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RESEARCH IN ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY VOLUME 29

**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT,
INTEGRATION, AND
MORALITY IN ASIA AND
THE AMERICAS**

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INTEGRATION, AND MORALITY IN ASIA AND THE AMERICAS

Donald C. Wood

As the sun rises in the East
As the wind blows the fog across the sea
As the hand of Man creeps across the face of the world
Caught in a web of glamors
Persian perfume and oriental eyes
Yogi in knots and Sufi wise
Master sublime and Swami high
Throw in some Voodoo on the side
And a dash of the old Kung Fu

Todd Rundgren, *Eastern Intrigue* from the album *Initiation* (1975)

Oh, Mexico
It sounds so sweet with the sun sinking low
Moon's so bright like to light up the night
Make everything all right

James Taylor, *Mexico* from the album *Gorilla* (1975)

Not that Mexico should be taken as representative of the entire American landmass, but the two epigraphs above allude to the fact that this 29th volume of *Research in Economic Anthropology (REA)* is concerned primarily with two vast regions – Asia and the Americas. Defining the latter is an easy

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task, but what is and what is not Asia is not quite so clear. Asia and Europe are considered here to occupy separate continents, with most of Kazakhstan and Turkey, all of Georgia,¹ and a small part of Egypt included in the former. However, this volume is more concerned with exploring situations in Asia, especially in relation to situations in the Americas, as sections of a greater cultural and historical concept – or perhaps as “bundles of relationships” (Wolf, 1997, p. 1) – than with defining this vast region as a specific place or cultural entity. This is one reason why its chapters are not organized geographically. Also, in this volume I want to avoid merely viewing either Asia or the Americas in terms of their respective relations with Europe, which colonized, took from, and gave to both, in favor of viewing them in terms of what kinds of developments are occurring in each, and what can be learned from their observation and study. This being said (and this volume illustrates), North America is generally considered to be part of the industrialized West while everything “south of the border” is usually not. Again, also evidenced here, the situation in different parts of Asia is harder to characterize, and this brings me to introducing the chapters at hand.

First, though, I’d like to offer a few words about *REA* in general. *REA*, in publication since 1978, is a peer-reviewed, edited book series. Born in the United States, under JAI Press, it now resides on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, with Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. in the United Kingdom. As a peer-reviewed series, *REA* relies on the willingness of busy researchers to take time from their schedules to read and comment on submitted manuscripts. It is customary in some such series – especially those that appear in a quarterly or semi-annual journal format – to regularly list the names of readers for each particular year in a volume. Names of readers have never before been listed in *REA*, but it seems appropriate to thank them publicly at some point if possible, so I offer a list here (apologies in advance to anyone whose name I have missed). The following researchers kindly read and commented on papers for volumes 25, 26, and 28:² John Adams, Shankar Aswani, Willie Baber, Peggy Barlett, Andrew Bickford, Joe Bosco, Joanna Busza, Brenda Chalfin, Eric Cohen, Jeff Cohen, Donald Cole, Jeffrey Cole, Sharon Collard, Rudi Collorado-Mansfeld, John Cooper, Lee Cronk, Norbert Dannhaeuser, Alicia DeNicola, Krisztina Fehervary, James Ferguson, Melissa Fisher, Jane Gibson, Hugo Gorringer, Joan Gross, Anna Guevarra, Rhoda Halperin, Ralph Hamann, Raymond Hames, Karen Tranberg Hansen, Betty Harris, Michael Harris, Geoffrey Hodgson, Katherine Hoffman, Mark Hunter, Barry Isaac, Ken Jacobson, Sharryn Kasmir, Max Kirsch, Wendy Larner, Kari Polanyi Levitt, Walter Little, Victoria Lockwood, Sarah Lyon, Gordon Mathews, Thomas McDade, James McDonald, Lynne Milgram, Daniel

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Next – the matter of introducing the chapters here. Although I made clear at the outset my desire to resist the temptation to consider Asia and the Americas in terms of their respective relationships vis-à-vis Europe, Europe does seem to be a logical starting point because it provided the (modern) link between them. Both Asia and the Americas have been profoundly changed through their respective cultural interactions with Europe over the years – measurable in millennia for the former and in centuries for the latter. And, although it is now commonly accepted that the Americas were peopled by pilgrims from Asia, Europe got to know both of these great regions long before they really got to know each other. As Wolf (1997) shows, expansive trade routes linking Europe with all but the most distant parts of Asia were well established by the 13th century. But there is plenty of evidence for movement of people, animals, and items stretching much further back in time. The famous Silk Roads have a history of well over 2,000 years and Rome and China had exchange relations before the time of Christ, but there was much movement of items and animals within the Levant – and even extending further east – 5,000 or more years ago. The Greco-Persian Wars of the 5th century BC, and Alexander the Great’s extension of his empire into northwestern India 120 years after the end of those conflicts, provide at least some firm dates marking intensive, direct interaction between Europe and Asia, including genetic admixture, which Alexander encouraged and in which he also participated (Murphey, 1992, pp. 28–29). At least from this time on, one might say (and in sickness and in health), the West and Asia were forever wed, and like any marriage there have been many ups and downs in the intensity, nature, and quality of interchange between them over the centuries (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1989; Eades, 2005).

Considering that Asia met the Americas through Europe, it is ironic that Europe’s “discovery” of the Americas was actually a result of a quest for a new route to Asia. And as history shows, in the form of colonization, slavery, plunder, unequal treaties, unfettered land grabs, gunboat diplomacy, and more, Europe – for the most part – has seen fit to take just about all it could from the lands to the east and the west (not to mention the

south). Part of the reason for this was competition between the nations and peoples of Europe, who fought each other for control of distant lands and their resources, and embroiled locals in their epic struggles. But this was, sadly, fueled by a general disdain for “black,” “brown,” or “yellow” strangers, and of their beliefs. A book by Edward Brerewood, first professor of astronomy at Gresham College, gives some insight into Europe’s general attitude toward both Asians and the Americans, although far more about the former than the latter, for they were much better known by Europeans when the treatise was originally published in 1614. Concerned above all else about the superiority and spread of Christianity, Brerewood does not treat non-Christian Others – Muslims and “idolators” in particular – with kindness. Of Asia, he writes:

... Mahumetanisme [“Mohammedism”] is farther spread, being embraced and maintained chiefly by four mighty Nations, namely, the *Arabians*, *Persians*, *Turks*, and *Tartars*. *Arabia* was indeed the nest, that bred and fostered that unclean bird, and had it been the cage also, for ever to inclose it, it had been but too much space and liberty, for *Arabia* is in Circuit above 4000 miles, and except a small mixture of Christians in *Eltor*, a Port Town toward the inmost Angle of the Bay of *Arabia*, and *Petra* ... a midland Town, and two Monasteries about the Hill of *Sinai*, all is possessed with *Mahumetans*. But from *Arabia* that poyson hath in such sort dispersed itself through the veins of *Asia*, that neer one half is at this day corrupted by it. For although it hath not hitherto attained to the North Coast of *Asia*, which is partly inhabited by Christians, namely, from the River of *Dwynna* to *Pechora*, and partly by Idolaters from *Pechora* to the East Ocean: nor yet to the East Coast, which from the most Northerly part of *Tartary*, to the most Southerly part of *India* (except some few places in the Kindgom of *Siam*) Idolaters in like sort generally obtain yet nevertheless, it is, as I said, namely, that a very great part of *Asia*, is infected with that pestilence (Brerewood, 1674, pp. 100 101). (...) Thus, it is with Christians in the firm Land of *Asia*: but in the Islands about *Asia*, Christianity is as yet but a tender plant: for although it hath made some entrance into the isles called *Philippinas*, namely 30 of them, for so many onely of 11000 termed by that name, are subject to the King of *Spain*. (...) Onely in *Japonia* Christianity hath obtained (not withstanding many hindrances and oppositions) more prosperous success. Insomuch that many years since, there were recorded to have been by estimation, about 20000 Christians in *Japonia*. (Brerewood, 1674, pp. 93 94)

Furthermore, Brerewood reported that:

... In *America* there be four large Regions, and those of the most fruitful and populous part of it, possessed and governed by the *Spaniards*, that is, *Nucua Espana*, *Castilla de Oro* (otherwise termed *Nurbo Reino*) *Peru*, and part of *Brasile*, the first three by the *Castilians*, and the fourth by the *Portugales*, all which together, by estimation, make a Region as large as Europe. In which, as also in the Islands, specially in the greater Islands of *Hispaniola*, *Cuba*, *Jamaica*, and *Puertorico*, the Christian Religion is so largely spread, that one hath presumed, to equal in a manner, the Christians of *America*, to those of the Latin Church in Europe: And another, hath left recorded, that within a few

years after the enterance of the Gospel among them there were no less than seven Millions, or as others reported fourteen Millions, that in the Sacrement of Baptisme had given their names to Christ. But especially in the Kingdom of *Mexico* (or *Nueva Espanna*) Christian Religion obtained that plentiful and prosperous success, that we find recorded of sundry of the Preachers, employed about the Conversion of that people, that they Baptized each of them, above 100000. and that in few years: Insomuch that (as is storied by *Surius*) it is to be found among the records of Charles the Fifth, that some old Priest hath Baptized 700000. another 300000, and certain others very great multitudes. (Brerewood, 1674, pp. 94 95)

These figures of 20,000 converts in Japan and many hundreds of thousands of baptisms in the Americas are curious. Japan had just been effectively closed off to the rest of the world by the Tokugawa government in Edo (today, Tokyo), and even if there had ever been that many converts, most were either “convinced” to renounce their beliefs or killed quite early in the 17th century.³ Also, for a single man to baptize 700,000 people, he would have to perform at least 65 such rites per day for 30 years, or 96 per day for 20 years. But for all his faults and those of his fellow 16th and 17th century Europeans, Brerewood was on the right track regarding the genetic and linguistic links between Asia and the Americas, even though the devil was in the details. Citing the pre-Columbian absence of written languages, and a perceived higher population density along the Pacific coastline of the Americas, Brerewood concluded that the native peoples of these vast continents were descended from the “old and rude *Tartars*” and not from the people of China or India, and he also pointed to the likelihood of their forebears having crossed a hypothetical land bridge between northeastern Asia and modern-day Alaska – this spot being “the least dis-joynd by Sea” or, “dis-joynd but by some narrow Channel of the Ocean” (Brerewood, 1674, p. 118). Further evidence for a land bridge comes from the presence of animals (including lions and tigers!) in the Americas that would not have been taken across the water for any conceivable reason by people of the Old World had they reached the Americas by boat.

Brerewood’s opinions – dominant for several additional centuries – would be met with disbelief and considerable contempt today, at least in academic circles or on the global stage. But unfortunately we cannot say with any degree of confidence that nobody would take them to heart. Certainly this would have been very much the case in the United States in the immediate wake of the September 2001 attacks.⁴ However, a point made by Brerewood (besides that of ancient migrations) deserves mention. Christianity has caught on remarkably well in the Americas, quickly adapting to local conditions and beliefs while nevertheless dramatically transforming the cultures that adopted it. This underlies the issue of colonization; the dominant

European religion was, of course, forced upon the people of the Americas in the great majority of cases, but it stuck and it spread – it was not rejected anywhere south and west of that part of the Rio Grande (or, Rio Bravo del Norte) that forms the border between Texas and Mexico upon the defeat of the Spanish conquerors, or independence from Portugal. It was even carried back to Africa by freed former slaves. In the near absence of successful colonization by Europeans, this did not happen to such a degree in Asia, where the Philippines stand out as the most obvious exception (colonized, notably, by Spain).⁵ Instead, Islam – a religion that still eludes and vexes many in the West – made large incursions, adding to Asia’s overall mystique. European colonization of the Americas – with the Spanish and Portuguese enjoying the most success in the southern areas and the English and French dominating the north – steered this great region in a developmental direction far away from that of Asia. It is why this volume has a chapter on tipping practices in western Canada, one on the spread of large supermarkets in Mexico, and another on cultural identity and political shifts in the Himalayan region. But even in Asia colonization has had political and economic consequences – hence the inclusion here of a chapter concerning the interactions of Islamic beliefs and Stalinist policies in pottery production in Uzbekistan. At the same time, comparing Shepherd’s study of a market in Washington, DC; Cohen, Everett, Polsky, and Montiel-Ishino’s thoughts on women and selling in Oaxaca; and Gordon’s investigation of marketing practices in Bolivia (all in this volume) illustrates some of the cultural and infrastructural differences between the area north of the US–Mexico border and that to the south of it. This overall situation regarding colonization and culture change no doubt helped reinforce the Orientalization of Asia (Said, 2003), which flourished as the Americas grew ever closer to Europe, culturally and economically. For me, growing up in Texas, Asia was distant and perplexing. Mexico, on the other hand, was culturally close and inviting, yet somewhat frightening. It beckoned but threatened at the same time – everyone knew there was (cheap) fun to be had there, but they decried the “bad air” and “dangerous” illegal immigrants that flowed forth from it. Indeed, for the North, Latin America offers rest and relaxation (see again the second epigraph at the beginning of this chapter) or a permanent escape (e.g., *Time Loves a Hero* by the band Little Feat).⁶ Escaping to Mexico is a common theme in American popular culture,⁷ and quite a few Northern writers and artists have found inspiration there (e.g., Nickles, 2002). But, the lands to the south also offer necessary labor for the North – at a price that consumers appreciate (see Rees, 2007).

Returning to the first epigraph at the beginning of this chapter, Asia is still very much a land of mystery, exoticism, and curious (or counter-culture) religions for many (see Obadia, 2008).⁸ Today Asia exudes exotic esotericism, even producing it and sending it around the world in the form of trinkets and idols (see Fig. 1). Not only this, but today it even produces spiritual paraphernalia of American origin, such as now-world-famous dream catchers (Esperanza, 2008).

As Eades and Obadia both show in this volume, Asia can be both a source of opportunity and danger – cheap fun, cheap goods, and high risk. But this would not quite characterize all of Asia – for example, where do Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea fit into all of this today? None of these is exactly a budget tourist destination, although the low value of the Korean won is making that country rather accessible at the time of this writing. Japan, especially, is sometimes seen as a piece of the West in the “Far East” (again, see Eades, this volume). Japan has the second largest economy in the world, is a leader in high-technology, and is among the biggest trade partners of the United States. It is a capitalist democracy in every sense, but still it is mysterious for many (e.g., van Wolferen, 1990). When I was preparing to leave Texas for an extended stay in Japan in 1995, an employee at the drugstore photo processing lab I co-managed in Dallas said, “Just be careful of all those geishas over there!” Even after living in Japan for a decade, I have never encountered a true geisha – there are very few, after all – and why one should watch out for them (at least in this day and age; see Eades, this volume), I still have no idea.

Following the addition of the New World to Europe’s exchange networks, the Americas and Asia became as deeply connected as Europe and Asia had ever been – or perhaps even more. The movement of people from Asia to the Americas has had many social implications (e.g., Abraham, 2000; Carvalho, 2003; Chang, 2004; Tseng, 2007). Agricultural products from the Americas have spread across the world like wildfire, and have changed it dramatically – what would Italian food be today without tomatoes from the Americas and noodle technology from China? Tomatoes and peppers are now central ingredients in many Chinese dishes, and *kimchi* would be nothing like it is today if those little red peppers hadn’t found their way to the Korean Peninsula in the 17th century – thanks to mobile Europeans. China is now the number two producer of corn – originally a sacred Mesoamerican crop – behind the United States. The common brown potato spread rapidly from its home in the Andes to all parts of the world beginning in the 16th century, changing diets and economies (e.g., that of Ireland) along the way. It entered Japan via Indonesia, picking up the name



Fig. 1. Exotic Oriental Items on Display in an Import Shop in the Old City of Saint Malo, France. (Photo by Donald C. Wood, August 2008.) Saint Malo was the Birthplace and Home of Jacques Cartier, Who Claimed Modern Day Canada for France in 1534.

jaga-imo – *jaga* being an approximation of Jakarta and *imo* meaning potato in general – and today potatoes are grown primarily in the northern island of Hokkaido. The peanut spread out of its Central and South American homeland, found its champion in the form of an ex-slave from Missouri (George W. Carver), and is today a major part of the economies of Africa and India, not to mention China. In Japan it's not easy today to find domestic peanuts (those from China are viewed with suspicion), and when they are available they tend to be fairly expensive.

