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Résumé de l'article

Par l'attention qu'elle porte aux activités de pêche, la recherche féministe sur les relations de genre dans des communautés maritimes soutient que la côte est « masculinisée » et que la vie des hommes est priviligiée par rapport à celle des femmes. Comme je le montre ici, le travail des femmes dans les communautés maritimes a un caractère invisible qui augmente encore plus lorsque le travail a lieu en dehors de la communauté. La comparaison des pratiques et idéologies liées au genre trouvées dans quelques maisonnées côtières des Philippines démontre que le travail des femmes est nécessaire à la reproduction des secteurs de la pêche. De plus, la plupart des maisonnées côtières ne dépendent principalement ni de la pêche, ni du travail des hommes en général. Malgré cela, les idéologies locales surestiment les contributions masculines et sous-estiment l'importance économique et sociale du travail féminin de production et de reproduction, dans la communauté et à l'extérieur. De plus en plus, l'exportation du travail féminin, surtout dans le secteur des services, est à la fois une source de revenu pour la maisonnée et une stratégie pour le règlement de la dette nationale. Les affinités culturelles et de classe qui s'expriment selon le genre s'articulent maintenant autour de relations transnationales et créent ainsi de nouvelles formes de conscience et d'expression politique.

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Invisible Labour, Transnational Lives: Gendered Work and New Social Fields in Coastal Philippines [1]

Pauline Gardiner Barber *

Feminist research on gender relations in fishing communities has established that through a narrowing of focus upon maritime pursuits, the coast is masculinized and men's lives are privileged over women's. The invisibility of women's labour in coastal communities becomes particularly acute in situations where the labour is performed somewhere else, as is the case here. This comparison of gendered work practices and ideologies in some Philippines coastal households reveals that women's work is crucial to the reproduction of fisheries sectors. But more than this, most coastal households are not sustained primarily through the fishery, nor through the labour of a male breadwinner. Nonetheless, local gender ideologies overstate men's contributions to livelihood and understate the economic and social significance of women's work: productive and reproductive; local and extra-local. Increasingly, the exporting of women's labour "in service" is both a means of household livelihood and ironically, a strategy for servicing the national debt. Gendered class and cultural affinities are now articulated through transnational social fields creating new forms of consciousness and possibilities for political expression.

Par l'attention qu'elle porte aux activités de pêche, la recherche féministe sur les relations de genre dans des communautés maritimes soutient que la côte est "masculinisée" et que la vie des hommes est priviligiée par rapport à celle des femmes. Comme je le montre ici, le travail des femmes dans les communautés maritimes a un caractère invisible qui augmente encore plus lorsque le travail a lieu en dehors de la communauté. La comparaison des pratiques et idéologies liées au genre trouvées dans quelques maisonnées côtières des Philippines démontre que le travail des femmes est nécessaire à la reproduction des secteurs de la pêche. De plus, la plupart des maisonnées côtières ne dépendent principalement ni de la pêche, ni du travail des hommes en général. Malgré cela, les idéologies locales surestiment les contributions masculines et sous-estiment l'importance économique et sociale du travail feminin de production et de reproduction, dans la communauté et à l'extérieur. De plus en plus, l'exportation du travail feminin, surtout dans le secteur des services, est à la fois une source de revenu pour la maisonnée et une stratégie pour le règlement de la dette nationale. Les affinités culturelles et de classe qui s'expriment selon le genre s'articulent maintenant autour de relations transnationales et créent ainsi de nouvelles formes de conscience et d'expression politique.

1. INTRODUCTION: ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE GLOBAL IN THE LOCAL

> (These) world trends of integration of economies, dependence on finance capital and erosion of subsistence security have profound consequences for the societies we study, whether they are located in core industrial countries or in developing areas (Nash, 1994: 13).

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In the post-Marcos Philippines, global political and economic processes are experienced directly in the daily routines of Filipinos, regardless of their class, ethnic, gender, and community locations. Debates over the limitations of ethnographic research, the polemics and poetics, and also the politics and praxis, are vital to the "recapturing" of anthropology (Fox, 1991) but need not detract from the challenge of exploring responses to global economic integration in local settings. Nash (1994) draws upon examples from her own research on culture, class and the dynamics of social change in contrasting ethnographic situations (urban and rural, core and periphery, peasant and industrialized working class), to illustrate how processes of global economic integration undermine livelihood security and engage forms of political consciousness in different cultural and class contexts.

From a vantage-point more conciliatory to postmodern critiques, Abu-Lughod (1991) also advocates ethnographic "particularity" to represent the experiential contestations in daily life as people grapple with the implications of change[2]. As Abu-Lughod suggests, the complexities of people's strategizing, negotiating, arguing, desiring and predicting are not well re-presented by ethnographic narratives about culture. In her view, narrative conventions associated with anthropological constructions of culture reproduce ideologies of "other"(ing); the dynamic west versus a non-west characterized by homogeneity, coherence, and timelessness[3]. She advocates "writing against culture" in favour of a more fine-grained exposition of particular responses to change in all its contrariety. But what of lives that are bound up in multistranded processes associated with modernity and postmodernity, changing social practices and discourses of change? If we eschew culture as Abu Lughod suggests, do we also forego the opportunity to explore the commonality in how people are positioned historically, socially and economically in similar locations, perhaps the most compelling feature of Nash's cogent argument?

Here, I prefer to deal with the tension between individual and collective experience, fragmentation and coherence, and the ethnographic opposition of poetics and politics, through the conjoining of the idea of culture with historical political economy; an approach which allows:

> ... for the creative and sometimes surprising activity of human subjects, living conditioned lives and actions in conditioned ways with results that have a determined and understandable shape, and sometimes, under conditions not of their choosing and with results that cannot be foreseen, creating something new ... (Roseberry, 1989: 54).

Culture, then, is constituted through lived experience rather than as something apprehended ideologically, or textually. In what follows, I explore changing livelihood practices amongst coastal dwellers in the Philippines, in one sense an agenda about the imposition of modernity as articulated by Nash (1994) and, indirectly Breton (1991) cited below. Through a focus upon gendered work as a "window" on change, I reveal how coastal livelihood strategies and gendered work practices are articulated in widening spatial, social, and cultural fields, as coastal residents are drawn into migration and for some, new transnational relations. In this aspect, I also engage issues associated with what some researchers would choose to call postmodernity, because of the fragmentary and spatially dispersed labour and capital intersections, and the class and cultural processes these transnational migration practices entail (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994; Harvey, 1989, 1993; Knauft, 1994; Pred and Watts, 1992).

Drawing on life and work histories, I examine the diversity and complexity of gendered livelihood practices and divisions of labour in one Visayan coastal context. The purpose here is to contrast the relationship between work practices (who does what kind of work – domestic, waged, and/or market oriented), historically constituted gender ideologies (discourses and ideas about the significance of who does what), and ensuing economic entitlements (who allocates labour and controls resources), as these are negotiated in the course of daily work routines. Finally, as Nash proposes, the paper will address questions of the class and political consequences of changing livelihood practices, gendered work, and discourses about work. In particular, since labour migration comprises a locally significant feature of livelihood security and class differentiation, how are gendered migration trajectories related to emergent forms of political consciousness?

At the most general level, this work confirms that Philippine coastal livelihood practices are diverse and also, through the impact of what Nash calls "global integration," subject to relatively rapid change. Moreover, Philippine coastal dwellers are now supported by gendered livelihood practices which extend far beyond the confines of local communities into regional, national, and transnational labour markets. I show that women's work in the household, the local economy, and increasingly in international service sector labour markets, permits the reproduction of artisanal fisheries sectors, yet because of the ideological packaging of discourses about gendered work and fishing, women's work remains under-valued, both socially and economically. Indeed, where households are sustained through remittances sent "home" by women working in extra-local service sector labour markets, women's work remains "doubly" invisible.

First, women's work is initially deflected from view by a cultural discourse about the significance of male breadwinners and female "managers" of household economies. This ideology, a variation on the familiar Euro-colonial theme of the male provider (Abregana, 1991; Blanc-Szanton, 1990; Illo, 1985) is exacerbated by perspectives (most notably in the extensive development literature) which masculinize the occupational structure and cultural processes associated with fisheries. This is by no means an uncommon pattern of gendering space and work in coastal areas (for example, Barber, 1992a; Cole, 1991; Davis and Nadel Klein, 1992; Nadel-Klein and Davis, 1988; Porter, 1988, 1993). Women's work also remains invisible because the work activities are more fragmented than those of their male kin and because much of their work is located in domestic spaces, either in their own homes, or in the homes of their employers (Sanjek and Colen, 1990). In addition, women's work is more subject to variability than men's, both in everyday routines, if not over time; women do more and different kinds of work. Finally, through the exporting of gendered labour from the Philippines, women's work has also become a critical feature of how political and economic shifts towards modernity, and for some transnational migrants, postmodernity, are negotiated at the local level. I conclude by reflecting upon the political ramifications of such negotiations.

