Mau. Since the 1960s.

people live in dispersed homesteads in their own farms on land holdings which were demarcated and freehold titles issued. The cylindrical mud walls and conical roofs of their houses have changed into modern timber work of walls and corrugated iron sheets for the roofs.

This study's material inventory survey, gathered information on construction materials whose values were based on the present approximate prices found in shops in Embu. All houses for each household were thus rated to obtain a fairly accurate picture of their types and the estimated cash invested in home improvements. It was found that those households with over 5,000 tea bushes had more property in their houses than those with few tea bushes. Non-tea growing households had houses roofed with old kerosene tin roofs and mud walls showing that they were poorer than tea growing households. The results of the material inventory survey are shown on page 238.

Today a household consists of a man, his wife (wives) and children but also other people such as hired workers, grandparents and unmarried daughters with their children. Flandrln (1979) distinguishes between household and family. His definition of a family is, "the related persons living under the same roof more especially the father, mother and children who all have affinal bonds" (ibid : 4). In Embu the family includes notions of co-residential and kinship. Family and household differ in that membership of a household includes people not bonded by affinal

ties. Households that were studied consisted of different groupings. Some had relatives only while others had non relatives usually residential hired labourers. In the few polygynous families, each wife with her children constituted separate households with the husbands as heads of all the households.

4.2.2 Division of labour and patterns of work allocations.

Monsted, (1977 : 259-266) has explained division of labour by stressing the aspect of specialization of activities of family members. These activities are centered around maintenance of the capacity to produce labour and meet social obligations of a given household. Division of labour within the family refers to the pattern of allocating obligations of production and reproduction within the family. It entails a pattern of work allocations to husbands, wife(wives) and children according to their sex and age.

Embu pre-colonial society's division of labour was for subsistence production. Agricultural production was and still is organised around family labour. This labour was demarcated along biological factors of sex and age. Although there were no hard and fast rules. Embu men are said to have done the heavier work of clearing virgin forests and breaking ground in preparation for cultivation. Women followed the men turning the soil to prepare it for planting. Planting was divided between men and women. Men were responsible for planting bananas, sugarcane, yams and sweet Potatoes while women planted millet, beans and other grains, (c.f.

Kenyatta. 1938:178). After planting. women were responsible for weeding all crops. Harvesting was done by use of communal labour but the threshing, winnowing, shelling and storage were considered women's activities. These are what Pala (1974:5) called lighter but all the year round activities for women. All production was for consumption as:

each wife is held responsible for what she produces from the land and can distribute It as she pleases, provided that she has reserved enough food for the use of herself and family until the next harvest (Kenyatta. 1938:178)

The division of labour along gender lines in Pre-colonial Embu according to 10 X respondents followed what Murdock a proponent of biological determinism of women's subordination wrote:

Man with his superior physical strength, can better undertake the more strenuous tasks, such as lumbering, mining, quarrying, land clearance and house building. Not handicapped as is a woman by the physiological burdens of pregnancy and nursing, he can range farther afield to hunt, to fish, to herd and to trade. Woman is at no disadvantage, however, in lighter tasks which can be performed in or near the home. e.g. the gathering of vegetable products, the fetching of water, the preparation of food, and the manufacture of clothing and utensils. All known human societies have developed specialization and cooperation between the sexes along this biologically determined line of cleavage (Murdock. 1949 : 7).

Thus, the Embu people allocated labour to men and women in proportion to their biological capacities to perform these tasks. Division of labour too was justified as a way of enabling Embu women to engage in production in or close to the house in order to facilitate child care. These postulations as already explained in the theoretical framework contradict the practical rationale of

Embu people. For example, there were proficient craftsmen who were considered specialists regardless of their sex. Also Embu women worked in the fields and at home during pregnancy showing that Hurdock's theory cannot be applied to every society. Sexual division of labour in Embu was however strictly enforced through legal and ritual rules. There were institutions such as rites of *kuumagaria mwana* (literally translated as escorting a baby) which promoted the accepted work allocations by gender. A ceremony of presenting a baby boy with miniature bow and arrows was to symbolise the boy's role as a hunter and protector of Embu nation. Baby girls were presented with a bundle of dry twigs to symbolize their role as producers and providers of food and sustenance of the nation (Njeru 1979, Oral Interviews Nyaga, Ngari and Wambogo on 3 - 11 - 89, Mwaniki, 1973 and Were. 1986).

Table 6 below sums up work arrangements in pre- colonial Embu homesteads. It shows percentages of what was considered suitable for either men or women is shown according to the respondents of this study.

Table 6 WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND THE TYPICAL DIVISION OF LABOUR IN PRE-COLONIAL EMBU.

Activity	% considering activity suitable for:		
	men only	men and women	women only
Agriculture			
Clearing Land	77	15	8
Removal of Shrubs.			
Kuguma	15	30	55
Planting	10	20	70
Weeding, bird scaring	2	23	75
Harvesting. Threshing	1	36	63
Winnowing and storage	0	25	79
Animal Husbandry			
Grazing animals	100	0	0
Milking and calves			
Care	30	65	5
Goats and sheep			
Fodder	30	40	30
Poultry keeping	3	14	83
Tasks in The Homestead			
Building of houses/ cattle sheds	98	2	0
Repair of houses	18	19	63
Food preparation	0	2	98
Beer brewing	0	3	97
Fetching water	0	4	96
Beekeeping	100	0	0
Lighting fires	8	15	67
Gathering wood fuel	20	29	51

Source: Compiled from author's field data.

According to this table, clearing the virgin forests was the work of Embu men. In those days. Embuland was bushy and forested with only a few pathways called mitaaru which penetrated Into the

Men were responsible for livestock keeping. They went out to herd animals everyday. They had to guard them from marauders (Chandi 2 - 12 - 89). Cattle had both economic and social values In Embu for possession of large heads was an indication of wealth and prestige. Women were however expected to feed those who were going out to graze and to meet them in the evening with food. Milking was a task that was equally shared by men and women. Apart from being a symbol of wealth, cattle provided milk and meat. Women kept the milk in various calabashes in which It was churned into butter and cheese. These were valued commodities which were exchanged for salt and beads (Ngembi 1-2-90). Men were however entirely responsible to what happened to cattle. They negotiated to buy and sell their livestock as they wished. In some occasions oxen were slaughtered and their meat allocated to various members of the household. Skins from slaughtered animals were used as clothing called kigori. Livestock was the source of wives for it was the accepted item of exchange whenever an Embu man wanted to marry.

i

Hunting was another activity in which Embu men engaged themselves. Edible animals such as antelopes, buffaloes and bushbucks were hunted by groups of Embu men. A hunting group was known as athi and had its own leader. The athl. trapped animals or shot them by using poisoned arrows. They protected people from fierce animals such as lions, leopards and rhinoceros. By mid 19th century there was a great demand for ivory and Embu hunters intensified their hunting activities. Hunting was however

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sugarcane to make honey beer which was drunk by important visitors. All these tasks were strenuous and in some cases women had sleepless nights. They had to grind grains into flour an arduous task which preceded the preparation of fermented gruel the most common drink in Embuland. Large guards were filled with gruel and everyone who visited was given a half- calabash full (Igoki 14-12-89). The feasts which accompanied these tasks were considered successful only if women cooperated with others to ensure that large pots were full of food and numerous guards were filled with beer and fermented gruel.

After people ate and drank, singing and dancing usually followed. This was according to age groups. Married people with children formed their own group and unmarried couples sang and danced in another group which was separate from that of their parents. According to one of the respondents, married women had a lot of leisure then for apart from preparing food which was an every day task, there were no dishes to wash afterwards or many clothes to wash, dry and iron as to day (N.iura 10-1-90). It is the women who ensured that everyone in the homestead had eaten enough of everything. They were responsible for food preparation, fetching water from streams downhill, gathering firewood, cooking and serving everyone. Song and dance continued even after harvest festivities were over as practices for future (Wangai 10-1- 90). Hence in the words of one respondent. "Women were continuously and regularly engaged in leisure activities". (Ngima, 5-12-89).

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Social relations were such that good neighbourliness and

men and women in Embu before colonialism. Since corporate labour was always available women were therefore relatively free most of the months to participate in leisure activities. Family social structure, social relations and Inheritance systems have combined to bring about the present unequal labour distribution among smallholder tea farmers in Embu.

The present agricultural production defies application of such terms as landlord/tenant models of land tenure. Even the use of household as a basic unit of analysis whereby management roles are assumed to be those of a husband while the wife fulfills the labourer's roles under his direction was found to be incorrect. The presence of a woman and her competence in housework, child care, tea production activities and other farm work activities has become crucial. There are however variations in the husband's power of deciding over his wife/wives activities.

Before concluding this section it is important to note that these socio-economic structures have been maintained to present day. The normative division of labour by sex has continued even though men are involved in tea production and other agricultural activities more than they did in the past.

4.2.2.1 The Subordination of Embu Women

Despite their prerogatives, Embu women were subjected to some demeaning practices when it came to actual administration of their rights to land. To begin with, decision-making processes regarding cultivation of women's portion was not always the woman's

prerogative. Embu women were obliged to comply with their husband's suggestions. This was said by a respondent to be a mark of respect (Raeli, 11-2-90). According to this respondent a good wife "must not be rude but fulfill her duties for if her husband is dissatisfied with her behaviour he has a right to beat her". Obedience, respect and industry were instilled through wife-beating. More than 75 % of the women respondents admitted that they feared beatings from their husbands. Their fear was well founded because nearly 60 % of all the respondents, reported that husbands have a right to use physical force in order to back up their power. Some elderly women among the respondents felt that women nowadays fared better than in the past when wife-beating was more widespread than the mere threats of today. This may be the result of the way male violence to women has been historised (Kipuri, personal communication).

Women are, as in the past, expected to accept all decisions taken by their husbands. They were to consult their husbands concerning disposal of any surplus products from the farm. Commercialization of land and labour has intensified this aspect of subordination. Women are rarely consulted about the disposal of cash from tea farms even when their labour in planting, weeding and carrying to buying centres is expended. Like in the olden days when man's crops were used only to entertain their visitors and as secondary reserves for the family, men's income is not always disclosed to their wives. Although it is customary for the husband to consult the wife concerning cash output, they have tended to

use their ultimate power to spend all the cash (Mutitu 14-12-89). Women respondents were however striving to reduce dependency on their husbands by seeking their own sources of Income. Involvement in women groups was one of the ways by which women sought independent incomes.

Inheritance is another area in which an Embu woman's access to land tenureship was marginalised. As a patrilineal society, the Embu inheritance system is along male lines only. Since male posterity ensured clan solidarity and continuity of family's name, when a man died, his wife and children and all his property were inherited by one of his brothers or male relatives. If an Embu woman chose not to be inherited (a decision considered anathema), she was returned to her kinsmen accompanied by her young children. She had no claims whatsoever over her husband's property except being its guardian while her sons grew to take it up. Sons inherited their father's land and property. They were expected to look after their mothers and sisters. As Kanogo (1989 :6) wrote, this dependency of grown women on younger men than them was a reflection of the gender articulation of means of production portraying the subordinate status accorded to women.

Embu women's rights to inheritance of land were further marginalised when they were considered as part of the property to be inherited. As Potash (1986) noted among the Luo, levirate marriages in Embu were mandatory. It was obligatory that arrangements for marriage be made immediately after the death of a spouse. After the death of her husband the Embu woman's access

to land was shaky. Like the Bukusu women discussed by Nasimiyu (1984), Embu widows have no rights to land;

a girl who was married cannot come back to claim any land...when a man dies his wife is inherited together with her cultivation by the heir. If the heir is a son, he inherits his father's property and provides for his mother (K.N.A. file No. DC/NN/10/1 1926 - 1940).

These socio-economic institutions in Embu have undergone numerous changes during colonial and post colonial periods.

4.3 Integration of Embu Economy into market Economy

Swahili traders collectively known as chomba were the forerunners of the colonialists in Embu. They came by mid 19th century, made friends with rulers athamaki and other merchants in Embu who became their trade partners. They exchanged beads, cowrie shells, daggers and other foreign goods with Ivory, rhinoceros horns and other forest products. This way Embu people had a fore-taste of foreign goods which colonialists were to bring in great numbers (N/jiru, 1975).

Rodney (1975), Brett (1973) and Leys (1975) have lucidly explained factors that were behind the coming of Europeans to Kenya and other colonized countries. These scholars attribute colonialism to economic factors. Rapid industrialization in Europe led to a saturation of their home markets. There was a need to seek for other markets and sources of raw materials. European merchants

sought these in Africa. Asia and South America. They only looked for places which were not claimed by other European powers. Hence need to protect these places from their rivals led to establishment of colonies. Thus Kenya and many parts of Africa were drawn into international capitalism as peripheries. Their role as colonies entailed supplying export raw commodities to metropolitan markets and buying manufactured products in return. As Amin (1975) and Frank (1967) reiterated, people in Third World countries became subordinate to European metropolitan centres whereby their political economy was altered to allow raw materials to be extracted from them. Never the less their pre-capitalist modes of production in which production was for subsistence continued.

In Kenya the decision by colonial government to establish a viable economy that could finance the maintenance of the railway led to introduction of settler community who undertook plantation agriculture. There followed massive alienation of African lands and a demand for abundant cheap labour which would enable the colonial system maintain itself and make profits (Sorrenson. 1968). Taxation and forced labour were introduced forcing African men to be siphoned to Europeans plantations and colonial government's public works.

Under colonial rule in Kenya, all African societies were progressively integrated into international capitalism. As Kanogo (ibid : 8 - 15) reiterates, women continued to perform their traditional roles according to pre-colonial division of labour. They however had to combine their roles with those which were for

men since many men were recruited as male labour by colonialists. In Embu women could be seen grazing for the first time, clearing farms, thatching roofs, constructing sheds among other activities (Peris : 4-11- 89).

i

Colonialism ushered in new economic patterns which underplayed women's economic contributions in the productive process. There was an imbalance in division of labour for in the absence of males, women became defacto heads of households. Such a position entailed decision making without confidence. In some cases women were allowed some latitude in deciding some important matters while in others they had to wait for their husbands. In Embu, colonial rule affected women in many ways but we shall deal with land tenureship, commercialization of agriculture, wage labour and Education.

4.3.1 Effects of colonial land tenure system on Embu women's work and labour allocations

At first colonialist's demand for free land made them exploit the African pre-colonial land tenureship by not recognising or codifying customary rights governing land transactions. After Second World War, colonialists had to rethink their position for there was overcrowding, overstocking, soil erosion and desperate lawlessness in African reserves. This was so bad that even the settlers' property was affected and it was imperative that the situation be rectified. Swynnerton Plan of 1954 and East African Royal Commission of 1955 where efforts by colonial administration to make land reforms. These programmes involved a series of steps of adjudication of clan land and individual land rights leading

to consolidation of fragmented holdings, enclosure and registration and issuing of individual freehold titles, (Sorrenson 1967 : 117; Okoth Ogendo. 1976). Colonial land tenure reform aimed at replacing what they considered the uncertainty of customary tenure with a system of land titles registered and guaranteed by the state. This was to bring more economical holding by restricting migrations to unclaimed land for cutting down of forests was made illegal. This was for the purpose of expanding cash crops, improving agricultural techniques and encouraging agricultural investment. Once fragmented, holdings were consolidated into units of economic size, registered freehold titles could be used as security for agricultural loans. Swynnerton (1954 : 10) noted that it was also to encourage progressive farmers who would buy out smaller subsistence oriented production units of uneconomic size. Those people who became landless by this process were to be the source of labour for larger commercial farms and in industries. Creation of landed and landless was an important step in evolution of an agrarian reform in a capitalist country.

The extent to which this capitalist agrarian transformation affected women in Embu is the focus of this study but first the general effects. In the area of study, people live in scattered homesteads built on individual farms which were demarcated since early 1960's. The mean size of registered farm parcels among the sampled population is 6.2 acres. Subdivision and fragmentation of land is a serious issue which is as a result of persistence of pre-reform land use. population pressure and inheritance related

problems. Multiple parcel ownership is quite common showing the weakness of the Swynnerton Plan. About half of the sampled respondents claimed they owned land elsewhere.

Among the sampled population it was noted that women were not registered owners of land. It is the men therefore who own land and they appropriate all income from crops grown in it. Almost all Informants in this study held that all property in a household is corporate family property. Although corporateness means group ownership of property, to many respondents it meant that family cash income is under the control of the husband. Women cannot own anything absolutely for even what a woman owned before marriage belongs to the husband. Thus land tenure system has widened the economic gap between men and women. Also there were differential consequences in relation to access to resources. Both men and women respondents were deeply against women ownership and control of property Independent of men. Even those couples who own /joint bank accounts, their accounts were frequently referred to as their husband's account. While a husband is free to withdraw from such account without consulting the wife, the woman has to be authorized by the husband (Naomi Mathla 1-2- 90).

Since the Embu are exogamous and patrlllocal, every married woman moves from her natal home to stay with her husband's family and to care for his property. Every woman is aware that the land on which they live is that of the husband. The man is presumed to Provide his family with all they need a situation which has brought a lot of handicaps for women. Women are not expected to have power

in decision- making on farm management. Whenever men are overwhelmed by women's power, they resort to land ownership and ask such questions as:

Whose land do you live on ?", "Did you come with your own plot when you came here ?", "I can get another woman and throw you out" (Kimuru 15-12-89).

Thus women have lost usufructory rights of access to land. They are however not absolutely powerless for they possess veto power over their husbands' decision to sell land. The 1982 presidential decree has increased legal safeguards against sale of land by men (c.f. Muga.iu 1983 : 196). Recently women who have independent sources of income can buy and own land but it is still unheard of for a married woman to own land in Embu. Among the sampled respondents there was no case of an independent woman owning land.

4.3.2 Effects of Commercialization of Agriculture on Embu

Women

As Moris (1970) wrote, Embu district had the advantage of being 20 years ahead in export cash crop production. Along with Abagusii and Ameru, the Embu people were allowed to grow coffee by 1930's. One informant said that coffee was first grown in Embu at Kathungururu in Ngandori location around 1934 (N/jiru 8 - 1 - 90). Introduction of cash crops in Embu came at a time when their

economy was being integrated into capitalism. In the new set up, there was a great demand for male labour in colonial projects and traditional division of labour was getting upset. Commercial crops required larger areas of cultivation and were labour intensive, women in Embu found themselves acquiring more roles for they had to work on both subsistence and cash crops. Work allocations were no longer clear cut and the division of labour in Embu acquired new values. For example work on subsistence crop was accorded lower status than that on commercial crops. Commercial crops were an elaboration of the prestigious men's crops in the Embu traditional economy which included yams, bananas, sugar cane and sweet potatoes. These were endowed with power for they could be sold for cash (c.f. Kenyatta 1938) Money was becoming the most powerful symbol of wealth and not livestock.

Among the first cash crops in Embu, were coffee, pyrethrum, wattle and potatoes. These crops required tender care so as to yield adequate quality and quantity products. Weeding and tedious harvesting were left to women as men had moved in search of wage labour or were working as forced labour. Thus the effect of the cash crop in Embu was the expansion of production and the increase in women's labour burdens. They also added to the conflicts in families concerning land usage and allocation of labour as will be shown later in this study. Men insisted that cash crops predominate all agricultural production and thus directed women's expenditure of labour time to be more in cash than in subsistence crop Production. Hence the source of misconception in which men were

portrayed as Instrumental in commercialization of agriculture while the truth is that it is women's work which was marginalized and their contributions disregarded. Their active participation in cash crop production is invisible because most decision - making power is appropriated by their husbands.

This trend gained strength when tea was introduced during the post-colonial era. In Embu, tea started as a low income crop and it was known as a woman's crop as men initially had to register their wives's names so as to be given more seedlings on credit by KTDA. Later when it began to bring huge cash incomes, men appropriated it on the strength of their owning the land on which it was grown. Nowadays respondents were agreed that women cannot independently own their tea. Even where tea is in a woman's name, the money accrued from it is not hers but her husband's. Even where the money goes to /joint bank accounts, women are not expected to draw out this money and use on their own needs.

Thus one can see the way capitalist division of labour is depicted at micro level in Embu. Men are the ones with power of deciding on how cash from tea is to be used while women are dependent producers. KTDA is just a middleman who markets the raw material (tea) and in turn pays the men who own the tea farms. Men in turn buy manufactured products such as cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and motor vehicles. In this vicious circle, it is the women who are the major workers at the grassroot level yet their status and contributions are invisible.