Perhaps no crop native to the Americas has had the global impact of tobacco or the cacao bean, both of which Europeans first encountered when Columbus stumbled upon the landmass in 1492. At the time, tobacco had already enjoyed an intimate relationship with natives of the Americas for thousands of years (see Gately, 2001). Adopted by Europeans, it came to play a major role in the slave trade, along with cotton (see Wolf, 1997, pp. 195–231). Today, as many parts of the “developing world” struggle to catch up with the industrial nations of the West, they face the plague of rising tobacco consumption, while some leading nations experience a drop (FAO, 2004). Some Asian countries (China, for example) will soon have to deal with the economic consequences of today's extremely high consumption rates. Cacao also spread rapidly out of the Americas after Columbus's initial visit. Far more of the nuts are produced now in Africa and in Southeast Asia than in their old home of South America, and the market is dominated by the Northern Hemisphere, with the United States and Western Europe handling most of the processing and selling of the final product. Belgium put itself into a leading position in chocolate by tapping into cacao production in its central African colony (now DR Congo), cemented by the subsequent invention of the praline – a filled chocolate treat containing crushed sugar-coated nuts – also in Belgium. It seems safe to say that there are few who can visit Brussels today without ducking into at least one of the many chocolate shops that line the streets, especially in the center of the city (see Fig. 2). Yet even Brussels's chocolate world has seen its share of shifts over the last century; the world-famous high-end brand Godiva, which debuted in Brussels in 1926, moved its head office from there to New York in 1974 after being acquired by the Campbell Soup Company (Yomiuri Shimbun, 2008). Moreover, Campbell arranged in December 2007 to sell Godiva to a Turkish corporation for \$850 million (Sorkin, 2007). Additional Asian chocolate action: A relatively new confectionary in Syria – Ghraoui, winner of the Paris 2005 Salon du Chocolat “best foreign chocolate” prize – is claiming a growing share of the world market with its distinctively Syrian styles and flavors (Yunus, 2008).⁹



Fig. 2. Homage is Paid to the Roots of Chocolate in Planete Chocolat, a Leading Confectionary in Brussels. (Photo by Donald C. Wood, August 2008.)

In other cases, plants were taken by Europeans to the Americas, where they thrived and became deeply embedded in the local economies, tools of subjugation and later even of emancipation. Coffee went from its home in Ethiopia to Mesoamerica, where it has had an enormous impact (see Smith, this volume, and also Luetchford, 2008), and where it is now produced in far greater amounts than in the entire continent of Africa. The beans are also grown in many parts of Asia today – second only in production to the New World. The Indonesian island of Java has even lent its name to coffee – as a nickname, and production of the bean in that country is surpassed in Asia only by Vietnam, which boasted 681,000kg grown in the year 2000 (Coffeeresearch.org, 2006). Currency is another item that flows across regions and also across political borders as economies develop and become more deeply integrated with one another (see Hart, 2005). Much of Western Europe is littered with Roman cash, still sleeping beneath in ground. Coins of the successive Chinese dynasties were widely used across much of Asia for many centuries, and became the models for coinage produced in different regions as they developed the political clout and means to do so. Even in Meiji-era Japan (1868–1912), ancient Chinese coins were legal tender, although their value at that time was nearly nothing. And today, a massive “ancient” Chinese coin industry thrives in China – propped up by high-level casting and antiquing skills. A dizzying array of concoctions – both “authentic” and imagined – can be seen at any time on Internet auction sites (Fig. 3).¹⁰



Fig. 3. Three “Ancient” Coins from China. The One on the Left is Almost Certainly a Contemporary, Well Done, but Fanciful Creation, Based on an Actual Coin Type of the Han Dynasty. The Middle One is a Very Recent, Poorly Made, and Antiqued Copy of an Ancient Japanese Coin (Sold as “Authentic” and “Not a Fake”). True and Original Items of this Type are Quite Valuable. The Coin on the Right is an Actual Period Piece, Made in the 12th Century (Northern Song Dynasty) in Circulation During the Time of Angkor’s Prominence (see Lustig, this Volume).

Specialists in the collecting field advise people today to simply not buy “ancient” Chinese coins online without reliable evidence of their having been outside of that country for some time, or to buy only from certain trusted sellers with good reputations.¹¹ Lustig’s chapter in this volume, on the other hand, concerns a period and region in the history of Asia in which Chinese cash coins were circulating but in which money and markets appear to have not played a central role, at least in the eyes of the administration and scribes.

But not only are material items – as commodities – involved in global development and integration; ideas and images are a part of it, too, and these can be just as important in power relations as their physical counterparts. Take brands, for instance. As Dannhaeuser and Werner (2003, pp. xviii–xix) pointed out, these “can be considered an extreme form of commoditization, enabling companies to separate production location and the labor input from the exchange value of the product itself.” Brands can be broadcast across the globe almost instantly, and they may carry heavy imagery with them (see Moeran, 2003; Vann, 2003). Labels, such as “authentic” or “original,” function like brands in most respects. There was a time when “Made in Japan” meant “cheap and shoddy.” Later, people spoke derisively of “Taiwan trash.” Today, as Obadia shows (this volume), “Made in China” occupies an ambiguous position in the global (and regional) economic and political atmosphere. Brands and labels may also be manipulated for certain uses, and this also spans the globe – the Fair Trade label, for example (De Neve, Luetchford, Pratt, & Wood, 2008).

The chapters of this volume are organized into three sections: on development, integration, and morality in markets and economic transactions. Noting that development can mean a number of things, and that it (or its absence) is also a subjective issue, here it is considered to mean social, economic, or political change (or some combination of these) taking place within a specific region – generally a political entity, such as a state or nation (see Cohen & Dannhaeuser, 2002, for a larger discussion). Integration refers to connections between two distinct economies, which fluctuate with time. Finally, morality indicates the role of feelings, ideas about how things ought to work, and social relations within market activities and economic exchanges. This arrangement helps to avoid grouping the chapters geographically in order to bring theoretical issues and thematic concerns to the forefront. But it is also somewhat arbitrary. These are, after all, rather broad and amorphous categories. Some chapters might be just as comfortable in a different section than the one to which they have been assigned. Nevertheless, certain points are prominent in each chapter, dependent on

the research theme, methods, and the interests of the author(s), and this has largely determined the groupings.

PART I: DEVELOPMENT

Bosco, Liu, and West's chapter on underground lotteries in rural China is one that begs permission to cross the boundaries between parts of this volume, for it deals with the integration of the Chinese economy with others, and it also poses certain moral questions about the nature of markets and rationality in economic exchanges (see also Suarez, this volume). But the authors, after reviewing the evidence, ultimately conclude that China's underground lotteries must be viewed in relation to that country's phenomenal economic development in recent decades. They show that the rise of illegal underground lotteries in China is tightly connected to the development of the modern capitalist economy there, and that although it seems at first glance to be powered by irrationality and superstition, it actually functions according to capitalist principles – at least as viewed by the participants. They also argue that rural villagers who place bets in them are not mere victims of nonsensical beliefs or of opportunistic “outsiders,” but rather that they are participating in their own way in a system in which luck clearly plays a very large role, but one over which they have little control, and one that is grounded in the historical commercialized economy of China (see also Richardson, 1999). It is interesting to note the way that participants rationalize the lottery and their actions through their assumption that it is rigged – their approach to it is markedly different from that of someone from, for example, Japan or the United States, where such a lottery is assumed from the start to not be rigged. Bosco and co-authors well demonstrate here the importance of viewing a cultural phenomenon as part of a greater whole, and one in a constant state of flux.

In the next chapter, Jayant Anand takes a look at a different case of development – the spread of large-scale retail outlets in Mexico. The common assumption is that this kind of development is necessarily detrimental to smaller, local businesses. This is also true in Japan. On the outskirts of a small city near where I live, a large center opened in mid-2008 amid the protestations of the proprietors of small stores lining the city's downtown shopping strip. In autumn of the same year, though, the branch outlet of a department store chain that was attached to the largest mall in the area closed its doors, and a local shopping mall chain went out of business, closing all three of its locations and laying off about 500 people.

Contrary to the popular consensus, Anand demonstrates here that the process in the place he investigated has not been particularly damaging. He shows, instead, that smaller, locally owned stores can successfully co-exist with larger, more powerful retail chains. For one thing, in this case, people with the ability to purchase a car have been more able to patronize the larger stores, which tend to be located farther from their homes, while those without cars tend to utilize smaller stores closer to home (see also Markowitz, 2008). This, of course, might have other implications, such as a growing divide between rich and poor, or serious problems for lower-income residents if smaller stores eventually do close their doors. However, as Anand points out, larger stores do not always offer lower prices and greater savings, even if they give the appearance that they do.

In the third chapter of this section, Haruka Kikuta explores a century of development in a pottery-producing area of Uzbekistan, which has gone through quite a bit of change during that period. Unlike the situation studied by Anand in the previous chapter – large stores opening alongside smaller ones in a natural process – this is a case where an entire industry, which had developed naturally, was gradually reorganized into a single large-scale factory by the state, with marketing channels also decided by the state, following the usurpation of power in Central Asia by the Soviet Union in the 1920s. The pottery industry is shown to have changed dramatically, parallel to social transformations and economic development, but the persistence of religious beliefs amid Soviet rule, and of certain patriarchal relationships in the production process – despite the influx of capitalist ideology in the post-Soviet era – is remarkable. Kikuta's chapter shows a case in which European colonization in Asia brought much social and political change without extensive, long-term religious change.

The following two chapters resonate well off one another. In the first, Kathleen Gordon examines the motives of certain vendors in a weekend marketplace in Bolivia. Market vendors have been a popular subject of interest in economic anthropology (e.g., Little, 2002, 2004; Kelly Spurles, 2007). Gordon focuses here, though, on marketplace vending with respect to its position in the household, or more specifically, its role in the economic life of the household (see also Mayer, 2005). The idea that people will not always engage in economic activities with the goal of generating bottom-line monetary profits is nothing new, but Gordon extends this to the question of whether or not sellers will reinvest profits in their businesses with the hope of generating more profits and, perhaps, expanding (a major assumption of capitalism). Drawing partially on the arguments of Karl Polanyi and issues that arose in the infamous formalist–substantivist debate

(e.g., Isaac, 1993; Wood, 2007), she argues that small-scale shop or stall operators will not necessarily be eager to reinvest their profits in their businesses, contrary to the hopes and expectations of some development experts and agencies. Instead, she finds evidence of a variety of uses for profits, among which maximum reinvestment in the businesses through which they were gained ranks low – a finding that supports her contention that vending should not be investigated as an activity separate from the rest of life. In my own neighborhood in Akita, Japan, there was for many years a tiny family store, Kagaya Shōten, across the street from a small park (Fig. 4). An appendage of the owner's house, it was small, run-down, and had nearly empty shelves, but it stayed open simply because the white-haired grandmother was happy to tend it. Any profits generated by this store were most certainly not reinvested in it. The store closed sometime in 2005 after the passing of the grandmother.

In the second of these two chapters, Cohen, Everett, Polsky, and Montiel-Ishino also focus on vending activities, and in terms of household economics, but they are concerned specifically with the activities of women.



Fig. 4. Kagaya Shōten in the Mid 1990s. (Photo by Donald C. Wood.)

The authors argue that vending, in addition to being a means for women in rural Mexico (Oaxaca) to supplement their household incomes, can be a good way for them to empower themselves – making notable economic contributions to their households while maintaining flexibility that comes in handy when a crisis arises. The catching, preparation, and selling of grasshoppers for food is their primary example, but they show that there is actually a variety of ways requiring very little capital investment in which (primarily) women can make economic contributions to the maintenance of their households while earning at least a modicum of cash that they can also control themselves. Especially in this way, this chapter ties into Gordon’s discussion of vending and reinvestments in Bolivia before it.

PART II: INTEGRATION

The second part of this volume concerns the issue of economic integration, in a broad sense. The first chapter is another that might be comfortable in a different section – perhaps the one on development before it – but it has been included here because of the issues it raises about the relationships between economies as they develop and become more tightly interconnected, and because it addresses a central question in the integration of economic systems relating to relative values and costs. Eileen Lustig gives the volume added historical depth by seeking an answer to the question of why the epigraphy of the Angkorian Empire contains almost no mention of everyday, mundane economic exchanges among commoners over a 600-year period (the 9th through the 14th centuries), despite the fact the pre-Angkorian era, which was undoubtedly less politically complex, has left behind a greater record of such exchanges. Moreover, a distinct unit of account is also absent from the record following the 8th century. As Lustig shows, the general region with which she is concerned was experiencing economic interaction with different economies – as far away as Rome – during the right time period, so a degree of integration was taking place, and it was also becoming monetized, which varied by region, which makes the absence of a unit of account all the more perplexing, especially when this development is considered against the backdrop of Angkor’s political complexity. After weighing the evidence against a number of possible explanations for this conundrum, Lustig concludes that there must have been a unit of account for common exchanges but that such activities were probably overshadowed by the symbolic dominance of the temple economy. Lustig’s analysis summons up the question of equivalencies in economic exchanges – or equivalency

formation processes, a major concern of Polanyi (1970, 1977, and also see 1957a, 1957b) and one that lies at the heart of many problems in economic anthropology, but one which is not usually very clearly articulated (cf. Halperin, 1993, 1994, Chapter 4). According to Halperin, “The question of how much of what kinds of goods and resources or the number of units of one kind that can be substituted for units of another kind in economic processes is a critical element, if not *the* critical element in the forms of economic integration” (Halperin, 1993, p. 263). Lustig is examining a case in which the ways in which this was worked out “on the ground” in daily life apparently took a backseat to more formalized negotiations in the temple economy – hence, there seem to have been at least two different equivalency formation processes at work in the same place at the same time. It would be interesting to learn more about the interactions of these processes.

In the second chapter of this section, Julia Smith looks at the integration of the Costa Rican and Panamanian economies – specifically, the coffee markets – with those of other parts of the world, and especially in relation to their respective histories. She shows how the particular history of coffee production in each area has affected its trajectory, and what kinds of challenges it poses in the fluctuating global market for the beans. As mentioned by Dannhaeuser and Werner (2003, p. xi), the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s benefited many people in the developing world, and Costa Rican coffee producers can be counted among them. This resulted in their achieving much success in producing quality coffee beans and exporting these to the North, where they were much appreciated. However, as Smith demonstrates, what was at first a great advantage for the Costa Rican coffee industry over its rival in Panama became a major drawback in the face of shifting tastes among the millions of consumers in the United States, and also in other parts of the coffee-loving West. Instead, Panama, able to more quickly adapt to the new environment, is now in a much better position to compete for foreign business. Smith’s findings, although growing out of integrative processes, offer a lesson for business operators, politicians, and development planners not only concerned with coffee production, but also with elite global markets of all kinds.

Next, Jerry Eades explores the intersections of sex, work, and tourism in a global sense. Eades’s chapter helps expand the geographic horizons of this volume, but although its concern is by no means limited to Asia and the Americas, much attention is paid to the former – offering analysis of current developments in the region and also predictions of things to come. Eades’s analysis centers about a division of sex, work, and tourism into seven zones, four of which are created when any two, or all, of these themes overlap, and

his primary goal is to expand the discussion of the intersection of these three themes beyond the one zone common to all of them. He does this by considering a number of situations taking place around the periphery of sex tourism in different parts of the world, and his inclusion of the factor “work” in the equation helps draw attention to the possibilities and dangers of the expansion of this industry. Important to a consideration of economic integration in Asia, there are the issues of the rise of a relatively wealthy middle class in both China and India, and of the differences in the general conditions of workers (mostly women) in the sex trade of less-developed parts of Asia – catering to foreign tourists vs. catering to locals, for example. Eades expects to see an expansion, with increased segmentation, of the entire industry, given infrastructural developments and increasing access to travel, to name two factors. Indeed, economic expansions and contractions are important here; long-distance truckers in the United States are said to be keeping their hands off of their wallets – and off of women at certain truck stops – more and more these days (Powers, 2008). For better or worse, though, the intersections of sex, work, and tourism will probably only grow in importance in the economic development and integration of Asia and other regions, in different ways. Perhaps a better understanding of these intersections will help to reduce the damage that related economic activities and industries cause to the lives of many involved people.

In the fourth chapter here, Lionel Obadia looks at the implications of the “Made in China” label both in global and in local perspectives. Similar to the way in which capitalism itself went on trial during the autumn of 2008 – blamed for market failures, foreclosures, drops in currency values, and for the near destruction of Iceland’s economy, *China* has taken quite a hit across the globe over the last few years because of products flowing out of it. There have indeed been many scares of late, and the media of the world have been quick to point the finger at the Chinese bureaucracy for failing to successfully monitor its industries. The recent tainted baby formula scandal has been especially embarrassing for the ruling party – even more so since it became apparent that the problem was kept under wraps until the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing had finished, which resulted in more casualties (Blanchard, 2008). Moreover, melamine – the chemical implicated in the scandal – has turned up in Chinese eggs as well. While Obadia’s analysis does involve China’s exports and its central position in the market for many products, he is more concerned here with the political baggage carried by the “Made in China” label, and in this his approach relates to the study of the symbolic economic power of “brands,” as was discussed in Volume 22 of *REA* (e.g., Dannhaeuser & Werner, 2003; Moeran, 2003). Obadia shows

how “Made in China” not only reflects China’s relationships with Tibetans and with Nepal, but also how deeply involved it is in the integration of the economies of China and Nepal with the wider world.