2. THE RESEARCH SETTING

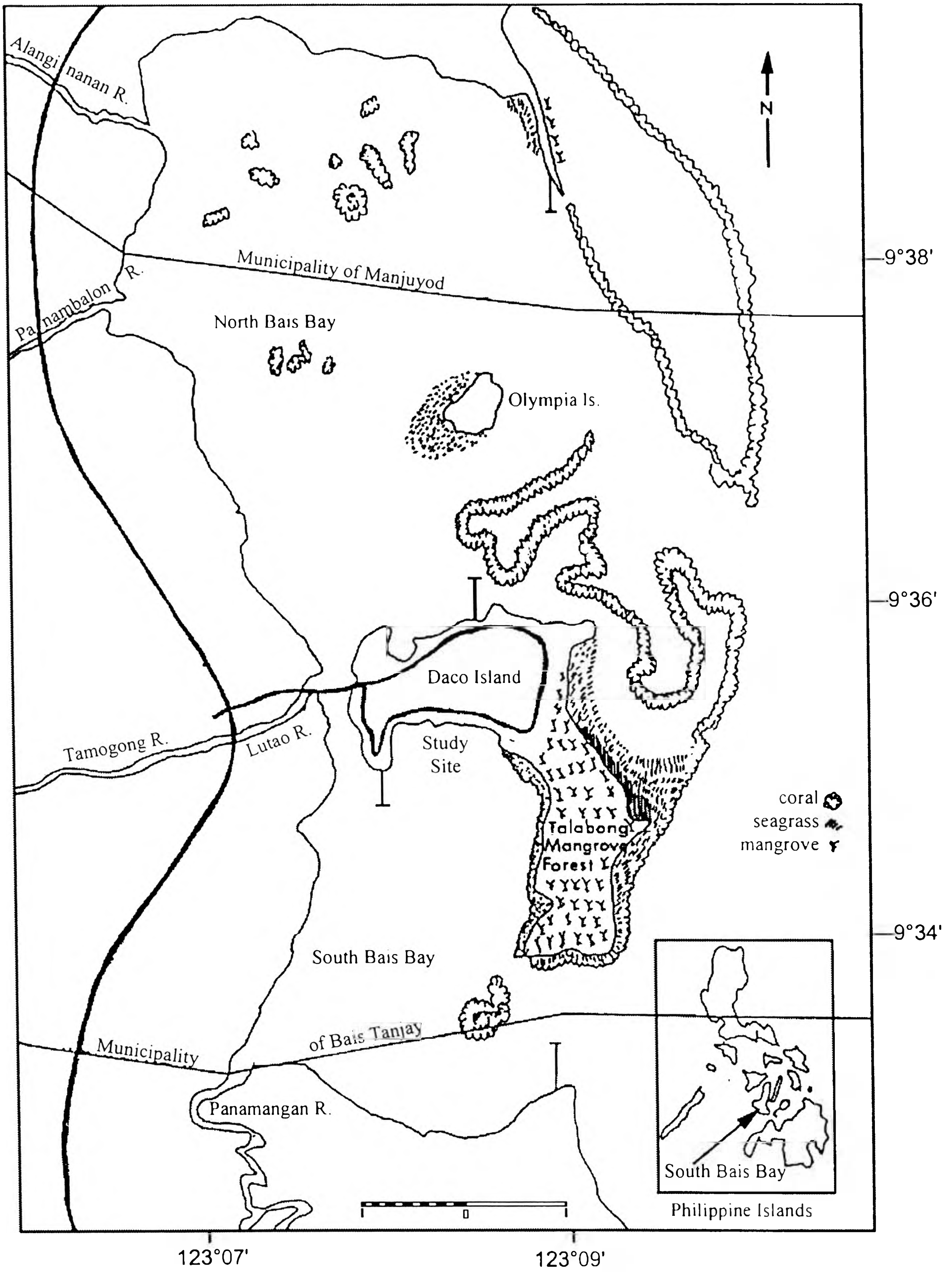
The coastal area under discussion here is located in Bais Bay, about 45 kilometres north of Dumaguete City, the provincial capital of Negros Oriental in the Central Visayas. Bais Bay lies across the Tañon Strait from the Island of Cebu. Cebuano is the local language. Three municipalities, Tanjay, Bais, and Manjuyod, border Bais Bay, making for a complex and sometimes conflictual system of governance in matters pertaining to the Bay itself, and the ownership and control of coastal resources. Fishers using the Bay originate from small communities, or *barangays* (the smallest political unit in the Philippines) in all three municipalities, as well as from farther afield in Cebu. Rumour has it that subsistence farmers from the more marginal upland communities will occasionally fish in the bay. The study site for this research to date, involving four field trips during the summers of 1992 to 1995, has been in three adjacent shoreline *barangay*s located on an island joined by a small causeway to Bais City. These *barangay*s, each with a different composite class and livelihood profile, are three of the most "fisheries-dependent" of the 35 *barangay*s comprising the municipal jurisdiction of Bais City. Most of my research on life and work histories has been conducted in the poorest of these three coastal barangays which was recorded in the 1990 census as having an official population of 1,214 persons, comprising 304 families, living in 236 households. Preliminary research to date suggests these figures may be very conservative and they certainly do not reflect the larger numbers of people who both have a claim upon and/or contribute to household and family livelihood in these three *barangays*.

3. FISHING AND THE IDEA OF "THE COAST"

> I have always been impressed, as an anthropologist, to see that in almost all national contexts, there exists more information on the types of fish species, their reproductive mechanisms, their migration and fragility, the types and lengths of boats, the types and sizes of fishing gear, the range of capital assets and the volume and value of the catches than there is information on the people using the gear and catching the fish (Breton, 1991: 3).

Academic researchers and development practitioners tend to characterize non-industrial communities adjacent to the ocean as "fishing villages," or "coastal," tropes which are by turn economic and spatial; research trajectories are then at risk of prematurely according greater economic and social significance to fishing than is warranted. In this way, the distinctive shape and character of local fisheries is obscured as, for example, in the Philippines where there is consid-

Figure 1: Map of Bais Bay


Alangi nanan R.
N
Municipality of Manjuyod
Panambalon R.
North Bais Bay
Olympia Is.
Daco Island
Study Site
Tamogong R.
Lutao R.
Talabong Mangrove Forest
coral
seagrass
mangrove
South Bais Bay
Municipality of Bais Tanjay
Panamangan R.
South Bais Bay
Philippine Islands
9°38'
9°36'
9°34'
123°07'
123°09'

erable variation at the local level. Such tropes may well also exaggerate the significance of fishing in local economies and fail to capture the full complexity of livelihood practices in coastal areas and how these change in concert with extra-local processes. At the same time, as noted above, in communities where those who fish are male, an exclusive focus on fishing skews our understanding of the gender division of labour in coastal communities, leaving women's lives and activities in predictable but unproblematized domestic spaces, and in the shadows of men's lives. When gender "blind spots" occur in Philippine literature, it is all the more noteworthy because gender ideologies and practices do not position Filipina in clear-cut subordinated work and family relations. As Blanc-Szanton (1982, 1990) has demonstrated, the "dialectical interactions" between colonizers and colonized groups, through different periods of colonial history, failed to transform rural Visayan gender relations into the male dominant form of Spanish and European Catholicism. Moreover, as this research shows, in the coastal households of Bais Bay, in the 1990's, gender ideologies reproduce, albeit somewhat problematically, the image of women as economically powerful actors in their own households. Thus, it is particularly important that studies of coastal households and local fisheries, such as those in the Philippines, not understate either livelihood diversity, or the gendered labour which sustains them[4].