4.3.3 Impact of Wage Labour on Embu Women.

One of the effects of colonial economy on pre-colonial Embu was that women were not sought after as labour. Kanogo (1989 : 8). observes that they were not among the male squatters in European plantations, workers in public work department, railways and harbours. These and other government departments recruited men who were also siphoned from rural homes to join the army and formal education. This requires a historical explanation so as to clarify the background.

In 1926, Native reserves ordinance together with Hut and Poll-tax demanded that men migrate in search of wages. These men provided the cheap and unskilled labour which colonial economy required at that time to maintain itself. Able bodied males of sixteen years and above were made to work as forced labour. In Embu, people recall some activities of forced labour such as the digging the trench to prevent Mau- Mau nationalists from getting provisions and also the construction of Embu-Irangl road (Mbogo, 6-12-89).

Siphoning males from African reserves removed an important element in sexual division of labour in Embu. Women were left to maintain the production and reproduction of subsistence economy which entailed food production and child care. Thus women's agricultural labour time expanded for they had to take over what was formerly performed by men. Cash crops made their work burdens even worse. The situation was compounded further by absence of any form of technological improvements. Up to date cultivation is done

by hand using machetes or pangas and hoes. In the sampled area, no one owns animal traction for the land is too steep. The effect is increased work and labour burdens for women. Instead of food production by women while the men deal with livestock. Embu women are greatly burdened by both activities. Apart from agricultural activities, they also work on household maintenance, child care, food production and preparation, fetching of water, firewood and cleaning up.

Urban areas continue being the stimuli for wage labour thereby usurping rural economy of its manpower resources. In the area of this study, most women are retained in the farms owing mainly to their disadvantaged position in the educational field. The legacy that their economic operations and sphere are within the homestead is another reason. According to Embu Development Plan (1989 - 1993), about 9 % of the males work out of the district but in the sample most men left their homes in the morning to come back in the evening. It is usually women who are left behind to supplement on whatever little is received from their men's remittances from wage labour. Women are the unrecognized chief managers of farms and homes. Suda (1989) was right in pointing out that women have assumed greater responsibilities within the household and in the farm even where their spouses have not been part of migratory labour.

Lack of agricultural technology. Information and extension services further disadvantages Embu women. Farming of food crops is usually left to the basic knowledge of the woman while all

infrastructure and service is advanced to cash crops. Use of fertilizers is not favoured by respondents for it tends to stimulate too much weeding of crops. Tea requires fertilizer application once a year but it is an expensive activity in as much as a useful one that maintains high yields. High yields in cash crops benefit the men more than the women.

4.3.4 Impact of Formal Education on Embu Women

Another important effect of colonial rule on Embu women is the European attitudes towards education for Africans. Education was the determining factor for employment of Africans in support roles of commercial ventures, colonial administration and other sectors of colonial rule. Colonialists emphasized education of the boys rather than both boys and girls. This fitted well with the cultural tradition of Embu people where formal education for boys was greatly stressed and more external oriented. Boys were taught to be warriors who would protect the nation, graze animals far afield and search for fertile lands. Girls' education was more home based for they were taught child care, food preparation and household maintenance. The patrilocal marriage patterns of the Embu people favoured the colonial bias in educating the boys who were seen to benefit their kinsfolk while girls were married off. Missionary education was structured in such a way that most opportunities were for boys. In cases where girls got educated, the curriculum was designed to fit in with their culturally determined roles of performing domestic chores. Domestic science

-as the main subject preferred to make the girls better wives (Mutua. 1978).

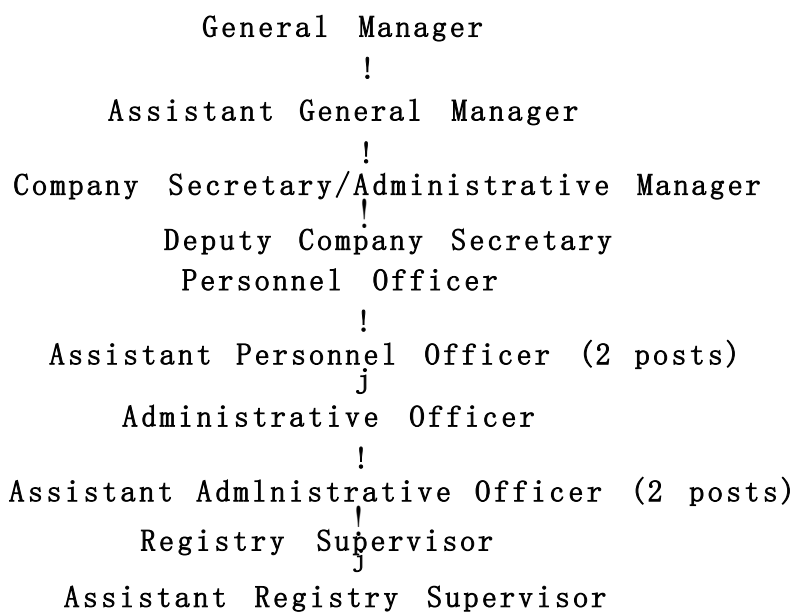
This pattern was followed by post-colonial governments for, up to 1984, the national enrollment of girls had not risen beyond 45 % in primary schools, 33 % in secondary schools and 24 % in higher education (Mutua ibid). Even at the university level there seems to have been a bias towards enrollment of females in liberal arts and education faculties. Lately, enrollment of females has increased tremendously but still stereotype ideology that females can only do well in professions that offer only services continues (Riria Ouko, 1985).

How has this disadvantaged women in Embu smallholder tea producers ? In several ways. Firstly, education is a gateway to acquisition of resources for it produces access to employment in prestigious /job positions. This in turn breaks the dependency role /
for a person becomes economically independent. Thus failure to expose women to education in the same way as males are exposed has increased the dependency position of the women. This was repeated frequently by respondents whenever the question of other economic alternatives was raised.

It is due to lack of educational opportunities that women are bound to homesteads where they engage not /just in their own traditional roles but also take up "men's roles". Embu men having been made mobile through access to education can engage in wage labour and earn the much needed cash. Women had to be beasts of burden and their dependency on the men's income was intensified.

This research found out that there is a small percentage of Embu people of relatively younger generation who have had access to education and have thus enhanced their position. These are among the respondents who claimed to have completed primary, secondary and further training levels of education. These have encountered constraints of a structural type the main one being non-recognition and lack of appreciation of their work capacity. They are thus hampered by their femaleness from upward mobility by being left out of key positions in both public and private sectors of employment. Available data shows that the percentage of women in prestigious and policy-making positions in Kenya is very low as shown in the following diagrams.

Fig. VIII. STRUCTURE OF ADMINISTRATION IN K.T.D.A.



Source: K.T.D.A. telephone lists.
All these posts are occupied by men.

FlfL IX. STRUCTURE OF LEAF COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

Head Office

Leaf Collection Manager

Deputy Leaf Collection Manager

Assistant Leaf Collection Manager (Finance)
I
Assistant Leaf Collection Manager (Green Leaf)
I
Mechanical Technicians (Vehicles)

Mechanical Technicians (Weighing Scales)

Field:

Leaf Collection Superintendents 7 posts according to
Zones

Leaf Officers attached to 39 leaf bases
j

Acting Leaf Officers

Source: Compiled from notes made from interviews of KTDA officers.

It was alleged that there is not a single female in all these
Dosts.

Table 8 THE PERCENTAGE FEMALES IN WAGE SECTOR OCCUPATION: A
CASE OF K. T. O. A. IN EMBU

Post	Percentage (%)
Executive posts of directors and top administration	0
Field officers, factory and leaf officers	1
Technicians and factory supervisors	6
Clerks, secretaries and collecting clerks	64
Operators of machines and drivers	1
Unskilled workers	15

Source: Own data

The information from the above diagrams and table show that there are virtually no women in executive posts within KTDA In Embu. There were many reasons given by respondents for this state of affairs. The most important of which is education, socialization, biological factors and discrimination.

According to information from KTDA*s head office the absence of women from top echelons of administration is attributed to shortage of educated and specialized women. Most women graduates seem to specialize in education and liberal arts and seem to shun "hard sciences" a factor that disqualifies them from KTDA*s executive posts. These were however found to be mere excuses for further investigations by the author on the educational Qualifications of the Individual officers occupying the described Positions revealed that they are neither highly educated nor specialized in any way. Many of them are men of low education whose

promotion is due to on-job experiences.

Women were said to be wrongly socialized in that they never applied for top posts. A respondent said women have an attitude of shunning responsible posts which require thinking preferring rather to concentrate on clerical and secretarial /jobs. Women have also failed to advance to high levels for they have divided loyalties. They tend to have too many out of work responsibilities which make them lose experience. Their family responsibilities especially as relates to their husbands, curb their ambitions and they appear to be less highly motivated or committed to their careers than the men (Wan/Jama 8-6-89). These reasons were however not fully supported by the findings from the women themselves. Women seem to have internalized employment tendencies in Kenya. They know that the probability of their being employed as subordinate clerks is higher than as executives. Also they have observed many highly educated women who can cope with their family responsibilities and yet are not highly placed.

One respondent from top management of KTDA stated that since the body running the tea industry is a parastatal, it has private sector tendencies of fearing to engage women at top positions for this would lower the industry's productivity for women tend to absent themselves because of maternity leaves. This reasoning was however discarded by Butterfled's (1977) study in which it was observed that many kenyan banks prefer hiring women at all levels. According to bank's management, Kenyan women deal more honestly with public than men. Their superior work performance compensates

for their few and far spaced maternity leaves. Also the banks management find women cheaper to employ for they are not paid housing subsidies. KTDA and other bodies running the tea industry have thus no valid excuse for discriminating against women.

Outright discrimination of women is usually related to the Employment of Women Children Act chapter 227 of the Laws of Kenya (c.f. Jackson, 1970). This act ruled out against employment of women and children between 6.30 p.m. and 6.30 a.m. apart from medical and para-medical workers. Tea industry management and administration have used this protective legislation to restrict female employment opportunities. Male respondents propounded that tea industry all over the world has a conservative approach for even in international gatherings there are no women in management levels. They also stressed that women cannot cope with night shifts and extensive overtime work especially during peak seasons (Miriti: 8-2-90). The personal make up of women is such that the high pressure of management, policy making and administration, is unsuitable to them. This coupled with their family obligations makes them incapable of handling responsibilities at high posts. Handling of cash by leaf officers, driving and mechanical work were said to be unfeminine and most unsuited to women. Even at the buying centre's level women could not be elected members of committees for they are said to lack the time for meetings.

These attributes were found to lack validity for these respondents at the top level were oblivious to the fact that the quoted act was repudiated on 3rd of May 1976. Attempts to discuss

the new trend with them were in vain. The author also found out that tea authorities have not sought out women's own opinions which were found to correspond to the table 9. below.

Table 9 BARRIERS TO WAGE LABOUR OPPORTUNITIES AS FOUND
FROM MUNGANIA FACTORY AND LEAF-BASE FEMALE WORKERS

8 out of 20 workers stated biological factors as barriers
13 out 20 workers stated discrimination as barrier
10 out of 20 workers stated socialization as a barrier
9 out of 20 workers stated education as a barrier

Source: Own data compiled from questioning the female respondents of mungania tea factory.

From this table, the most significant barrier to opportunities of promotion is outright discrimination as was confirmed by 65 % of the respondents. The implication is that the equalization of educational opportunities for men and women may not sufficiently reduce inequitable participation of women In the Kenyan wage sector (c.f.Butterfield 1977 : 5-10). As Boudon, (1973) noted social opportunities do not follow decrease in inequality of educational opportunities. Thus women's employment opportunities may remain constant in future even if their access to education opportunities has increased. As Butterfield (1977) noted. It may be imperative to use legal pressure which insists on equal quotas of employment. There ought also to be equal pay for equal work if

female employment opportunities at high levels will be achieved.

It is against this historical background and overview that the findings of this study are analysed and discussed.

Footnote

1. Flandrin Jean-Louis 1979 Families in Former Times, London.

Cambridge University Press. On page 65 he has shown the five principle types of households subdivided into 19 secondary types.

Table 10 TYPOLOGY OF HOUSEHOLDS ADOPTED BY CAMBRIDGE GROUP.

1. Solitaries	(a) Widowed (b) Single, or unknown marital status
2. No family	(a) Co-resident Siblings (b) Co-resident relatives of other kinds (c) Persons not evidently related
3. Simple family households	(a) Married couples alone (b) Married couples with child(ren) (c) Widowers with child(ren) (d) Widows with child(ren)
4. Extended family households	(a) Extended upwards (b) Extended downwards (c) Extended laterally (d) Combinations of 4a - 4c
5. Multiple family households	(a) Secondary unit(s) UP (b) Secondary unit(s) DOWN (c) Units all on one level (d) Frereches
6. Indeterminate "stem families"	(e) Other multiple families
	5b
	5b + 5a
	5b + 5a + 4a
Fereches	5d
	5d + 5c + 4c
	5d + 5c + 4c + 2a

Source: P. Laslett, Household and Family in past Time, pp. 31

Note : All categories can be without servants.

* The descendants included in type 4b can only be grandchildren or great grand children.

** The distinction between types 5a and 5b is generally arbitrary.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the findings concerning Embu women's multiple and often conflicting roles and responsibilities in cash and food crop production, domestic work and child care are discussed. As has been shown, the Embu peoples' cultural norms emphasized male headship of households. As a leader of the household, the husband is expected to command the labour of his wife and children. It has been pointed out that studies of agrarian change previously regarded the household as the basic unit of analysis. Such a view disregards economic and social differentiations within the household based on the criteria of gender and age among other factors. This study considers it crucial that in order to grasp the socio-economic aspects of tea production and to answer fully Questions related to land, labour and capital, the analysis of household has to be expanded. This is done in this chapter by focusing on the aspect of gender the crucial element that has been fitted in designing strategies to improve and accelerate development in many Third World countries. Tea farming in Embu is a part of improvements on agricultural industry in Kenya and is based on the wrong view of male household headship. Such a view has retarded socio-economic development and the general deterioration of the quality of human life.

In this chapter, issues concerning present day land, labour and capital organization in farm and off-farm employment are

discussed. Factors that led to adoption of tea and other forms of commercial production are highlighted in order to contextualize the labour situation into which tea production activities were introduced. The findings point to the fact that tea production in Embu is not only an enterprise that affects the farming system and households in general, but an enterprise that differently affects various members of the household and is also affected differently by them. These views facilitate a better discussion of the dynamics of the division of labour within households. Households are discussed not /just as units of communality but also as depicting power hierarchies and conflicting interests of their members (c.f. Bulow and Sorrenson 1988:127-137). This way those aspects of labour constraints in Embu smallholder tea producers and the extent to which husbands control their wives' labour as heads of households are elaborated. The question of increased workload for the women respondents is addressed. Men's roles and their views are examined and incorporated so as to present an objective study.

5.2.1 Factors that Led to Entry Into Tea Production In Embu

Today 94.7 % of tea production in Embu is by smallholder tea growers supplying Mungania and Rukuriri tea factories (Mureithi 12-2-90). Also a great number of households are directly or indirectly involved in tea growing either as labourers in other Peoples tea farms, the tea factory and or as growers in their own farms. Tea was first grown in Embu in 1949 when an enterprising

councillor and chief, Gerishorn Mukono, is said to have given his clanland to the colonial Ministry of Agriculture for experimentation and research. This pilot scheme was neglected during Emergency but was revived in the 1950s (Chandi: 20-11-89). The creation of Special Crops Development Authority in 1961, as Dart of Swynnerton plan for promotion of cash crop production among African smallholders was the actual beginning of smallholder tea growing in Embu.

Some people from Embu who had seen tea growing while they worked as labourers in European farms in Limuru in Kiambu district were keen to try growing the cash crop in their own farms. By 1964 when KTDA was formed, quite a number of Embu farmers became curious about tea planting. At first those who had not heard about tea were apprehensive about new crops which were not for consumption purposes. The first tea growers were ostracised by those who adhered to traditional Embu customs. This fear was quelled seeing the visible improvements of the living standards of those who had adopted coffee, pyrethrum and other cash crops (Ruth Gichuku 12-11-89).

Meanwhile KTDA was encouraging Embu farmers to enter tea production by offering cheap loans and credit facilities to farmers. it was not difficult for the people to respond enthusiastically to tea growing as maize and beans the main subsistence crops and coffee did not do well in the area studied. This author remembers that when growing up in the 1960s, the area around Kian.iokoma was famous for its famine. The situation has

changed drastically, for today there are numerous commercial activities and one can see well built houses and many motor vehicles on the roads. Access to land and capital were and still are the most important conditions for entering tea production.

Generally it is the better educated, enlightened and Christian Embu people who entered tea production. The role of Christianity was not a direct subject of this study but many respondents have remarkably made Christianity synonymous with both desirable Embu traditional values as well as new ideas for development. This idea will be discussed further in the next chapter. Suffice it here to mention that Embu tea growing households differ from non-tea growing households in that they have more land, larger stocks of dairy cattle and are more deeply involved in cash crop production. Many tea growers especially those among the large-scale tea farmers claim to be Christians. Furthermore, they constitute the better educated people who are likely to engage in off-farm wage labour (c.f. Bulow and Sorrenson. 1986:6-8 on Kipsigis). Thus they are able to generate a surplus income which is invested in further improvements of their farm. Fig. XI below shows the household of a typical tea grower in the area of this study.

Fig. XI. THE FARMYARD OF A TYPICAL TEA GROWER



Courtesy of F.nos Nyaga, Public. Relations Officer, KTDA Nairobi.

Tn t.his picture note t.he way this farmer has surrounded his homestead with cash crops: Coffee, Tea in every stage of growth and Napier Grass for Grade Cows. Very small space is left.' for subsistence crops.

5.2.2 The Role of KTDA in Tea Production in F.mhu

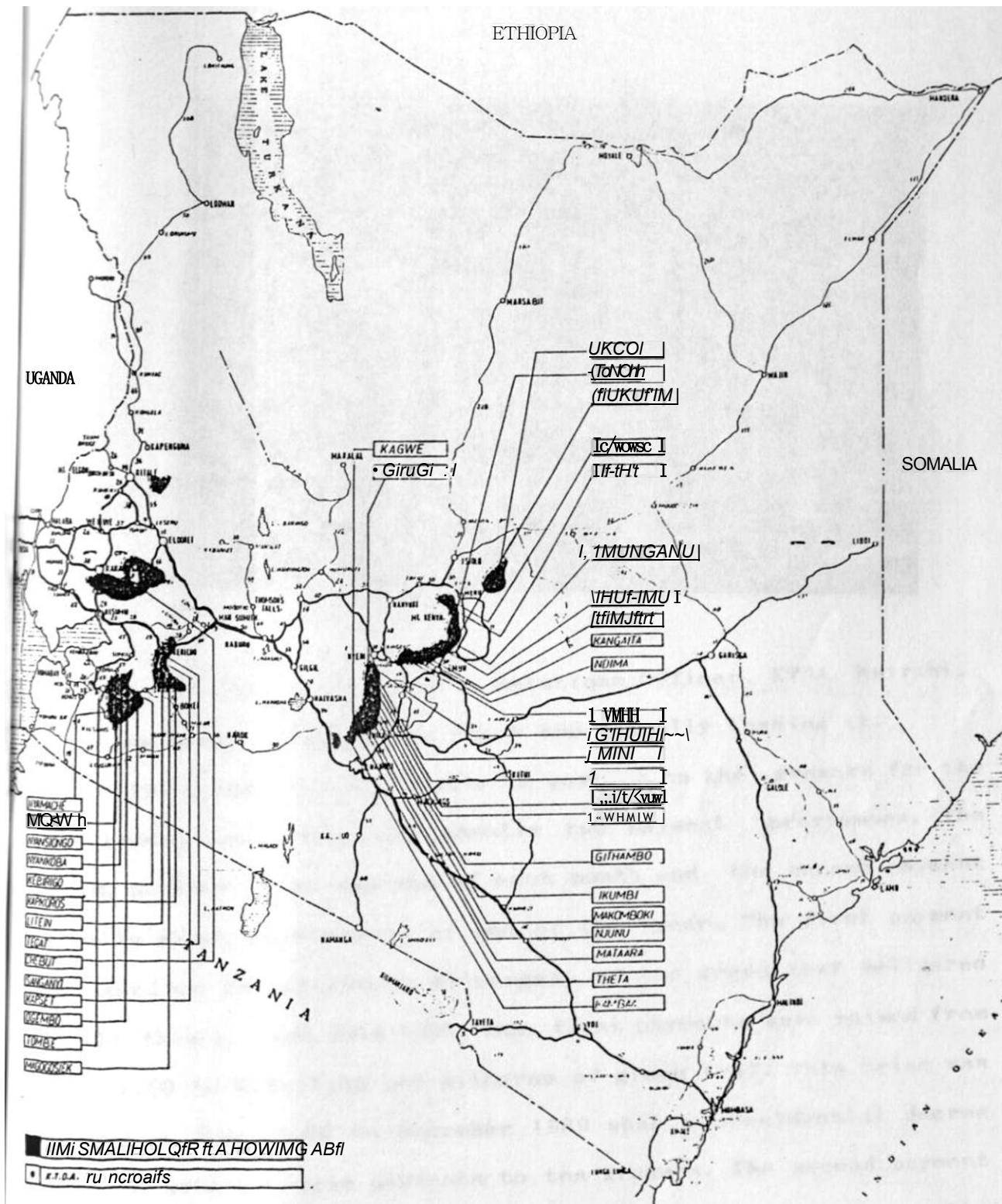
KTDA nowadays does not interfere much in production process and t.he way people organise their labour in their tea farms.