Finally, Tamar D. Wilson investigates a facet of the integration of local economies in Mexico with the North, or with areas in the North. The migration of Mexicans to the United States, and the importance of the remittances they send back to their communities of origin, has been heavily researched (e.g., Cohen, 2004; Fitzgerald, 2008; Rees, 2007). This migration has been so extensive that the idea of saturation points – points at which all possible migrants in certain communities have migrated out – has entered into the discussion. But Wilson finds evidence of sustainable out-migration in a Jalisco community, where such a saturation point might conceivably never be reached. Instead, new migrants to the source community from within Mexico are found to blend into pre-existing social networks and to take advantage of the wealth that has accumulated largely due to remittances sent back from out-migrants. The author views social capital as something created through networks of social ties and cash flows into which new migrants are able to tap, and illustrates one way in which the effects of northward emigration from Mexican communities extend far beyond the borders of those communities.

PART III: ECONOMIC TRANSACTIONS, MARKETS, AND MORALITY

Part III of this volume consists of four chapters that analyze human economic behavior with respect to people’s feelings about how these exchanges should rightly be conducted, or that focus on personal values in these transactions, or which are dominated by questions about the social construction of economic relationships and exchanges. In the first chapter, Daniel Suarez investigates the apparently economically irrational practice of tipping waiters in restaurants in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Being culturally determined and highly social, restaurant tipping is an excellent area for economic anthropology, but it is theoretically problematic for a number of reasons; it is a personal exchange that occurs in a fairly formal environment, and it is also dependent on fixed prices (for food). In addition to smiling and putting on an act, waiters may be motivated to try to convince customers to order more expensive menu items, or to select a greater number of dishes, or even to drink more in order to loosen their

wallets. On the other hand, waiters might avoid these practices in the hope of building a trusting relationship with customers to ensure their return, and possible higher tips for their gratitude. Overtly selfish acts on the part of a server, however, may damage the personal relationship between themselves and customers, yet there is no guarantee that any customer will ever return, anyway, or that they would have the same waiter. Customers also have a lot of power – unsatisfied customers not only have the option of leaving only a small tip (or perhaps none at all), they can notify the manager. Unlike the “interpersonally embedded services” described by Ichinosawa (2007), in which customers and prostitutes negotiate prices for illicit encounters in Bangkok, there is a large power differential between customers and waiters because the former have nothing at all to be ashamed of, or to worry about. They are in positions of dominance when it comes to paying the tip. Yet, as Suarez shows, they tend to attempt to conform to social tipping rules, and most harbor concepts of “fairness” and “justness” regarding these personal exchanges. Suarez asks where the social (personal) ends and the economic begins, and, importantly, whether or not this division is even legitimate.

In my own contribution to this volume, I examine one result of demographic shifts in the capital city of Akita Prefecture, northeastern Japan (Tōhoku). As with many leading countries of the world today, the population of Japan is said to be “graying” because of the increasing proportion of elderly and the (related) lagging birthrate. The birthrate, in fact, has been below the replacement rate for some years now, and has been a source of much worry for the national and regional (and municipal) governments. The situation has been exacerbated by increased movement from villages (now a veritable endangered species) and smaller towns to larger cities, and also by the fact that the national public financial support system for localities is based largely on population (Onoda, 2007; Thompson, 2003; Thompson & Traphagan, 2006, pp. 12–13). This situation has resulted in increased competition between municipalities for people. Even in larger cities, though, the small number of children has resulted in greater competition between care and educational institutions. There was a time when Japanese mothers were easily typecast as quasi-slaves to kindergartens (among other entities), especially by Western female researchers, and although this image was not – and still is not – entirely incorrect, the actual situation is clearly changing in a way that appears to be beneficial for most mothers. Viewing the shrinking pool of available children as a common-pool resource (CPR), I argue that research tools developed for the study of CPRs can also help understand social phenomena that are not related to the kinds of resources normally

covered by the conventional definition of CPRs. After all, as Gudeman (2001, p. 28) so deftly points out, a CPR is part and parcel of a community itself, is “regulated through moral obligations that have the backing of powerful sanctions,” and the destruction of it “is a tragedy not of a physical commons but of a human community” (also see Gudeman, 2005). Schools, including preschools, provide good opportunities for research on this issue because of the special relationships they have with their communities (e.g., Gillin, 1955, and also see Halperin, 2008).

Next, similar to Suarez in his analysis of tipping, Robert Shepherd explores personal economic interchanges in which the actors are negotiating values. But instead of paying “after the fact” for labor (and a smile), the players are working out prices for items that are shown here to carry a range of different values depending not only on their physical attributes but on their provenance as well (see Obadia, this volume). As was acknowledged by Polanyi in his considerations of equivalencies, marketplaces are loaded with social factors that mystify and complicate exchanges, defying economic rules at every twist and turn. For example, there is the time factor – later in the day sellers are usually more likely to accept lower prices so that they can spare themselves the trouble of taking some items back with them. Here, Shepherd brings the social milieu of the marketplace to the forefront by showing how relationships between sellers – reflected in narratives – are both affected by and help govern the workings of the marketplace. Certain sellers appear to favor a “just price” and certain others seem not to (as with some customers in restaurants). There are indeed many layers of social processes at work here.

In the final chapter, Kristiano Raccanello, Jayant Anand, and Patricia Arroyo Martinez examine the decision-making process behind the involvement of women in Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) in a municipality in Cholula, Mexico, a country in which such associations existed in pre-colonial times. They are mainly concerned here with the question of why there are so many women participating in such associations as compared to men, and also why there are many ROSCAs with only women as members. Noting that there is a variety of reasons for this, and that vague conclusions about a greater sense of community and stronger social ties among women have been offered, the authors attempt to isolate and evaluate more precise reasons through the use of a mathematical model based on a random data sample they generated through a survey. They do find that social relations are very important, but they also find that women tend to participate more – especially with other women – when they are more responsible for supporting their households financially, an

important issue because it involves the blurring of “formal” and “informal” market categories. Raccanello, Anand, and Arroyo Martinez couch their findings in terms of the concept of social capital, which has been the subject of some debate in economic anthropology, but instead of treating it as something personal, they consider it as something communal – something in which all participants in a specific community might be able to share when generated (see also Wilson, this volume). Viewed in this way, social capital could be considered as similar (if not equal) to a CPR as envisioned by Gudeman (2001, p. 28).

A number of general conclusions can be drawn from this volume. The six chapters on Latin America indicate a high degree of dependence on the North, whether this be in the form of access to global markets (not dependent on place) for coffee or markets for labor, which tend to be less formal and are more dependent on place. The role of daily, informal, markets in the household economy also appears different. Aware of the danger of comparing apples and oranges (i.e., rural markets in Mexico at which essential items are bought and sold with a trendy urban market in the United States), thinking of the ubiquitous garage sale and popular markets “north of the border” and other examples, we could say that selling in daily markets in Latin America tends to play a more central role in economic survival. However, this volume has also shown that certain developments found in the North are also occurring in Latin America – the spread of super- and hypermarts and their co-existence (at least to a degree) with smaller stores. Perhaps remittances from the North play a role in developments of this sort in Mexico as well – at least in determining who patronizes which kinds of stores, and where large ones may appear. Indeed, dependence on the North for work opportunities continues. This also occurs in Asia. For example, Japan, with its dropping population, needs many laborers – both skilled and unskilled. Today, not only are women heading there from the Philippines to be brides (or to work in “entertainment”; see Eades, this volume), they are also heading there to serve as nurses, physical therapists, and general caretakers, in growing numbers. Saudi Arabia, a nation of 28 million, employs about 8 million foreign workers – mostly as domestics – hailing primarily from the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India (Ambah, 2008).

This volume has also raised questions about the relationship between social and economic transactions in Western society – specifically Canada and the United States in this case – in which economic exchanges are often thought not to be as deeply embedded in social relations as they actually are

(cf. Grannoveter, 1985). It has also shown that behavior that may seem as irrational as tipping in Canada and as spending great amounts of time and money on playing the lottery in rural China can be easily “rationalized” by the spenders in spite of, or perhaps even because of, the political/economic system around them – a similar result in very different environments with regard to culture and the general state of development. In addition, this volume has also demonstrated that culture and ethnic groups can be deeply affected by national level political conflicts over land. It has shown how China’s post-revolution policies have affected Tibetans, and also how relations between Tibetans in diaspora and China and Nepal have shifted in response to global market forces. In Uzbekistan, a foreign government asserted its control over the territory, rearranging the system to better suit its ideals. In both cases, resistance occurred, but with very different outcomes. Today, displaced Tibetans seek market channels for their products from a host country while ceramists in Uzbekistan seek channels, and struggle to preserve the integrity of their works, from the same places where they have always lived, but in a new political and economic environment nonetheless.

Finally, one more important issue that this volume raises, as mentioned above, is that of equivalency formation processes (cf. Halperin, 1993, 1994). Although central in economic anthropology in general, several chapters here call attention to the problem of how values for certain things (not necessarily corporal) are decided both in the distant and immaterial market, and in the physical marketplace, which is more social. In post-Soviet Uzbekistan, there is the issue of flooding the market with inexpensive copies of high-quality “authentic” pieces, which drives down prices overall. Masters, it is seen, worry about how to preserve their “brand” in this situation. The “Made in Tibet” label is valued highly by followers of Tibetan Buddhism – especially far from the Himalayan region. This seems to be due not only to “Orientalism,” but also to the current political situation regarding Tibet. In one place in North America, servers and customers silently negotiate the cash value of the formers’ labor, and on the opposite coast, sellers and buyers vocally negotiate equivalencies at a trendy market, while sellers do the same with other sellers. As Polanyi observed, in these last two cases, because the deliberations are occurring in places (localized markets), a huge variety of factors come into play, dramatically affecting the equivalency formation processes. Paying greater explicit attention to these processes in a cross-cultural sense should be beneficial to economic anthropology as both an academic and an applied field.

NOTES

1. Although what is and what is not Georgia is contested at the time of this writing.
2. Volume 27 was guest edited and I was not involved in the review process.
3. The officials of the Tokugawa government used a technique known as *fumie* “stepping on a picture” to identify Japanese Christian converts. All those who refused to step on a likeness of the Virgin, placed on the floor, were either forced to repent or removed from society in some way.
4. The presidential election of 2008, especially toward the end, also revealed some of this in the form of angry (and mistaken) characterizations of Barack Obama as an “Arab” and a “terrorist,” not to mention innuendos regarding his middle name. Sadly, also, a wave of racist backlash swept across the country in response to his election – smaller than, but comparable to, the post 9/11 tsunami of similar sentiment (Washington, 2008).
5. Interestingly, nearly one third of Korea’s population is Christian, although the country was never colonized by a Western power.
6. The lyrics read: “Some say my uncle, that he’s a zero/His life is as a shell, he left it back at Stateside/I’d say he’s doin’ pretty well, without his shell/Bumming ‘round the beaches of Puerto Rico/The beauty of the sunrise and sunset/To his friends he wish he could tell/They’re at home still runnin’ for bells/Better San Juan than that blue collar hell” (written by B. Payne and P. Barrere, from http://www.littlefeat.net/index.php?page_lyrics&dc_id_149).
7. See <http://angam.ang.univie.ac.at/western2000/pres/escape/start.htm>.
8. Rundgren was half joking with his song about Asian religions – he had been experimenting with various faiths at the time, poking fun at people (including himself) who sought truth in exotic belief systems yanked from their own cultural milieus.
9. See also <http://www.ghraouichocolate.com/>.
10. Even “Meiji era one yen silver coins” (equivalent to the US silver dollar) that were supposedly minted in years when no such coins were even made appear in great numbers.
11. See Scott Semans World Coins (<http://www.coincoin.com/I054.htm>).

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UNDERGROUND LOTTERIES IN CHINA: THE OCCULT ECONOMY AND CAPITALIST CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

A little-known “lottery fever” has spread to many parts of rural China over the past 10 years. This is driven by participation in underground lotteries with local bookies. It is called liuhecai, which is the name of the Hong Kong lottery, and is based on guessing the bonus number of the Hong Kong Mark Six lottery. Such lotteries are illegal, but are an open secret. This chapter seeks to understand the meaning of this apparently irrational lottery fever: why people participate in it, why they believe the conspiracy theory that it is rigged (and yet still participate), and why similar lotteries have emerged in both capitalist Taiwan and post-socialist China at this particular time.

Since 2002, a little-known “lottery fever” has spread to many parts of rural China. It is driven not by participation in the official state lottery, but rather by widespread, and deeply social, play in various forms of underground lotteries. Such lotteries are illegal, but they are a quite open secret. While

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neither illegal lotteries nor speculation itself are all that unusual (for work on gambling and speculation in Chinese societies see Oxfeld, 1993; Hertz, 1998; Pina-Cabral, 2002), both the social nature of play in this lottery fever and the depth of its influence in rural areas of China leave us wondering why it took off when it did.

The rise of this particular lottery fever is remarkable for three reasons. First is that villagers are convinced that the lottery is rigged, and that if one is clever enough, one can divine the correct number ahead of time. Second, the odds offered by the lottery are not very attractive, and the entire lottery appears to be “economically irrational.” This seems especially surprising given the vaunted Chinese skill in handling money. Chinese lottery participants are not unsophisticated pre-capitalist economic actors. On the contrary, not only has China’s economy been commoditized for over 1,000 years, but many of the biggest lottery players are petty entrepreneurs and persons with experience in industrial jobs. Third, it is notable that much of the terminology and many of the practices are the same as those that emerged in Taiwan in the 1980s, and the current wave of lottery fever in China has spread from Fujian, just across the Taiwan Strait. While it is tempting to try to explain the lottery as perhaps a reaction to post-socialist capitalist penetration, this interpretation cannot explain why similar lotteries have also emerged in Taiwan, which did not go through a socialist period. This chapter seeks to understand the meaning of this apparently irrational lottery fever: why people participate in it, why they believe the conspiracy theory that it is rigged (and yet still participate), and why similar lotteries have emerged in both capitalist Taiwan and post-socialist China at this particular time.

THE LOTTERY

While doing research in several villages in South China during the summer of 2002,¹ I (J. Bosco) discovered that, in many parts of Guangdong and Guangxi, villagers were obsessed with lottery. In one Hakka village in northeastern Guangdong, I quickly found that it was not possible to conduct interviews on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday nights, when the numbers are picked in Hong Kong’s official lottery. The lottery was such a big topic of conversation that it was impossible to interview about anything else. Starting in the late afternoon, everyone focused their attention on sorting through various hints, drawings, and signs they had gathered to pick the number. Then, once the number was drawn and announced shortly after 8:30 p.m., everyone visited each other to discuss the right number and how

to have picked it. People came by, saying to my hosts, “Did you win?” or “I can’t believe I lost again.” That first night, a rumor initially announcing that the correct number was 11 inspired all sorts of discussion about how each villager had nearly picked it, and how they should have realized that the hint they had seen meant 11. A bit later, however, a call came in and said the number was actually 41, and again the same people were finding (new) ways of saying they had barely missed it, should have known, etc. It seemed the entire village, young and old, man and woman, all knew and talked about it. Even cadres were involved, as the first author discovered when his interviewing led him to enter a house in which township government officials were resting after lunch. They were in the village to collect the rice tax. Though the conversation became strained as we entered, it was clear that they had been discussing the numbers, and they had newspaper divination papers and other sheets of research in front of them (see Fig. 1). At various times that evening, firecrackers could be heard going off in the distance, marking the very public celebration of those who had chosen the number correctly.



Fig. 1. One Quarter of a Hint Sheet Collected in Huian, Fujian, in 2005. (The Original is Printed in Red Collected by Luo Pan.)

It is hard to trace back exactly when the underground lottery was introduced to China, as it grew at different rates in different places. We have reports that claim it started anywhere from 1988 to 1999,² but most news articles refer to the latter half of the 1990s as the beginning of the underground lottery's popularity. It seems to have begun in Guangdong and Fujian Provinces and then spread rapidly to other places in the north and west of China. In Fujian Province, for example, the underground lottery first started in rural villages in Zhangzhou and, besides this area, it was most popular in rural villages in Quanzhou and Xiamen (Research Team, 2004). I (Bosco) came across the lotteries in the summer of 2002 while conducting research in Guangdong and Guangxi provinces, and in both villages where I saw it, the lottery had risen as a fever within the previous year.