Breton's observation that fish are noted more than people is pertinent for the Philippines because the extensive archipelagic coastline allows subsistence fishing, of some sort, to play some role in the livelihood strategies of many coastal households (Ushijima and Zayas, 1994). But we cannot assume, from this state of affairs, the primacy of maritime pursuits, a mono-occupational structure, nor the gender structure of livelihood practices in coastal communities[5]. Feminist researchers in the Philippines have demonstrated that when gender divisions of labour are factored into livelihood studies, Philippine coastal communities are likely to reflect multi-sectoral ties and multi-occupational patterns; a bundle of livelihood practices resulting in women's multi-faceted work strategies as "fishers, traders, farmers, wives" (Abregana, 1991; Illo and Polo, 1990). This diversity arises, in part, from widespread poverty and the generalized marginal economic conditions experienced by the majority of Filipinos, conditions resulting from the Spanish and United States colonial periods, and more recently, the structurally dependent position of the Philippines in global political and economic processes (see Blanc-Szanton, 1990; Eviota, 1992; Mabunay, 1995; Pineda-Ofreneo, 1991). But there also remains the possibility that multi-occupational livelihood activities were also the historically preferred mode of coastal cultural economy (Juliano, Anderson and Librero, 1982).

4. PATTERNS OF CLASS AND LIVELIHOOD

The *barangay*s of the municipality of Bais City are not all coastal. Economically and socially they are quite diverse, extending around a large portion of the Bay, over a relatively narrow ribbon of flat agricultural lands and into the surrounding upland areas. Historically, the production of sugar, controlled by prominent families of Spanish descent, was the mainstay of the local agricultural economy. While sugar production is clearly still one major aspect of the local economy, haciendas are less prosperous than in the past, partly because of the decline in world sugar prices (see Eviota, 1986, 1992). Today, there is little evidence of significant capital concentration in the Bais sugar sector. Nonetheless, the hacienda system still persists as a major mode of livelihood organization in Bais.

Haciendas now rely upon the labour of landless *tapaseros*, or cane workers, who continue to reside upon hacienda lands, combined with the occasional labour of women and men from subsistence farming and fishing households. Male sugar workers receive housing and schooling for their children along with a low daily wage rate for their field labour. During the harvesting and planting seasons, men, women, and children labour in the fields. Despite the fact that women and men may labour side by side, daily wages are gender specific, with the male wage being higher. If paid, children receive lower wages again, but they are usually unpaid and their labour is disregarded in the wage calculations for parents. Children's labour thus "helps" parents. Should they be able to prove they are landless and yet are also actively farming by cultivating up to three hectares of land, sugar workers who also farm, may apply to purchase the land they are farming[6]. Not all *tapaseros* shift their productive activities to subsistence farming, some also turn to fishing and take up residence on land bordering the coast. While it is not my purpose here to explore the production organization and cultural consequences of the hacienda system in

Bais Bay, the presence of the sugar industry does have a bearing on the weaving together of the various strands of livelihood practices in the coastal *barangays* of Bais. Also, historically, the hacienda system was an important framework within which gender divisions of labour and class relations were constituted in the Bais area. I shall demonstrate that this history has ironic counterpoints in contemporary coastal gender divisions of labour.

5. WHO AND WHERE ARE FISHERS?

Here, I will outline some general issues pertaining to the Philippine fisheries, in general, and to the nature of the Bais Bay fisheries, in particular. First, it must be said that the fisheries in the Philippines have received less scholarly attention than upland and lowland areas, and the forestry and rice farming systems (Ushijama and Zayas, 1994). Like many national fisheries, the main division in the Philippine fishery lies between the industrialized, capital intensive, larger more mobile fleets, and the more local municipal (or what is often called artisanal) small boat fisheries which stay closer to shore, typically within three miles of the community of origin (Juliano, Anderson and Librero, 1982; Ushijima and Zayas, 1994). Garcia (1992) provides a definition of the municipal fishery in the Philippines for policy purposes "... as a fishery which is mainly undertaken with family members of the fishing operator's household to maintain their family needs" (ibid.: 37).

Bais Bay fisheries are artisanal, reliant upon small manually operated boats and gear, and they fit within this municipal designation. The bay is notable for the absence of an industrialized fishing sector[7]. Within municipal fisheries, such as the one in Bais, there exist further class sub-divisions based upon ownership of boats and gear, and upon contractual labour arrangements (see Russell, 1992). As Illustrated by Illo and Polo (1990) in terms of gender divisions of labour, and by Juliano, Anderson and Librero (1982) in their overview of the structure of resource use in Philippine coastal zones, the situation in the Philippines can also be quite complex in terms of who actually qualifies as a fisher, or which coastal households are to be considered "fishing households."

In Bais Bay, I suggest two opposing trends are now apparent which amount to a polarization in sub-class groupings in the bay fisheries; a relatively modest concentration of fishing capital, on the one hand, and an increase in the numbers of producers in the subsistence fishery, on the other. Fishers who own the boats and gear described below must fish for longer hours. Only those who have sufficient capital to diversify their fishing activities through acquiring different gear, owning more than one boat, and hiring others to work for them can approximate full-time fishing. In the bay, the "full-time" fishers compete with subsistence fishers with both groups "chasing" fewer fish. One of the more experienced fishermen who provided me with instruction in various fishing technologies, both from his boat and from the shore, and who helped me develop a map of fishing activities in the bay, suggested that approximately seventy percent of households in the most fishing-dependent *barangay* rely on fishing for household subsistence "to some degree." Again, I am arguing that it would be socially and economically misleading to classify all these households as "fishing households"; their livelihood practices are quite diverse. There are historical continuities in the pattern of coastal multi-occupational livelihood strategies and the use of coastal resources strictly for subsistence. The intensified use of coastal resources for subsistence, however, has contributed to an accelerated rate of resource degradation much commented upon, both in the literature (Juliano, Anderson and Librero, 1982; Calumpong, 1994; Ushijima and Zayas, 1994) and by fishers, whether full-time or occasional.

In Bais Bay capture fisheries, most of the fishers are men. Some women fish with their husbands in the small boat fishery but this is not very common. Few fishermen in Bais have been fishing for all of their work histories. Even for these men, their fishing income has always been supplemented with other income-generating activities performed by wives and sometimes, other members of their households. Many of the fishermen interviewed to date are relatively recent entrants in the local fishery[8]. In the mid-1980s, as a result of political unrest in the uplands, there was an influx of "mountain people" taking up residence on land adjacent to the coast and, subsequently, working as day labourers in the fishery. These people remain quite poor but have settled into a pattern of subsistence fishing and gleaning, combined with whatever other income-generating activities they can cobble together with their meagre capital resources. After that more obvious larger influx, families have continued to move to coastal *barangays* in search of what appears to them to be a more secure coastal subsistence. Some of those who come to the coast are returning migrants laid off from jobs elsewhere, now eager to make some claim upon lands used by family members. Inheritance provides one means of access to land in the coastal area. There is now also a system whereby households on the actual shoreline have been granted stewardship contracts, a form of long-term tenancy rights tied to the planting and/or maintenance of mangrove areas adjacent to the houses[9].

The pattern of circular migration in Bais raises the question of whether new arrivals who fish part-time, mostly for food, are to be considered fishers. At the same time, there is the issue of how to define the occupations of members of coastal households who leave in search of work in regional, national, and international labour markets. If these people would fish if they could, are they to be considered unemployed fishers? Here again, the idea of fishing and fishers, a mono-occupational model deriving from industrialized gender ideologies about work (Pahl, 1984), is incongruent with actual work practices. For migrants, arrivals and departures depend upon perceptions of livelihood opportunities on the coast and work opportunities in external labour markets. While people will draw upon information and resources available through their extensive kin and community networks, they are sometimes misinformed and/or forced into desperate migration measures[10]. This is where ethnographic research, "ethnographies of the particular" in Abu Lughod's sense (1991)[11], becomes an important supplement to the limitations of official record keeping by local and national offices, and ever-present international "development" agencies. Again, in this situation of flux and mobility, the continuities and changes in livelihood practices in coastal communities engage issues of class, gender and cultural identities in novel, often opaque ways[12].