Cxuftlly the authority provides tea growers with a wide variety of services ranging from operation of factories to provision of tea clones for planting in nurseries. At the national level, KTDA operates 39 tea factories in Kenya (Fig. XTT on page 182). Two of these Mungania and Rukuriri are situated in Fmhu.

KTDA functions in tea production include the registration of growers, allocating them with buying centres and providing inputs like fertilizer and extension services. From its sister body. The Kenya Tea Research Foundation of Kenya, experiments are performed to provide the best varieties of crop development and control of diseases is carried out. The results are passed on to the farmer hy KTDA through its technical assistants. T.eaf officers control the quality of green leaves through the leaf collection clerks attached to each huying centre.

After the delivered green leaf has passed the factory control of KTDA, the smallholders are guaranteed the consequent, purchase of their produce through the receipts that, are issued to t.hem. Tea »R then delivered hy means of large lorries (Fig. XTIT on page 177) to the factory where it is manufactured into hlar.k t.ea. Manufactured t.ea is sold hy auction. A fixed percentage of about 13 X of all t.ea produced in each of the 39 factories in the country is sent to the Kenya Tea packers Company T.td. (KFTRPA) who blend. Package and market the t.ea for the nation as a whole. The remainder is sold hy factories. The money obtained is used in running of the t.ea industry and paying the growers (Wan.iama 8-8-89) .

Fig. XII. KENYA SMALLHOLDER TEA GROWING AREA AND KTDA
TEA FACTORIES.



Source: KTDA 1987/88 : 15.

XTTT: A T.OADED KTDA TRUCK.



Courtesy of Enos Nyaga, Public Relations Officer, KTDA, Nairobi.
Note the women climbing the truck and actually loading it..

KTDA's most, important, role is payment, to the growers for the tea production. There are usually two payment programmes. The first, payment, is at the end of each month and the second payment, usually known as bonus is at end of the year. The first, payment, is based on the weight, by kilograms of the green leaf delivered by the farmer. From July 1985, the first, payments were raised from Ksh. 1.50 to Ksh. 1.90 per kilogram of green leaf. This price was raised to Ksh. 3.00 in December 1989 when a presidential decree ordered KTDA to raise payments to tea growers. The second payment, (bonus) varies from factory to factory and it depends on the

quality of the process. Its colour, brightness curling and strength are crucial (Ng'ayu 2-11-89). Table 11 on page 185 shows the actual payments to tea growers in Kenya according to factories during 1987/88 year.

One should note that there are deductions from these payments which include: 38 cents per kilogram as cess paid by the farmer for KTDA's services, 20 cents per kilogram deducted for fertilizer loans if a grower had taken it and 1% of the farmer's total earnings per month to the local government. In the budget, of last government year, tea farmers were also required to pay a 5% tax which luckily for them was waived by the president.

I

5.3 Characteristics of Tea Farming Households

An enquiry into demographic structure of sampled households was important in determining the amount, of labour available to a given household. From a random sample of the smallholders three stages of household cycles were identified. These were the young and newly established households consisting of a husband, his wife and children who were under school age; middle aged well established households with older children some of them grown up but not independently established. Their children assist them in production of cash and food crops. Old households were those where a husband and his wife (wives) live alone as all their children have established their own households. Middle-aged and some old households have what it takes to be progressive smallholder tea growers. They form the bulk of the sampled households among the

TABLE 11. PAYMENTS TO TEA GROWERS IN KENYA 1987/88.

Unmet/1. of Base	(Green Leaf Collected Kg)	h ^m in Payment KShy 1.90 per Kg/Green	Second Payment		Total Payments to Growers for the Year in KSh
			Rate	Amount	
Zimbabwe Mutimbu	K 007.761	15 244.746	3.57	28 587.707	41 802.463
Kiumu	6 625.07	12 000.015	3.60	23 851.083	36 490.08
District fuuh	U. 6JJ. WX	27 002.791	3.58	51 438.740	80 241.531
Kijumji	5 455.5*	10 067.517	1.70	9 276.200	19 643.717
Kindiki/Nikara	11 000.115	19 100.436	2.47	24 704.557	43 708.083
Kapchoros	6 600.011	12 700.071	1.28	8 633.113	21 233.994
bpo	8 500.101	16 000.044	1.69	14 051.76	30 511.600
Makindu	9 000.011	17 000.015	1.24	12 950.015	31 387.77
Iron	12 000.011	11 425.019	1.64	20 220.158	43 646.057
Iteal	47 600.027	91 440.621	1.69	80 885.459	170 325.080
District I Utah	10 605.05	21 511.72	3.15	33 408.883	53 550.225
Kisumu • Mjauji	9 951.00	19 900.514	3.59	35 727.177	54 655.711
Itea	5 769.00	11 561.26	4.96	28 644.76	39 506.02
Hague	6 900.171	17 200.45	5.26	36 783.089	50 042.464
Kijumhaa	3 000.014	6 000.617	4.04	134 513.75	197 844.42
District I Utah	7 000.00	14 000.00	4.35	34 176.767	49 104.150
Thyanta • Kiringaya	7 400.00	14 800.00	2.13	15 904.40*	30 001.48
Kimunc	1 115.471	21 155.15	1.51	28 000.22	49 155.627
Kireiti	11 100.00	21 200.00	2.99	33 444.80	54 664.87
Nitua	5 500.00	10 500.00	2.50	10 944.55	24 444.55
Kipitici • Nuri	2 600.00	4 900.00	3.02	7 885.00	12 885.00
Nitua II	7 200.00	14 400.00	2.95	11 889.177	15 506.00
District I Utah	7 555.67	15 111.34	1.62	11 255.413	26 681.218
Kali • JINIKKI	7 912.20	15 824.40	1.27	10 055.86	25 880.129
Nitua	8 500.00	16 000.00	1.69	14 463.34	30 463.34
Iimhc	8 600.00	17 200.00	1.21	11 690.063	30 089.42
Kichtneu	8 250.00	15 650.00	1.54	11 697.449	33 347.449
Suneimi	7 100.00	14 200.00	1.19	8 794.44	22 335.916
Oismho	7 100.00	14 200.00	0.83	5 800.22	19 100.22
Kunukaru	6 000.00	12 000.00	1.45	9 856.64	22 840.910
Unmet fuuh	6 114.016	12 228.032	1.36	8 556.185	20 504.213
H57.X31	1 629.00	3 258.00	1.75	1 100.004	3 131.003
Won - Oihungo	1 671.142	3 342.284	4.69	11 528.078	17 603.419
KICJEW	6 570.00	12 140.00	2.65	17 440.75	29 911.177
Iharanya	4 700.00	9 400.00	2.08	9 990.178	19 087.51
Jumr	9 100.00	18 200.00	4.88	44 445.618	61 708.534
I Ami	8 214.00	16 428.00	4.74	38 735.82	54 533.02
District Totals	11 444.54	22 889.08	JS3	123 249.751	152 041.024
Muraga • Njiru	10 855.00	21 710.00	1.75	30 957.538	51 612.664
Lantapiiii	12 271.551	24 543.02	2.96	16 123.791	59 639.738
Uluuru	11 000.00	22 000.00	3.23	15 784.841	56 834.747
Lumbt	12 722.68	25 445.36	3.67	26 875.76	71 143.872
Malunihuki	12 997.691	25 995.38	1.71	15 221.748	59 917.35
uthamho	11 272.519	22 545.18	1.34	24 077.694	43 555.480
Unmet Total*	70 100.173	140 200.346	1.9*	209 213.437	342 705.8*
Nadi	4 104.879	8 209.758	1.77	7 255.63*	15 064.90*
Nyeri • Chinga	6 600.414	13 200.828	3.00	20 055.242	32 773.229
Otiugi	5 004.92*	10 009.84	1.98	15 091.45	24 716.84*
I nam	6 055.655	12 111.31	3.02	20 100.07*	32 745.823
Oathuthi	29 100.84	58 201.68	1.07	6 055.930	11 655.610
Kagati	7 429.202	14 858.404	3.81	28 305.20	42 420.74
Irati Nursery	6 000.00	12 000.00	3.72	22 162.00	34 066.00
Kayotehi Karm	535.117	1 070.234	3.72	1 990.655	3 007.57
District Touto	29 110.265	58 220.53	3.13	91 644.192	147 333.69*
Total 1987/8	115 500.00*	231 000.00	1.6*	90 176.76	1 554 597.717
Total 1984/87	133 194.815	266 389.63	2.68	877 170.810	1 141 406.61

Source: KTDA 1987/88

growers (c.f. Rulow and Sorrenson ibid :B3-84). The average tea grower is fifty years old, monogamous and lives on his own farm together with his family usually a wife and about 10 children - some of school age and others having completed. Polygyny among the sampled respondents was found only among the old households. Co-wives were seen living together and engaging in either working on the same piece of land or living separately with their children. Polygyny, however, is one of the causes of family conflicts among smallholder tea growers as will be explained later.

In all the sampled households, the family is the core of the household as well as the basic unit of production. All members of the family participate in various activities of smallholder tea farm. It should however be stressed here that in all the households it is the women who were found toiling at household maintenance tasks, food and cash crop production as well as child care.

5.4 Land and labour factors in tea production

The Mungania leaf base officer confirmed Etherington's (1973) observation that tea is truly a labour intensive crop. Etherington, (1973:99) also showed that it requires approximately 2000 working hours per year to work on tea. Table 14 on page 219 shows what was observed in this study concerning time use in hours for tea production and other activities done by females and males. Activities that a prospective tea farmer engages in are outlined here in details.

A smallholder farmer who wishes to be contracted by KTTA to plant tea must have land on which to grow it. Land is the most

sensitive issue among the farming community that was studied. Usually it is men who inherit or buy land from their fathers. As was shown in chapter four, F.mhu women do not inherit land hut they gain access to land through use-rights granted by their husbands when married or their male kin when unmarried. A new phenomenon of land ownership has evolved as a result of tea production. This is hiring of land from migrant tea farmers. One respondent (Ngima:23-11-89) reported that she works on a hired farm taking the tea to the buying centre and keeping the receipts. The owner pays her half of the total amount given in the first payment. Thus she gets Ksh. 1.50 out of the present Ksh. .1.00 per kilogram. The migrant owner gives her grants that act as incentives. l.easing of tea farms however is not a widespread activity.

Another way that a person can "own" land is hy borrowing usually to cultivate subsistence crops but not to squat. Usually women borrow land from their parents and natal relatives. Purchasing of land is considered a wise investment and most respondents in this study had purchased their present lands. Land buying deals were originally a male preoccupation hut nowadays women do buy their own lands if they have independent incomes. Farmers in the category of large tea hushes are considered wealthy and are approached directly hy land sellers. Sale of land is a desperate move and only those who have given their titles to private financiers and are unable to pay are forced to sell land.

A keen tea grower will have land and reliable family labour if he is to succeed fully in growing the crop. Tea is a choosy crop

when it comes to land allocation for unlike coffee, it cannot be intercropped with other crops (Wanjama 8-8-89). There is no crop rotation with tea so a proper site is essential. Land recently cleared from trees has "armillaria" danger or root rot problems. A stony land with a layer of murram and also poorly drained land which is waterlogged are unsuitable for they stunt the growth of tea roots. If land is available elsewhere a farmer should avoid very steep land where the slope is more than 30° as this will require expensive water conservation. Exposed sloppy land brings about problems of too much evaporation while an area with growing permanent trees will cause a lot of competition with tea for food nutrients and ground moisture. Valley bottoms have frosty pockets which are dangerous to tea (Miriti 20-2-90).

As already said, tea growing is a capitalist enterprise and the crop is planted solely for making money. Great need for cash makes farmers to fill all available land with tea leaving only a little residential area which is crammed up with subsistence crops, fodder for livestock and residential buildings (see fig. XT on page 1B0).

S.4.1 Nursery

Construction of a vegetative propagation is the first activity that a would be tea grower engages in. The site for this unit, should be near a homestead to avoid theft of clones. Weeding and leveling the site of about 4.88 metres length and 2.44 metres wide is done first. Next is erection of shade which requires 11

posts of 2.4 metres length. Shade materials usually grass and fito* {for walls and roof} are required. A string wire or wattle bark strings for tying are also needed. Holes of 45 cm deep and 15 cm apart are dug. Posts are placed in these holes in such a way that 1.95 cm is above ground level. Fit.os and grass are placed on the roof in such a way that 50% of light and 59% of shade are provided. The nursery unit consists of polythene bags (sleeves) which are filled with top soil which is freshly dug so as to be moist. This soil is mixed with a fertilizer known as superphosphate and the sleeves are filled. These are stacked in rows in the nursery and watered thoroughly. Clones are got from mature tea in the following order. Tea which is:

1 year old after planting can give 50 cuttings of bush

2 years old after planting can give 100 cuttings of bush

3 years old after planting can give 200 cuttings of bush

4 years old after planting can give 400 cuttings of bush

5 years old after planting can give 800 cuttings of bush

Cutting should be 2.4 to 4 cm long. These should not be exposed to sunlight and should be kept in water until planting to keep them turgid. These are planted in the stacked sleeves and watered regularly. During the propagation stage the nursery needs to be visited regularly to ensure that the clones are growing properly. Fig. XTV on page 185 shows the photograph of a tea nursery.

XIV. TEA SEKDTITNOS TN A NURSERY.



Notice it. is men who are hein* instructed about. «rowintf t.

Fig. XV. PEGGED TEA PLANTS.



Courtesy of F.nos Nyaga, Public Relations Officer, KTDA, Nairobi.
This was taken on a field day when tea farmers are instructed by
KTDA officers.

i

5.4.2 Planting and Weeding

During planting, the clones should be about 15 cm in height. Plant sleeves are cut carefully avoiding roots destruction. One should remove the plant together with the top soil. Land preparation for planting requires digging stamps and removing roots using a folk ,/emhe. Drainage trenches and terraces have to be made. Wind breaks to prevent soil erosion and moisture loss through evaporation which would reduce crop yields are made.

Maintenance stage was found to require a lot of labour of Activities. Initial pruning is done after 12 months in order to stop upward growth and encourage sideways spread. The shoots are pegged as shown in Fig. XV page 185. At the height, of 20 cm above the first, pruning point, tipping is done so as to develop a good plucking space. Tipping is cutting of branch and leaves to a good table level. Weeding is required at this stage. Most respondents said weeding is the most, tedious of the farming activities. It is done usually by women who use machetes and one should be careful not to destroy tea roots. Wealthy tea growers were found using chemical control. A chemical weed known as Dalapon bought, from KTDA is sprayed to kill the weeds.

Another important activity during maintenance stage is fertilizing of established tea. Three main nutrients namely: phosphate and potash are required by a well nourished tea farm. Fertilizer application can be done any time of the year but not during heavy rains for then fertilizer will be washed away. Very dry periods are not suitable for the chemicals may be scorched by heat.

5.4.3 Harvesting

Harvesting or plucking is the most, regular and labour intensive activity in tea production. A plucker should be able to pluck acceptable shoots which are placed in the tea basket, and at the same time identify and reject, unripe shoots. Rejecting unripe is essential so as to maintain a plucking level. The table

level is meant, to rise by 10.16cm per year and 0.3m in three years. Breaking back is the name given to the process of removing protrusions in a plucking table. When plucking time is right, there are few break backs necessary. Failure to break back makes plucking table uneven and the tea farm looks unkempt, and this lowers crop yields. Two common faults in plucking are overplucking and underplucking. Overplucking is done by small-scale tea growers wishing to increase their crop yields and it causes a condition known as crow's feet. This can be corrected by plucking over the fish leaf level (see fig VT page 103) a tiring process. Underplucking is done by large-scale tea growers who have too many tea bushes and are unable to cope with the work. Crop loss and uneven table which may rise too high and become impossible to pluck will result. Plucking requires the use of a plucking stick, a cape and a mururii which is a cylindrical basket of about 45- 50cm diameter by 60-75 cm length. This is strapped on a plucker's back and the stick carried on the head. Carrying things on the back is considered a woman's work and it may be for this reason that women in the area studied are expected to do all tea plucking. A plucking stick of about 35 cm is kept on top of plucking table to facilitate leveling of the tea table. A plucking cape is a protective clothing made of hard plastic to prevent a plucker from wetting their clothes for tea is plucked in all weathers hot, sunny, cold or rainy (fig.XVI page 189). It is done in the mornings when there is a lot of dew in the leaves and an unprotected person becomes wet up to the chest. More than 75 % of

the respondents were not. able to have these plucking capes partly because they could not afford them but also because KTDA does not have enough supplies.

What are working conditions like for smallholder tea producers? The smallholder farmers have long working days especially during the peak season as was observed in the months of November and December. Most pluckers start working about, eight in the morning and work up to about. 2.00 p.m. with no morning or afternoons break and no lunch for workers.

Asked why they refused to have breaks one respondent said;

the morning and comes back in the evening. Even though people in offices go for breaks it is because their salary programme does not cease. A farmer's break means the stoppage of their wages and one cannot afford to indulge in such luxuries (Kaveti 22-11-89).

Actual experience in this work of plucking showed that the work of plucking is rhythmical and once three or four people are engaged in it, there is a momentum which one does not like to break. Also there are practical problems of wet firewood which would take time to light a fire and make a meal. Pluckers also compete as to who will have more tea leaves in their baskets at the end of the day and no one wants to hreak.

Although the respondents en/joyed plucking as an activity, they considered the plucking routine hard and dangerous. Working conditions were found to be unpleasant particularly as the day wore on and the baskets of tea carried on their backs became increasingly heavy (c.f. Mhilinyi 1989: 9-10). The plucking process itself was found to be tiring as one's shoulders, head and back

XVT TEA PMJCKKRS AT WORK



Courtesy of Finos Nyaga, Public Relations Officer, KTDA, Nairobi.
Note the *Miruru* strapped on the head and carried on the back. Notice that, man putting leaves into the woman's basket, and thus increasing her load.

muscles are always stressed by the body motions of plucking, standing and carrying a heavy load. The combination of long hours, poor conditions and poor nutrition are probably the causes of the poor health and general fatigue which most of the respondents complained about.. Women pluckers told me that, they had various aches in the head, back and swelling of the feet..

As a rule, KTTIA buying centres are located not more than two

to three kilometers from the most distant growers. Every plucker is expected to carry their tea personally to the buying centre for it is there where one checks the tea shoots and gets the actual weight of their plucked tea. All buying centres are situated near roads to facilitate transportation by KTDA lorries. Usually the infrastructure within the area of study is quite good but in times of heavy rains as happened at the end of December during this study, the roads are impassable. This delays leaf collection from buying centres and pluckers have to wait for long hours for they dare not leave their leaves unprotected as they could be stolen. Fig. XVTT on page 191 shows them in a buying centre.

The problem of congestion of tea leaves in buying centres has adverse effects on pluckers in general but particularly on women. Due to fatigue, hunger and overwork, the pluckers are very tired and buying centres were found to be sensitive places where arguments can easily lead to actual fights. This is explained later in this chapter.