For this study, we have data from several villages in Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi, but the village about which we have the most information, which we will call Zhong Village, is a natural settlement and a lineage village of over 400 persons in an administrative village of over 2,000 persons. It is a Hakka village in northeast Guangdong. The village switched to the "Responsibility System" in 1978, and divided its land in 1979. While it is remote, the township is now connected to the county seat and indeed to the neighboring province of Jiangxi by a four-lane highway built in the late 1990s. Still, the village is in an area that Skinner (2003) characterizes as rural and in the far periphery of the Guangdong macro-regional zone.

Newspaper reports and informants agree the underground lottery is most popular in rural and periurban areas where it is very public and does not attract attention. In urban areas, it is less popular, more hidden, and the police will arrest gamblers and bookies alike. In Zhong Village, as in many other rural villages, people place bets, discuss the betting, and exchange information in the open, even though it is illegal. It is estimated by local newspapers that in many rural villages more than 90% of villagers participate in betting (Lin, 2005; Luo, 2004). In the recent past, a common Chinese greeting was to ask "Have you eaten yet?" According to some commentators, the greeting phrase in many villages where the underground lottery is popular has now changed to "What number have you bought?" (Liang, 2003).

The Zhong Village lottery is based on the Hong Kong Mark Six. Both are called *Liuhecai*,³ but the two lotteries are different. Mark Six in Hong Kong has 49 numbers and bettors pick six plus a bonus number (*tema*). In the village, only Hong Kong's bonus number is used. The gambling relies on Hong Kong only for picking the number; the prize money is paid (profits made, and losses sustained) by local bookies. These bookies in turn spread some of their risk (and benefits) by being linked with larger bookies in larger towns.

Villagers said the lottery became a craze in October of 2001 when a villager won ¥110,000 (US\$13,400 at the time) in this, then, new informal lottery. We calculate that it would have taken a bet of about ¥3000 on one number to win so much. Other villagers took to buying lottery numbers with alacrity, even while that first winner proceeded to gamble and lose all the winnings. Even so, as of December 2006, the lottery was still very popular, though it was not so novel anymore.

There is considerable local variation in the ticket prices and payout of betting. In one village in Fujian, the minimum bet was 20 yuan, however, in many other villages, each bet can go as low as 1 or as high as 100 yuan, depending on bettors. In Zhong Village, however, bets could be much larger, as we heard of some bets in hundreds of yuan. In general, the reward for correctly picking the special number is from 37 to 40 times the bet. In Zhong Village, for example, it was 38 times.

Betting on the “special number” *tema* or bonus number itself is the most common form of betting, but there are variations from area to area and over time, and some bookies also take a variety of forms of bets. For example, we were told about a second form of betting involving choosing the color of the balls that are used to select the number; since the balls come in three colors, red, green, and blue, the gambler has roughly a one in three chance of winning. While this form still refers to the lottery in Hong Kong, it requires looking only at the color of the special ball instead of at its number. Informants in Fujian said the payout was 2.5 times the bet. Thus, a ¥100 bet would win ¥250. A third way of betting is called “odd–even.” Bettors only need to guess whether the special number is odd or even. The payout is ¥180 for a ¥100 bet. Since there are 24 even numbers and 25 odd numbers from 01 to 49, there is slightly higher chance to get an odd number than even number. In the fourth way of betting, “combined odd–even,” the digits are added together to form odd or even single digit numbers. An 18 would mean $1+8 = 9$ or odd, while 29 would mean $2+9 = 11$ and then $1+1 = 2$ or even. The payout is same as the “odd–even” game. However, the total amount of odd and even numbers are not the same. There are a total of 24 odd and 25 even which is the opposite of “odd–even,” the third form.

Poor Odds

The Hong Kong Mark Six (*liuhecai* in Chinese) is a lottery, but it seems villagers do not understand their lottery as such. Lotteries are games of pure

chance in which the house has a built-in advantage so that over time gamblers will lose:

Mathematically speaking, as the saying goes, no one wins the lottery. Sports betting, in contrast, involves skill, and it is possible, although very difficult, to consistently win money on it. Sports bettors are closer to stock or commodities buyers than to people who buy lottery tickets. (Surowiecki, 2006, p. 68)

It is this understanding of an overall statistical inevitability of losing that many analysts (as well as many gamblers) take as the natural order against which the thrill of speculation and flouting prescribed fate can emerge (see Reith, 1999). Of course, this thrill-seeking type of experience is markedly different from that of an investor, dominated by worries about diversification and minimization of risk. Villagers, however, deny there is any difference between investing (*touzi*) and the lottery. Because they believe the lottery is rigged, they also believe there are patterns and hints that one can research and discover to more or less consistently make money. This “research” makes the underground lottery not a form of gambling or speculation, but a form of risk-taking normal in investing under capitalism.⁴ Furthermore, they are at least partially correct in asserting a difference with conventional understandings of lotteries because this lottery actually pays a fixed return, not a share of the take. Thus, in theory, if many people guessed correctly, the bookies could lose a substantial amount of money. This is, in fact, why the bookies hedge their risk by collaborating with larger bookies. This differentiation was further illustrated by the comment of a university-educated villager who was back for a brief visit. He said that it was impressive to see the degree of power that women have in buying and picking the numbers; he found it incredible that women should have so much say in such a large investment. When I (Bosco) naively suggested it was not an investment but merely for fun, he argued forcefully that the lottery is a means to make money, and since it involves a lot of money, it is an investment.

In Zhong Village when we asked a 45-year-old man, “Why do you bet on the lottery when the odds are so obviously against you; the longer you play, the more you will lose?” he jumped up and said, “No, it is not like that. Some people never do win. It is not random.” He, like several others we spoke to, rejected the idea that there was a random chance to win. To us, the lottery seemed like poor odds.⁵ A minimum bet in Zhong Village was ¥5, and one would win ¥190 for a correct bet. A quick calculation will show that a bet only had a 1 in 49 chance of winning, and a bet on each number would cost ¥245, while a winning number only paid ¥190. Thus, the bookie was

making, on average, ¥55 on ¥245, or 22.4%. When we tried to point out to another villager that the odds were against him, he completely rejected our calculation, explaining that some people never win. He added later that he himself had not won. Informants noted that some people won repeatedly, while others seemed to never win. I asked him if he thought he was unlucky or if his luck had just not come yet, and he said he could not know. In this answer, he accepted the uncertainty of the lottery, even though in also seeming to emphasize fate, he (and others) seemed to assume there was a master plan of sorts. On the one hand, villagers appeared to be telling us that skill was an essential component in this kind of play, thereby making the lottery more like investing. On the other, in rejecting our calculations they alluded to a sense of luck or fate. We will return to explore these three seemingly contradictory aspects of the lottery in more detail below.

Of course, in these discussions of why people participated in the lottery despite the odds, some informants displayed typical signs of gambler's fever: when we asked one woman why she kept betting since she kept losing, she said she had to make her money back. Most research on gambling tends to focus on its apparent irrationality at the individual level (e.g., Gilovich, 1983; Rogers, 1998; Wagenaar, 1988; but see McMillen, 1996, pp. 11–12). Psychological aspects of gambling such as this woman's "entrapment" (increasing commitment to a failing course of action in betting), the "near miss" (the motivation to continue betting stemming from coming close to the winning number), and the gambler's fallacy (the belief deviations from chance such as heads in a coin toss will be evened out by more "tails" in the future) (see Ariyabuddhiphongs & Phengphol, 2008) were also present in Zhong Village, but they can neither explain the sudden rise of the lottery fever nor its rise in similar forms in Taiwan and rural mainland China. All the talk in the village attracted people to the betting even more. There was a sense of frenzy about the lottery that was palpable. It was hard, even for us, to hear so many people talking about it without being drawn in (and as this study may suggest, we were indeed drawn in). This fever is similar to the stock market *re* (literally "heat") described by Hertz (1998), and is the social aspect of the lottery that we seek to explain here.

Picking Numbers and the Need to be Clever

Since the villagers deny the lottery is random, they see the results as the playing out of fate, luck, and skill. Fate was not a major topic of discussion, however. Most of the conversation was about cleverness (*jiqiao*) and luck

(*yunqi*). Cleverness involves not just intelligence, but a kind of creative street smarts. A university-educated villager gave the example of a race up a mountain; Chinese, he said, will think of other ways to get up the mountain other than just running straight up, for example, by taking a balloon. (This is an interesting image very much at variance with turn of the nineteenth century colonialist images of Chinese as singularly lacking in creativity but willing to do nose-to-the-grindstone work.) He went on to relate this idea of cleverness to a topic that was widely discussed in China in 2002, the issue of cheating in TOEFL, GRE, and SAT exams in China (see Mooney, 2005). Chinese students are taught tricks and techniques for doing well on such tests. For example, they have been told that the listening comprehension part of the TOEFL exam will usually be about situations on a school campus. Also, in most cases where a woman and man disagree in a tape, they should guess the woman is correct and the man is wrong if they do not know for sure. The idea of being clever extends to cram schools paying people to enter the exam to memorize 10 questions each. The cram school then can find the answers, and inform future students what the questions are going to be. My informant felt that if people find such tricks and do well, then they have done nothing wrong; it is the test makers' own fault for having bad tests. Of course, as a result of these "clever" approaches, ETS had just stopped giving computer-based exams and began using special rules for China and Korea, which my informant strongly felt was unfair discrimination against Asians.

Since they believed that with skill and cleverness one could figure out the lottery number, a striking feature of the lottery fever was that people always felt they had just missed it.⁶ The winning number was either a number they considered (but did not buy), near the number they bet on, or it was a better interpretation of a hint they had heard. That first evening, when the number 41 was picked in Zhong Village, my informant's uncle even got mad at his wife because he said he had told her it was going to be 41, but she refused to pick it. Another informant also noted that hindsight in the lottery has often led to couples blaming each other for not buying the correct number.

For each lottery, there are many hints circulating. Newspapers send tip sheets (*caimitu* or *xuanjitu*) covered with many diagrams, numbers, poems, drawings of zodiac animals, and the five elements of feng shui (Fig. 1). Shops and other entrepreneurs also sell such tip sheets since there is profit to be made in producing them. The tip sheets are often just photocopied on A4 paper and often consist of a set of mysterious poems and drawings. They may have short phrases like *yiba he tema* (one eight and extra number), which could be read to mean eight is the number (but of course could be a lot of other things as well).

Bettors using these sheets then seek associations among the numbers and symbols to help them choose a number. One way is to use the five elements – metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Each element is associated with 10 numbers, except one that, because it includes zero which is not a lottery number, has only 9. The numbers are grouped based on the annual almanac and therefore also change every year. In addition, there are 12 animals in the Chinese zodiac, and each animal is associated with 4 numbers, except for the current year that has 5 (for a total of 49). From an outsider's perspective, the fact that each number is linked to multiple other numbers makes the bettors feel their guess was closer to winning than if it was simply one of 49 possible numbers. From the bettor's perspective, this association, when interpreted with skill, greatly narrows the possible numbers and thus significantly improves their odds. One old man explained that in the last drawing he had correctly guessed tiger but, as he only bet on two numbers, he did not get the right one. A girl listening nearby nodded knowingly, adding for our benefit that one has to understand “the deeper profundity” (*limian de aomiao*).

Hints about the correct number also came from books, rumors, and television programs. One program that was widely believed to offer such insightful hints was called Big Pinwheel (*dafengche*). It was a CCTV (state television) children's program that started at 18:05 on weekdays. The program I watched began with a studio piece showing overacting children talking about an occupation and then followed with two Disney cartoons. One of these cartoons was a cat chases mouse type. At one point, the cat contacted a company selling a mouse-catching contraption, but no one seemed to think the phone number or the address of the company was an important hint. The hints should be “deeper,” less obvious. There were about 18 children and men watching and researching the program in a small snack and dried goods shop. No obvious hints emerged from that program, leaving many disappointed.

An example from the Teletubbies illustrates what informants mean by “deep” hints. One episode revolved around bathing. The Teletubbies repeated the phrase “use soap to wash the body clean” (*yong feizao xi ganjing*). In the past, another common name for soap (*feizao*) was (*yangzao*, Western soap). As “Western” and “goat” are pronounced the same, this was interpreted as a sign to bet on “goat” (Xu & Zhao, 2004).

Later that day, before the drawing, we heard another hint in the form of the riddle *san wu liangbian kai* (three, five, two sides open). This could have meant anything. Once we found out the correct number was 15, though, we knew what it meant, thinking, “Oh, 3 times 5 was right!” We felt like the hint was very obvious, and that we should have been able to guess it.

Confirmation bias such as this makes one select data that fits the known number, making it appear that one was close to getting it right, and that with a little more cleverness one could have picked the number in advance.⁷

Five men discussing the numbers told us they did not believe that the number was random. If it *were* random, they said, they would not be interested in participating. It is precisely because one can use one's cleverness that they get hooked. One man gave a couple of examples of hints that had come out. The first was the expression *kan jiu tongqian*, "look at the old bronze coins." Because the coins have a square hole in the middle, he explained, the hint was for the number four. The second was *liang niu dui chang*, "two cows in musical dialog." Since all the numbers are associated with certain animals, and the numbers for the cow are 6, 18, 30, and 42, the answer must have been the double of one of these. Since 30 and 42 cannot be doubled to produce a number under 49 (and thus within the range of the lottery numbers), the answer had to be either 12 or 36. He said that these were easy ones, but that most are more "deep."

Some of these stories of hints and cleverness are told and retold as jokes, especially when a hint is misunderstood or misinterpreted and results in the gambler just missing a chance to win. A young mother told us a story about a man who had lost money and whose wife had left him. A fortune teller told him *yi shou zhua*, to "grab with one hand," which seemed to mean that he should go to convince his wife to come back. It turned out after the lottery number was picked, however, that it must have meant bet on the number five. In another case, someone who worked in the lottery did not feel he could reveal the number directly, but he gave someone 10 apples. When the person took the apples back, his friends asked him, "Did the lottery worker tell you or give you anything?" and he answered "No, just these apples." His friends took the apples as a hint and all bet on the number nine. The problem was that, on his way back home, he had eaten one and forgot to mention it. This was only discovered when the correct number came out as 10. Interestingly, the woman telling the first of these jokes ended her story with, "Who could have known?" And yet, what she meant in telling the story, as with the story of the apples, was that though this was a hard clue, it *could* be guessed.

These hints therefore surface in a diverse set of social situations and, as such, they are key to making the lottery more than an individual experience of risk seeking. They are also clearly a part of the business of the lottery. Bookies are said to produce and deliver hints and charts. Some newspaper articles (e.g., Ma, 2005; Wang & Cao, 2007) say that it adds "interest" to the process of guessing numbers and therefore makes it easier to attract more

participants.⁸ Furthermore, as we described above, it is a way to help people decide what number to buy. It gives people a sense that there are ways to help them guess the number and therefore makes people think it is easier to bet. Some articles even describe these handout sheets as an invention designed by bookies to encourage play (cf. Ye & Luo, 2006), and giving the process of guessing numbers “Chinese” characteristics. Indeed, as in the examples above, when people bet on the right animals but the wrong number they feel that they were close to winning. The above two principles narrow the possible numbers for bettors. Once people decide which animal or element is the correct one, they then can decide which number to bet on from a smaller set. It both reduces the number of choices, and by linking numbers in different ways, reinforces the feeling that, though their result was off, their logic was sound. This gives them hope that they can win the next time.

The Organization of the Underground Lottery

The underground lottery system is organized as a series of levels through which the bets and money flow. The bottom level consists of underground lottery buyers or bettors – *caimin*. News reports in China indicate underground lottery buyers are not distinct in terms of gender, age, or occupation. This confirms our observations in Zhong Village. The only difference is that players are mostly rural, simply because the lottery is more common and less policed in rural and periurban areas. In fact, in some areas more than 90% of villagers are reported to be involved. In those cases, almost everyone in the village bets, regardless of occupation and educational level. In other words, these are normal villagers, even though the media often tries to describe them as “abnormal,” “crazy,” “ignorant,” and even “criminal” (cf. Renmin Gonggan Bao, 2005).

The second level in the system is inhabited by the *xiao zhuangjia*, which literally means “small bookie.” They are essentially the “bet collectors,” the middle people between underground lottery buyers and bookies. Their task is to receive people’s bets and pass the money on to the bookies. In some areas people call bet collectors *shoudanren* (people who collect bets) or *xiedanren* (people who write bets) or *paodanren* (people who run bets). Bet collectors are usually recruited by bookies and in some cases there are also multiple levels of bet collectors. At each level, bet collectors get a 5–10% commission from the betting money that they send back to the bookie. The commission varies and depends on how many other levels there are between the bet collectors and the top bookie.