Here is a brief sketch of the kinds of fishing activities undertaken in Bais Bay which, it must be emphasized, do not provide the sole means of income support for any of the households whose livelihood practices are tied to these fisheries. Fishing technologies include small wooden boats, between eight and ten feet in length, called *banca,* that resemble canoes, rowed into the bay by one or two persons. From these boats, men, or infrequently women, fish with various kinds of hand-held gear, including multiple hooked lines and drag nets, or tend their fixed gear such as fish weirs – *bunsod* – and/or fish pots and crab pots – *pangaal.* Sometimes, men anchor the boats while they fish with spears. The boats, larger nets and fixed gear all require relatively significant capital outlay for their owners in contrast to more modest, hand-held shore-based activities involving casting lines and smaller drag nets. Larger shore-based nets are costly to purchase and time-consuming to maintain. Owners of larger nets may employ a small crew of between five and eight "fishermen," who are paid with a share of the catch. In one method of deploying a larger net, the men wade knee deep in water in a semi-circle, coordinating their efforts to drag the net which is anchored by a post at one end. Another large net method involves two or more men holding the net while other members of the group scare fish towards the net. Typically, the owner of the net, who may or may not fish with the crew, takes fifty percent of the catch. The other fifty percent is divided amongst those who haul the net. Where the owner fishes with the crew, he also takes a portion of the second fifty percent reserved for distribution amongst the crew. Recruitment to the shore-line net crews, or as a second man to work from a boat, is based primarily upon kinship and neighbourly ties[13]. The fishing is seasonal and tidal. Weather permitting, boat owners usually make two fishing trips a day. Similarly, shore fishers and gleaners work in a sequence dictated by the availability of labour and tidal flows.

6. GENDERING WORK ON THE "COAST"

Wives of fishermen usually market the best quality fish from the catch and, in poorer households, any fish that is not required for household consumption. On days where the catch is extremely low, the fish may be sold or traded in the *barangay* because the wives do not want to travel the two or so kilometres to the city market, a trip which uses up precious cash resources in pedicab fare. Local prices are less than those which are negotiated in the market. Unfortunately for sellers, a good day's catch may be reflected by a relative abundance of fish in the market, a situation which will deflate prices somewhat (Cadeliña, 1983). As will be illustrated in the next section, women's marketing activities are always supplemented with other income-generating measures. Marketing relations, organized by wives of fishermen, are extraordinarily complex, frequently involving sale to a market fish vendor with whom the women enter into a *suki*, or regular buyer-seller relationship, often mutually satisfactory but sometimes not. The *suki* relationship is now extensively documented in a general way for the Philippines (for example Kawada, 1994) but not yet closely analyzed for gender, class, and local cultural variability. In the *suki* relationship, the *suki*, usually female in Bais, controls the price and the women who sell to her can and often do become indebted. In this event, a further culturally specific sense of gratitude and loyalty prevails. Several women grumbled to me about their *suki*s and spoke of their desire for change, a change that they did not actually initiate because of their sense of obligation. Celia, whose husband fishes "full time," spoke of this as "feeling sorry" for her *suki*, and that she herself "would feel guilty" if she were to change her *suki*.

In 1994, there was a boat-based fish buyer attempting to enter into *suki* relations with fishers in the Bay. Fishermen who elected to take advantage of this buying contract would have to calculate the benefits of this type of transaction against that managed by their wives in their *suki* relations in the city. Because the *suki* relation is multi-layered and involves appeal to mutual obligation, a power imbalance, and sometimes real dependency, fishermen who sell to a *suki* on the bay must assess their wives' market obligations. Most likely, selling to the middle-men in the bay signals the lesser value of a catch (either in terms of weight and/or species caught) and represents a compromise. In such cases, the catch is sold for a higher value than could be obtained from selling to neighbours, but with the value being less than one's wife might negotiate in the city market. This was certainly the case during one of my fishing trips when I observed several fishermen selling a few species of fish from their meagre catch to the bay-based *suki*. This was not their routine practice.

In addition to the capture fisheries all too briefly sketched here, there are the more capital-intensive and market-oriented (as opposed to subsistence where household consumption is primary) aquaculture enterprises, most significantly in the form of sizeable milk fish and shrimp ponds owned by members of the local elite, or by absent land-owners. The *barangay*s in the study, also include a few households which operate very modest aquaculture projects. For example, some households gain a modicum of control over the daily quantity of fish sent to market through the use of make-shift pens in front of their houses to temporarily contain live fish or crab. In this way, women in crab fishing households are able to predict household income a few days ahead, and with such a cash cushion, can secure peace of mind relative to the more precarious, unpredictable income pattern of their shell-gleaning neighbours.

A further fishing activity, which is free of any capital outlay, is gleaning for shell fish along the shoreline. In Bais coastal *barangays*, this occurs in a muddy tidal eco system but in bays adjacent to Bais, gleaning activities occur on coral reef and sand-covered areas and the species collected vary accordingly. In Bais Bay, the shells are most often collected by women and sometimes by children. Women, who routinely comb the shoreline for shells, move from one gleaning site to another based upon their personal predictions about which sites are likely to be most productive on a given day. In turn, this decision involves calculations about tides, use patterns, the proximity of various gleaning sites to their households, the availability of modest transportation, and not insignificantly, notions of luck. Gleaning serves as a primary source of household income in extremely poor households. Here again, that portion of the day's catch not required for household consumption is taken to market and turned over to the preferred *suki*. Gleaning is also a last recourse for the income-supplementing activities of women and children in households with multiple livelihood practices. These women sell their catch to a *suki*, sell or trade in the *barangay*, or consume it in their own households.

The only major source of industrial employment in the area is provided by two sugar refineries in the Bay, one located on the boundary of Bais and Tanjay and the other in Manjuyod. Jobs in these plants are difficult to come by and seasonal. Workers in the most fisheries-dependent *barangay*s where I carried out my research, have little involvement with this local industrial employment, seemingly because it draws upon very specific labour pools and operates under quite localized patronage labour recruitment systems. All three municipalities also support a small service sector and professional middle-class of white-collar government workers, nurses, teachers, and a very few doctors and lawyers. It appears that, as is the case in Cape Breton where I undertook research in 1987[14], recruitment to municipal employment is organized through patronage circuits based on kinship and political loyalties. During the month of May in 1994, right after the completion of the municipal election process, Bais City implemented a series of rotational clean-up crews to spruce up the municipality and to provide jobs for senior school students. This project provided money for students to pay school fees and buy supplies; many students from poorer households fail to complete their high school education due to the lack of such resources. *Barangay* captains, the elected officials administering *barangay* affairs, provided the names of the worthy candidates for these jobs.

Residents in different coastal *barangays* in Bais Bay have, therefore, different historical ties to both the sugar industry, as either seasonal day labourers, or previously landless tenant hacienda workers who moved to the coast, and to the fishery. Some men and women continue to provide seasonal labour in the sugar fields and use the fishery for subsistence. These various labour histories have contributed to different senses of community identity, even at the *barangay* level, which in turn can become a source of local conflicts over coastal resources. For example, mussels cultivated along the shoreline of a *barangay* closest to major sugar haciendas and one of the refining plants are considered common property by fishers from *barangays* across the bay. In 1993, some people in the *barangay* adjacent to the mussel beds signalled that they viewed the mussels as their private property. Some barriers were erected along the shoreline in front of the houses that claimed the resource; as it was reported to me, "they are some sugar-workers who want to grow mussels." The word was spread around the bay that the mussel beds would be defended against raids from other *barangays* and I learned on my return in 1994 that they had been, aggressively so. Fishers from the opposite side of the bay, to the north of where I was working, continued their protests against the "privatization" of this resource. Yet, they too, grumbled about encroachments into the areas they habitually fish. In the case of these fishermen, however, there is not the same show of concerted collective action. Indeed, within their locale, farther removed from sugar sectors, both geographically and in terms of class and labour issues, there is a history of internal strife about stolen gear and catches, only some of which is blamed on outsiders. They are somewhat suspicious of each other.

In the upland *barangays* of Bais City, where migrant subsistence farmers struggle to gain a measure of livelihood security, labour histories also produce different expressions of community identity at the *barangay* level. A very knowledgeable community development worker from Silliman University in Dumaguete, reported that her efforts in organizing farmers in two upland *barangays* evidenced two different kinds of responses to change. In one *barangay*, settled by a group of ex-sugar workers who left their hacienda after a particularly bitter labour conflict, there is a more co-operative enthusiastic approach to agricultural innovations, including new crops in collective gardens. In another equally marginal community, subsistence farmers are described as more "individualistic," fatalistic," and "less interested" in crop diversification and new livelihood programmes.