KTDA Leaf Collection Manager explained that the problem of congestion in buying centres was a result of many factors namely; the unplanned increase in crop which was not anticipated. Crop yields surpassed KTDA's target by 100 % month after month in 1987/88 year (see table 12 on page 192). This huge increase is attributed to two main factors. One, the favourable climatic conditions which persisted for long periods in 1987/1988 year. Two, the fact that smallholder tea producers have realized the need to use fertilizers and have been ordering more of it.

Fig. XVTT. TEA GROWERS TN A BUYTNG CENTRE.



Courtesy of Enos Nyaga, Public Relations Officer, KTDA, Nairobi.
This picture was taken during the peak period when pluckers wait
for long hours in buying centres.

TABLE 12. 1987/88 LEAF YIELDS STATISTICS IN KGS. MADE

District/Scheme	Productive Hectares	* Actual Yield in Kgs M.T.	Expected Yield in Kgs M.T.	Actual Production Per Heci M.T.	Expected Production Per Hect. M.T.	Actual As a % of Expected
Kiambu	4.995	7.655.841	7.703.183	1.533	1.542	99.4
Murane'a	9.146	16.144.988	15.925.011	1.765	1.741	101.4
Nytn	5.257	7.371.510	8.351.139	1.402	1.589	88.2
Kinnvaga	3.326	7.894.116	7.516.981	1373	1260	105.0
Embu	1078	3.341478	3.339.307	1.609	1.607	100.1
Mem	6.557	- 7.223.848	7.483.878	1.102	1.141	96.6
ICencho- Chepsir & Akuru. Olenguruone	8.071	10.938.603	11.820.632	1.355	1.465	91.5
LSi Sotik	12.693	14.501306	14.788.209	1.143	1.165	98.1
Nandi: Lessos	1.734	943.308	915.259	544	528	103.0
Akamaga	2.072	1.253.932	1.291.579	605	623	97.1
E/ Marakwet Cherengany	568	197.130	238.144	347	419	81.8
SUB-TOTAL	56.497	77.468.100	79.373.352	1.371	1.405	97.6
KTDA Plots Farms kagochj	48	121970	121024	1562	1542	100.8
Inaini	2	1.394	3.245	697	1.623	43.0
Kargaita	136	127.309	156.034	936	1.147	81.6
Ndimia	1	600	-	600	-	-
SUB-TOTAL	187	251273	281.303	1.349	1.504	89.7
GRAND TOTAL	56.684	77.720.373	79.654.655	1.371	1.405	97.6

Source: KTDA 1987/88 : 11.

These two factors have generally boosted tea production. Other reasons for this unprecedented increase in tea production include the confidence people have in the tea payments by KTDA which has not failed to pay tea growers since its inception. Compared to other cash crops such as coffee and dairy products this record cannot be matched. This has attracted many people to become tea growers and many tea farms which were not contracted by KTDA sprung up giving unanticipated heavy yields. The increase found the spaces in buying centres too small and tea factories cannot cope with the yield. The Nyayo Tea Zone has also brought in too much tea that was not catered for by KTDA factories. The deterioration of roads has come about, because of the transfer of road maintenance from KTDA to the Ministry of Works. Delays in road maintenance have resulted in deterioration of road surfaces and KTDA trucks experience a lot of wear and tear. At times tractors are used to ferry tea to the factories.

5.4.4 Pruning

Another activity of tea growers is pruning. Tea is pruned for a number of reasons: to stimulate new growth, to remove unproductive diseased wood, to control the height, of plucking table and to allow correction of uneven plucking table. Table 13 below shows the correct months of pruning.

Table 13. MONTHS OF PLANTING AND PRUNING ACCORDING TO ARFA

Area	Planting Period	15 cm for sleeved Plants	Subsequent Prunes
Districts West of Rift	April/May	15th March 30th March	1st February 31st March
Districts East of Rift	April/inay	15th March 30th March	1st June 31st June
Meru / Embu	April/May	15th March 31st December	15th May 15th June

Source: Adopted from Miriti Budi's manual at Munqania Leaf Rase.

Pruning months do not apply to peqqinq operations which are done independently of pruning. Many respondents said that pruning requires a specialist usually a hired person as Lhe one shown in Fig. XVTTT on page 196.

5.5 Women's Work and their labour allocations among smallholder tea producers

The above account confirms Lhat tea is indeed a very labour-intensive crop. The general questionnaire for Lhis study confirmed Etherington's (1973) assertion that the labour needed by tea is surpassed only by domestic work. To get an adequate output, tea needs almost daily management. Fig. XIX on page 197 shows that unlike coffee Lea activities are all year round. This is especially so when a farmer applies ferLili/er on their tea

Fig. XVTTT A PRIJNFR AT WORK



Most pninera are men as pruning is a specialized task which is highly paid.

regularly. This encourages leaf production and the demand for labour is enormous. When these labour demands combine with other production activities, it is difficult to fit the ensuing labour into farming system. From this figure a comparative account of labour activities between coffee and tea can be made and one can see that tea is more labour demanding than coffee. Tea and coffee are the main cash crops of the area studied. They are pure cash crops in that they are grown only for making money. People grow these crops on individually owned lands for the sole purpose of

generating incomes a factor that has influenced work and labour allocations in the area. Traditional Embu labour groups *irimn* or K^WHtjiniro cannot be used in providing labour for these crops. This is because the reciprocal principles of these labour groups are not valid in production of pure cash crops. It is also difficult, to get assistance from extended family relations and smallholder tea farmers have to use their own family labour or hire labourers.

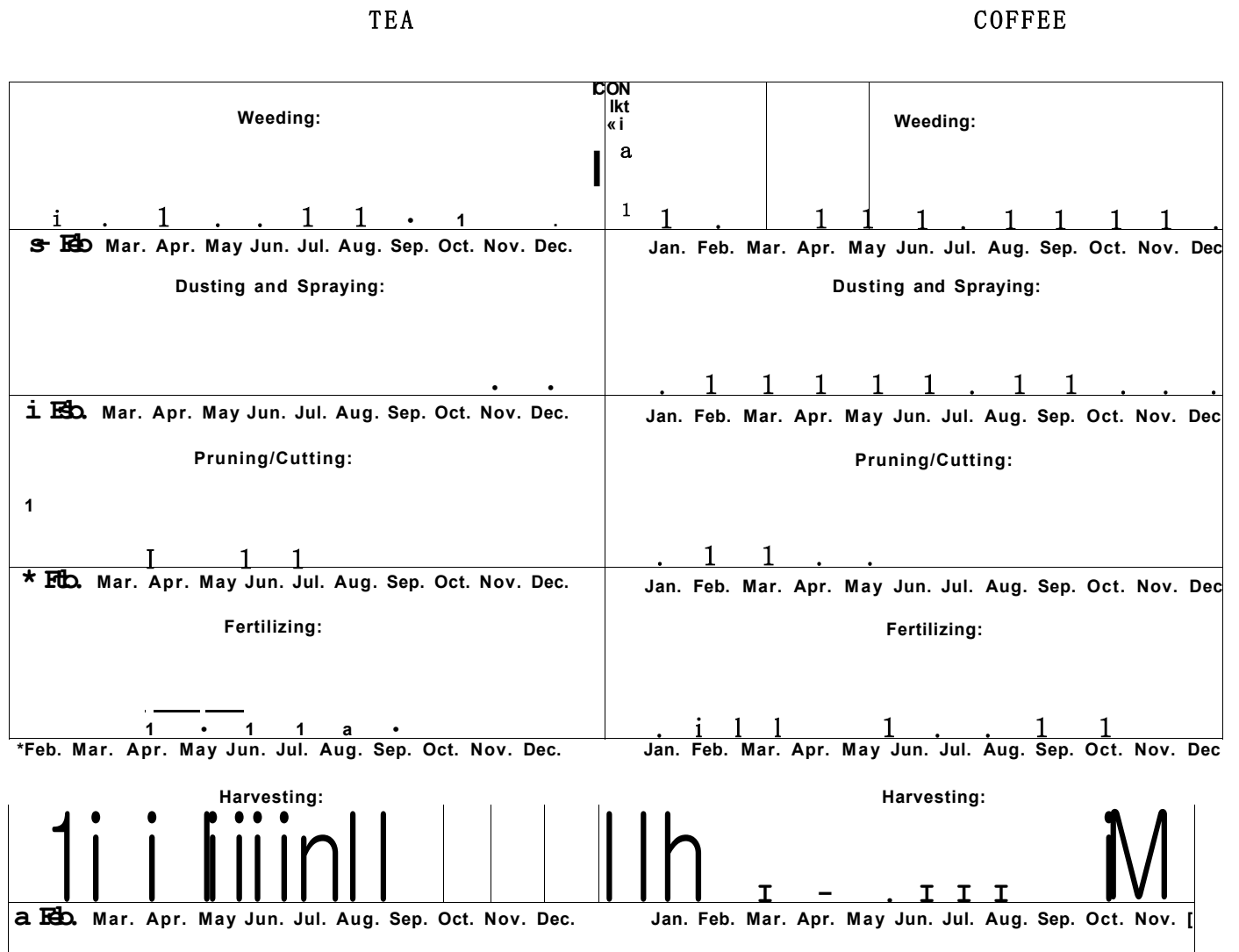
It was also found that labour tasks in tea production have sub-labour processes which relate to different operations. Establishment requires: digging, planting, pegging and mulching. Maintenance involves: weeding, application of fertilizer and pruning. Harvesting is plucking and delivery to buying centres. Of these tasks, weeding was said to be the most tedious activity. It is however done on young tea, coffee and on subsistence crops. For mature tea, the most labour production activities are very rigid. One cannot drop out of them one time then take them again for unlike other crops tea crop is not rotated.

Thus when tea was introduced in Fmhi as a family enterprise, the relevant authorities generally assumed that owners of tea farms (usually men) had the authority to control the labour of their families. This was found to have been adhered to for the general survey carried out by this study, showed that more than 50% of the sample relied mainly on family labour for tea production activities. Only less than 10% of the sampled households relied on hired labour entirely. Most farmers used a mixture of casual labourers and family members. Hired labour included casual

labourers and permanent, employed people who reported daily for work. Casual labourers were paid either on a daily basis of either KSh.1.00 per every kilogram plucked, or KShs. 30.00 per day. There were very few permanently employed labourers in the area of study because local people preferred to work as casual labourers for this way, they got more money (interviews with tea growers). It was only among the large-scale tea growers that permanent employees (usually Rwandese refugees who have run away from Kericho) were found.

Family labour consisted mainly of the man, his wife (wives) and children. As already said, men were usually away on off-farm wage employment and children were in schools. So the only family labour available were women. Even when men were around, women respondents said that they prefer to work on coffee. Work in coffee farms after planting and weeding was found to be less compared with that in the tea farms. It includes spraying and removing suckers. These were definitely more dignified tasks than plunging into the dew of tea farms. Men were also put off by the act of carrying tea baskets on the back strapped on their heads for this is considered a woman's traditional activity. Since it is not possible to pluck tea without carrying the basket for if the basket is placed on the plucking table it spoils the shoots and stunts growth, men have to strap the baskets on their shoulders. This is more tiring than the women's method of carrying and it slows the pluckers speed so much that the plucker is left too far behind. By the end of the work men are discouraged

Fig. XIX. COMPARING TEA AND COFFEE FARMING ACTIVITIES.



Source: Jaetzold, R. and H. Schmidt, 1983 : 64.

hy the little amount, of their plucked tea.

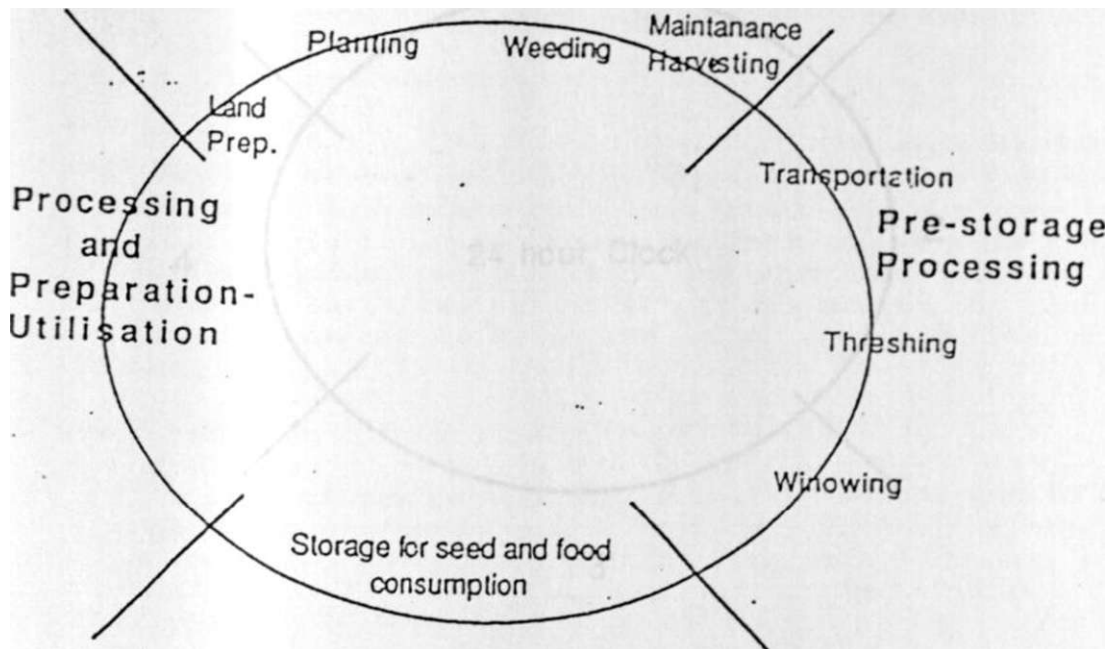
Tn general, as Rulow and Sorrenson, (19R8:fiB-79) noted, KTDA's general policy tends to favour male household head while the women are perceived of as family labour. Married women are not encouraged to establish their own tea independent of their husbands. Licensing the woman was said to have the adverse effect of dividing up the management and control over income from tea between a husband and his wife/wives (Mureit.hi 12-1-90). This would threaten the husband's dominant position in the household thus weakening his control over family labour an aspect that poses danger to crop yields. Hence land registration, laws of property inheritance and agricultural extension practices are designed such that the male is retained as the head of a household and the family labour. Even when there were well documented reports that men misused incomes from tea on selfish activities, the male dominance ideology is still maintained by KTDA.

Furthermore KTDA does not interfere with the tea production process among smallholders in Emhu. The organisation of labour is regarded as a domestic issue which should be solved by the families themselves or by the Community Development Officers. The field staff are however instructed to deal discreetly with "those family problems that may affect tea yields. The leaf officers and their leaf collecting clerks are advised to involve the buying centre's committees and the sub chiefs. Women are not expected to be members of these committees so the views that dominate decisions from these committees are those of the men. Even on field days the

farmers who are addressed and instructed about, growing tea by officers of KTDA are the men who are considered the tea farmers. During one of the field days this author heard the farmers (men) being advised not to leave all intensive farm work to women but to participate in them. That is as far as KTDA goes. They have no plans of introducing labour saving technology in tea farms which would alleviate women's labour burdens. Manual work on tea plucking is recommended for it does not lower the quality of tea yields. Figs. XX and XTX on following pages depict, the sampled women's production activities round the clock.

Fig. XX. RURAL FOOD PRODUCTION BY WOMEN.

Production

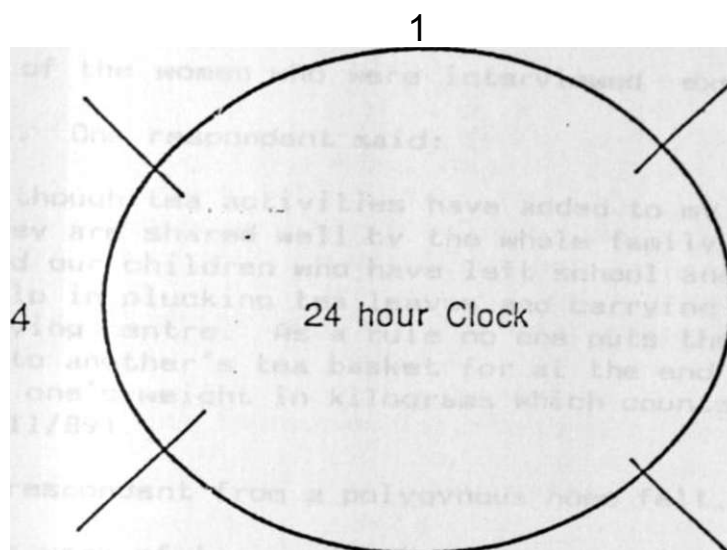


Storage
Transportation
to market

..»ik

Source: Ntombana 1989 : 7a with adaptations.

Fig. XXI. RURAL HOUSEHOLD CHORES BY WOMEN TODAY.



1. - Early Morning and Mid-morning Chores
 - Breakfast Preparation
 - Children, Livestock Care
 - Field work: mainly tea production activities
2. - Midday and Early-afternoon Chores
 - Food preparation
 - Children, Livestock
 - Water and firewood collection
 - Tea work: carrying to buying centres
3. - Late-afternoon and evening
 - Field work: at buying centres, selecting and weighing
 - Firewood and water collection
 - Food preparation
 - Children care
 - Livestock tending
4. - Early and late night
 - Sleeping and resting
 - Baby care

Source: Adapted from (Ntombana 1989 : 7b).

5.5.1 Do Women Feel That They are Overworked?

Contrary to what was expected the answer to this Question was not an obvious and unanimous "Yes". A look at the recorded comments of some of the women who were interviewed explains this study's findings. One respondent said:

Although tea activities have added to my work burdens, they are shared well by the whole family. My husband and our children who have left school and are unemployed help in plucking tea leaves and carrying them to the buying centre. As a rule no one puts their plucked tea into another's tea basket for at the end of the day it is one's weight in kilograms which counts (Mutitu, 3/11/09).

A woman respondent from a polygynous home felt.

The work of tea production is most enjoyable and it is not too much for me and my co-wife. Each of us has been allocated a portion of the tea farm, and this way, the tea production activities are well shared (Runii, 4/12/88).

One male respondent was of the opinion that women are not overworked, for:

There is a lot of help from the children especially those without full time employment and have finished school. Although I don't pluck tea, I help in other farm activities like removing suckers from coffee and taking cattle to the dips. On peak periods I assist my wife by hiring casual labourers (Ndwiga, 13/12/89).

A woman respondent, who besides growing tea was a full time primary school teacher was of the opinion that working on tea, other farm work and teaching were "a welcome challenge." Her secret was that she had learnt the principles of purpose, goals, prioritization and planning. Even though her husband was away from home in Nairobi she manages through wise use of hired labourers who

are permanently employed. "Two men for the farm work and two housemaids for the housework and animal industry" (Muliuri, 6-11-89). A respondent from a large-scale tea grower had this to say:

There is too much work in tea production for even though my husband engages many casual labourers during the peak period, I have to cook for them. On a plucking day I have to wake very early so as to prepare food for the labourers. Tea for breakfast has to be made in great quantities so that as soon as they come, the casual labourers drink before going to the farm (Mariamu, 12/12/89).

This view was supported by nearly all women in large-scale farm category who said that having casual labourers does not relieve women's work burdens in the tea farm for an industrious woman will need to be in the farm with these workers so as to supervise their plucking. Hired labourers are not interested in the future of one's tea crop so they may cause the over plucking problems already explained.

One tea-grower woman respondent said. Increase in work-load for women is not just because of tea for I find myself extremely busy working on horticultural crops and selling them in the open air market. When my crops are not yet ready for sale I have to be a casual labourer in a tea grower's farm to get the needed cash (Wanjia Kariuki, 14-1-90).

Asked why men do not help them in these activities, many women said that men have a way of dodging all activities which are heavy, regular and not highly paying. This habit is from time immemorial for even in precolonial times men engaged only in tasks which were done once a year. Repetitious tasks such as weeding, scaring birds were left to women. There is however a change in

men's attitudes for nowadays they have stopped to be too cruel to women. No matter how angry they yet, these days they refrain from beating their wives.

This is not because they care more for them today than in the past but they know they depend on their labour for tea plucking. If the women declined to pluck tea, there will be chaos (N.iue, 17/1/90).

This respondent also showed this author a man who had learnt to look after crying babies while his wife plucked tea and did other-farm and household activities. This is an example of changing men's attitudes and dynamics of sexual division of labour.