If a villager wins, the bet collector will receive the prize money from their bookie and give the payout to the winner. Bet collectors are local people and, as such, their role is in fact more important than just to collect the bets. The underground system works largely thanks to the integrity of bet collectors and their ability to transfer money between clients and bookies. While in terms of technical skills almost anyone could be a bet collector, bettors choose someone they would trust to pay their reward if they win. Since the lottery is “underground,” there is no legal protection to guarantee participants get any prize money. This trust is built on social relationships, or *guanxi*, between buyers and bet collectors.

Finally, at the top level of this underground lottery system are the *dazhuangjia*, the bookies, about whom we know very little first hand. Informants say that bookies, as opposed to bet collectors, are usually “outsiders” – people from outside the village. Mainland media in the latter half of the 1990s often described these bookies as mainly Taiwanese or Hong Kong people, although now they claim there are more and more mainland Chinese, often coming from Guangzhou. Both villagers and the media of course claim they are rich. Sometimes the media reports that many bookies are “gangsters,” and that bookies do not contact lottery buyers directly because they need to remain hidden and mysterious. On the other hand, one informant suggested that some bet collectors and local bookies may only be pretending to have the backing of higher-level bookies; there is no way for us to know.⁹ All client contact is conducted through bet collectors. Sometimes bet collectors do not even contact bookies directly in a physical sense. Bet collectors use telephones or fax machines to pass their betting list to the bookies, and they reportedly transfer betting money through banks, by mail, and even via the Internet (Gu & Fu, 2007; see also Wei, 2004). Winners do not get a share of a pot, but returns that are known in advance. This prevents the bookies from cheating by underreporting their total pool and underpaying winners. But it requires bookies to link with larger bookies to hedge their risk, or else a random series of multiple lottery winners could wipe them out. The larger scale makes this less likely.

Many local magazine articles portray bookies as “outsiders who suck up local capital through the underground lottery” causing the local economy to be more backward than it should be. Furthermore, after bookies “suck up” local capital, they then transfer the money “outside” the area since they are “outsiders.” Hu (2007), for example, says that in Xiushui County of Jiangxi Province, a local official said that at the peak of the underground lottery

(in 2004), savings in the county fell by 10 million yuan (US\$1.2 million) in just one month.¹⁰ What makes bookies “bad” to such commentators is not only that they withdraw capital from savings and other businesses but also that they transfer it to the “outside.” This argument shifts the blame for the lottery to “outsiders” and therefore diminishes the blame falling on the local participants, the “insiders.” Creating an image of evil outsiders makes the lottery appear more dangerous to society, while also avoiding blaming the majority that participates in it. At the same time, “insiders” who participate locally are also tainted indirectly by being portrayed as complicit in the flow of money out from the community.

Newspapers often compare the bookies’ underground organizations to multi-level marketing organizations – *chuanxiao*. Multi-level marketing is illegal in mainland China because the government was suspicious of their organization and their ecstatic meetings where they motivated their sales force to sell more. Bookies recruit more bet collectors in different villages to sell more tickets and promote the underground lottery. These collectors try to attract more bettors and even hire other bet collectors to make more money such that a pyramid-like structure can develop. The association with multi-level marketing is intended to associate the lotteries with other organizations that are commonly seen as dangerous and even seditious in the government’s attempt to fight them.

PICKING NUMBERS: SKILL, FATE, AND LUCK

As mentioned above, the numbers are not viewed as random; picking the correct one is thought to require intelligence and cleverness. In addition to television programs and newspaper sheets, people also may seek key signs from dreams, the murmurings of people with psychological disorders, or even from shamans. In a fishing village in Fujian, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday after 1:00 p.m., people visit each other asking: “What (sign) did you see today?” (*ni jintian kan shenme*). This question has several meanings. It asks what number the person is thinking of buying that day. But it also asks whether they have seen any sign or portent. The question is meant to elicit whether he/she has gotten anything out of the tip sheets, has understood something from the poems, or has been able to figure out what animal will come up based on a dream, TV show, or the news. The typical answer is to name one of the animals of the zodiac, or an inspiration from a newspaper or TV show rather than any specific number.

Destiny and Fate

When people pick the right number and win, they usually explain it as being due to destiny. They use the expression *mingzhong zhuding*, which means predestined or “decreed by fate.” The character *ming* means both life and fate (see Harrell, 1987). It can be used to explain a fortunate or unfortunate event. An event can be said to have happened because someone’s *ming* is good or bad, that is, it was his or her fate. In the case of the lottery, people explain winning as due to their *ming* being good. It implies that if someone has the right *ming*, they will win in any case. It is just a matter of time. This concept reduces any envy toward people who win the lottery because it is seen as their *ming* or destiny, something that a higher force has allowed to happen, instead of something earned through individual action and, perhaps, immoral behavior.

On the other hand, when people explain why they guessed the wrong number, they tend to use the concept of luck, *yunqi*. Luck can be both positive and negative, depending on how people use it. If people want to explain why they failed at something, they explain it as due to bad luck (*yunqi bu hao*), thereby emphasizing the random nature of life. *Yunqi* can also be used to play down something good. For instance, if people congratulate someone’s success, the person often responds “it is just good luck” (see also Barnett, 1962, pp. 200–201). People use this expression to show humility, attributing success to good luck instead of individual ability or hard work. Success and failure are then not (or at least not only) due to their ability, but due to their good or bad luck. In the underground lottery, however, people only describe their *failure* to guess the wrong number as due to their bad luck. This connotes a “temporary” condition, meaning “I failed because my luck was bad this time, but it does not mean my destiny is bad.” To some extent, “bad luck” attributions are more a way of talking about and explaining failure, since cleverness and hard work in analyzing the signs and numbers is valued, with the assumption that preparation helps make good luck more likely.

It may seem that the concepts of “destiny” and “luck” are contradictory because if we believe our destiny is pre-determined, then there is no space for luck. On the other hand, if we believe good and bad things happen just as a matter of luck, then there is no role for “destiny.”¹¹ These concepts are problematic only if we see them as independent and separate concepts, however. Instead, it is better if we see these two concepts as articulating with one another and as working at different levels (cf. Harrell, 1987).

An example will show how the concepts of destiny and luck articulate. The Chinese saying *shilai yunzhuān* means “fortune is smiling” or more literally, “when the time comes, your luck will change for the better.” It does not deny the existence of destiny, but says destiny is changeable as long as your luck changes. The Che Gong temple in Hong Kong’s New Territories is famous for its pinwheels. People go to the temple to spin the wheels in order to change their *yun* (luck). In Taiwan, the phrase *zhuānyun* (*chhut-ūn* in Hokkien) expresses the idea that one’s luck has changed for the better. Moreover, “luck” is relatively short term while “destiny” is long term (*ibid.*, 1987, p. 100). Luck allows people to continue to hope without feeling despair: bad things have happened to you because your luck is bad now, but your destiny is not necessarily bad. In any case, you cannot know if it is bad or good until you reach the end of your life (*ibid.*). The two concepts of luck and destiny are very important to understanding how people pick numbers in the underground lottery because they provide a cultural logic to justify continued participation, especially after losses. Furthermore, playing the lottery was a simple way of testing one’s fate, as luck in one area like the lottery was believed to indicate the state of one’s fate more generally.

Magical Bases for Picking Numbers

The many ways for guessing numbers can be divided into two types: one is through magical means and the other is through informational means. This distinction is an analytic one; people use multiple ways to guess numbers and individual cases may be difficult to put in only one of the two types. Dreams are one of many magical ways to seek signs. For example, when people dream about someone, the zodiac animal of the person’s birth year or, if the person is dead, the year of their death, can be interpreted as a sign that the number will be one of the four or five numbers associated with that sign of the zodiac. In addition, if people dream about a beggar or a stranger, this could be interpreted as a sign to choose a number associated with monkey. Furthermore, sometimes people claim gods or ancestors tell them the number in their dream.

Beyond dreams, people seek numbers from almanacs since the assignment of the five elements is based on the almanac. Other magical methods include listening to people with psychological disorders, children’s meaningless babbling, and interpreting the images people see while they are halfway between wakefulness and sleep (hypnagogic and hypnopompic dreams).

Another magical way to guess numbers depends on random events. When one of our assistants visited her home village, a villager decided to buy a number associated with the rabbit because the assistant was born in the year of the rabbit, and the villager won. So when she and her boyfriend recently revisited the village again, villagers decided to buy rabbit numbers again because this time there were two rabbits visiting, though this time they lost. Any random event in daily life can be interpreted as a sign for guessing numbers.

The idea behind these magical signs is *tianji* (message from heaven) or *xuanji* (mysterious message). The terms indicate that there are messages out there in daily life and that these messages are sent by some kind of higher power that determines people's destiny. People seek "messages" to understand their destiny and their luck at that moment, and to see if it is their destiny to win the lottery.

Inside Information for Picking Numbers

Another way to pick numbers is by seeking signs from informational sources. Rumors accompanying the underground lottery in China play a major role. One of the most important rumors is that the winning numbers are determined in advance. One version of this rumor had it that though we participated in the 77th drawing of the numbers of the year, the numbers up to the 100th drawing had already been decided (*yijing gei renjia dingxialaile*, literally "it has already been set by people"). A more elaborate version holds that the Hong Kong Lottery draws all the winning numbers (a total of 108 numbers) for a year at the end of previous year and locks them all up in a safe-deposit box in a bank. For each drawing, the Hong Kong Lottery opens the safe-deposit box and then announces the winning number. This not only implies that the numbers are determined in advance, but also that there are people who know the numbers. Building on this rumor are other widespread rumors that detail how such persons send messages to reveal the winning number. Given the knowledge provided by these rumors, the issue becomes whether villagers can be smart enough to find the right source and be able to "see" the signs that lead to the right number. After watching the cat and mouse cartoon mentioned above and as my assistant and I (Bosco) left the dried goods and snacks shop, one relative of my assistant, asked me, "If you knew the number, you would tell me, right?" He seemed to doubt that I did not know the number. Both because I was from Hong Kong, and a professor who was therefore supposedly smart, he and several others

believed I should be able to figure it out. My claim of ignorance led to comments that my specialty was not very useful; I was clearly a pointy-headed professor, in their eyes.

One rumor in a village in Guangxi Province held that wealthy Hong Kong bosses wanted to fight the bookies who organize the lottery. The bosses have sent 10 people who know the bonus number in advance (local people call them the “Bonus Number Kings”) to cities and counties near Nanning, the capital of Guangxi. As a result, villagers seek out “outsiders” in their village and nearby cities, especially people from Hong Kong, to ask them what the special number is, or at least to give them a sign.

There are also rumors that the mainland government is involved in sending messages revealing the numbers. People believe there are signs in some TV programs on CCTV – China’s national broadcaster (see above). They say that because the government wants to prohibit the underground lottery in China but cannot prohibit the Hong Kong Lottery in Hong Kong, due to the “One Country, Two Systems” policy under which Hong Kong was reunited with China, it takes covert action by sending messages on its TV programs. If many people get these messages, the rumor goes, then the people will win, which means the bookies will lose. As more and more bookies lose money, the bookies will give up conducting the lottery in China for lack of profit. In other words, the government’s intention is to fight the bookies by helping the common bettor win by sending messages on TV programs that broadcast on government stations.

In a related rumor, the government is said to be fighting against the religious persons believed to be controlling the Hong Kong Lottery. Many of the hint sheets have statements on them that claim they come from Hong Kong and are of supernatural origin. Some claim to speak on behalf of Wong Tai Sin (a major temple deity in Hong Kong – see Lang & Ragvald, 1993), Bai Guniang, or Zhen Daoren (Ma, 2005). The rumor claims that in order to prevent these religious groups from winning all the money from China, the government sends messages to people to make them win the money instead.

According to one source, in Fujian the two most “authoritative” programs are a children’s program named *Qiqiaoban* and a cooking program named *Tiantian yinshi* on CCTV (*Dushi Xiaofei Bao*, 2004). The way people watch and analyze the signs from these programs very much depends on individual skill. For example, one article reports how a villager from Liaoning Province watched a cooking show one day in search of clues. He carefully counted the number of times (37) that the host chopped food with his knife during the show and bet on that number (*Nanfangwang*, 2007). Another villager from Hunan also sought the number in this cooking

program. The dish that day was crabs in soybean sauce and there were a total of eight crabs in one dish. At the end of the program, the cook made a “victory” hand gesture. So the villager decided the number must be eight because each crab has eight feet and there are totally eight crabs in a dish and the “V” hand gesture also means eight in that village. Besides the above two programs, people also seek a sign from the weather report, the evening news, and the Teletubbies on CCTV (see also above). One particular episode of Teletubbies showed a cat, and the people watching the show interpreted this as a hint to bet on a “tiger” number because the tiger is in the cat family. The winning number was indeed a tiger number (Chen, 2004).¹²

THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE LOTTERY IS RIGGED

As mentioned, villagers do not believe that the numbers are selected at random. They believe they have been decided well in advance, and thus can be determined through intelligent research. A young mother we interviewed said it was like “guessing riddles” (*cai miyu*).

We tried to explore the question of why and how information on the numbers was being revealed. In whose interest was it for the lottery number to be released to villagers? Who with the knowledge of the number would produce the hint sheets with daoist-inspired charms and numbers distributed with the newspaper? If someone knew the information, why not use that information to win the lottery himself, or sell the information to others? These were puzzling questions to informants, reminiscent of Evans-Pritchard’s (1976) hypothetical question about what would happen if one continued feeding *benge* to a chicken (It would explode!). Though some explained these sources with the types of stories recounted above of efforts by the central government or the Hong Kong Jockey Club to fight mainland bookies by making them lose money on the lottery, most informants were not very clear about why the numbers can be guessed.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club does a great deal to reassure the public of the fairness of the lottery, that is, that the selection of numbers is random. The numbers are selected live on television, with prominent persons invited to witness the drawing in person to attest to its fairness. The machine is made of clear plastic, so viewers can see the balls being mixed up in the hopper and then sliding down the ramp, one after the other. The draw is shown live on one of Hong Kong’s two terrestrial channels.

Informants in China do not know this, however. Even though all Hong Kong stations are widely rebroadcast in the Pearl River Delta and much of

Guangdong, the PRC authorities have banned broadcasting of the lottery draw. This is done to try to dampen the widespread interest in Hong Kong's lottery, and to try to prevent its use in underground lotteries throughout South China. None of the villagers had seen the drawing process, even those who had worked in Shenzhen, close to Hong Kong. The secrecy and lack of information caused by the government therefore made it easy to believe that the lottery was corrupt. Informants in Shunde who have been able to see the drawing live on television (because it was not blacked out there for a time), however, still believe there is cheating, noting that computers can be controlled by humans.¹³

When villagers say the numbers are picked in advance, however, they do not only mean that they were known in Hong Kong. They believe that the process is corrupt, so that numbers are entered from the side, for example. My assistant, by way of explanation, said that if humans can clone humans, then why is it not possible to cheat at a lottery? To him, if one can even make a fake human, a copy of oneself, then why is it hard to believe that people would be able to cheat at Mark Six? This was a revealing analogy, because for us, the logic was the exact opposite: if our science is good enough to clone humans, then it should be possible to run a fair lottery. We began from an assumption of trust, while he and the villagers began with the assumption that one could not trust the authorities. Our view was more trusting, but perhaps naïve.

Corruption and cheating is thus obviously a major theme of this rumor; investments by the rich and powerful might be considered "gamblers" by economists, but most wealthy investors have connections and contacts that make their investments more secure than the little person's. Small investors are just trying to get similar inside information. What at first seems irrational is actually not only rational, but a political statement. Rapacious officials and the conversion of public property to private control and use are major problems and topics of discussion in China and around the capitalist world. The culture of capitalism insists on viewing success in business as an individual matter, but often it depends on inside information and government contacts. The lottery being rigged is believable at least in part because in China, at least, everyone recognizes the importance of connections.

At the same time, however, the idea that the numbers can be known may in part reflect the Confucian view that the world is always knowable. "According to Judith Zeitlin, in traditional Chinese thinking nothing is really unknowable; people consider certain things as strange only because they know little about them. Therefore, strangeness reflects the subject's own ignorance and can help open his or her eyes. . . . The general response of traditional Chinese

thinking to “strangeness” is: “just read them carefully enough, and you will always find the moral order of the ten thousand things” (Pang, 2004, pp. 308–309, citing; Zeitlin, 1993, pp. 15–25). Thus, when farmers believe that if they study tip sheets, TV programs, and rumors enough, they can figure out what the number will be, they are applying an old Confucian attitude toward the world. This Confucian view is not very different from the Enlightenment view that science would be able to explain all. Lottery bettors have, however, applied this rational idea in this case with irrational results.