All of the above forms of livelihood and sources of wage work, however, pale by comparison with the extensive, vibrant, and relentlessly creative range of small-scale enterprises and income-generating tasks people resort to as a primary, or supplemental means of livelihood undertaking. As is usually the case, these activities, often in the "informal", unregulated sector, are gendered, and take up the bulk of women's productive work (Blanc-Szanton, 1982; Eviota, 1992; Heyzer, 1986; Illo and Polo, 1990; Redclift and Mingione, 1985; Trager, 1988). Generally, as will be described in the examples below, women are the most likely to initiate multiple, simultaneous livelihood undertakings, which makes it difficult to provide an occupational designation to their work. Women may sew, run a small convenience store (*sari-sari*) from a stand in front of their homes, market fish, grow some cash crops on rented land, raise livestock for household consumption or for sale, glean shells, and so on, sometimes all as part of the same bundle of livelihood strategies. Men, on the other hand, may have diverse work histories, but mostly they engage in one principle activity at a time; be it wage work (construction and road work were the most common forms of wage work, neither being particularly secure), driving a pedi-cab which they may own or rent, and in the coastal *barangays* on the northern side of the bay, some form of quasi full-time fishing[15].

And of course, there is also the likelihood that out-migration will provide access to wage work in labour markets farther afield. Economic migration is not a new phenomenon in the Philippines (Eviota, 1992; Tragger, 1988), but the internationalization of gendered migration is relatively recent, as is the "feminization" of the Filipino workforce abroad (Rasul, 1990). Extremely conservative national statistics from 1988 placed the number of *officially* deployed overseas contract workers for that year at 201,788 males and 180, 441 females, but these figures do not include those large numbers of unregistered overseas workers, particularly women in illegal sectors (ibid.)[16]. The national gender ratio of overseas workers is not mirrored in Bais. In the official census of Bais in 1990, the poorest coastal *barangay* in this study is marked by gender imbalance; 658 male residents to 556 females, a pattern of missing women evidenced in many of the other rural *barangays* as well. Not all of these women are overseas but a significant number are. Men also migrate in search of work but in the coastal *barangays*, fewer men than women work overseas.

7. GENDERED WORK PRACTICES: THREE VIGNETTES

Victor and Cynthia Romanos[17]

The Romanos' bundle of livelihood strategies are typical of a self-sustaining household involving occasional wage labour, and a combination of subsistence, and market fishing and farming to produce a modest cash income. Less common is their sharing of a wide range of tasks in that Victor expands his productive activities to include various extended subsistence activities thereby sharing responsibility with his wife for "making ends meet." The more common division of labour is for women to perform a broader range of tasks than men who are more easily classified in terms of their breadwinning occupational roles. This couple, in their late forties, have three children, two teen-aged boys, and an eight year old girl. They moved to the coast fifteen years ago to take up residence on land owned by Victor's parents, then built a modest house made of nipa and bamboo (the most available, lowest priced woods used in domestic construction) beside Victor's mother's house. Before his death, Victor's father had fished as one aspect of his contribution to the household economy. Household resources in 1993 included a small *banca*, used regularly but not daily, two goats, one of which was pregnant, a flock of chickens, and some cassava, bananas and corn being grown on the parent's land. Both the goats and the crops are reared for marketing and the cash used for the purchase of food staples (rice, sugar, coffee, and fruits) and expenses associated with the children's schooling. Unlike many men, Victor does not require much cash to spend on tobacco, nor on alcohol, most often consumed in the form of *tuba*, locally made coconut wine.

Victor and Cynthia's division of labour is quite exceptional in that it is also reasonably equitable. They prefer to work in each other's company as much as possible. When Victor goes out fishing, using a hand-line, Cynthia does the more time-consuming of the domestic chores such as laundry, a task that in the dry hot summer months, involves fetching water from a saline well used solely for washing (clothes and often children). Several times a week they glean together for shells on the shoreline in front of their house, sometimes selling the shells for approximately five pesos a quart (on very good days when shells are taken to market, they will be resold by their *suki* for one or two pesos more per quart). Victor is skilful in woodworking and can produce small wooden items for use in the fishery and, sometimes toys. These he will either use himself or sell for twenty-five pesos a piece, that is just a little over one Canadian dollar. On occasion, he completes carpentry work in the *barangay* and Cynthia takes in laundry for some development workers associated with a nearby fisheries college. She would like more such work for cash and is one of a group of women who are meeting to explore the possibility of a collective women's livelihood venture, with the assistance of Silliman University staff.

In 1994, Victor and one of the sons temporarily moved into Dumaguete to work on carpentry contracts in order to earn sufficient money for expenses associated with the start of the new school term. Cynthia and the other two children remained behind, moving through daily routines of fetching drinking water, field work, gleaning, and tending to the next generation of goat kids being raised for market. When I asked Cynthia how things had been over the course of the last year, she replied: Just the same, really. Things don't change much around here." But she did miss Victor and her son, who were unable to return home for weekend visits because of the prohibitive costs of the bus fare (between ten and twenty pesos for a one-way ticket). This household is in a relatively precarious position economically with both adults stretched to their limit in subsistence activities and sporadic wage labour. It is a struggle for them to meet the cash requirements of the household. As for many coastal residents, the Romanos' livelihood pattern is predictable in its form and relentless in its demand upon their diversity and flexibility. The only emergency resources available to the family could be realized through consolidation of assets shared with Victor's mother who is elderly yet, fortunately for all, still in good health. A more intensive use of the combined family landholdings, perhaps through renting out some land for cash crop production, would provide one further source of cash.

Cynthia and the other local women, meeting to discuss women's livelihood projects, expressed interest in pig raising. Pigs are a highly prized source of extra cash for women, one of the few ways they can gain access to a few hundred pesos at one time. Many households in the coastal *barangays* are too poor to purchase pigs outright, however they will enter into pig rearing arrangements with more cash-rich, or labour-poor households. *Binatnan*, which translates as "pig-sitting," is a common practice in the *barangay* when women can afford the cost of food for the pig and the additional labour. In return for successfully rearing a litter of piglets, they acquire up to half of the litter. The other half goes to the owner of the sow, with the owner of the boar typically receiving one pig per litter. A two to three month old pig can fetch up to 400 pesos at market. There is also some risk to this investment of cash and labour since pigs are prone to disease, particularly if the conditions under which they are raised are not sanitary.

For the majority of households in the *barangay* where pigs are raised, extra quantities of water must be collected from one of several collection taps, or wells. Otherwise, water must be purchased from people who live closer to the city supplied pipes where piped water is more readily available. In the dryer months, the piped water runs out by the time it reaches mid-point around the island, partly because enterprising individuals closer to the water source in adjacent *barangays* have started small water supply businesses, bleeding out what remains of the municipal water supply after haciendas have irrigated fields. Fetching water is a relentless burden for women and older children. Most often for children it is the work of daughters, perhaps because fetching water is associated with cooking and the laundering of clothes, both central aspects of women's domestic labour. One centrally located tidal well (*tu-ong*) on a rocky outcrop on the shoreline provided a common laundering site for women. Here at least they could visit with friends, kin and neighbours while they worked[18].

Susan and Luciano Lopez

The Lopez household represents the closest example of a fisheries supported household encountered in my research to date. Luciano is from Bais. Susan's family live in Bohol, another island. The couple met and married as teenagers in Manila where each had gone in search of wage labour. At the time of their marriage in 1968, Luciano, the husband was working as a guard and Susan was a domestic worker. After returning from Manila 15 years ago, with two small daughters and a son soon to follow, Luciano gradually increased his productive capacity in the fishery. By the 1990's, he held sufficient capital to diversify his activities and produce a reasonably reliable range of fish products for the market on a daily basis. Although the daily catch varies considerably, he has recourse to several different sources of fish for market. The most reliable source during the summer months is Luciano's fish weir, or *bunsod*, conveniently located on the outer reaches of the mangrove area where, during peak fishing seasons, fish in the Bay ecosystem are often at their most plentiful. He has also constructed a smaller weir in front on the house. Luciano's larger *bunsod* requires three to four hours of labour each day to be cleared and maintained. To get to the *bunsod*, Luciano rows his *banca* (large enough to transport three persons), which could also be used for trawling with one of his nets, or for hand-jigging with lines. A neighbour's son often works with him for a share of the catch.

Susan, on the other hand, has a much more varied set of daily work routines enabling her to also contribute cash income to the household budget. She operates a well-stocked *sari-sari*, or small convenience store stocked with basic goods, sews clothes for her family and some local customers, raises ducks and chickens, and in 1992 raised three of her own pigs, a labour intensive undertaking because of the pigs' food and sanitation requirements. Susan is also responsible for the marketing of the daily fish catch which was, on average, between four to eight kilos during the months of May, June, and July. With the right conditions in the most abundant season, Luciano has caught – in a single catch – as much as 30 kilos of "dangit," a profitable local species. The income from the catch fluctuates between 50 and 1,000 pesos, with 200 to 300 pesos as the norm. Susan's relationship to her *suki* is thus fully developed and must be skilfully managed to maintain a strong bargaining position against her competition, the thirty odd suppliers who sell to the same *suki*.