5.5.2. Comparative Views of Women's leisure today and in the past

Another way by which this author tested whether or not women's workload has increased as a result of tea production was by comparing their concepts of leisure today with those of the time when farming was for subsistence only. As mentioned in chapter four, pre-colonial agricultural work in Embu was done in stages following the two rainy seasons. Since there was no wage labour or school where children spent most of their growing time, almost all family members assisted production by contributing their labour in agricultural and household chores. Thus women could easily concentrate on reproductive activities and have time for leisure activities such as song and dance.

Nowadays, activity schedules are so concentrated that there is no time for leisure at all. Some sampled women were found to

have no idea what leisure means.' Asked what they thought leisure was many of them said it is praising God in church. Christian women said they found attending the church on Sundays and during week days (when there were seminars) very enjoyable. After all, attending some of these seminars this author confirmed these respondents' attitudes about leisure for the exhausted women found the silence in the Church and the sermons of male preachers an inducement to sleep. Many of them were observed sleeping comfortably on the church pews.

Some women respondents said that leisure was going to hospital either to deliver a baby or for ante-natal clinics, or even to take a sick child to hospital. One of these respondents showed the author three sweaters she made while in hospital confirming that hospital was a place for leisure. Yet making sweaters is work. These women were greatly puzzled when this author suggested that people go for holidays to beach hotels at the coast and other tourist centres in the country for leisure.

Unlike women, men's concepts of leisure were very clear. Many of them had definite times for relaxation. After work (usually off-farm work or working on coffee and taking livestock to dips) they talked of sitting and listening to music from their radios and record players. Many of them spent time in the market centres drinking and talking with friends. One male respondent even said that he went to a place known as Kamugere to swim. Thus women's lack of leisure time is not because the concept is unknown in Embu. It is simply due to increase in workload.

5.6 Effects of Commercialization of animal husbandry on women's work and labour allocations

From responses of the sampled population it is clear that tea production activities alone were not the only ones that increased women's work and labour allocations. It is the changed sexual division of labour brought about by investments such as animal husbandry. As already pointed out, consolidation and registration of land has brought increased pressure on land. This has led to commercialization of most farm activities. Cattle herding has been redefined to be part of women's work. Women have to milk grade cows in the morning, lunch time and in the evening. The wife should also make sure that the cattle have drunk water twice in a day. Men's work is to spray them or take them to the dips fortnightly. Grade cows which have increasingly become the cattle of the area studied, have many requirements namely: fodder and minerals. It is the women who wake up early to cut fodder, milk and take milk to diary. Those with too small acreage or whose land has been filled with tea and other cash crops have to have zero-grazing. This method of herding requires strong fences in which to keep the liveslock and leave them eating fodder during the day. It is the women who cut large supplies of fodder for liveslock to keep eating while they go to the tea farms.

Although it is men's work to erect and mend fences, it was found that in many cases they ignored broken fences and women have no alternative than to buy ropes for tying the cattle on poles. It is against the Embu customs for a woman to leave her husband to

do any task. Caring for animals like tea production involves several labour processes, which are spread throughout the day. Thus, commercialization of animal husbandry has led to increase in women's work-burdens by shifting it from the men.

The general questionnaire however found that about 30% of the sampled households, women were assisted by their husbands in both daily and periodical tasks of animal husbandry. It was also found that men in tea growing households are more active in cattle husbandry than those in non-tea growing households. Women in non-tea growing households were expected to tend the livestock which is considered to be a very easy and pleasant task, one which looks like "doing nothing" (c.f. Huntington 1950:61). Many tasks of animal husbandry were done, by children after school and during school holidays.

Whether they accept it or not, it is clear that women's workload has increased. As LeVins, (1968 : 88) noted, female work burdens have increased in recent years for they are not only responsible for food and cash crop production but also traditionally defined women tasks. They have been assuming burdens of less routine work which was carried out by men traditionally. All decisions concerning labour in agricultural production are made by women while husbands even when they are at home relax or attend to livestock-related matters. In the area of study, it was observed that men have not migrated but yet women bear the dual burden of providing agricultural labour for both food and commercial crops (Salifilios - Rothschild, 1980: 1985:27-63).

Women respondents for this study were found to be similar to those studied by Jones (1983: 83-84) who lack access to independent resources and their role is that of assisting their husbands in commercial production. Their labour-burdens arise from the fact that they are conceived of as unemployed people, and such, their husbands expect them to pluck as much tea as possible and also to accommodate their traditional roles to the tasks of tea production. They wake up very early to milk cows, make breakfast, wash the utensils and run to tea farms where they engage in plucking up to 2.00 p.m. after which they carry the tea to buying centres. At the buying centre their woes are added to by the arrogance of the tea collecting clerks who by the virtue of being in an off-farm wage employment look down upon the often dirty and untidily dressed women tea pluckers. Their attitude is that of bossing the farmers by telling them to remove any badly plucked leaves. Bad plucking usually depends on the mood of those clerks whose jobs are not secure and they seek assurance from thrashing the women pluckers in the buying centres. The pluckers have learned to be patient for if one dares so much as to reply to the numerous revilings by these clerks, their tea is rejected. They are also made to plead for mercy publicly in a most demeaning manner. In some cases the leaf collection clerks are bribed so as to stop harassing tea growers.

There is a derogatory saying among the Embu people that there is a period of time around sunset which is known as *Mnugin nkn*. This is literally translated as a time when women jump about as they have to hurry around the evening chores. For the respondents this

time was after selling tea; about 6.00 p.m. in the evening when they have to literally run from the buying centres to their homesteads. In their minds they expect to collect firewood, water, prepare and cook food so as to feed their families before 10.00 p.m. in the night. Cooking of fast foods such as Ugali, rice and vegetables has replaced the delicious traditional food for the latter requires slow cooking and there is no time for it. Table 14 below shows the results of a comparative account of time use survey for females and males in the area studied

Table 14. AVERAGE HOURS PER PERSON PER DAY IN WORK ACTIVITIES BY SEX AND AGE AS OBSERVED AROUND THIGINGI IN EMBU DISTRICT FOR THREE MONTHS 23rd NOVEMBER 1989 TO 28th FEBRUARY 1990.

Females

Activity	Age Group and Sample Size		
	15-19 (29)	20-49 (26)	Over 50 (13)
1- Tea production own land	2.5	9.3	3.0
2. Animal husbandry	3.4	7.7	.6
3. Agricultural wage labour	2.1	5.7	0.7
4. Child care	0.2	4.9	0.4
5. Household food preparation	2.0	7.7	3.2
6. Firewood and water fetching	0.2	0.4	0.4
7. Other tasks of household maintenance	0.8	3.2	0.8
8. Non-agricultural wage labour	0.0	0.2	0.0
9. Total all work	13.2	39.1	10.1

Males

Activity	Age group and Sample Size		
	15-19 (29)	20-49 (26)	Over 50 (13)
1. Tea production (own land)	2.2	8.4	2.7
2. Animal husbandry	2.8	6.0	2.0
3. Agricultural wage labour	0.9	4.2	0.5
4. Child care	0.1	0.8	0.2
5. Household Food preparation	0.9	2.0	0.9
6. Firewood and water fetching	0.2	0.7	0.1
7. Other household maintenance	0.8	2.5	0.7
8. Non-agricultural wage labour	0.7	2.3	0.4
9. Total all work	8.6	26.9	7.1

Source: Own data compiled from time-use survey.

5.7 Interrelationship between tea and other income generating activities

Table 15 on page 213 shows the principle income generating activities of the sampled population. From this table it is noticeable that families without tea or with few tea bushes engage more in agricultural wage labour. The notable thing that is deduced from this is that there are changes in land and labour use patterns which have occurred as a result of introduction of tea production activities.

Traditional division of labour in which men were involved with animal husbandry while women cultivated subsistence food for the family has changed. These changes have been brought about by a

decrease in economic and cultural value of livestock and the introduction of intensive agriculture. As Bulow and Sorrensen (1988:128-206), found out among the Kipsigis tea farmers, cultivation is today carried out by both sexes. It is notable that sexual division of labour in Embu has not undergone a radical change but rather a gradual and complex alteration. Since the integration of Embu economy into world market a process that was described in details in chapter four, agriculture has become more associated with men than women. Colonial and post-colonial agricultural policies were directed to the men who were perceived of as farmers. Division of labour by gender in Embu has therefore evolved to be less rigid particularly for major farm production. Yet it is strictly maintained within such spheres as women's domestic work and child care. Men have more opportunities in formal employment where they engage in some non-farm activities as those shown on the table 15. Certain labour tasks in the farm have been redefined as female even though they were originally for males.

Table 15 PRINCIPLE INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES OF THE SAMPLE

Activity	% per type of household			
	Large	Medium	Small	Non-tea growers
Tea production	48	30	22	0
Coffee production	50	34	14	4
Dairy Farming	52	36	9	2
Subsistence production	20	17	23	40
Carpenter	-	28	30	42
Mason	3	27	40	30
Clerk	10	10	30	50
Clergy	53	23	18	5
Shopkeeper	40	30	25	5
Agricultural wage earner	7	13	30	50
Trader	42	26	10	12

Source: Own data compiled from demographic survey guestiannax re

The ultimate results of the changes in division of labour is a marked increase in Embu women's labour input in farming activities relative to men's. Tea production activities have proved to be the best way of raising monetary incomes for smallholders. Introduction of modern cash crop farming in form of tea without technological innovations but aimed at only a need to increase productivity per land unit has not paid any consideration to the consequences of increase in workload for women. In a capitalist system such as operates in Kenya people have to continually expend their labour in them. Tea is not however to be blamed for all the changes in the sexual division of labour which have caused increase in women's labour burdens. It is not tea Production alone which is responsible for increased workload. Rather it is the entire development of intensive production i.e.

zero grazing, keeping of roadside kiosks, building modern houses which require to be washed frequently and many other aspects of modernization. Tea therefore has functioned as a catalyst or a first step in commercialization of agriculture and labour. Money from tea is used for investing in other commercial activities.

It is notable that despite their prominence in smallholder tea production, Embu women have yet to be more than marginally integrated into agricultural development programmes (c.f. SaTilios - Rothschild. 1985:30). One explanation for this is the Kenyan agricultural policy which has continued to some extent the colonial administrator's attitudes of progressive farmer. Extension services were to improve the better farmer so that others may learn from him. Progressive farmer was the purported bread winner, the man. Women were merely the farmer's family labour who needed not to know the state of finances from the farm on which they worked. (Staudt, 1980:3). This trend has been followed among the area of of this study with some serious consequences as will be shown in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

6. CONSEQUENCES OF INTENSIVE WORK AND LABOUR ALLOCATIONS ON GENDER RELATIONS AMONG SMALLHOLDER TEA GROWERS IN EMBU.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Tea, dairy and coffee are the main commercial products of the area of this study. They exemplify the many agrarian changes that have occurred in Embu since 1930's when cash crops were introduced to the Africans. Their production requires intense labour of members of household and this has affected gender role relations in Embu district. One of these effects was shown in chapter five as increase in women's labour burdens relative to those of the men. It was also noted that little farm technology has accompanied the introduction of these cash crops to alleviate the labour burdens of their production process. Instead smallholders perform all farming operations manually. This labour is usually by the so called family labour and in some households a mixture of family labour and hired labour. The reciprocal principles of extended family and traditional labour groups of *Irima* or *Nguataniro* are not applicable to the production of pure cash crops. It is family labour therefore which constitutes the main workers in tea farms. In most of the sampled households, it was the wives of smallholders who carry out most farm operations, all household maintenance and child care.

In this chapter it is argued that the intense labour of modern agriculture has adverse consequences on women's status relative to that of the men. These will be shown by analysing women's access

to and control over resources, the increased socio-economic differentiation within households and among women in different households. Finally the sampled women's views explaining why they continue supplying their labour to the intensive labour demanding farm and homestead activities even when they are inadequately remunerated are discussed.

6.2 Sampled Women's Access to and Control over Resources.

In this section three questions are posed and answered which seek to know whether or not commercialization and capitalization of production has strengthened or weakened women's decision-making power and control over specific resources. Who in the sampled households controls and allocates important resources? Do all family members benefit equally from an increase in productivity? What role is played by power relations of men and women within sampled households particularly after introduction of intensive farming methods?

A discussion of women's power and control over resources has to be based on the knowledge that gender relations concerning property ownership are not static but are constantly changing. As was shown earlier, women's lack of access to and control over major resources in present day Embu is an outcome of conflicts between gender and historical changes. Prior to introduction of private ownership of land, women in Embu had no problems in maintaining their rights to land and disposal of cultivated subsistence crops if they were surplus. Even though land and

livestock were regarded as men's property the cultivated grains were associated with women. Women cultivated while men cleared virgin lands and grazed cattle. Thus there was a balanced usufructory rights of access to land as ownership of property was not restricted to individuals. Abundance of land and absence of individual proprietor terms meant that married women in Embu had secure rights to valuable resources then. It is colonialists' implementation of the Swynnerton Plan in the 1950s which gave private ownership of land exclusively to men. Colonial agricultural policies perceived of Embu people as a poorer version of European middle class families. In these households, women were housewives whose duties included maintenance of the home, child care and helping out on the farms while the husband was seen as the bread winner who went out to work. His income was assumed to trickle down to the family. So there was no need for women to be involved in formal education and wage employment.

Today land is privately owned by individuals. One can buy or sell land as a commodity of exchange. As a result of growing population land has become scarce and there is no more security of tenure for the landless among who the majority are women. There is widespread shortage of land in the area of this study which is evidenced by fragmentation of land as it is subdivided between a land owner and his sons. Scarcity of land has necessitated that owners of land (usually men) be the sole decision makers as far as allocation of land to crops is concerned. Few women respondents agreed^I that they were involved in decisions concerning allocation

of land to crops. In the words of one respondent,

"My husband is the head and I am the neck, the hands and the rest of the body. He alone decides on how land is to be cultivated. The portion for tea, coffee, animalssubsistence crops and residence are decided by him" (Ruth 3-12-89).

From this response, it is clear that men's control and power over land and its allocation is unquestioned by both men and women in the area studied. Women's position is weakened by the fact that where there are any disagreements between them and their husbands, men refer to their ownership of land and all its movable and immovable property demonstrating their dominance in gender relations.

Women are not always helpless recipients of men's arrogance. They propagate their rights through verbal complaints *kunuguna*. Verbosity and withdrawal of labour are women's most useful tools for curbing any violation of their rights. Although these tools are quite powerful and in many cases women's rights are restored, they have limitations. If the family conflicts are not amicably resolved, women can put forward their cases to sub-chiefs. All sub-chiefs in the area of this study are men and it is not unusual for husbands to use man to man friendship for the settlement of domestic conflicts to their favour. A male informant revealed this when he said,

There is nothing a woman can do to change her unreasonable husband. If she reports him to the sub- chief, she will only be providing a topic for male gossip in the bars. Such a gossip is likely to provoke her husband's wrath and she will be considered rude and thoroughly thrashed (Mugo 23-1-90).

The statute laws of Kenya in writing give civic social and political rights to men and women regardless of sex, but in practice there is often nothing to promote women's cause. Institutionalised attitudes are such that women should be forbearing and submissive to their husbands.

From these developments one can see the extent to which cash crops and in particular tea coming to Embu in the present land tenureship have weakened sampled women's decision-making power and deteriorated their control over specific resources which are important for production and reproduction in the households.

There has been a marked disregard of gender-role relations in relation to production of cash crops in the area of this study. This negligence is traced to the historical evolution of economic development in Kenya whereby planners concentrated on increase in yields which would bring in the needed cash. The model of agriculture advanced by colonialists focussed on the man, the household's breadwinner who was expected to go out to work and bring in produce for his family members. Female and male roles were different in that the latter worked in the private sector while the former worked in the public sector. The discrepancy of these work allocations is that in farming there are no clear divisions between the home (private) and the work place (public) which in this case is the farm. The notable effect of this confusion of working places is that women have become central to the production of food crops as well as crops destined for the market (c.f. Young, 1980:4-9). Another effect is that all

production is on a household basis utilising the family labour in which women work as unpaid labourers for the household.

In tea production there are no culturally gender specific roles assigned to the family members. Throughout the agricultural cycle, women in the area of this study work along with their husband if and when the latter are present. This way the work is theoretically shared but in actual fact most of the burden falls on the women of the household. In large households the workload is lighter for different farm and household chores are shared among available family members. In small households the workload for the woman is greater for the husband and children are usually not around the homestead.

Generally, in all households it is the women usually the wives who bear the responsibility of getting work done both in the farm and in the homestead. Those households where men are absent either because of employment in far off places or when they choose to live with one wife instead of the other in polygynous households, among other reasons, the wife's role as farm manager is strengthened. This apparent strength is however limited for it does not stop a husband from wherever he is to interfere with the farm. In this study as in that done by Staudt (1975) in Western Kenya, the position of women in jointly managed farms is characterized by several distinct **husband**-wife work patterns namely: Firstly, there is the case where husbands are employed around the area and play the managerial role in farm work. This was found in the majority of homesteads addressed by this study. The second case is where

husbands work with their wives on the farm. Thirdly it is where husbands have failed to find outside employment but dislike farming so they spend most of the day away from home. Asked of their whereabouts women made, excuses for them by saying that they had gone to the market centres for business matters. Some were frank to admit they had no idea where and what their husbands did all day. In all these situations production activities were mainly shouldered by the women while the real powers concerning land and its allocation, the financial matters of the household relating to cash income and outcome were the prerogative of the men.

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As one moves from one household to another it becomes clear that the process of commercialization and integration of the Embu economy into the market has brought about individuated mode of working. This has accentuated competition for important resources, land, labour and capital. Control over these resources is invested in the hands of the men. This has brought about several
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contradictions within the productive system itself and within households in relationships between men and women. Some of these are discussed in this study. They include different patterns in land usage as well as reorganization of production which has brought about individuation and differentiation within households. Certain categories of household members have been freed from actual hard work in the farm and household maintenance.

Kitching (1980) argues that this is a consequence of the nature and the way in which integration into wider capitalist economy has been achieved. She asserts that there are two major

economy has been achieved. She asserts that there are two major ways of entering commodity production.

Where women entered into commodity production before or at the same time as the men (by expanding cultivation in their own gardens) one would expect them to have greater bargaining power when the open land frontier closed and decisions had to be made about the division of land and labour power between "subsistence" and "surplus production" and about the division of the surplus product so obtained. Where however as in Kipsigis, entry into commercial production was a discrete, spatially separated step with a completely different labour process controlled by the household head, his decision-making power might not be challenged to the same extent, and access of wives to the proceeds of the surplus product would be more on a grace- and favour basis e.g. payment of school fees for the children of the favoured wife of a polygamist (Kitching, 1980:55).

Embu women, like their Kipsigis counterparts, entered into commercial production under the control of their household heads. No wonder their intensive labour in tea production does not render them capable of controlling the proceeds of their labour as was confirmed by most respondents of this study.

Among the many explanations why women, particularly those addressed by this study have been ascribed such a low priority in economic status, are those attributed to the prevailing biases in modern economic ideology namely:

Continued perception of a division of labour in which women are viewed as belonging to the traditional sector while men are natural participants in modern economic activities. The irrational association of occupations according to sex roles (Fruzzetti 1985: 38-60)

Change, the word used to define economic growth and progress in all sectors is usually a male oriented phenomenon. Women's roles in agriculture are also delineated along pre-existing lines

other practices have changed the structure of agricultural production. The capital and labour intensification, which have been added to a situation in which there is separation of land ownership from farm activities. Women are particularly affected by the fact that traditional Embu concepts of work by family members are that

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women are the workers and the main producers for the family. Secondly, social relations useful in agricultural production in pre-colonial Embu are no longer operational for kinship and family labour has given way to contract which induces the preference for non-kin hired labourers.

One contradiction in the area of this study is that there are inconsistencies in the ideology of agricultural development particularly concerning tea production. The model propagated by those in authority tends to separate remunerated from traditional activities. Specialization in certain cash crops, improved yields and marketing improvements by those in authority, excludes the actual work in which the majority performers are women. The result is that women are stereotyped into oblivion as little scrutiny of their roles and expenditure of labour is done. Thus there is a discrepancy between money earners and labourers resulting from separation from control over production and actual work invested on the farm. Women's work and labour allocations are not paid because they are regarded as part of their family obligations and responsibilities. Figs. XXIIa and b below illustrate the contradicting modes of production in the area of study.