This lottery fever can also be viewed as a form of desperation, a sign of the fear over the growing gap between rich and poor, between city and countryside. Families see some neighbors make a fortune, and worry they are being left behind. We often heard complaints about the low quality of teachers and of poor rural schools, which also reflect fear that village children are disadvantaged and left behind.¹⁴ Yet, the lottery should not be taken as a game of the poor. The players are only relatively poor, and in many cases the most frequent players were locally successful business people with the capital to spend and the desire to compare themselves to richer contacts in the cities.

Previous researchers on Chinese gambling have noted that lotteries and other games of chance are common and not viewed negatively unless they impact the gambler’s family relationships and work. Speaking of Cantonese in American Chinatowns, Barnett (1962, p. 201) wrote, “Attitudes towards gambling here are ambivalent, reflecting the functional relationship between gambling and business.” The idea that Barnett describes, that Chinese see a similarity between business and gambling, has been often noted. It focuses especially on the importance of luck, in addition to hard work and good planning, in any business outcome. This helps explain informants’ insistence that buying lottery numbers is an investment (discussed above). It reflects not a practical attempt to get a return on investment, but the idea of trying one’s luck, which is going to be necessary to break out of the low income present. Gambling is an affirmation of the speculative spirit, almost as if one can win by speculating alone – which is not unreasonable since others are doing so successfully.

Also significant is that China’s underground lotteries use the Hong Kong Mark Six to select their winning number, rather than just picking a number locally. The problem with picking a number locally is that villagers might suspect that the bookies have chosen the number based on the local bets. For example, if no one had bet on the number 17, the bookie has an incentive to pick 17 as the winning number to avoid paying anyone the prize money. Using the Hong Kong number makes the lottery more trustworthy and transparent. Yet, paradoxically, villagers felt at the same time that the

Hong Kong lottery is rigged. It seems contradictory that the Hong Kong number is both more transparent and rigged at the same time. But this apparent contradiction is resolved when one realizes that bettors are playing against local bookies, or at least against provincial-level bookies, and that Hong Kong is viewed as outside their system and control. Thus, using the Hong Kong number protects bettors from bookies' fraud, even as it is still assumed to be rigged. Though the Hong Kong lottery is corrupt (since everything is controlled by someone), since it is not under the control of the mainland bookies, it is still possible, they believe, for local bettors to win, if they are lucky. This accurately reflects the villagers' view that those with power and connections benefit most from the economy. All the poor can do is hope that with some luck, they can also gather some profits.

SKILL WITH MONEY

Chinese farmers have had experience with a highly commercialized economy since the Song Dynasty (960–1279).¹⁵ Every so-called peasant in China had experience buying and selling agricultural products, land, and labor on the market. Chinese have valued discipline, parsimony, and long hours of work, although like most pre-capitalist cultures (and perhaps most humans), they have sought to escape work, in their case through landownership and gentry privilege. Desire for material wealth is entirely acceptable in Chinese society; it is not the case that “greed is good” but that “greed is normal.” In contrast, in much of Africa and New Guinea, “Inordinate desire is seen as greed and greed lies at the core of witchcraft” (Stewart & Strathern, 2004, p. 137). China has not had such notions of witchcraft, and jealousy over wealth is not common. Chinese families were like small firms, diversifying income streams by placing sons in different occupations, investing capital, and borrowing and lending money. Twenty-five years of collectivized agriculture did not eliminate this tradition.

Thus, one cannot understand the lottery as the product of peasants unsophisticated in the use of money. Many studies of lotteries and pyramid schemes in other parts of the world argue that one factor promoting pyramid schemes and similar “occult economies” is the sudden arrival of the capitalist economy, which leads people to view the growth of money as magical and open to occult manipulation (e.g., see Jarvis, 2000; Verdery, 1995, p. 656). In the Chinese case, however, this argument cannot stand up to scrutiny. The economy has long been monetized and commercialized. It is instead, we argue, a case of the entrepreneurial spirit intensified to the point

of going awry. The Chinese case has nothing to do with commercialization but is due to rising inequality and frustration at how those with power and connections are able to enrich themselves. Bettors hope that with the same luck and cleverness as the party cadres and new entrepreneurs, they too can make a sudden windfall.

It is common to view lotteries as irrational because a lottery pays back less than what it takes in. Taking out the bookies' profits, the lottery is less than zero-sum. But the same can be said of day-traders in US stocks, which are also playing a below zero-sum game when one includes the brokerage fees. Transaction costs quickly exceed the rate of growth of the securities themselves. An example can illustrate how sophisticated our informants' betting strategies and logics are. We have been told that some bettors use a sophisticated hedging strategy, which is known as *fang* (defend). In betting on the color of the bonus number ball, there are three choices: red, green, and blue. A bet of ¥100 that the blue ball will win can be hedged with a ¥50 bet on the green ball in case his main choice is wrong. When the underground lottery was popular in Taiwan, Taiwanese often used this strategy as well. They would spend most of their money on a "main number" (*zhuma*) and a lesser amount of money on a "backup number" (*fuma*) in order to spread the risk.

This strategy would reduce the loss, however, only when the second choice is the winning choice. It increased the loss if the third color was chosen, and reduced the gains if the first color was chosen. In other words, in most conditions, and assuming the drawing is random, it actually maximizes the bettor's losses. The only thing it did was to perhaps reduce psychological uncertainty. This strategy is very interesting if we contrast it to gambling behavior as described by psychology. Gamblers are often described as risk seekers, and it is often assumed in the United States that gamblers are seeking the thrill of challenging fate. However, this strategy shows that some gamblers consciously seek a "rational" way to reduce and distribute their risk, although it turns out not to actually work. Their intention shows that people who participate in the underground lottery are not just risk seekers, but are seeking a "rational" way to bet.

THE LOTTERY IN TAIWAN IN THE 1980s

The underground lottery was also tremendously popular in Taiwan in the mid-to-late 1980s, having begun in the winter of 1985 in the central area

of the country. It was known as *Dajiale* (Everybody's Happy), and relied on the numbers drawn by the state lottery. Early on in the Taiwan craze in 1986, an informal and conservative estimate was that NT\$10 billion (US\$250 million) were spent on the underground lottery and that about three million people participated in it (*China Times*, 1986). In 1989, the Taiwan government abandoned the state lottery because the underground lottery, based on the state lottery, had become so popular that the entire island seemed to come to a stop for the drawing. Ending the state lottery did not kill the underground lottery as had been hoped, however. Two months later, the underground lottery re-emerged, using the Hong Kong Mark Six numbers and was renamed *Liuhecai*, the same name used in Hong Kong and in Zhong Village in 2002. A survey showed that 85.6% of people in Taiwan participated (Hong, 1990). The popularity of the underground lottery gradually decreased over the 1990s, but it still exists today.

Research conducted on Taiwan showed that workers participated the most in this lottery, and that it remained most popular in central Taiwan, where it had begun and where many workers were becoming increasingly marginalized by competition from lower-wage countries (Qu, 1990). To a considerable degree, the lottery was driven by a working class desperate to avoid impoverishment. After over a decade of rapid economic growth, capital was abundant, but there were not enough profitable ways to invest it, and rising wages, competition from abroad, and political uncertainty had created a feeling of insecurity (Weller, 1994). As mentioned above, it is not the lack of sophistication in the market economy, but the accompanying frustrations and desires of consumer capitalism, and the growing gap in wealth, that underlies the lottery craze.

What the Chinese case has in common with the 1980s Taiwanese case is rapid growth and increasing inequality. Though a few families in Zhong Village were impoverished by new neoliberal policies, the vast majority were at least slightly better, with a few dramatically better off. The remarkable similarity with Taiwan's lottery fever of almost 20 years earlier shows, in addition, that the lottery has little if anything to do with the unrealized millenarian ideology of socialism, since Taiwan has never had such an official ideology.¹⁶ Both mainland China and Taiwan do share common ideas about destiny, luck, and cleverness, and a similar experience of rapid economic growth that benefits most, but benefits the few considerably more than the majority.

CONCLUSIONS

The lottery in southern China needs to be understood within the context of China's almost magically rapid economic growth. This growth of roughly 10% per year has been one of the fastest in human history. Some observers have been predicting China's implosion or collapse for at least 15 years (e.g., see Kristof, 1993; Chang, 2001). How China's economy can grow so rapidly is, in fact, a bit of a mystery even to modern scholars. China's ability to build four-lane highways even to remote towns like Zhong Village is puzzling, especially when compared to both the inability of the Philippines and many other developing countries to build similar infrastructure and the continuing gaps in infrastructure existing immediately alongside these accomplishments in China. Some villagers have become extremely rich, either by being at the right place at the right time, or by having the right connections in the right places. The lottery seems less irrational when one sees it in the context of an economy where luck seems to play a large role.

We have found that the Chinese underground lottery is far from irrational; if anything, it stems from an excessive confidence in the power of rational knowledge. If we take the lottery numbers not as random, but as knowable, the betting practices employed by the people of Zhong Village and elsewhere in China suddenly closely resemble investment practices that are largely seen to be logical within a capitalist market.¹⁷ Betting here may be wrapped up in local significances, but it is also based on a balance between luck and destiny, a balance that links it closely to the Taiwan lottery craze of the late 1980s. While it is tempting, perhaps, for Western readers to feel superior to the villagers described in this research, it is important to remember that tens of thousands of Americans engage in "day-trading" and other speculative stock trading despite almost universal expert opinion that it is irrational. For example, Graham (1949, p. viii), the author recommended by Berkshire Hathaway CEO and billionaire Warren Buffett, lists as his first rule: "If you speculate you will (most probably) lose your money in the end." Speculation is not prohibited in developed markets because it helps make a market in securities. But for most individuals it is a foolish practice. The irrationality of the informal lottery thus has a remarkable similarity to the recent internet and real estate bubbles in industrialized countries; internet stocks and homes were expected to continue to grow in value, and like the lottery, offered the prospect of easy money, despite warnings and criticisms that were not heeded because of crowd behavior.

The bookies who collect the money are all fellow villagers, though they are backed by higher-level bookies in towns. Villagers view the bookies' business as a risky business, and perhaps as a bit shady, but then all business is shady in post-socialist China. Moreover, the lottery is mostly shady because the state defines it as such and tries to stamp it out, which ironically makes people suspect that it is not shady after all, if the government is so much against it. People correctly see that the state is protecting its interests when it prevents informal lotteries from competing with the state lotteries. The two main state lotteries are the Sports Lottery (*tiyu caipiao*, known as *tici* for short) and the Social Welfare Lottery (*shehui fuli caipiao*). Thus, the state not only seeks to prevent underground lotteries because they drain capital from the village economy, cause social problems, and undermine state control, but also because the underground lotteries compete directly with state lotteries for funds. In conversations with villagers, it seemed that the state's attempts to suppress the underground lottery tended to confirm in villagers' minds that the state lottery did not offer opportunities to win. They assumed that the authorities want to make the money for themselves, and so do not want ordinary people to invest in the truly profitable lottery, the underground lottery.

Davis (2006, p. 518) has recently noted that "There is a long tradition within the social sciences of viewing gambling as a form of symbolic resistance against authority or societal norms," and this chapter fits into this tradition. Participants who are buffeted by large economic and political forces seek to control their fate through essentially magical means, even if that control is illusory. As has been shown by other scholars who have discussed symbolic resistance, this resistance is not internally consistent, nor is it politically effective (*ibid.*, p. 519). We have shown how the lottery practices build on traditional ideas about fate and luck, how they emerged in Taiwan, and have spread and evolved in the mainland. The explanations for why or how the lottery is rigged are varied, internally contradictory, and even illogical. But they represent "hidden transcripts" of resistance (*ibid.*; Keesing, 1992; Scott, 1990) to the imposition of neoliberal policies and the enrichment by cadres in rural China. They are also an opposition to the intensification of work that the new reform policies were intended to produce. Only in the rural hinterland, where most young people between 18 and 40 have left for work, do people have time to speculate about lottery numbers. As one person put it, people working overtime do not have time for the lottery. And the very sociability of it – the fact that everyone plays, and even people who do not get along can discuss the numbers – makes it contrast with the increasingly individualized and anomic social relations of

reform era China. Rural areas are also where economic growth has been slowest, and where there is less capital available for business. It is the rural areas, along with farmers and workers, who are being left behind by the rapid growth of the reform era Chinese economy.

China has shifted from collectivist policies that focused on production to neoliberal policies that focus on profit. In a well-run economy, ideally, production and profit should overlap. In the consumer capitalist economy, however, we increasingly see value and profit generated not by production but by control over capital, information, and intellectual property. The new consumer capitalist economy has led to fantasies of easy money, as can be seen in investment bubbles, and the phenomenal growth in gambling (so-called gaming) in the United States and Britain since the 1990s. The Chinese case is therefore just one example of a much wider explosive growth of popular gambling and its incorporation into the nation-state (see Comaroff & Comaroff, 2001, p. 297). Gambling mirrors and mimics the fantastic ability of the consumer capitalist economy to produce fantastic wealth through control of key nodes in the economy, rather than through production. The lottery captures the alchemy of neoliberalism: “to yield wealth without production, value without effort” (*ibid.*, pp. 313–314). And the lottery is another example of what Comaroff and Comaroff (1999, p. 283) call “millennial capitalism – that odd fusion of the modern and the post-modern, of hope and hopelessness, of utility and futility, of promise and its perversions.” We have described the lottery as a “fever” because we expect it to pass; it is, after all, irrational and maladaptive for the new economy. In a short time, Chinese rural residents will become accustomed to the logic of the new economy, and the lottery will fade, and probably not even remain as a memory. But as we see in the United States and elsewhere, the decline of this particular lottery fever does not imply that the confluence of factors that brought it about will not continue to shape future movements and desires.

NOTES

1. The research was on the rise of consumerism in China and focused on the rapid rise in popularity of branded soap and shampoo. This work was thus partially supported by a grant from the Research Grants Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China (Project No. CUHK 4348/01H). Fieldwork involved interviews with 25 families in 3 villages or neighborhoods in the Shanghai/Zhejiang region, in Guangdong Province, and Guangxi Province. Each interview lasted about 30 min, and the lead author spent about one week in the village/neighborhood,

conducting family interviews as well as visiting shops and other area stores and informants.

2. One informant in Shenzhen said he heard about it as early as 1988, while Xue (2003) states that the underground lottery started in 1991. Li (1991) reported in the *China Times* in Taipei that some Taiwanese were in Guangzhou as bookies to run the underground lottery. However, Wu and Li (2002) say that it first appeared in eastern Guangdong in the later half of 1999.

3. Other names for the lottery in China include *waiwei liuhecai* (outside [Hong Kong] lottery), *sicai* (private lottery), *waiwei maima* (numbers bought outside [of Hong Kong]), and *maima* (buying numbers).

4. The difference between speculation and investment is hard to define. In the United States, around 1900 there was a concerted effort to distinguish regular trading based on company fundamentals from “speculation” based on pricing trends, so as to allow the first to appear moral. The stock market was to be raised above gambling, so that a crackdown on speculation would still allow (and might even improve) the functioning of the market. At the same time, regulators saw speculators as playing a key role in smoothing out commodities markets and preventing all of the fluctuations of price from directly affecting investments by those directly involved in the buying and selling of the actual commodity (see Markham, 2002).

5. The Atlantic Lottery Corporation (in Canada) has payouts of between 93% and 95% on video lottery games (Atlantic Lottery Corporation, 2008), and casinos also generally pay out on the order of 97% of revenues. State lotteries in the United States pay much less, however; Campbell and Gillespie (2002, p. 2) say the average payout rate is only 53%, in part because administrative costs are usually over 40% of revenue. Hong Kong’s Mark Six only pays 54% of its takings as prizes, another 25% is paid as lottery duty, 15% goes to the Lotteries Fund (charity), and 6% is Jockey Club commission (Jockey Club, 2008). These state lotteries justify the lower payout by saying the lotteries are raising money for charity or for public goods like education. A payout rate of about 78% is high when compared to state lotteries, but much lower than the payout rate in commercial gaming.

6. Reid (1986) argues that the “near miss” is not a significant inducement to gambling over the long term in games of chance, but others have argued that it is indeed a factor (e.g., Ariyabuddhiphongs & Phengphol, 2008; Côté, Caron, Aubert, Desrochers, & Ladouceur, 2003; Kassinove & Schare, 2001). As we have noted, however, our informants deny that the lottery is a game of chance.