In 1993, Susan and Luciano had five children, the youngest an active toddler. The baby was cared for by Susan and the second eldest daughter, who had taken time off from her high school education to assist her mother. The eldest daughter had completed training as a nurse's aid and was searching for a job; the son, the third eldest child, remained in high school and expected to complete this level of education. To have achieved such a high level of education for all three of these children is an indication of the income security Luciano and Susan were able to achieve through their combined efforts. When asked whose work assignment was the most difficult, Luciano, after some thought, replied: "The man's role is harder. He must provide for his family." Certainly, Luciano works extensively in the fishery seven days a week from three to seven hours a day. In addition, he is responsible for locating firewood and he sometimes looks after the active baby when his wife and daughter are preoccupied with marketing fish, the livestock, sewing, or attending to customers in the store. Nonetheless, Luciano also has more "free time" for resting, visiting with his kinfolk in the area, and indeed, talking with myself and my research assistant, than does his busy wife and daughter, whose tasks seem to expand to fill all their waking hours. But here again, Luciano takes credit for being, and indeed provides an example of, the "male breadwinner"– a good provider for his family.

Luciano's *barangay* kin networks provide a further means of trading and sharing resources. The concrete houses owned by Luciano and Susan, Luciano's mother, and several other kin in the *barangay*, are visible evidence of this family's transnational kin connections. Luciano's unmarried sister, who moved to Hong Kong more than ten years ago has also been a "dutiful" daughter and sister, sending sufficient money back to her kin to enable them to build more durable, larger, more secure concrete houses. Her economic circumstances are viewed by Luciano, and his other siblings, as an overseas resource to call upon should there be a need for emergency capital resources. Here, then, is one example, an important one, of how the exportation of women's labour has contributed to the consolidation of livelihood security in one of the more "successful" local fishing households in the *barangay*. Taken together, the work strategies of Susan, her daughter, and her overseas sister-in-law, provide major contributions to the capital and labour resources of this household. And yet, this is seen by family members and locals as a fishing household, a family provided for by Luciano's labours.

Maria Perez

In this final example, the household, consisting of Maria (who was most often absent), her father, her son, and her niece and nephew, is primarily supported through the process I am describing here as exported women's labour. Twenty-five years ago, Maria, caught by an unexpected pregnancy, tried to set up a household with the young father of her son. This situation was not successfully economically and emotionally, so Maria and her young son moved back into the her parents' household and the boy's father went off in search of work in another region of the country. In the meantime, Maria's father, also working elsewhere, was laid off from his mining job. As a result of the need for cash resources in the household and because she wanted to provide well for her son, Maria decided to seek wage work farther afield. She left in search of industrial employment in Manila some nineteen years ago. At that time, in her view, women leaving their families in search of employment elsewhere were frowned upon in the local community. Still, as she expressed it, "what use is pride if people are hungry." She was also determined to provide her son with a solid education. In Manila she moved through several different sectors, using skill and personal contacts to make each transition, hoping with each move that the employment conditions and wages might improve her circumstances. After a stint on the shop floor of an export processing plant, where wages were based upon piece work and speed-ups were common, she worked as a "shop girl." Retail jobs seemed more glamorous to her but the work was very poorly paid and closely supervised. Again, she left in disappointment.

As a last resort, Maria turned her hand to domestic work. As she reports, this period in her life "was a constant struggle to upgrade myself and improve my education." These efforts seemed to have paid off when she was hired as a domestic worker by an expatriate European family in Hong Kong, a highly desired situation for a domestic worker because Hong Kong wage rates are higher than those in Manila. Also, domestic workers overseas hope for better, more humane treatment from their employers. As Maria then perceived it, employment in households overseas also allowed for increased autonomy over the domestic worker's labour process. However, only two years later her Hong Kong employers moved to another country. In a typical patronage gesture these employers passed on their "good Filipina helper," giving her an introduction to a British family known to them. The British employers were extremely "strict" (which I interpret to mean both exploitative and controlling), asking her to work seven days a week, confiscating her passport, and eventually, refusing to accept notice from her that she wished to terminate her employment. Fortunately for Maria, there were "kind Spanish neighbours" who provided her with financial and legal support and with their assistance she found employment with a Canadian family. Eventually, the Canadian family arranged for her to emigrate to Canada in their employ when they returned to home some six years later.

By 1994, when I met Maria in Bais during one of her visits "home" with her family, Maria had left the employers with whom she had entered Canada and arranged for her sister to take up her old position, thereby placing a second member of her family in a transnational location. She also held Canadian landed-immigrant status under the Domestic Worker's Programme and had up-graded her formal education through completing night courses in community nursing, the field in which she is now employed. Maria's ambition is to bring her son to Canada to complete his education, although she fears that he lacks a work ethic and has succumbed to the influence of television culture. Such influences are partly a result of Maria's work history, her transnational positioning and specifically her efforts to straddle and negotiate family relations through two national settings, across several layers of social and cultural expectations and experiences (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994).

Maria's generous support of her family household in the Philippines has more than provided for their subsistence. Their material circumstances have improved considerably as a result of her efforts and the household's material conditions stand in marked contrast with many, although not all, of their neighbours. A new, relatively substantial concrete house has been built, utilities have been connected to the house, school supplies, medicines and clothing are provided for the son, and an assortment of appliances are enjoyed by family members (for example, a television, a stereo system, and an electric kettle, none of which are commonplace in the *barangay*). Nieces and nephews in need of school supplies also receive support from Maria, as do other family members with special needs. All of these expenditures, along with occasional return air tickets to visit "home," are paid for out of the very modest wages Maria has earned as an overseas domestic worker, wages which must first pay her own expenses.

Maria's personal accomplishments are a source of deep satisfaction for her; the fact that her work history reflects such remarkable transitions and that she has been able to "provide" for her Philippines family. On the other hand she has also made major personal sacrifices in taking on this "breadwinner" role, most obviously in having to rely upon others to rear her son, but also in allocating most of her personal financial resources to her kin in the Philippines. This singular economic and emotional focus to her life has also meant that she declined to (re)marry, for fear that any new personal obligations would be at the expense of her kin in the Philippines. It also means that her hopes and fears for her son and his future are a constant source of stress to her. As she frames the situation, because he is very "flirtatious" with young women his own age, he may end up in the same predicament as his own parents, caught out by an unexpected pregnancy. Unlike her own youth, when parents would provide shelter for such a young couple, with all parties viewing this as a form of "trial marriage," she feels that her class position as an overseas worker makes her son a desirable suitor in Bais. Today, Maria feels, it is not uncommon for parents of pregnant girls "to force" such a young couple into early marriage in cases where the husband is from a more prosperous household. This is her ever-present fear: essentially, that all her efforts in raising her son towards a better, more economically secure life will amount to very little should he remain in the local community as a young, married, high school graduate. Some of her fears arise out of her feeling that he has lacked the kind of close guidance and supervision she, as his mother, would have provided, thus her fear is not without a burden of guilt. Instead of properly supervising her own child, her child-rearing skills have been expended upon other people's children, something about which she is more resigned than resentful.

As noted earlier, Maria's situation is quite common in the *barangay* and has become more common nationally. More households in the coastal *barangays* are sustained through the exporting of family members to regional, national and international labour markets, than are sustained through the fishery. While men also leave the area in search of wage work, they are less likely to leave the country and are more likely to work as drivers and guards in Manila than in other forms of employment. A few men, related to each other, moved from their equipment maintenance and light engineering jobs in Manila to take employment in the middle east as contract workers, all with the same firm. Some other men are working in industrial sectors in other parts of the country. Although significant nationally, the number of absent men from the *barangay* pales beside the number of women working as domestic workers in Manila, elsewhere in the more prosperous countries in Asia, and increasingly farther afield, in North America and Europe.

As Maria's experience indicates, women are likely to pass through several employment contracts and thus leave for a long period of time, if not permanently. Some of the women who leave have children of their own, others feel compelled to sacrifice personal relationships for themselves to provide for their parents and other kin. When women leave children behind they experience the double-bind Maria faces; becoming a good provider but an absent and perhaps neglectful parent. Men who leave are more secure in and gratified by the good provider role, a role which is socially more valorized for males than it is for females. Men also feel less burdened by guilt at being an absent parent. Many people suggested that women are the most active parents when the children are younger and most mothers are also the firmest in dealing with adolescents. Men are considered to be more indulgent with children and also more preoccupied with other things (see also Neher, 1982).