Fig. XXIIa. TRADITIONAL AND CONTRACTUAL LABOUR

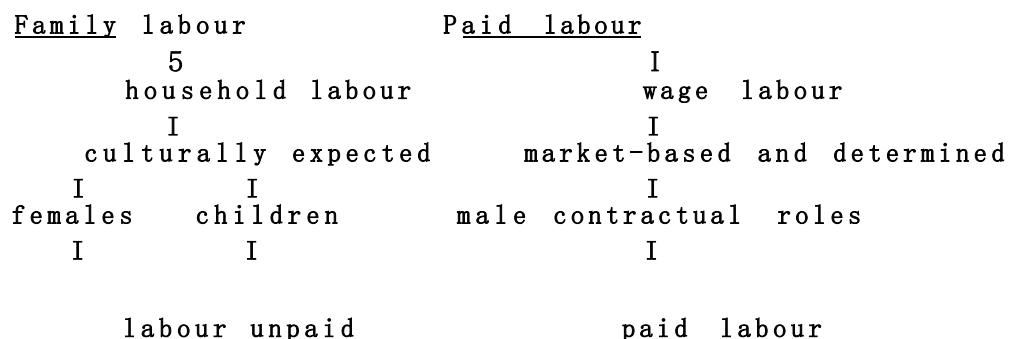
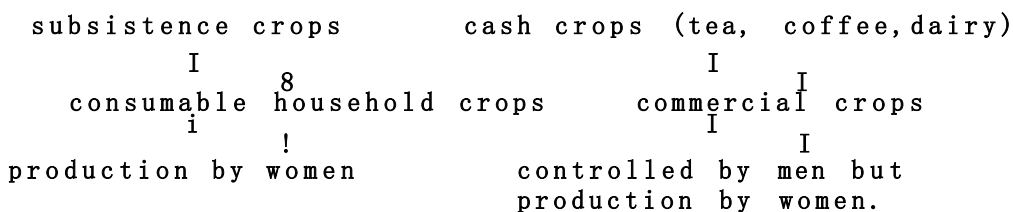


Fig. XXIIb. LABOUR ACCORDING TO CROPS



Source: Adopted from Fruzzetti (1985 : 41)

Women and in particular wives of smallholder tea producers bear the responsibility of getting work done not just in food crops but also tea, dairy and coffee production. About 50% of sampled women showed that a woman's bargaining power concerning their labour contributions in cash crops and dairy production is quite high. This is because men cannot legitimize their control over women's work by referring to their responsibility as food providers (c.f. Bulow and Sorrensen 1988:149-170). Unlike subsistence crops, commercial production has brought about certain levels of gender role relations. A situation in which men have become farm centered has arisen. They are particularly monitoring women's

activities in both farm and homestead to ensure that maximum time is spent on profitable production. Despite their dominance and control men are careful not to be too severe on their wives for women are custodians of symbolic values that give a man prestige and status. Irresponsible action by a man to his wife may lead to a lowering of his social standing. Thus the extent to which men reinforce their authority as heads of households depends on their mutual relationship(s) with their wives. The response of the women depends on their general status in the household.

There are groups of women whose rights to land are more undermined than others. Single women who are either separated or unmarried and have children have no rights to land. Even widows who the author expected to take over the rights of their dead husbands and exercise all the powers are sometimes threatened by their sons. This is because Embu customary laws and land tenure today demands that women should hand over decision making powers concerning land to their grown up sons. The increasing population density has brought about land shortage in Embu and the widowed, separated and unmarried single women are a vulnerable group. Their predicament is made worse by the general process of dissolution of Embu traditional rules, customs and norms which ensured everyone's security of access to resources.

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S.3 How Control of income from tea by men affects women

For most of the sampled households, tea is the major source of income. In spite of its reliability as a monetary source the

activities in both farm and homestead to ensure that maximum time is spent on profitable production. Despite their dominance and control men are careful not to be too severe on their wives for women are custodians of symbolic values that give a man prestige and status. Irresponsible action by a man to his wife¹ may lead to a lowering of his social standing. Thus the extent to which men reinforce their authority as heads of households depends on their mutual relationship(s) with their wives. The response of the women depends on their general status in the household.

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that the cash returns to them will be adequate. This leads to women deciding on separate economic relations rather than joint efforts so as to further their own economic interests and those of their children. During this study many women were engaged in sale of passion fruits for incomes which they keep separately from other joint incomes. Table 16 below shows material inventory of a few sampled households and it shows who owns what in the various households.

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'able 16. MATERIAL INVENTORY PURCHASED ITEMS PER SAMPLED
HOUSEHOLD: ITEMS AND THE PERSON THEY ARE ASSOCIATED

Item	<u>Type of Household</u>							
	Large-Scale > 5000 bushes		Medium 2001 - 4099 bushes		Small < 2000 bushes		Non tea growers	
	wife /	hus- band	wife /	hus- band	wife /	hus- band	wife/	hus- band
Water tank		6		4		2		1
Motor bike		8		5		1		1
Car/pickup		8		3				
Bicycle		10		8		4		
Pressure/ Wick stove		8				2		
Hurricane lamp		8		8		5		4
Radio		10		6		3		2
Torch		8		7		6		1
Record/ Cassette player		5		2				2
Cupboard		2		2		1		1
Bed		5		4		3		2
Cooking utensils	10		9		5		4	
Sofa set		8		6		3		
Books	2	8	5	7	6	8	2	2
Grade cows		20		10		5		1

N for all households was 10 households

Source: Own data compiled from material inventory questionnaire.

From this table it is clear most of the visible material goods are owned or associated with the men. Sharing of proceeds from, tea is a major cause of problems among smallholder tea growers has led to family conflicts, sorcery, child care problems and neglect of domestic chores.

6.3.1. Conflicts among members of households

Family conflicts among the sampled households are very complex but they are usually related to strained household economy and labour constraints. They are linked to the existing power hierarchies within households which are based on sex and age.

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Decision making regarding the use of incomes accrued from cash crops on which family labour is expected to depend on is the main cause. Two types of conflicts are most common according to my informants namely: those between male household heads and their wives and those between fathers and their adult sons who are dependent on the land for income. These conflicts are more pronounced in polygynous households.

The problems start with the refusal by male household heads to share money from tea with others in the household who contributed towards its attainment. These problems are predominant during the second payment (bonus) which comes around the months of November and December, the time when the author of this study was doing field studies. There were five cases among sampled households where men were said to disappear from their homes and return after consuming all the money. About 50 % of women respondents reported that whenever they question their husbands irresponsible behaviour they are silenced by being beaten.

Since there are no customary or other ways of clarifying terms of payments to family labour, women participate in tea production without guarantee of returns. Women are however not completely helpless for they don't passively accept all decisions made by

their husbands concerning spending their income from tea. There were four cases of women who snatched and hid their husbands identity cards to stop them from withdrawing money from banks. Search for lost identity cards by men is a harassing business for everyone is suspected. This leads to factions within households whereby women gang up with their school-going children while men may gang up with their adult sons. According to the information of two women respondents, school going children gang up with their mothers because they would like them to control the family income to ensure the smooth running of the household. They are also hurt by exploitation of their labour. Men and their adult sons gang up in exploiting their wives and children who are regarded as labourers whose rights are to be subdued.

Alliance between a man and his grown up son(s) is for pragmatic reasons to assert Patriarchy and ensure unquestioned obedience of women and children. There was one case in which a man did not give his three sons enough money and the alliance stopped. Sons are most capable of pressurizing their fathers to share money fairly with other members of the household. This is because in Embu an adult son's effort to break dependence on parents is respected. Thus even if a son attempts to take part of his father's tea and make it his own, society does not restrain him. For this reason fathers are afraid that their adult sons may influence their mothers and younger siblings to stop working for them. There were five cases where fathers were observed refusing to release their grown up sons to develop independently.

Two of those sons had their own incomes but their fathers wanted to have a say in the running of their homes. Embu cultural norms however do not allow use of violence by a father on his grown up son(s) and the strongest weapon a father has is denying the son title deed to land.

Unlike the sons, women cannot establish their own independent farms and they depend entirely on what they are paid by their husbands. The following responses are a summary of women's feelings

My husband gives me only Ksh 100.00 which is hardly enough for purchasing personal and family consumer¹ items. This amount is too small even for buying such items as sugar, fat, tea, and other household things (Wangiri 2-12-89).

Another respondent felt: I

Plucking tea is like a prison from which I cannot get out. Yet despite all the work I do, the money is used by my husband. He does not hire people to assist me in plucking tea and I do this work all by myself which is very tiring (Dora 12-11-89).

A respondent who had about eight school going children said,

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The problem is that men are not good at budgeting for the family. They can wait for a long time before seeing the gaping needs of their households. My children almost go in rags before he thinks of buying them clothes. It would help if men could get their own share of money and women are allocated the rest for the general maintenance of the family. Right now I wish my husband could use the money to purchase Christmas clothes for all of us but I know he will not. How I wish I had my own salary for then I could freely buy what is right for all members of my household (Karimi 3-1-90).

Women do not question how their husbands use the money so long as he spends a reasonable amount on what are considered the common needs of the family. These needs include payment of school fees, clothing and items of consumption in the household. Consequently

the women and children will work in the tea field without complaints. It is only in situations where a husband neglects his family obligations and responsibilities that conflicts arise. Generally women respondents informed the author that they know their vulnerability in gender relations within the household. They have a low perception of themselves as far as money and its expenditure were concerned. To them what counts is caring for their family and personal needs come afterwards. They continue working in the farm and household. Unless in a situation where their husband's behaviour is intolerable, they rarely resort to withdrawal of their labour.

The problem of unequal income from tea is accentuated in polygynous households for each wife earns the income from the portion of tea allotted to them. There arises competition tensions and jealous between wives and their children if the husband does not share money from the tea equally.

It was encouraging to see that tea authorities are beginning to respond to these problems. One KTDA official informed the author that for the last two years 1988 and 1989 tea growers in the area of study were issued with a circular to the effect that those husbands who wished could authorize their wives to receive cash from KTDA offices. This has brought relief in many households where previously husbands spent family earnings irresponsibly. Since then, some couples operate accounts of tea earnings in the name of wives or jointly with their husbands. The problems which arise are those brought about by the mode of women's

dressing. Although it is the women who actually receive cash from bank cashiers, they have nowhere to put it for their clothes have no pockets and they are not in a habit of carrying handbags like women in urban areas. Since theft is widespread, it is not expedient to carry money in open bags or ciondo for it can easily be

snatched. Women are obliged to give all or most of the money to their husbands for safe-keeping in their pockets. Usually wives and husbands have different needs in town and each goes their way expecting to meet at home. Twenty respondents said that

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is when their husbands disappear and reappear after all or most of the money is finished.

The author asked one respondent why she does not make arrangements to keep all or at least the larger portion of the money. She said:

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I prefer my husband getting all the money for there is a time I came with all the money and he kept demanding for a little so many times that I sympathized and handed him large amounts. This money was finished very fast and I felt as though I am careless and stupid in matters of money management (Agatha 5-2-90).

These sentiments are an indication of the negative Perception which sampled women have of themselves. Through the course of-time they have internalised subtle messages communicated to them by the society that they are failures (c.f. Kobobel 1983:135-139). In their struggle to prove themselves better than the way they are perceived, some women have become "super savers". That is they strive to spend very little or no money even on pressing issues so

as to show that they can be better than their husbands in preserving money.

6.3.2. Sorcery

Lack of guaranteed monetary remuneration for their intense labour inputs and the increased dependency on men especially by women from households with few tea bushes or non-tea growers has led to severe competition. This has brought about use of supernatural powers by a number of sampled women. In order to protect their labour inputs and guard their money, women were said to use magical herbs which were collectively known as samweli. Some women use these herbs to gain other women's husbands while others use them to keep their straying husbands in line. This phenomenon was not in my investigation schedule but when nearly 67% of the respondents kept mentioning it, the author was obliged to investigate. The issue surfaced when respondents were asked why they don't try to keep the money from tea instead of letting their husbands misuse it. Many responded by saying:

It is women who have spoilt for us to the extent that we cannot be trusted with money by our husbands. These days some women have learnt how to deal with cruel husbands. They are buying Samweli. SM)wel_i is the name of the herbal drugs which women are administering to their husbands to make them stupid. Such a man loses all manhood and does exactly what the woman who administers the herbs wants. For example he will give her all the money and stay around the house without mingling with other men in bars (Mutitu 14- 11-89).

A few women respondents were annoyed with these views and said, Samweli is a gimmick or another imaginary excuse which men

are using to justify their selfishness and refusal to grant women their rightful share of money from tea. These men are claiming . t that if women are given reasonable amounts of money they will be induced to purchase Samweli (Bertha 13-12-89).

Three male respondents confirmed that Herbal medicines or Samweli are bought in town from a known practitioner and are administered in different ways. The commonest way is placing them inside a man's clothing. If this does not work women are advised i to sit on them and afterwards place small portions into a man's food or drink. Administered this way they are strong enough to turn a man into a fool (Nyaga 23-11 -89). The author was shown some men who had been turned into fools.

There are various developments as a result of this issue. Beliefs about the evil nature of women are nowadays articulated openly. A case in point is the Christian seminars attended by the author where the idea of feminine evil was greatly propagated by sermons which lay the greater burden of responsibility on the woman Eve for the entry of sin into the world than on the man Adam. Proverbial undermining of the feminine nature as 'a primitive energy who is .terrifying, tyrannical deviant from male norm... ineffably mysterious, enticing and perilous (Shidder 1971 : 8), are dominant. The worst aspect of these views is that they are propagated by both men and women among the sampled, households. Rubbo (1975 : 333-340), rightly noted that in a rapidly modernised world, sorcery is not losing out but it appears to be patching up some gaps in cultural economic and social holes produced by rural

capitalism. This author is of the opinion that Samweli or these beliefs about supernatural powers are a way of getting an acceptable rationalization of men's appropriation of monetary incomes without regard of labour contributions of their wives. Women who are said to use the magical herbs may be in quest of their husbands love and concern. They hope to improve their material situation. Even some of the men who are said to have become fools may have decided that it is economical to live amicably with one's family.

6.3.3 Effects of increased workload on women's food production, childcare and home maintenance.

Embu women in this study, expressed their sense of being inferior in that tasks assigned to them by society had one thing in common. They are outside key-coordinating roles of the Embu society. As the unpaid labourers they produce food, take care of everyone and maintain the homestead's health standards. The intensive labour activities of tea production, animal husbandry, subsistence crops, coffee and tea production often leaves them with hardly enough time to fulfill their traditional roles effectively. During the peak season for tea plucking, women are so pressed for time that they have to make priorities of their labour allocations. Women within the tea growing households' give priority to tea Production activities. Tea production has the guarantee for money income even if women are not guaranteed that they will get as much

money' as the labour they spend on the tea activities. Increased work in the farms also makes people to grow more hungry and women are required to provide adequate food to satisfy them all. This requires purchasing of a number of foodstuffs to add to what a woman may have produced on her own farm usually late in the evening. To obtain the necessary cash, women have increasingly depended on their husbands for they have insufficient influence on disposal of income from tea even though they organize labour during peak seasons.

There has been undoubted increase of household incomes by a look at the 1987/1988 large amounts of money paid to tea growers in Kenya (See table 11 on Pg 224). Munganiaⁱ tea growers were paid over 15 million yet there are few relative improvements and the satisfaction of basic needs has not been commensurate with increases in households cash incomes. Consumerism seems to be the greatest use for money accrued from tea. During this study's research, several invitations came to this author for pre-wedding parties, equipping people's houses and visiting friends. These parties were[%] highlighted by large feasts whereby people seemed to out do each other in filling their guests with all sorts of foods.ⁱ Women in many households took the opportunity of these occasions to exploit their husband's generosity and the need for male egocentrism of portraying their wealth to others by purchasing and cooking such large amounts of food that most of it is wasted. Thus as Palmer (1985) noted higher incomes from tea have come at a cost.

Maize, beans and potatoes are the main subsistence crops grown in the area of this study. Levels of production of these has not been high enough for self sufficiency and there has been a recorded decline in 1987/1988 year (Reports in Republic of Kenya 1989-1993). The decline in production and value over the two years was 48% and 36.4% respectively. The decline is attributed to reduced hectarage allocated to food crops in this area as more land is being channeled to growing cash crops the main one being tea (Republic of Kenya).

Respondents however attributed this decline to the fact that the area was never good for growing maize and beans for one is required to put a lot of labour to obtain sufficient yields. Fertilizer, weeding and spraying are essential if one is to get substantial yields. Respondents said "they simply have no time for cultivation of food crops. It is easier to work on the tea and buy food from shops with the money from tea" (Interview respondents around Kianjokoma market).

Even vegetables and potatoes which do well in the area are not grown in sufficient amounts. Respondents prefer to mortgage their bonus money in grain shops. At times their credit is higher than the anticipated bonus and this causes problems in households.. The seasonality of tea production activities has imposed a strain on women in general. Lactating mothers are forced to wean their infants pre-maturely. Food preparation takes place in the night using paraffin stoves which means that the houses are colder than when people used firewood. It is not unusual to feed school going

children on unbalanced diets such as bread and tea when a woman comes late from a buying centre.

Child care in the area of study has suffered a great deal as the priority is to concentrate on money generating farm operations. I was informed that children in the rural area cannot be given too much attention as those reared in urban areas. There, they have to be disciplined from their early age so as to look after themselves and assist their parents. Among the sampled households only where the wife had a well paying non-farm job such as primary school teacher were children well looked after. In most of the homes women, managed all the work by themselves or with the help of their growing children and relatives. The problem according to most respondents is that few girls in the area want to work as maids or childminders. They find working as a maid too taxing for a maid is expected to do both the work in the household as well as in the farm. Farmers are not satisfied with childcare and housework tasks only, they also insist that maids should raise their salaries through farm work activities. Would-be maids prefer to work as casual labourers in tea farms for this way they earn more money than by monthly payments as maids.

Usually small children are left alone in the homesteads while the mothers work in the farms. If there is a mother in law or any other person at home they are given the responsibility of looking after the children. The problem is arising nowadays for most aged persons have their own tea farms on which they prefer to work and generate their own cash. Labour reciprocated by grandparents is

no longer operating in the area of study for any labour requires monetary exchange. The mediation of cash nexus is the same for all people and it does not imply the ubiquity of profit motive. It testifies that everyone depends on the market and shops for a significant part of their daily consumption (Young 1980).

Consequently all available labour is used in tea production. Children are not reprimanded if they miss school so long as they pluck tea and take it to the buying centres for their parents. Existing data (c.f. Republic of Kenya 1989- 1993) indicates that there is a wide difference between men's and women's literacy rates a trend that needs checking. This may be explained by the greater demand for girls labour in the sampled households. Since in many households parents are not highly educated, they do not motivate their children to have high educational aspirations. School is however necessary in so far as one learns how to read and write. Babies of less than six months are strapped on the backs of women tea growers and they work while carrying them. As soon as they learn how to walk they are left with their older siblings. School going children wash their own clothes and make their breakfast in the morning. Children help in farm and housework after school and during school holidays. Girls do most of the housework such as sweeping the house, fetching water and firewood, cooking and washing clothes. Items such as books school uniform and soaps for washing clothes and their bodies are priority items purchased by parents. None of the 50 % of sampled women cared very much when and how their children cleaned themselves. Wealthy farmers take

their children to expensive boarding schools where they can be away from household and farm activities.

With reference to their lifestyles the sampled women were not greatly concerned with their personal grooming. Generally they consider smartness to be irrelevant to farming activities. During peak seasons the women are shabbily dressed even those from wealthy households. They are however very well dressed when attending church meetings or going to town.

Among the sampled population there is no clear sexual division of labour in farm-work activities. Women are as adept as men in handling tea production. It was however rare that men were found engaged in domestic work. Hence it is only women who do both men's work and domestic work while men do only farm work. Domestic work includes marketing (buying and little selling of subsistence produce) food preparation, cleaning utensils and clothes, mending torn clothes, gathering wood fuel, caring for the sick the aged among others. Both men and women regard these tasks as domestic work and as belonging to women alone.ⁱ These attitudes are so internalized that in some households women cannot expect help from their husbands. If a husband or a grown up son dares so much as to go to the kitchen, or help in washing up after a meal, other men friends would become very suspicious. Some women respondents said men who help their wives may likely be those who are bewitched. Men respondents in this study agreed that is why they do not assist their wives even when they see them overworked.