7. In contrast to psychological research on “near misses” (e.g., Ariyabuddhiphongs & Phengphol, 2008; Kassinove & Schare, 2001), the “near miss” here was created by the informants themselves. Most gambling research focuses on games like slot machines or roulette, where it seems clear what a “near miss” is (e.g., the ball in the wheel is next to the winning number or only three of four numbers came up correctly on the machine). In this case, however, we see informants actively constructing “near misses.”

8. Similar tip sheets are also published for the state lottery. We have four examples from the city of Xi’an. One called *Cai Jing (Picker’s Bible)* is four pages (i.e., a single page of newspaper broadsheet) of tables of past winning numbers highlighting trends. The *Shaanxi Fengcai (Shaanxi Elegance)* is a four page tabloid

size supplement that is distributed free. The *Shaanxi Ticai* (*Shaanxi Sports Lottery*) is eight pages tabloid, and marked on the masthead as *neibu ziliao* (internal secret material, officially only for Communist Party members!). The fourth is Xi'an's *Meibao* (*Beauty Weekly*) which devoted its July 28, 2005, issue to the fourth anniversary of the Sports Lottery, and included 13 pages of charts. These official publications provide data in interesting tables and charts. The informal hint sheets have poems, drawings, and other mystical hints.

9. This is especially dangerous because villagers with some personal authority can influence many villagers to buy the same number, and if that number wins, the bookie may lose heavily in one particular lottery, since the payout is fixed and not based on the overall size of the pot.

10. Guo (2005) reports on another case, in Anhua County, Hunan Province, where savings in the county decreased rapidly, showing the loss of capital and the fact that people had stopped working and saving during the lottery fever. Between 18 and 27 of October 2004, savings suddenly decreased by ¥66,000,000 (almost US\$8 million) in the 17 branches of Agricultural Village Trust Association (*Nongcun xinyongshe*). In the same month, there was a ¥6,000,000 (US\$720,000) decrease at Development Bank (*Jianshe yinhang*).

11. Max Weber (1958) uses the conflict between success based on individual effort and predestination to show a drive towards accumulation led to the rise of capitalism in Europe. Here, however, we see a similar conflict affecting attitudes toward gambling, though it obviously also affects attitudes toward investment and business. As Oxfeld (1993) showed, gambling and investment are both types of risk taking embedded in the same cultural system. The ability to gamble shows one to be a capable person. As one of her informants put it, "It is the clever one who gambles. Can the stupid person take any action? No, they can't!" (*ibid.*, p. 111).

12. In some parts of Fujian Province it is possible to see television programs from Taiwan. The Teletubbies were popular as a source of signs even when the program was broadcast from Taiwan. Other children's programs and the news programs from Taiwan based television were also watched for signs. People will also tend to seek signs from local newspapers, rather than national newspaper seemingly contradicting their reliance on the national based CCTV shows. For example, if they see news about chicken or even KFC on the front page, then it indicates that the rooster is the sign so people should seek numbers in the rooster set. Government television (CCTV) is said to provide hints to fight the bookies, but we have not been able to explain why local newspapers and Taiwan television programs are believed to provide signs for numbers, except the broader idea that insiders know and the information is being spread for their own reasons.

13. At the same time, while we can see the lottery on TV in Hong Kong, we have no way of knowing that the program really is live, and has not been taped earlier, or even months earlier, as villagers claim.

14. That the lottery is a critique of the powerful can also be seen in the inversion which has children and mentally ill or handicapped persons as able to ascertain the numbers.

15. On Chinese sophistication with money, see Freedman (1979), Gardella (1992), and Gates (1996).

16. Taiwanese influence in setting up the mainland lotteries does not undermine our point because we are interested in why it spread and became such a craze, something that its introduction alone could not have accomplished.

17. The idea that complex random events can be known in advance is not only believed by rural peasants but has parallels in the most modern sectors of China's economy. *The New York Times* (Bradsher, 2008) reports that during the summer of 2008, Chinese officials blamed the United States for losses China suffered from holding US bonds. Many mid level policy makers believed that the United States had deliberately tricked China into purchasing its securities, knowing that a plunge in their value was imminent. These policy makers thought that the Americans must have known, just as peasants believed we (the researchers) knew the numbers "already selected" in Hong Kong.

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SUPERMARKETIZATION, CONSUMER CHOICES, AND THE CHANGING FOOD RETAIL MARKET STRUCTURE: THE CASE OF CITLALICALLI, MEXICO

Jayant Anand

ABSTRACT

This chapter evaluates the proliferation of supermarkets in developing countries using data collected between May 2005 and June 2006 in Citlalicalli, Mexico. Contrary to the experience of most developed countries, this study revealed that supermarkets and small retailers can coexist by catering to different income groups and product categories. Consumer choices are driven by the desire to reduce transaction costs in terms of time and money. In striking a balance between the two, consumers look for retail outlets that offer them the best value for their money with the least amount of time spent in shopping trips. Location of the store plays a critical role in buying choices that consumers make. In developing countries, generally, only high-income consumers can afford to own cars and choose to buy most products in supermarkets. Consumers without cars buy frequently purchased goods (foods) in small stores and infrequently purchased goods (consumer durables) in supermarkets.

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INTRODUCTION

In the developed West, the birth of supermarkets, their proliferation, and their current dominance of the retail market all occurred over the last 150 years (Bucklin, 1972). However, supermarkets have made inroads into the developing world in comparatively recent times. While consumers in countries like India (Kumar, 2006) have only recently been exposed to large retail chains, consumers in many Latin American countries have been exposed to large-format retail stores since the 1940s (Reardon, Timmer, Barrett, & Berdegué, 2003). In this chapter, I refer to the proliferation and domination of large-format retail outlets as “supermarketization.” Many scholars view this process, especially the spread of transnational retail chains, as neocolonialism (Schils, 2008). However, as I shall demonstrate in this chapter, supermarketization need not be seen as a process ridden by negativities.

Despite the growing importance of supermarkets on consumers as well as smaller retail stores, anthropologists have paid inadequate attention to studying modern retailing (Green, 1976, p. 531; Garsten & Lindh de Montoya, 2004, p. 1). Some notable exceptions are the works of Price (1967), Dannhaeuser (1977, 1981, 1991, 1997), Matejowsky (2001), and Applbaum (2004). In contrast, scholars in the field of business have extensively studied modern retailing processes. In recent years, these researchers have devoted considerable effort to studying various aspects of the proliferation of supermarkets in emerging economies (e.g., Reardon & Berdegué, 2002; Schwentesius & Gómez, 2002; Coleman, 2003; Reardon et al., 2003; Cadilhon, Moustier, Poole, Tam, & Fearne, 2006; Reardon & Hopkins, 2006; Traill, 2006).

A commonly held notion regarding the spread of supermarkets is that it involves the displacement of traditional retailers (cf. Dannhaeuser, 1996, p. 1; Goldman, Ramaswami, & Krider, 2002, p. 281; Goldman & Hino, 2005, p. 273). This belief is generally based on the idea of economies of scale: large-sized firms (supermarket retail chains) out-compete the smaller retailers by increasing efficiency through the vertical integration of their distribution channels (see Guy, Bennison, & Clarke, 2005). In this competition driven by price, supermarkets shift the retail landscape from the urban center to the urban periphery to take advantage of lower rents (Hankins, 2002, p. 37). This shift, in turn, moves consumer traffic away from independent small retailers who tend to be concentrated in the town centers. This phenomenon has been observed not only in most US cities but also in some developed Asian countries like Japan (Fackler, 2007).

Eventually, small retailers are forced to “close, move, or become branches/franchises” of large chain stores (Dannhaeuser, 1994, p. 80).

The growth of large retail chains that foments the changing of retail landscapes does not occur in a vacuum. Reardon et al. (2003, p. 1141) identify two categories of factors that encourage this growth: demand side factors and supply side factors. In this chapter, I focus on two factors from the demand side: consumer profile (increasing income, ownership of refrigerators and increased private ownership of cars) and consumer buying behavior (lower prices offered by supermarkets). Then, I evaluate the impact of supermarket proliferation on preexisting small retailers.

MARKETS AND SUPERMARKETS

Before proceeding to the field site, it is pertinent to clarify the meaning of certain terms used here. I employ the term “marketplace” as it is usually used in the anthropological literature (Mintz, 1960; Bohannan & Dalton, 1965; Davis, 1973) to refer to, what Hill elaborates as, “an authorized concourse of buyers and sellers of commodities, meeting at a place more or less strictly limited or defined, at an appointed time”(as cited in Smith, 1978, p. 12). The term “market area” refers to what Beals calls the “marketplace district.” According to Beals (1975, p. 9), “[t]he term ‘marketplace district’ includes not only the marketplace...but also stores, depots, warehouses, and other enterprises clustered around the peripheries of the marketplace.” The reason for not retaining Beals’ term is because a market area also includes retail establishments in the urban periphery. Here, I use the term market area when referring to the retail establishments in Citlalicalli as well as those located in the neighboring cities of Heultiuhtli and Altepétl. I refer to the process of retailing to include “[a]ll the activities associated with the sale of offerings for final consumption” as defined by James, Walker, and Etzel (cited in Peterson & Balasubramanian, 2002, p. 10).

Scholars such as Clifford Geertz have emphasized the role of retail trade in economic development by arguing, “sustained transition to economic growth in an underdeveloped country demands a commercial revolution as much as it demands an industrial and an agricultural revolution” (1963, p. 59). Commercial revolution implies that “some unspecialized firms must somehow become more specialized” (Acheson, 1986, p. 47). This specialization manifests itself in a multitude of ways: a shift from small stores to large stores, from personalized selling to self-service, from urban areas to suburban areas, from local ownership to transnational ownership, and from

fragmented product distribution to vertically integrated supply chains (Appelbaum, 2005, p. 279).

In Mexico, retail outlets are categorized into five types: public markets, mobile street stores (*tianguis*), traditional small retailers, specialty stores, and self-service stores (including supermarkets) (Schwentenius & Gómez, 2002, p. 488). In the field site of Citlalicalli, the average small retail outlet has a sales area of about 50 square meters, convenience stores occupy between 275 and 350 square meters, supermarkets are between 350 and 4,000 square meters, and hypermarkets are larger than 4,000 square meters (Reardon & Berdegué, 2002, p. 373). In Citlalicalli, consumers use the term supermarket to refer to all self-service stores, irrespective of their size. They sometimes make a distinction between large and small self-service stores by referring to the smaller ones as a “mini-super” and a supermarket or hypermarket as a *bodega*. Thus, in this chapter I define supermarkets as retail establishments that have a sales area greater than 275 square meters, adopt a self-service selling style, are part of a chain with more than one outlet, and have a centralized procurement system. This category, therefore, includes convenience stores, supermarkets, as well as the larger hypermarkets. Retail establishments that do not fall in this category of supermarkets are classified as small stores.

A distinction that must be understood is the one between “modern” and “traditional” retail stores. This distinction is based on three parameters: type of link to the supplier, style of selling, and type of inventory control. A modern retailer is one who has contractual ties with supplier(s), has a self-service store format, and uses electronic inventory management systems. In the event of absence of either one of these criteria, the retailer is classified as traditional. Thus, a general grocer (*abarrotero*) who does not have a contractual agreement (or ownership link) with his supplier, as well as the ambulant store (*tianguis*), will fall in the category of traditional retailers. However, understandably, there is a difference between these two retail types based on their size and supply chain – *abarrotes* tend to be larger and have more stable supply chains as compared to *tianguis*.

SUPERMARKETIZATION

Scholars for a long time believed that developing countries were insulated from the process of supermarketization – the proliferation and dominance of supermarkets. The belief prevalent among such scholars was that the retail structure of developing economies, dominated by small, family owned

enterprises, was resistant to retail change because small retailers are self-exploitative and flexible, based on trust between family members (Geertz, 1963; Tokman, 1978; Dannhaeuser, 1997, p. 152). However, since the 1940s, supermarket chains have made inroads into developing countries (see Dannhaeuser, 1996, pp. 252–258 for an overview of retail structural changes in developing countries).

Moyer (1962, p. 55) argues that supermarketization will not take place without the existence of a market that can support high volume retailing. Evidence from less developed countries like Kenya suggests that such high volumes can also be generated in relatively low-income environments (Neven & Reardon, 2004, p. 669). I argue here that large-format retailers induce the supermarket culture among low-income households – by relying on initial high sales generated by locating stores on urban peripheries in order to expand their potential consumer base and by creating a perception of low prices.

Latin American countries have experienced the fastest growth of super- and hypermarkets among developing countries. While large retailers have existed in Latin America since the 1940s, until the 1980s, these were owned by domestic investors and catered to the wealthier populace in metropolitan areas. In a span of two decades (1980–2000), Latin American supermarkets increased their market share from under 20% of national food retail in 1980 to close to 60% in 2000 (Reardon et al., 2003, p. 1142) and have spread to smaller cities and not-so-wealthy neighborhoods. Retail development in Mexico has occurred in three phases (Chavez, 2002; Schwentesius & Gómez, 2002). The first phase, 1940s to mid-1980s, saw the spread of large retailers led by Mexican entrepreneurs with domestic capital. The second phase, from 1986 with Mexico signing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to 1994 when Mexico joined the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), witnessed several joint ventures between Mexican and foreign retail chains. This phase resulted in higher levels of imported goods being sold in Mexico through supermarkets. The third (and current) phase, since 1994 when NAFTA went into effect, has seen the spread of large foreign retail chains in Mexico. This phase has shown the fastest growth of supermarkets compared to earlier phases (Chavez, 2002, pp. 507, 511; Schwentesius & Gómez, 2002, pp. 492–493).

METHODOLOGY

Data used in this chapter was collected as a part of my doctoral dissertation fieldwork during the period May 2005–June 2006. The study included a

retail survey (August 2005–January 2006) to explore the retail structure of the market area. This survey collected data on the products sold, product sourcing pattern, operation style, details on the background of the owner, and perception of competition in the market for retailers in the market area. The list of registered retailers in the field site was not readily available until the very end of 2005 and retailers, when contacted, showed a high reluctance to participate in the survey. Therefore, the selection of respondents was determined by willingness of retailers to participate. Consequently, a non-random sample of 100 retailers was generated from two streets around the four sides of the municipal marketplace. Since the focus of the study was food retailing in the municipal market, this demarcation of the target population was deemed to be viable.

The data collection process also included two consumer surveys using the intercept method – a popular method, especially in marketing research, where “respondents are intercepted while they are shopping” (Malhotra, 2003, p. 172). In this research, consumers were contacted outside retail stores as they were exiting the store after shopping. The sample was equally split between supermarkets and small stores in the market area. The first survey, conducted between October 2005 and March 2006, was designed to gauge consumer buying patterns. The second consumer survey, conducted in April 2006, sought data to measure consumer perceptions of food products sold at supermarkets and traditional stores.

Since the samples (for the retail survey as well as the consumer surveys) were not random in nature, and the second consumer survey included the use of the semantic differential scale, parametric statistical tests were deemed inappropriate to analyze the data. Though non-parametric tests tend to be less powerful than their parametric equivalents, they do not make assumptions about the population distribution. Therefore, in this research, non-parametric tests were considered to be most suitable. The sample sizes were determined using statistical tables provided by Kraemer and Thiemann (1987, pp. 57, 110) to determine the effect of a correlation (Spearman's ρ) of 0.3 with a power of 80% at a level of significance of 5%. The minimum sample size for a two-tailed test was found to be 99. Eventually, the target sample was set at 100 for the retail survey and 100 respondents each were sought outside traditional and modern retail stores for the two consumer surveys.

Besides the surveys, 27 interviews were also conducted. This sample included 17 retailers, two wholesalers, five consumers (two of whom were long-term residents of Citalicalli), a local businessman (also a long-time resident of the city), and the acting Mayor. Twenty-seven interviews were considered

adequate for this study since, generally, sample sizes for qualitative research fall in this range (Ibrahim, 2005, p. 226). Since building a rapport with retailers was critical to conducting reliable interviews, the first 6 months of the study period were spent in identifying potential interviewees.