8. GENDER IDEOLOGIES AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The above household and work profiles illustrate both the diversity of women's work practices and that their economic contributions permit the reproduction of coastal households in so-called fishing *barangay*s. There is a double discourse that accompanies how gendered work is ideologically represented. As noted, on the one hand, men and women alike espouse the ideology that reinforces the position of men as the primary breadwinners, even in households where this is clearly not the case. On the other hand, people suggest, jokingly, that women are the "bosses" of their households, that they hold "the purse strings." Some of my middle-class, urban friends, not very familiar with the sociological research on gender constructions in Philippine society, express this contradictory ideology of women's economic power rather more forcefully. One friend suggested that not only do women in rural Philippine communities "hold the purse strings," the Philippines in general is "matriarchal" for the way in which women are accorded economic power. As noted earlier, the fine-grained historical scholarship of Blanc-Szanton (1982, 1990) provides some evidence of historically constituted gender complementarity, but this research stops far short of proposing the predominance of female economic power suggested by the metaphor "matriarchal."

What is most problematic about arguments which construe women as economically powerful actors in their households is the seeming ideological separation of production on the one hand, ideologically gendered male, and reproduction and consumption on the other, gendered female. Both men and women speak about men as breadwinners but women acknowledge that this is not the end of the matter in terms of their own household economies. As one women, whose husband fishes for crab, said about her own and other women's economic practices:

> Every night we women lie awake wondering how we are going to get enough money. Every day we have to buy enough rice to eat, that is first, and if we can manage to, some fruits and vegetables. We always have to think about our husbands who want us to buy coffee and tobacco. There is never enough to go around. We are always dreaming and planning. When you see us we are laughing but inside we are crying.

As the ideological frame suggests, women "hold the purse strings" and are accorded responsibility for household budgeting but they also take on the very great burden of the household economy. For many women in the coastal households discussed here, there is often a discrepancy between cash and other inputs into the household economy, and the actual consumption needs of the household. It is women who must make up this shortfall, and they do so to the best of their abilities given the resources to which they have access. Sometimes they are forced to take out loans, either from their *suki* if they have one, or worse, a local "loan shark", a "5/6er", so-called because of the exorbitant terms of the loan; to borrow five means pay back six.

In sum, the contrariety surrounding gendered work practices – that is, the idea that men's work is to *support* their families and women's work, if acknowledged, is *supportive* and somehow less valued than men's, and that women primarily manage household budgets – distorts the character and quality of women's productive and reproductive labour. While women are resourceful and can be influential in their households and communities, this is not to be taken for granted and should not be translated into, nor equated with, women's economic power. Men receive more social acknowledgement for their work and are more readily accorded relief in the form of rest time. To leave gendered work practices unstudied in coastal areas, such as the one described here, facilitates the distortion of men's and women's work practices and also encourages the conflation of coastal livelihood with fishing. Fishing, then, remains in the foreground of discourses about the coast; occupational diversity and gendered livelihood struggles become relegated to the background.

Aspects of this situation are in accord with patterns of gendered household economy that have been well described in several decades of feminist research on gendered work: firstly, that productive and socially reproductive labour are mutually influential and not always readily distinguishable; and secondly, that women's reproductive labour is less likely to be socially and economically valorized and legitimated (for example, Beneria and Feldman, 1992; di Leonardo, 1991; Long, 1984; Young, Wolkowitz and McCullagh, 1988). However, in the cases I have been describing, the situation becomes more complex because of the cultural assumption that women are economically powerful through their management of household budgets. I am arguing here that this strand of locally constituted gender ideologies fails to appreciate the contradictory aspects of such claims, and fails to account for the additional burdens imposed upon women through their efforts to sustain their household economies. The intensification of women's labour in subsistence and market activities increases as coastal resources are more intensively exploited (Israel-Sobritchea, 1994; Nash, 1994). Now, the current transnational pattern of exporting women's labour imposes new pernicious, agendas for women's economic contributions to their households. Women in the Philippines are not subjected to gender inequities in educational achievements although their programmes of study may be coloured by the gendered labour markets they seek to enter (Blanc Szanton, 1982; Neher, 1982). Ironically, those women who are able to gain legal overseas employment are often relatively well educated; racist and cultural ideologies in labour-receiving countries such as Canada ensure these women are underemployed (for two relevant examples, see Bakin and Stasiulis, 1995; Maklin, 1994).

Significantly, the practice of families deploying female labour into service is not completely unfamiliar to this part of the Philippines. Historically, the hacienda patronage system often involved the extension of credit by landowners to sugar workers. It was not uncommon for the *tapaseros* to be unable to repay these loans and for men to send their daughters to work as domestic workers in the households of their landlords[19]. The exporting of women's labour today extends such historical practices to draw in both state relations and a new form of international, or transnational, class of "landlord" equivalents. Exported labour from the Philippines now services the international debt load carried by the Philippine state and the consequent voracious need for the foreign currency resources generated by domestic and other overseas workers (Beltran and de Dios, 1992). State-to-state relations control the positioning of domestic workers, many from communities not unlike Bais, in international labour markets; a contemporary manifestation of patriarchal class practices historically initiated through the relations of landlords to *tapaseros*.

Thus the current exporting of women's labour, as it is realized through state practices and by the resourcefulness of women like Maria, is but one further instance of the appropriation of women's labour by others, one which positions these women into new class relations both in terms of their local communities and in transnational labour markets. As Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1994) point out, transnationalism entails a migratory process whereby migrants' lives and loyalties straddle borders. Their cultural practices, identities, and loyalties are constituted within shifting temporal and spatial frameworks, a situation which entails the creation of new "social fields." Maria, and women like her straddle borders: national, cultural, economic, and social. They experience a particular gender pattern of class exploitation as domestic workers, one that is likely to be orchestrated by racism and that entails isolated, socially and economically undervalued, invisible, and usually demeaning work (Bakan and Stasiulis, 1995; Giles, 1993; Giles and Arat-Koc, 1994; Silvera, 1989, 1993). In the national contexts where they work, Filipinas have developed various political and cultural organizations; some examples are INTERCEDE, AWARE and PINAY for Filipinas in Canada (see Beltran and de Dios, 1992). In the Philippines, non-government organizations have also taken shape to support overseas workers (for example, Gabriela, *Kanlungan, and Migrante* - Santiago 1995). In the national locations in which they are employed and through the Philippine organizations which support them, overseas workers also bring, to their work and class identities, an alternative cultural consciousness and the possibility of a radical, transnational politics.

Recently, there have been signs of the truly radical potential of gendered transnational class politics arising out of the lived experience of Filipinas working overseas. The recent case of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino domestic worker who was executed by the Singaporean government for the alleged murder of a Singaporean child and his nanny, another Filipina domestic worker, was the occasion for widespread political agitation in the Philippines (Reid, 1995). Ironically, the dispute between the two Filipina, said to be the cause of the conflict, was over arrangements they were making to send remittances "home." Two concerns motivated social protests. First was the immediate issue of Filipinos wanting their government to pressure for a stay of execution and to forcefully challenge what was widely perceived in the Philippines as a Singaporean travesty of justice. The other concern expressed in the protests was the Philippine state's role in sustaining the exportation of women's labour as an economic development policy[20]. Groups supporting these protests in the now vigorous Philippine civil society spanned the political spectrum from right to left, feminist or otherwise (Davide, 1995).

State-to-state relations which shape the context within which women are positioned in the transnational processes, illustrated internationally by Flor Contemplacion and herein by Maria Perez, are thus increasingly subject to challenge. Overseas workers are now viewed as a concern of foreign policy and national security in the Philippines (Hernandez, 1995). The flow of women and their services, the coming together of capital and labour in this transnational form, then, is also clearly about the processing and reprocessing of ideas – truly a postmodern vantage point from which to contest the imposition of modernity at the local level, but globally as well. The political consequences of the recent mobilizations and the circumstances which compel women to leave, their individual desires and the nature of their family circumstances are, of course, quite variable; consciousness about gender positionings in these new transnational locations is likely to entail contradictions and polarities. Davide (1995) suggests that one consequence of wives' exported labour in contemporary gendered family relations is that husbands feel less obliged to be breadwinners and may give up their wage work responsibilities to pursue more leisure and consumption. Others, she suggests, initiate new relationships and start new families which are supported by the first wife's remittances. In this case, for those who directly benefit from the labour of Filipina workers overseas, there will be support for current policies and practices. To date, such examples have not been apparent in Bais households known to me. But more research about these transnational processes is needed.