Thus Patriarchy in land tenure, allocation of land and labour

in tea production among other intensive activities in the socio-economic structure of Embu have failed to bring women into social and political visibility. Even the traditional kinship channels of communication through which women gained social status are getting undermined. Women groups are among the few avenues for the sampled women to free themselves from oppression. These groups were found to be riddled with problems such as those identified by Watchel (1976). The observed trend was that these groups have redefined their aims and direction from being mainly for mutual self- help. They instead invest in money-making projects such as building butcheries, constructing posho mills and recreational houses. They do not aim at relieving fellow women's work and labour burdens. There are complaints of leadership wrangles concerning inefficiency and dishonesty among leaders. Those women who are capable of leading these groups are too busy in their households to find time to engage in women groups. Women leaders of these groups are therefore usually those who have few or no tea bushes. These are already poor and they use their leadership to embezzle the groups money. This makes women be suspicious of these women groups.

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If the women's education and socialization remains as low as was found out, there will be little chance of their bettering their lives in future. As it is, the sampled women are conceptually invisible to political administration for the continuing notion of male headship of households is likely, to be there for a long time.

In the church seminars which the author attended, young women were instructed by older women who were recipients of domestic oriented colonial educational programmes. Thus their issues are defined within the realm of marriage, good housewifery, childcare and church. This

outlook fails to focus in more comprehensively the way to increase income generation by women. Women's hard work in tea farms particularly in tea production activities is disregarded.

In their relationship with the men, sampled women were found to be subjected to possessiveness. Although men cause women to be —jg3lgus__bykeeping prostitutes afca a mitt— as they are called in Kiambu, dancing and drinking alcohol as they wish, it is the women's activities that are subjected to greater scrutiny by the Embu society and by their individual husbands. Engaging in any form of public use of money by women is greatly curtailed. Thus if a woman dared go for a drink or a meal in a public house such as a hotel, the incident would be subject to devastating and malicious gossip. Sampled women left their homesteads only for specific destinations which are sanctioned by their husbands.

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6.4 Aspects of differentiations that determine the extent to which women's increased workload affects women.

Tea growers in Embu like other rural societies are not homogeneous but are differentiated along socio-economic lines (Pala 1975:1-7). Even though tea growing has become the most Popular agricultural activity through which Embu farmers hope to improve their incomes, it is not the only factor for there are

aspects of commercial production bringing about the differentiations observed in this study. However as already noted, tea functions as a catalyst in bringing about changes in the pattern of production which determines the effects of increased work among the sampled women. This study also postulates that tea production activities have reinforced the process of differentiation which may have began earlier in the area of this study. Among the factors that determine differentiation, and consequently the extent to which increased workload is felt among the sampled women of smallholders are: Characteristics of the tea growing households and size and use of hired labour.

In discussing characteristics of the sampled tea growers in Embu, there is need to refer to gender and age of the members of various households. Changes in household structure at different stages of its life cycle influences labour patterns within households. This may affect production, income and determine the extent to which increased workload is experienced by women. It is these which decide the conflicting interests within household power hierarchies and to a large extent determine the way increased labour burdens are experienced by various women. Modern land tenureship has brought about increased individuation which has accentuated differentiation among sampled households. As already noted, the character of pure cash crops negates the reciprocity and communality of traditional work groups namely *^a^Lksniro* or *Irima* making those engaged in tea coffee and dairy

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production rely mainly on family labour or hired workers. Introduction of tea as an institutionalized industrial crop where farmers are contracted with individual licenses has enhanced commercialisation and capitalization in the area of this study. Family labour is only supplemented by hired labour. Hired labour does not substitute family labour except in very few cases but it eases the degree to which increased workload is felt by women. Hired labour also determines the changes in labour use patterns among small holder tea growers of this study.

Why do some tea growers use hired labour while others do not? There were several responses to this questions but only those related to explanation of the extent to which the sample women experience increased workload are considered. The size of the tea i farm determines the extent to which sampled tea growers are differentiated in their use of hired labour. Large=scale farmers with over 5000, tea bushes cannot manage their tea farms using family labour alone so they have hired casual and permanent labourers. Medium size farmers use a mixture of family labour and hired labour while those with less than 2000 tea bushes use family labour alone. Use of hired labour is not determined by the size of tea farm alone but also availability of family labouc and extra income from off farm employment. A typical tea farmer among the sample is one with an established household on his titled land and one who has extra sources of money to hire labour to supplement family labour. As Etherington (1973) found out, most tea growers hire labour and the question of whether or not a tea farmer can t

manage without labour especially for plucking is an academic one. Only strained household economy prevents some farmers from relying on hired casual labour. As already explained Embu people do not accept to work as permanent hired labour for casuals are better paid.

Women in households who rely exclusively on family labour experience more increased workload than those in households where hired labour is used. The state of increased workload is further aggravated if the household has young children who have not attained school going age and therefore require more attention. If such a household is isolated from other members of extended family and there are grade cows requiring zero-grazing as well as other cash crops such as coffee to be tended, the woman's workload is enormous. These activities have already been shown to require several labour processes and operations. Besides a wife has the obligation to provide food, care for the sick and keep the home clean. It often becomes difficult for her to fulfill all these labour tasks satisfactorily. In many cases women resort to making priorities over certain labour allocations and activities that generate income tend to take top priority. About 40% of the sampled women tea growers said that they have to forget tea production activities if their families were to eat and wear clean clothes.

The group of women which was most adversely affected by increased workload is that which belonged to households with few tea bushes. Usually these were newly established households whose

incomes were low and could not allow hiring of labourers. Women in these households have infants and children who have not yet gone to school. The male household head is usually absent in search of off-farm and even agricultural wage labour. The work load for women in these households is tremendous for they have to perform work in their own homes and farms then hire themselves to the more well-off households so as to earn cash for purchasing food for their families.ⁱ

Women in medium size-tea farms experience of increased workload is varied for it depends on the households income and the number of children. Households in which both husband and wife have off-farm well paid jobs can afford using several permanently employed labourers.ⁱ Women in these households may not experience too much increase in labour but they have to be well organized if their tea farms are to be profitable. Those women belonging to households with several school children are also lucky in that their workload is shared by their children after school, on Saturdays and during school holidays. Although tea is a very labour intensive crop, plucking, which is the most regular activity may be skipped depending on the season and the stage of growth of tea bushes. Postponement of plucking for a few days to await children's labour does not result in critical problems. It was observed that in most households plucking took place on Saturdays when children's help was available. Interview with tea collections clerks confirmed that aggregate weight of tea from buying centresⁱ was more on Saturdays and school holidays although the quality was

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not the best.

Women in old households whose children have established their own independent homes, experienced increased workload to a greater degree than all others. These women were aged between 70 and 80 years and both the husband and wife are too old and weak to manage work on tea farms alone. Except in closely-knit families where grandchildren offered help, the old people were observed struggling on their wobbly feet as they worked in their tea farms. Asked why they could not get help, they decried modern times when everyone works only for money and each one is left to themselves. Nowadays no one seems to care for the aged unless they have money to pay for services (Diphather 13-2-90).

Women within middle-aged households with well established tea farms were observed to have the least experiences of increased workload. Even where the tea bushes are more than 10,000, women in the age category of 45 to 55 years were observed to have confidence and a strong sense of Personal efficacy in carrying out their duties. They seem to have considerable influence in their households which may be attributed to the fact that through the years, they have proved their reputation of industry and successful motherhood. Having proved their loyalty in all farms' production, they have a greater degree of independence from their husbands. Such women were chief decision-makers regarding labour allocations for both domestic and farm work. Since they have no small children to look after they have more time to engage in their own income generating activities.

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6.5 Why do women continue working despite inadequate financial remuneration?

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One of the results of tea production and other cash-generating activities in the area of this study, is increased differentiation between men and women in relation to access to household's income. Findings on material inventory questionnaire have already indicated that most of what is purchased in the sampled household belongs to men as is manifested by an increase in motor-vehicles, bicycles, radios and other male-controlled items. This study was not able to gauge what women have gained as a result of introduction of tea in the overall absolute terms. It is however clear that whatever they have gained is more by intensive application of their labour making their benefits less in proportion particularly in relation to what men have gained. Decisions concerning cash output and household budget especially the amount of money to be passed on to women lies in most cases entirely with men. The amazing thing is that women continue their labour contributions in both farm and homestead relentlessly. They also carry on their family obligations of purchasing essentials for the family upkeep. About twenty-seven women belonging to various categories of the sample were asked questions concerning cash output in their households. Their responses are shown on the table below:

'able 17. ISSUES OF HOUSEHOLD FINftNCIAL MANAGEMENT

Questions	Tea growing women				Non tea growing women			
	N	Yes	No	other	N	Yes	No	other
Is there more money due to tea production?	27	25	2		10	9	1	
Do women control cash out put in this household ?	27	5	19	3	10	3	5	2
Do you get ^ money regularly for household needs ?	27	15	11	1	10	2	6	2
Is the amount enough for all your purchases ?	27	5	20	2	10	2	7	1
Is there enough money for food ?	27	10	16	1	10	3	6	1
Is there enough money for fuel ?	27	7	19	1	10	2	7	
Is there enough money for clothes?	27	2	23	2	10	1	8	1

Source: Own data.

In responding to those questions sample women were not sure about such problems as enough money for there is no accepted measurement of what ^t is enough. Hence the responses may have been vague but were a useful means of gauging women's ideas in relation to household income which they knew is available but they have limited access to it. Having established that they were marginalized as far as ⁱ household finances were concerned, the next question was: Why do they continue their labour contributions in a system that fails to remunerate them financially ? Women had many varied views in

response to this question. These are discussed here as they relate to children, pride of motherhood, women's ability to negotiate their rights and Christianity.

6.5.1 Children as a reason:

More than 75% of women respondents in all categories said that their children were the main reason why they continued their labour contributions regardless of inadequate financial remuneration. These women felt that the most important function for a woman is to give birth to as many children as possible. Sample households have an average of 10.5 children per family for child bearing is considered the basic reason for living. One respondent said that it is the very essence of femaleness and to fail as a mother is to fail as a person. Childless women have no need to tire themselves for they have no long term expectations in marriage. There were no childless households in the sample and I was not able to investigate the views of women who are childless but information from everyone was that a childless woman is most likely to be divorced and another woman married to give birth. Unless where a husband was exceptionally loving to withstand public opinion, a childless woman never stays married.

Respondents insisted that children were the main reason they stayed and worked in their households. They feel that so long as their children's school fees, uniform and other requirements are met, their labour contributions were not in vain. Why do they continue working even when their children have grown and are out

of school ? There is no time when a woman ceases to think about their children. After school they need to be married and weddings require money. So a woman works hard in order to make her husband finance her children's weddings. By the time all the children are educated and married, the woman is too old and too used to hard work to slacken. Thus women's work and labour contributions is a type of investment for the future of their children.

6.5.2. Pride of Motherhood

Embu women attach a lot of importance to a woman's ability to provide subsistence for their family. There is a general association between mother and giver of food such as was postulated by Parsons (1959). (see also theoretical framework). Giving food to one's family is linked to its production and is often seen as an integral part of motherhood. The sampled women stressed that success of both child bearing and food production is very significant in the Embu society and in the woman's own perception of herself. Raising incomes to purchase food to feed their families through expanding their labour in the farms is part of their nurturing role. The sampled women are proud of their agricultural work and they derive personal satisfaction from their productivity.

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About 50% of them did not consider their work burdensome contrary to what I expected. Many were clear about the importance of what they did and their personal worth considering that they had no other alternatives. In the words of one respondent,

Work especially in the tea farms is what we fought for during the struggle for independence. We are now

have learned to negotiate their financial incomes within their conjugal contracts for they are aware that is the basis of their security. It is through a man's name that a woman is accepted in a society and acquires status. Her work and labour contributions are of consequence only if she is well married. Financial remunerations in absolute terms is not as important as having a base from which to operate. The socialization that has been internalized by most of the sampled women, is not of men as bread winners but men as lords to be served by their wives. They are not expected to notice or assist in the numerous tasks of home maintenance as long as they provide shelter and land for their wives. A small percentage of women disclosed that they have their own secret numbers into which they smuggle households plucked tea without the knowledge of their husbands.

6.5.4 Christianity

As noted earlier Christian principles have played an important part in making women tolerant of their roles in life among the sampled households. Christianity is associated with what is desirable in traditional and modern ideas in Embu society. Obviously men have also taken advantage of the Christian values which strengthen the man as the head of household and give examples of the virtues of an industrious overworked woman.

Many women respondents stressed that the reason why they continued working without adequate remuneration was a desire to maintain peaceful homes. Homes where people are not Christians were

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Many women respondents stressed that the reason why they continued working without adequate remuneration was a desire to maintain peaceful homes. Homes where people are not Christians were

said to be full of quarrels, chaos and anarchy. It is only in Christian homes that women are included in decision-making on important matters as there is natural respect between couples arising from loyalty to one another. Christian values are what brought about harmony within the family as one respondent said,

Prayer helps me to sought my priorities. It is the only means by which I know what activities to drop and the ones that I should concentrate on (Interview with Naomi 12-12-89).

It is remarkable that among the sampled households, those where both the woman and her husband claim to be Christians seemed to be more organized. Each member of the household was considered important in fulfilling their part of family obligations.

Christian teachings also urges people to accept their lot in life as part of suffering with Christ. Sampled women find Christian norms and values attractive in that polygyny is condemned. Most women prefer monogamous marriages. Church meetings are useful to the women in that they provide the only legitimate outlets for women to get together and discuss common problems.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of tea production activities on women's work and labour allocations in Embu district. Tea growers of Mungania Tea Factory were seen as a fair representative of the tea-diary zone of Embu district for they have experienced a variety of effects during the process of agrarian transformation in Embu and Kenya as a whole. The main question was whether or not tea production has adversely or otherwise affected the sampled population and in particular women. The study also examined closely labour-use patterns of the sampled population in order to identify changes in sexual division of labour. A summary of the major findings and the recommended suggestions are presented in this chapter.'

7.2 The findings

This study^I explored changes in production and the way_i they have affected gender relations of Embu people's social, structure through a historical perspective. Introduction of tea production among other commercialized production has brought several changes one of which is labour constraints among the sampled population. The change from subsistence crop production to capitalized production within a relatively short period from 1934 when coffee was introduced in Embu has culminated in adoption of a variety of cash crops among which was tea. Tea and dairy production are the main income generating activities by smallholders in the area of

this study. Notable too was the continuous decrease in farm size as land is getting fragmented through subdivisions as a result of growth in population. Tea production is the largest employer of people in the area of this study as well as the best source of cash income. KTDA's operations in Embu as elsewhere in Kenya were found to be most successful in terms of organizing smallholder tea production but despite this success, individual farmers experience a lot of labour constraints. Possible advantages, potentials, risks and problems that smallholders experience as a result of technical, economic and social aspects of tea production were explored.

The theoretical framework for this study is the marxist-feminist reproduction model which propounds that female dependency • and subordination are hinged on Patriarchal exploitation of women's reproduction. Dynamic forces that affect production were analyzed and it was noted that women's subordination has not just started but is rooted in ideology and customary practices of Embu people. Even in precolonial Embu society where women's access to the means of production were clearly defined, their social status did not equal their contribution to the provision of food for subsistence -and maintenance of all members of households. Women were portrayed as minors even in domestic decision-making whose valued contribution was bearing children and providing sustenance to a man's family. In patrilineal societies, Patriarchy was specially

felt. Nevertheless women had more time for leisure as they were not overburdened as they are today. Prejudicial colonial policies accentuated female exploitation for women were denied educational opportunities the only means of entering high socio-economic positions. Men's migrations from their homes disrupted the existing pre-colonial gender role relations introduction of commercialized production brought the appropriation of both women's labour and cash proceeds from commodities by the men. Tea and dairy production among other activities require labour intensive operations. Respondents were seen to engage in individuated mode of production whereby they are too busy stall-feeding their grade cattle or plucking tea to be involved in traditional labour groups.

The principles of reciprocity and communality of traditional labour groups *Irima* or *Ngwataniro* whereby neighbours assisted in production as well as labour from extended family are affected by increased differentiation and a growing tendency to individuation among the sampled population. Women groups have their orientation

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in saving and making money rather than mutual self-help for the members. They are thus not relieving women's intensified labour burdens. Tea production has therefore accelerated the general process of capitalization of labour relations in a two-fold manner. On the one hand, it has meant increased use of hired labour in agriculture which was shown to benefit only a small percentage of smallholders. Those women from large-scale tea producing households with formal employment careers were found to be least affected by increased work. This is because they could afford to

hire many permanent farm and household workers while others depended on family labour alone or with few casual labourers. On the other hand capitalization of labour has reduced non-market aspects of labour relations. No longer can smallholders in this study count on help of relatives and neighbours as was the case before introduction of tea and other forms of commercialized production. Each household has to struggle on their own for the proceeds from pure cash crops cannot be well shared among members of extended families.

Generally, with increased commercialized production, the total labour burdens within agricultural production have increased. The study noted that the tendency of men to diversify their labour power into various cash generating activities removes them from their households. Children's labour input has decreased considerably as a result of school attendance although they contribute considerably to family labour. Thus women's labour burdens have increased because they are the only members of the household without access to other forms of income generating alternatives. Their work includes being daily managers and workers in tea farms, domestic work, animal husbandry, child care and food producers. It was also demonstrated that women's access to and control over labour is by large restricted to the labour of their children after school and during holidays. Husbands* contribution to the households labour was a matter of negotiations between husbands and wives for their (husbands) interests were not necessarily those of the wives. Husbands were found to have their

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own priorities and it is these that determined the amount of labour they contributed to the household. Tea production therefore is yet another very labour intensive activity added to women's already intensive domestic activities. Hence the question of whether or not tea production has increased women's workload is a measure of significant change in gender role relations in the process of agrarian transformation in Embu district.

The way tea production in terms of labour interacts with other production activities within farming, domestic and child-care depend on women's access to hired labour. Their control over household's economic resources however does not allow them to hire labour unless they have independent incomes. Tea

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production also limits women from fulfilling adequately their primary roles and responsibilities of food production and care of the family. Nearly all the women respondents felt greatest pressure of work during peak seasons of tea production. Thus with a few exceptions the general pattern is one of real labour shortage which is aggravated during peak seasons. This study does not support the notion that women should leave tea production and concentrate on other reproductive activities. The increasing demand for cash in all aspects of life shows such views are unrealistic. Respondents agreed that tea production was their only hope for bettering themselves.

Poor tea growing households as well as non-tea growers were the hardest hit by increased workload from tea production. Women from households with large tea farms who had no other means of

obtaining their own independent income are not distinguished from others with less tea. They have in addition to working in the farms prepare food and supervise workers. Only women who are formally employed can afford to keep their homesteads smart and to take personal care of themselves. Thus they are better off in fulfilling their duties as "good" wives and mothers compared to other women. They have extra time for leisure activities such as listening to music among others. In this case so long as tea production means higher incomes and greater employment of hired labour to substitute the family labour in particular that of the wife, consequently standards of living in rural areas will be improved.

This study does not suggest like many others (Barclay 1977, O'dea 1982, Oniago and Kuria 1989,) that labour in the area of study should be shifted from export crop production to production of food for domestic consumption in order to improve nutrition status in the area. As was pointed out by Pinstrop - Anderson (1983), the suggestion that people quit production of export crop is a simplistic and misleading solution to nutritional problems. It may even bring about worsening rather than improvements in nutritional status. What is required especially in the area of this study, is correction of women's economic authority in the household as well as the recognition of the productive potential of food crops by non- tea growers in the area. The money generated through foreign exchange transactions from sale of tea should be used by the relevant authorities to import food in the area of

study. This will enable the tea growers to concentrate on export crop production without reducing availability of domestic food. The most important factors for a family's ability to acquire sufficient food are giving women liberty in handling the household income for food as well as for proper home maintenance. Food prices should not be too excessive. The situation as it is today

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is one where women's greater contribution, in tea production has not given them more cash income and there is hardly any time to engage in their own income generating processes. At the same time the need to purchase more food and use other forms of fuel has arisen.