9. CONCLUSION

In calling for a rethinking of the class contours of political mobilizations against hegemonic forces of global political economy, Nash (1994) draws attention to the greater radical potential of subsistence producers, whose knowledge, and therefore politics, is more likely to include the workings of global and local intersections: more so than the apolitical, hegemonically-managed, industrial working class she studied in the United States (Nash, 1989). Gendered, transnational class politics, shaped by the new relations "in service" of Filipina women "at work in homes" (Sanjek and Colen, 1990), also promise new political forms and forums. Again, this runs counter to the modernist predictions of gender-blind productionist class theory, and also to the extremely exploitative, socially isolating nature of the labour process "in service" itself. All of this takes us far beyond the idea of "the coast" and, indeed, ethnographic particularity, into the new terrain of transnational cultural identities and class politics which are feminized and in which middle-class women, both western and Asian, are implicated. Some theoretical renegotiation is required if postmodernism, as a set of spatialized social positionings in the transnational mode of experience, is to accommodate the political potential of exported gendered labour, imaged here through Maria Perez's experience and the case of Flor Contemplacion. The borderland experiences, and the demonstrable class and cultural affinities of these women would appear to counter world systems theorists such as Wallerstein (1990), who see capital's globalizing hegemony as ever more effectively accomplishing a globalized culture of consumption and a more exploited and exploitable international labour force.

Notes

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2 This paraphrasing is a deliberate strategy to signal support for the idea of fine-grained local studies, particularizing rather than generalizing, while at the same time remaining attuned to historically significant political and economic shifts which transform communities and family practices. However, the extremely narrow focus Abu-Lughod provides in her example, that of a Bedouin "matriarch," may discourage a comparative focus upon how, as a result of wider social forces, different households and families are positioned and repositioned in local class structures. There is also no guarantee that the idea of generalized Bedouin culture is subverted through a focus upon an individual's experience and narratives. Significantly, Abu-Lughod's critique and that provided by Thomas (1991) concur about the more problematic aspects of anthropology's representational conventions which subsume local difference under generalizations about typically exoticized, static, cultural homogeneity. Nonetheless, they each offer different theoretical, conceptual, and narrative strategies for circumventing these difficulties. Abu- Lughod elects to "write against culture"; Thomas writes "against ethnography." These critiques are part of wider, timely debates about the politics and poetics of the ethnographic enterprise; the contradictions would seem inevitable (see Knauft, 1994; Ulin, 1991). Again, Nash (1994) reminds us of the importance of proceeding, with caution.

3 See Fabian (1991) for an extended critical discussion of how ethnographic representations of time and verb tense also position ethnographic subjects in distorted temporal and spatial relationships relative to the ethnographer and the ethnography's readers.

4 In a recent edited volume on Visayan fisheries, one article details gendered economic practices revealing shifts in gendered productive activities. Because of the decline in the resource base, women's productive activities in local fisheries have increased but, significantly, the increased workload does not accord them the social and economic rewards they would receive from salaried work (Israel-Sobritchea, 1994).

5 I use the term gender neutral term "fishers" to indicate the possibility of a fishery where women and men may both fish. In the Philippines women are involved in some local fisheries as fishers. Where this is not common, there is always the possibility that a women will fish when her husband cannot, even where this is not seen as appropriate women's work (see Illo and Polo, 1990). Women and children are also active in the shoreline gleaning fisheries. Where I use the term fishermen, I do

so to indicate the specific gender of those fishers to whom I am actually referring.

6 Provision for this type of land acquisition, limited to three hectares, was a feature of the agrarian land reform programme set up by the Aquino administration in 1988. Land claims may be initiated by "farmers" who have been surreptitiously farming the land. The owner of the hacienda must then forfeit the land if the "farmer's" application to the land reform programme is successful.

7 There is, however, some diversification in aquaculture production in the bay. These enterprises range in size from the large export-oriented commercial shrimp establishments and fish ponds that secure labour under tenancy and patronage terms not unlike those associated with rice farming (Juliano, Anderson and Librero, 1982) or, in this study site, sugar haciendas, through to the small-scale production activities of individual families.

8 A 1983 survey on fishermen's living conditions in the study site reported evidence of cyclical in-migration over the previous thirty years but found the then current situation to be relatively stable with minimal out-migration. While maintaining an emphasis upon fishermen and fishing dependency, the same study portrays fishing households as resorting to occupational diversity but, nonetheless, in keeping with approaches to gender in that period, the author views women's work as primarily domestic. The income-generating activities of women are thus described as augmenting their fishermen husband's income from their fishing catch. In this survey, a report of productive activities of household members over the age of 8 during the week prior to the survey lists the three most significant types of work as follows; 25.61% of those surveyed were fishing, 13.03% were working in their households (household work) and 40.82% reported no work. Elsewhere in the survey 70% of fishermen's wives are described as being jobless, or housekeepers during the most abundant fishing seasons. Only 28% of these wives reported activities associated with fish vending. Interestingly, this survey, limited as it is by a narrowly construed notion of women's work as primarily domestic, reveals that women increase their income generating activities in concert with the seasonal cycle, doing more and different kinds of income generating work as their husband's catch declines (Cadeliña, 1983).

9 In addition to providing for some control over the further degradation of mangrove areas so vital to the replenishment of fish stocks, the stewardship agreements also facilitate the delivery of municipal services and allow for more accurate municipal records.

10 For example, when women who leave home to seek employment as domestic workers are unable to find that kind of work, or when they leave such employment, they may be forced, through poverty and/or coercion into the so-called entertainment sector, a sector which bleeds into the so-called sex trade (Lee, 1991). Significantly, no family members reported that such things had happened to members of their immediate families but they knew such things happened to other people. My initial assumption about this was that people would not want to report this kind of work history to me because of the social shame they might feel; I am revising this interpretation because I suspect daughters, sisters, aunts, and cousins would most likely not want to report this to their family members either. In other words, people are not telling me about their direct experiences of women entering sex-trade work because they themselves do not know about their female kin in this sector. Nonetheless, the sector appears to be sizeable. The contours are, however, hard to define precisely because many of those Filipinas who comprise this overseas sector may not have legal status in the countries in which they work (Rasul, 1990). The plight of these women is of deep concern to feminist activists and a growing number of national and international non-government organizations (see APDC, 1993; Beltran and de Dios, 1992).

11 See note 2.

12 See St. Hilaire (1992) for a critique of the Women in Development (WID) component of some Canadian funded projects in the Philippines.

13 This situation remains relatively similar to that described by Cadeliña in 1983. See note 8.

14 For example Barber, 1992a, 1992b.

15 My use of "quasi" here refers to two issues. First, that the fishermen are not solely supporting their households through their productive labour in the fishery. Other labour inputs from other family members also sustain the households. In addition, the hours spent fishing and working on gear do not take up all the hours available to labour during the day. This is not intended to detract from the view that fishing is difficult; however, fishing neither involves the men in the same amount of labour as their wives, and sometimes daughters as well, nor do fishers labour as long as their counterparts in wage labour jobs such as construction crews.

16 A recent study notes that there are 4.5 million Filipino overseas contract workers (both illegal and officially documented), 49 percent of whom are thought to be women. This is in addition to the 2.5 million Filipino immigrants in the United

States and Canada (Chant and McIlwaine, 1995: 34).

17 Pseudonyms are used.

18 A teen-aged boy regularly washed his Levi jeans at the well because he wanted to be sure they acquired a certain faded look. He lived with his aunt and grandparents while his mother was working overseas as a domestic worker in Japan.

19 I must credit Dr. Betty Abregana of Silliman University for this insight and for her collaboration in gathering information about women's work routines and the extra burden of their household economic management. (See also Abregana, 1991.)

20 In 1991, the Philippines Central Bank received US $1.5 billion in remittances, 17% of all Philippine exports for that year (Rodriguez, 1994). In 1995, Asia Week Magazine (Volume 10) reported that Filipino remittances sent to the Philippines, reached an estimated $5.1 billion US. While not all of this money comes from overseas contract workers, many of those who send remittances do so to support family members who remain in the Philippines. Remittances arrive in the Philippines from many different sources including more prosperous Asian countries, Canada, and Europe.

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