The study also focussed on factors of differentiation among smallholder tea producers in Embu. It was found that tea production has reinforced the already continuing process of social differentiation among the sampled households. Tea producers were seen not to be homogeneous. The already better-off farmers with formal employment were able to hire labour for their farms and I homesteads. Tea growing households who cannot afford to hire labour were not able to supplement their family labour adequately. Socio-economic differentiation is bound to increase as the growing population brings about a shortage of land. The notable effect of commercialization in production was differentiation among various households based on several factors. The life style of the household, the size of the tea farm, the number of children in a household, and the extent to which a household could hire labour were the important indicators of differentiation within

households. A woman's position in a household and the way she decided to interrelate tea production with other reproductive activities were also significant. Women from old households where children had left home to establish their independent homes were affected greatly by intensity of work resulting from tea production. Those in young households where there were babies to look after and those women belonging to non-tea growing households were the worst affected by increased workload. Women of non-tea growers had to work in their farms and in other people's farms to earn the needed cash.

Decision-making in relation to hiring of labour usually lies in the hands of the husband and women have only an indirect means of influencing such decisions. Consequently if their situation becomes intolerable not only as regards intense labour but also as regards spending the households income, women have few alternatives. Besides withdrawal of their own labour from tea production they can verbalize their oppression by telling as many people as care to listen. These devices are a poor means of solving women's problems. In comparison with the men, women's subordinate social status and their general lack of control over resources makes them less able to manipulate their power. Since it is men who are in control of national and local policy-making positions, they are bent on maintaining a balance of power between sexes by curbing all initiatives to change the present status quo. To them a good woman is one who accepts all forms of subordination an attitude which is stressed by male preachers in churches and the

male dominated politics. This leaves women with limited room for manouvre and to survive they have to know and use subtle ways.

A number of women enjoyed certain benefits such as increased influence over labour allocation. Since food for the household is purchased with the money from tea, there has been an improvement on women's economic position in the household. Many women are getting closer to controlling cash outputs of their households. Such a trend is a welcome development for it is a move towards the strengthening of women's status.

Access to and control over resources by various women among the sample could not be explained by reference to smallholders economic position only. Ideological and religious institutions were other factors determining the extent to which men feel threatened by their wife's increased influence over households income. As one respondent said, women have to be wise in making sure that their influence on household incomes was not noticed for if their husbands felt visibly threatened their rights could easily be overthrown. Hence a woman has to appear helpless and dependent in matters of power relations within households.

This study regarded the household as a point of departure and investigated individuals within them to see how labour is allocated. It was found that there is no simple "yes" and "no" answer to the questions of whether or not tea production has benefited women. Commercialized production has opened a way for women to negotiate their labour inputs in their households. Following a description of sexual division of labour around major

historical changes in Embu, the study shows how rigid divisions and specializations of labour between sexes have been relaxed. The interesting development is that certain labour tasks such as animal husbandry have been redefined as female tasks. This is due among other things to increased involvement of men in off-farm formal employment. The net result of these changes is increased work load for women. Their situation has been aggravated by lack of technological innovations and their double nature of production. Women are responsible for providing food and sustenance of their households but without effective control over proceeds from production.

The study also found that both women's and men's pre-conditions for fulfilling their prescribed roles within their households have been adversely affected by shortage of land, unemployment and intensive nature of modern farming methods. Conflicts within households have become widespread and there is desperation which leads to beliefs in magical powers by some women in a bid to rationalise their subordinate position and the exploitation of their labour.

Nevertheless the author of this study did not witness women who were actively struggling to flee from the overwhelming labour burdens. Most of the respondents even though aware of being overworked, were happily engaged in fulfilling their responsibilities and obligations. Hence tolerance is one of the reasons why women continue contributing their labour even when they were inadequately remunerated. Another reason is the pride and

high esteem of motherhood and the desire by women to invest in their children who would care for them at old age. The study also noted that the author's interpretation of changes in gender role relations did not necessarily coincide with the sampled women's perceptions of their situations in life. All of them know how best to negotiate their rights within their own households and even when they did not seem to be too happy about their situation, they were rather active in using every available opportunity to their advantage.

7.3 Recommendations:

This study has ascertained that smallholder tea production is a step in the right direction for it is among programmes which attempt to improve activities of small scale rural producers. Encouraging small-scale industrial developments is helpful to rural people for unlike workers in large-scale plantations, the smallholders are not deprived of their pride and independence. Success in smallholder tea production however is very much linked to the question of whether or not the increased demand for labour can be solved satisfactorily. Unless something is done to alleviate women's labour burdens in both farming and domestic work, tea production and zero-grazing method of animal husbandry will continue to create shortage of labour among small-holders.

The analysis of trends over time in sexual division of labour, suggests a need for certain employment policies to be enacted' if the position of women is to be protected. Protecting women's

status is essential if the standards of living in rural areas are to be raised. Development efforts should concentrate on ensuring that men have viable rural non farm occupations away from their household farms. So long as men are involved in sufficiently profitable activities, they will be less concerned about the rising incomes of their wives production at the household level.

There is need to restructure ownership of land in such a way that both men and women have equal rights to land. Both should have power to allocate whatever crops they choose on their land. Separating production activities by gender is one way that would bring about competition and mutually reinforcing benefits of increased household incomes. Each grown-up person, male or female could be in a position to alleviate their workload by hiring labour for specific services.

The study noted the usefulness of time-use surveys and would recommend them for providing information on labour constraints in agricultural production. Knowledge of which farm and non farm activities including household maintenance are most time consuming for men and women is important in highlighting the potential points which need assistance. Through time-use surveys detailed accounts of each persons activities would be measured and valued for remuneration purposes. These surveys are also useful in measuring sex differences in productivity and returns for labour. Such a measurement can identify critical gaps arising from differential access to labour-saving devices. Relegation of women and children to tasks of lower productivity and discriminatory tendencies in

the labour market may be curbed.

Even though designing such agricultural programmes as would ensure equal pay for equal work may be complicated, developments which ensure potential benefits and enhancement of women's activities have the best prospect of success. This is because they would be in line with the potentials of African Culture.

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List of some of the Oral interviews

Agatha Gatavi 5 -2 -1990	Kibogi Village
Bertha 13-12-1989	Mashiara
Chandi 20-11-1989	Thigingi
Difatha 13-2-1990	Kibogi
Dora 12-11-89	Rwere
Enos Nyaga 21- 21- 1990	KTDA office Nairobi
Igoki 14- 12- 1989	Kathangariri
Ireri 3- 2- 1990	Nginda
Isabella 11- 11- 1989	Nvuvori
Karimi 13- 1- 1990	Rwere
Kariuki 17- 1- 1990	Kavutiri
Kaveti 23- 12- 1989	Kianjokoma
Kimuru 2- 1- 1990	Nginda
Mariamamu 12- 12- 1989	Mutunduri
Market women 3- 12- 1989	Kianjokoma Market Centre
Mbogo Hosea 6- 12- 1989	Kiriari
Mbogo Joseph 7- 12- 1989	Kenga

Miru	Kibogo
29- 11- 1989	/
Hugo	Manyatta
13- 2- 1990	Mungania Tea Factory
Members of staff	
-Munyi	
2- 11- 89	Kavutiri
Mureithi	
3- 2- 1990	Tea office Embu Town
Muruana	
3-12-1989	Gituara
Mutitu	
3- 11- 1989	Kairuri
Muturi Lois	
6- 11- 1989	Kathangariri
Mwenji	
4- 12- 1989	Kathande
Naomi hathia	
12- 12- 1989	Thigingi
Nderi	
4- 2- 1990	Kathande
Ndwiga	
3- 11- 1989	Ndunda
Ngai	
2- 12- 1989	Kiandong' o
Ngayu	Assistant Factory officer Mungania Tea
4- 2- 1990	
Factory	
Ngembi	
26- 11- 1989	Gacucari
Ngima	
5- 12- 1989	Nvurori

Njeru 3- 12- 1989	Kibugu
Njiru 23- 11- 1989	Kiriari
Njue 17- 1- 1990	Kenga
Njura 10- 1- 1990	Kairuri
Nyaga Ngare and Wambogo 23- 11- 1990	Kai ruri
Peris 4- 11- 1989	Kathangari
Raeli 12- 2- 1990	Kamama
Runji Isabella 25- 11- 1989	Manyatta
Ruth Gichuku 23- 12- 1989	Thigingi
Wachira Leaf Collection Manager KTDA office Nairobi 8- 6- 1989	
Wangai 10- 1- 1990	Kibugu
Wangiri 9- 11- 1989	Nginda
Wanja Kariuki 14- 1- 1990	Kavutin
Wanjama Former General Secretary KTDA Nairobi	

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire on Effects of tea production on womens work and labour allocations

Good day. My name is _____ and I am from _____
University of Nairobi. I would like to talk with you about
your work in the farm and in the house. All information given
will be treated as confidential. I would be grateful if you
can answer the following questions.

Questionnaire

Respondent's household identification.

Name of respondent. Date

Name of respondent. Household Number

Respondent's code number. Division

Location Agro-ecological zone...

District Total number of
tea bushes

1. Sex: Male

Female

2. Farmers age in years

3. Respondent's classification: (i) head of household man
(ii) head of household woman

4. Respondent's level

of education

None

adult literacy

Std 1 to 4

Std 5 to 8

Form 1 and 2

5. Family size

Number of children ever born

Number of children living

Number of dependent children

Number of children in school

6. Sexes of children

- | | | |
|------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| Form 3 to 4 | | Males |
| Form 5 and 6 | | Females |
| Technical College | 7. | Respondent's marital status |
| Other training college | | Married |
| University | | Single |
| Other | | Widowed |
| | | divorced |
8. Form of marriage
- monogamous
- polygamous
9. If polygamous
- how many wives (men)
- are you the first, second.
- third etc. wife (women)
10. Household size
- Number of people including relatives living with the family
11. Occupation of the head of household
- (i) employed (specify)
- (ii) self employed
- (iii) Unemployed
12. Major source of income
- farming (operates farm either as landowner, tenant or leasehold) agricultural worker (does farmwork for other people for daily wages) Non-farming (specify)
13. Do you have any other source of income? Yes/No, If Yes specify

14. Mention all kind of occupations you have engaged In during the past 10 years.

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

15. Mention the length of time in each

II Land Use patterns and division of labour

16. How many hectares do you own (or are in your husband's name)? Put x on correct category

0 - 3

3.5 - 6

6.5 - 9

Over

18. Persons managing farm

17. Land ownership status:

day to day

full owner

self

tenant

wife/husband

family ownership

son

Other specify

farm manager

19. For this homestead, how much land is used for the following:

tea.....

Coffee and other cash crops

Pasture

Subsistence Crops

Residential buildings and animal sheds

Other (specify)

20. Do you own land elsewhere? Yes/No

If yes, where?

How many hectares?

What do you use that land for?

21. Do any of the statements below represent the way crop land is allocated in this homestead?

each married woman has her own plot for planting tea and for growing consumer crops.

each married man has his own plot for growign crops,
each married woman has her plot for growing subsistence crops but the plots for tea growing are jointly owned,
all crop land is under one person.

22. If none of the above statements describe the allocation of land for crops in this household, can you describe all allocation pattern used in your household?

23. Do other members of your family cultivate part of your farm? Yes/No.

If yes, how many members?

How much land do they farm?

24. Answer the following questions about division of labour in your household

Type of work	persons doing it
--------------	------------------

felling trees to prepare new

removal of stumps and big roots

holing and planting tea

weeding

Keeping pests away from crops :

plucking tea

carrying to buying centres

food preparation chores

child care

Specify the names of those who help you in all work

-
Name

-
Sex

Number of days worked '

Relationship

Type of work

Apart from you how many other members of your household
are involved in tea production activities? Specify number

C	Clearing the land
P	Planting
W	Weeding
S	Spraying pests and weeds
H	Plucking

CB Carrying to buying centres

people in the household tea production activities

C P W S H CB

female over 15 years

Males over 15 years

females under 15 years

males under 15 years

Are any of the above people permanently employed labourers ?

Do they live on your land to assist in farming? or are they

members of your Immediate family.

27. To get information on the number of people in your

household who help you in your housework and childcare.

HM House maintenance cleaning, mending fences

DW Domestic work mending clothes, tidying the
house washing clothes, washing
utensils

CC Childcare feeding children, changing their
soiled clothes, tending them

People in the household housework and childcare
activities

HM DW CC

females over 15 years

males over 15 years

females under 15 years

males under 15 years

28. Are any of the people who do this work permanently employed
or are they members of your family?

29. How many are they?

30. If you hired labour, what price do you pay per day and
does this price vary during the year.

Daily rates

Monthly rates

31. In traditional Embu society, what activities were done by

(a) Men (b) Women (c) Girls (d) Boys

32. In yours opinion, what stopped this type of division of

work, or is it still there? If vers, how is labour in
your house divided ?

III Household level of living

33. What is your house made up of?

Wal Is	roof
stone	iron
wood	tin
mud	thatch
other (specify)	other (specify)
floor	windows
cement	glass
wood	iron
earth	tin
cowdung	wood
other (specify)	none

34. How many rooms do you have in your house?

35. What do you use each room for?

36. Are there any members of your household who work elsewhere
and send you money?

37. If yes, how many members of the household ?

38. About how much money do they send?

39. To whom is the money sent?

Husband

Other (specify)

40. Who decides on how this money is to be spent

self

husband and wife /jointly

other (specify)

IV Crop patterns

I would like to get some information on the crop that are grown on your farm.

41. What are your five main crops? (in order of importance)

mainly cash crops

mainly food crops

both cash and food

42. For each of the crops named, specify the cash received from its sales.

Crop	Cash received	Period of year
Tea		
Coffee		
Bananas		
Beans		
Mai ze		
Potatoes		
Vegetables		
Cow' s milk		
Chickens		

Eggs

Other produce

43. For each of the five main crops, specify the area in hectares cultivated last year and the total yield in bags/kilograms

Crop	Production cost	Area	Yield in bags/kgs
------	-----------------	------	-------------------

- . For each of the five main crops, indicate where you sell them and for what price. specify all localities in which crops are sold and relative prices.

Crops	where sold (market)	Distance	Price
-------	---------------------	----------	-------

Activities of a tea producer

5. How long does it take for tea to be plucked after planting? (years)

46. During the plucking period, what time do yo start?
⁶— 7 a.m. 8 a.m. 9 a.m. 10 a.m.
47. When do you stop plucking (i) 12 noon (11) 1 p.m.
 (1i i) 2 p.m.
48. a) Do you take a mid morning snack as you pluck ? Yes/No
 b) If yes, who prepares it?
 i) self (ii) hired person (iii) a relative (v)
 specify
49. Who carries the tea leaves to the buying centre?_
50. How far is the nearest buying centre?
51. Do you go to the nearest buying centres? yes/No
 If not, specify the reasons
52. Do you get help with weighing your tea? Yes/No
 specify the source of help
53. What activity is engaged in on the way from the buying
 centre?
 / (i) Knitting (ii) weaving (iii) others (iv) Specify
54. What time do you arrive home after selling your tea?
 (Time of day)
55. What activities do you do after arriving from the buying
 centre?
 (i) food preparation (i.i) subsistence cultivation
 (iii) attend animals (iv) work on other cash crops
 (v) others (specify)

56. What is the most regular activity in your homestead?

- (1) Tea production activities
- (ii) Coffee production activities
- (iii) Animal husbandry
- (iv) Subsistence Crop Cultivation
- (v) Others (specify)

57. How many days in the week is this activity done?

58. For a normal year, give the sequence of farm activities beginning from January to the end of the year. List also those tasks which occur simultaneously.

Tasks	Period in months											
1.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2.												
3.												

59. Using an X mark those times when the farmer needs labour

60. Of all the agricultural works, which do you find most enjoyable?

61. Which of the agricultural task do you find tedious?

VI Decision making patterns

62. Who makes major decisions in this household?

- (i) husband(li) wife
- (il) husband and wife(iv) uncle
- (v) grandparents.(vi) oldest son
- (vii) Other.....(Specify)

63. In your family, who decides on allocation of children's

duties? (probe)

64. who decides on the allocation of labour time of married women?

65. Who decides on the use of cash or the allocation of output from tea farms?

(i) self.....(ii) spouse

(iii) self and spouse jointly

(iv) father in-law

(v) mother in-law

(vi) specify

66. Who in this household decides on the selling or buying of livestock?

67. What is your role in decision making regarding your farm?

(i) major.....(ii) Minor

(iii) not applicable

68. Who makes decisions on the following farm activities?

Kind of activity

Person making decision

(i) When to prepare land

(ii) When to plant

(iii) When to weed

(iv) when to start plucking
tea

(v) When to use insecticides/
herbicides/fertilizers

(vi) When to cultivate for
subsistence—

- (vii) When to prepare food
for household members
 - (viii) When to buy new clothes
69. Who makes decisions on
adopting farming innovations?
- (i) husband alone
 - (i i) wife alone
 - (iii) husband and wife
 - . (iv) farm manager
 - (v) Oldest son
 - (vi) not applicable
70. Who makes decisions on adopting household innovations?
- (i) Husband alone
 - (i i) Wife alone
 - (iii) Husband and wife
 - (iv) Other
71. Who makes decisions on educating and training of your
children?
- (i) husband alone
 - (li) wife
 - (iii) husband and wife
 - (iv) grandparents
 - (v) others (specify)
72. What is your attitude to the fact that women do not
control most activities in the household?

VII Respondent's perceptions

Information on women's concept of leisure

73. Is there a time when you are not doing any work at all during the day? Yes/No

If yes, what do you do in form of recreations?

- (i) Play music(ii) Listen to radio
- (iii) Watch TV(v) Play a game of cards with family members
- (vi) Sit down to rest
- (vi) Visit friends
- (vii) Personal care, hairdo, swimming & exercise
- (viii) Others specify

74. (a) Do you get help from agricultural extension officers about agricultural activities? Yes/No

(b) Are they from department of Agriculture
KTDA

75. How are farm demonstration conducted.

- (i) through agricultural extension agents making decisions and making the farmers to execute them? Yes/No
- (ii) farmers getting and using resources with extension officers' advise? Yes/No

(iii) Other (specify)

not applicable

76. Have you participated in farm demonstration? Yes/No

If yes, what do you think has helped you most from these demonstrations?

77. As a result of farm demonstration, did you have the following?

(i) higher income Yes/No

(ii) greater access to resources Yes/No

(iii) personal benefits Yes/No

(iv) nothing

78. (a) Do you belong to any cooperative society? Yes/No

(b) If yes, are you

(i) a member Yes/No

(ii) an officer Yes/No

(iii) a decision maker Yes/No

(iv) not applicable Yes/No

(c) Who are the other members of your cooperations?

Specify

(i) their number

79. Do other members assist you

in your farm activities ? Yes/No.

in housework? Yes/No

80. What is the nature of labour which is provided by members of cooperative?

(i).....<">....

(iii)

VIII On Increased workload for women

81. Fill in table one on time use profiles per household members activities.
82. Fill in table two to show the average hours per person per day in work activities by gender and selected age groups.
83. Fill in table three on activity schedules for all the members of the household
84. Fill in table four on decision making on output and cash use
85. What is the most lonely activity in the entire farmwork and house maintenance activities?

IX General views

86. What is the most lonely activity in the entire farmwork and household maintenance activities?
87. How often have you been visited by
 - (i) Male extension officer. times a month/season/year
 - (ii) Female extension officer. times a month/season/year
88. Who would you prefer to be visiting your farm:
 - (i) male extension officers Yes/No
 - (ii) female agricultural agents Yes/No
 - (iii) does not matter Yes/No

give reasons for your answer

89. In your opinion, can women own their tea farms alone?
- a) Yes/No
 - b) If yes, where would they get farm credit?
 - (i) relatives(li) spouse
 - (iii) others(specify)
90. Do you have a title deed to your land? Yes/No
- If yes, do you think your sons have any claim to the land
Yes/No
- Do you think your daughters can inherit your land? Yes/No
91. What do you think is the most critical issue in regard to
land ownership?___
92. Do you think your life has been better than that of your
parents? Yes/No
93. Do you like to improve your life situation? Yes/No.
94. What are your aspirations for your children?
- >
95. In all what we have talked about, what do you see as the
main problem for women in this area?
- (i) Need for finance_____
 - (ii) Credit availability__
 - (iii) Lack of labour inputs_
 - (iv) population problems__
 - (v) lack of decision making powers
 - (vi) other_____ (specify)__
96. Now that we have come to the end of the interview. I

would like to ask your general opinion on one issue.

What do you think should be done to improve the working patterns so that work is shared evenly among all household members?__

97. Who do you think can start changes to improve the situation on the women?

- (i) Men in general____
- (i i) Government____
- (i i i) the church____
- (iv) Women themselves__
- (v) 8-4-4 - education system
- (iv) others specify____