CITLALICALLI: THE FIELD SITE

Citlalicalli (a pseudonym) is a medium-sized city (95,580 persons in the year 2000) located in central Mexico, about 100 km southeast of Mexico City. Citlalicalli is believed to be one of the oldest cities in the New World. According to Spanish colonial records, Citlalicalli was a very advanced and sophisticated urban center of the central Mexican highlands with a multi-ethnic society. Today, it is overshadowed by Altepétl (pseudonym), a metropolis on the periphery of Citlalicalli, with a population of over one million. Citlalicalli's twin city, Hueltiuhtli (pseudonym), is located at a distance of about 4 km (town-center to town-center) from Citlalicalli and had a population of 51,937 in 2000. The populations of Citlalicalli and its twin city Hueltiuhtli have steadily increased over the last five decades. The number of households in Citlalicalli has also grown: about 5,500 households in 1970 to 20,076 in 2000. The streets of Citlalicalli are laid-out on a grid, with streets numbered from east to west and north to south. The main street (on the east–west axis) called *Calle Principal* lies on the south side of the town square (*zócalo*) and is not numbered. Most streets have adjoining two-storied residential buildings with commercial establishments located on the first floor and facing the street. Shops selling foods and other consumer goods are at a walking distance for the residents living within a four-block radius from the *zócalo* that houses the municipal office and several restaurants. Schools, churches, the utilities offices, and the city park are also located in close proximity to the *zócalo*.

Citlalicalli has 74 neighborhoods while there are 35 neighborhoods in Hueltiuhtli. Neighborhoods adjoining the *zócalo* are less affluent than the ones located on the eastern periphery bordering Altepétl. The more affluent neighborhoods of Hueltiuhtli are located on the north-east, bordering Citlalicalli and Altepétl. The affluent neighborhoods in Altepétl are also located in this peripheral region.

Weekly markets congregate along the streets 2 Poniente (Pte.), 3 Norte (Nte.), and 5 Norte (Nte.) adjoining the municipal marketplace on Wednesdays and Sundays. On these days, called the *días de la plaza*, producers and traders from adjoining pueblos bring their wares and sell them in open-air temporary stalls called *tianguis*. As in many Mexican cities,

the jostling for urban space between itinerant peddlers and street stores (García Canclini, 1996, p. 7) is quite evident during these days in Citlalicalli. This market is especially busy on Sundays when many residents of Citlalicalli and Hueltiuhkli (and sometimes residents of Altepétl) buy at these *tianguis*, street stores, and at the municipal marketplace after attending church and having their elaborate Sunday lunches at the *zócalo*. Until the 1950s, the site of the city park at the *zócalo* served as the site for the *tianguis* during the *días de la plaza*. The municipal marketplace was built in 1955 and soon after that the location of *tianguis* during the *días de la plaza* shifted to its current location. As in the past, for the most part, the local marketplace serves the daily needs of the residents of Citlalicalli today.

SUPERMARKETS IN CITLALICALLI

The first modern retail store in Altepétl was a Comercial Mexicana (CCM) that opened in 1970. But the CROM (the acronym for Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana) store was the only large food retailer in Citlalicalli before the 1990s. CROM started out as a cooperative store for factory workers, functioning like the CONASUPO (Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares, which provides subsidized basic foods for Mexicans), and catering mainly to the lower income groups (Dahringer & Hilger, 1985). Prior to the 1990s, a small group of retailers in Citlalicalli had formed an association that controlled the sale of essential foods viz. sugar, salt, cooking oil, and eggs. As a result of a local regulation, retailers outside the association could not buy or sell these commodities. Enjoying a virtual monopoly on essential goods, the existing members restricted the entry of new members into their association. Consequently, consumers were often forced to buy non-essential commodities from association members if they wished to buy any essential commodities. When the government removed rationing and price control laws in the late 1980s, this association lost its power.

The major chains that operate in the market area of Citlalicalli (including stores in Altepétl and Hueltiuhkli) today are Wal-Mart, CCM, Gigante, and Chedraui. The Oxxo convenience store chain dominates its segment in this market area. Citlalicalli houses two CROM stores, two outlets of Mini-Bodega (pseudonym for a local retail chain), one Bodega Aurrerá, and several Oxxo stores. In the following section, I will present a brief overview of these retailers in order to describe the retail structure of the Citlalicalli market area.

The retail chain with the biggest presence in the metropolitan area of Altepetl is Wal-Mart. Belonging to this chain, a Bodega Aurrerá is located at a distance of approximately 6 km from the *zócalo* of Citlalicalli, along its northern border with Altepetl. This outlet is across the street from a CROM store. Both the outlets, the Bodega Aurrerá and CROM, are recent developments in the retail structure of Citlalicalli and are located at a distance of approximately 6 km from the *zócalo* as well as the municipal marketplace. One Superama (also belonging to the Wal-Mart chain) outlet is located in Hueltiuhtli, close to the eastern border with Altepetl and at a distance of about 5 km from the *zócalo* of Citlalicalli. Superama stores in Mexico cater primarily to the affluent sections of the population.

The other major retail chain with a significant presence in the Altepetl metropolitan area is CCM. The closest CCM outlet was located on the western border of Altepetl with Hueltiuhtli, at a distance of approximately 5 km from the *zócalo* of Citlalicalli. This outlet closed in December 2005 citing high rent. Grupo Gigante, another Mexican retail chain, also has a presence in Altepetl. However, even the closest of the three Gigante outlets is more than 5 km away from the town center of Citlalicalli. For the residents of Citlalicalli, therefore, the Gigante stores are not a viable option. The fourth retail chain that is active in the Citlalicalli market area is Chedraui. Altepetl houses six Chedraui stores, one of which lies close to the northern border of Citlalicalli with Altepetl, at a distance of approximately 6 km from the *zócalo* of Citlalicalli.

CROM is considered to be the largest labor federation in Mexico. The oldest large-format store in Citlalicalli started in the 1950s as a cooperative store for factory workers and came to be popularly known as the CROM. Initially this store, located off the main street (*Calle Principal*) in front of the *zócalo*, sold furniture and limited food products exclusively to members of the labor federation. In recent years, CROM has become like other supermarkets, open to the public at large. Today this outlet has two levels, with the foods and consumer non-durables sections located on the first floor, and furniture and consumer durables (white and brown goods) sections on the second floor. In 2005, CROM opened its second outlet, opposite the Bodega Aurrerá, on the periphery of Citlalicalli and Altepetl.

In the convenience store category, the market area of Citlalicalli has several outlets of Oxxo and Mini-Bodega. Oxxo is owned by FEMSA (a joint venture of the Coca-Cola Co. and Cervecería Cuauhtémoc Moctezuma). *Calle Principal* in Citlalicalli has two of these outlets. There are several others in the residential neighborhoods of Citlalicalli, Hueltiuhtli, and Altepetl. Oxxo stores operate 24 hours a day, hence their

popularity, and each one is a franchise, with the supply chain, pricing, and store displays controlled by the parent company.

FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER CHOICES

For a market to be viable for retailers, it has to have a consumer base that can afford to buy their wares. Rising income levels (and the oft-cited growth of a middle class), creates an increased demand for processed foods (Reardon et al., 2003, p. 1141). This phenomenon is in accordance with Bennett's Law which states that as household income rises, the share of food expenditure on non-staples (fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV) and processed foods) increases (Reardon & Berdegué, 2002, p. 377). Interestingly, Lozada, Flores, Rodríguez, and Barquera (2007) found that among adolescent girls in Mexico, 17% of the dietary intake of the urban poor was from industrialized (processed) foods. Such increased demand for non-staples can be best met by large retailers that have better procurement systems. Efficient distribution channels can reduce costs for retailers and, consequently, buying prices for consumers.

Associated with rising income levels is the ability to own a refrigerator or a car (Reardon & Berdegué, 2002, p. 376). Ownership of a refrigerator by a household allows it to purchase foods in greater volume and with lower frequency. Bulk buying by consumers implies a reduction in inventory holding costs for retailers. High volume of purchases necessitates car ownership at the household level on two accounts. First, cars facilitate the easy transportation of large quantities of goods, and second they allow consumers to travel longer distances in shorter time. In the absence of privately owned cars, efficient and affordable mass-transit systems could be an alternative mode of transportation for consumers (Ibrahim, 2005). However, the convenience and comfort of cars are unmatched by public transport systems. The closest substitutes for cars are affordable taxis. And finally, all the factors listed above are of no avail if consumers are unwilling to buy (Morgan, 1965, p. 1135). Therefore, positive consumer attitudes toward a retail outlet (or store format) will be the deciding factor for the viability of a market area for the retailer.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN CITLALICALLI

Household car ownership levels in the market area of Citlalicalli ranges from 31% in Hueltiuhli to 34% in Altepétl. Not owning a car (or having

access to one) is a big barrier in the ability to shop at supermarkets that tend to be located on the periphery of these cities. Interestingly, the highest levels of car ownership (40–100% of households with cars) are in neighborhoods that are closest to the zone of large retail outlet proliferation (see Fig. 1).

Public buses (*camiones*) that ply between Altepétl, Citlalicalli, and Hueltiúhtli are an inexpensive (maximum fare of MX\$5) alternative for those who cannot afford cars. However, for most users, these bus routes do not provide direct-to-home services to and from supermarkets. With a minimum fare of MX\$25, taxi services in the metropolitan area are affordable only for a few. For instance, for a resident in the center of

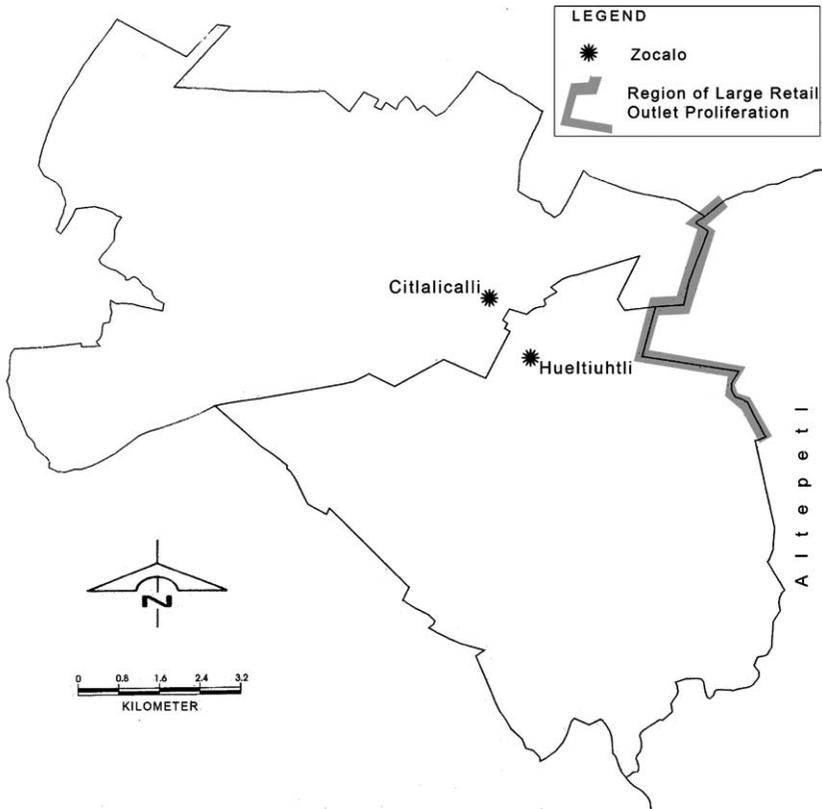


Fig. 1. Map of Citlalicalli, Hueltiúhtli, and Altepétl. Note: Map prepared by Ms. Jui Gadade.

Citlalicalli, a cab ride to the nearest Bodega Aurrerá costs about MX\$40 each way. Thus, for the residents of the Altepetl metropolitan area, *camiones* and taxis are not viable substitutes for cars.

Compared to levels of car ownership, refrigerator ownership levels are higher, ranging from 54% in Hueltiuhltli to 74% in Altepetl. The distribution of neighborhoods with households having refrigerators follows a pattern similar to that of cars (and income). For instance, in Citlalicalli, houses closer to Altepetl have a higher ratio (85–100%) of refrigerator ownership. The growing popularity of installment plans offered by retailers of household and consumer electronics has made refrigerators an affordable commodity for many consumers in this market area. For example, the consumer electronic chain Elektra, which started operations in the 1990s off *Calle Principal* in Citlalicalli, offers credit and installment plans to its consumers. Despite the exorbitant interest rate (40%) charged by Elektra on its installment plans, a product valued at MX\$5,000 when spread over 39 installments becomes affordable to many low-income households (Tuynman, 2002).

Using data from the second consumer survey, consumer attitudes toward small and large food retailers were calculated using a set of 12 attributes that were measured on semantic differential scale type items. Scores for the items pertaining to the attributes inexpensive, small quantity, high quality, near, comfortable, simple, fast, clean, friendly, convenient, personal attention, and fresh were averaged to calculate mean consumer attitudes. These averages were recoded into the variables *persuper* and *persmall* to reflect mean consumer attitudes toward supermarkets and small stores, respectively. Since the maximum score for each item was +2 and the minimum score was -2, the attitude scores thus calculated were also in the range of +2 and -2. Thus, a higher value for the variables *persuper* or *persmall* reflects a more positive attitude toward a particular store type.

Expectedly, the attitude score for supermarkets (*persuper*) was significantly higher for the cohort sampled outside supermarkets as compared to that selected outside small stores. The scores for *persuper* were 0.4361 ($n = 77$) and 0.1886 ($n = 95$) for the two cohorts respectively (Mann-Whitney test p -value < 0.019). Surprisingly, however, the scores for *persmall* were also significantly higher (Mann-Whitney test p -value < 0.020) for the cohort sampled outside supermarkets ($persmall = 0.7500$, $n = 91$) as compared to the one selected outside small stores ($persmall = 0.5245$, $n = 85$). Notice that the values for *persuper* and *persmall* are positive in all cases and implies that consumer attitudes in general are favorable toward both store categories. Interestingly, *persuper* (0.4361, $n = 77$) and *persmall*

(0.5245, $n = 85$) values do not differ significantly (Wilcoxon signed-rank test p -value < 0.205) within the group selected outside supermarkets. However, respondents encountered outside small stores, have a significantly higher positive perception (Wilcoxon signed-rank test p -value < 0.000) toward small stores ($pers_{small} = 0.7500$, $n = 91$) as compared to supermarkets ($pers_{super} = 0.1886$, $n = 95$). These observations suggest that consumers who buy at supermarkets do not differentiate much between store formats and definitely do not have a less positive attitude toward small stores. Table 1 shows the values for $pers_{super}$ and $pers_{small}$ for the three income groups in the two cohorts as well as in the aggregate sample.

For the aggregate of the two cohorts, the average value for $pers_{super}$ (0.2994, $n = 172$) does not differ significantly based on income level of the respondent (Kruskal–Wallis test p -value < 0.099) and average for $pers_{small}$ (0.6411, $n = 176$) also does not vary significantly based on income (Kruskal–Wallis test p -value < 0.902). However, the scores for $pers_{super}$ were found to be significantly different between the two extreme groups, low- and high-income (Mann–Whitney test p -value < 0.024). While the $pers_{super}$ score for high-income group was 0.3750, it was only 0.1103 for the low-income group. However, the difference in the scores for $pers_{small}$ between low-income group ($pers_{small} = 0.6852$) and high-income group ($pers_{small} = 0.7581$) was not statistically significant (Mann–Whitney test

Table 1. Consumer Perceptions Based on Income.

Cohort	Income Group	$pers_{super}$	$pers_{small}$	Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test p Value
Outside supermarkets	Aggregate	0.4361 ($n = 77$)	0.5245 ($n = 85$)	< 0.205
	Low	0.2500 ($n = 8$)	0.6429 ($n = 7$)	< 0.753
	Middle	0.7197 ($n = 11$)	0.6859 ($n = 13$)	< 0.813
	High	0.3958 ($n = 36$)	0.6581 ($n = 39$)	$< 0.007^*$
Outside small stores	Aggregate	0.1886 ($n = 95$)	0.7500 ($n = 91$)	$< 0.000^*$
	Low	0.0673 ($n = 26$)	0.7917 ($n = 24$)	$< 0.000^*$
	Middle	0.1306 ($n = 37$)	0.7929 ($n = 35$)	$< 0.000^*$
	High	0.3438 ($n = 24$)	0.7500 ($n = 24$)	$< 0.012^*$
Aggregate sample	Aggregate	0.2994 ($n = 172$)	0.6411 ($n = 176$)	$< 0.000^*$
	Low	0.1103 ($n = 34$)	0.7581 ($n = 31$)	$< 0.000^*$
	Middle	0.2656 ($n = 48$)	0.7639 ($n = 48$)	$< 0.000^*$
	High	0.3750 ($n = 60$)	0.6852 ($n = 63$)	$< 0.000^*$

Source: Consumer Survey II.

*Significant difference between $pers_{super}$ and $pers_{small}$, 5% level of significance.

p -value < 0.800). Based on these findings, one can say that while both low- and high-income groups have a similar positive perception about small retail stores, high-income groups have a more positive attitude toward supermarkets as compared to low-income groups. Table 2 summarizes the Mann–Whitney tests between the three income groups.

The *persmall* scores for the different cities of residence were more or less equal (Kruskal–Wallis p -value < 0.603). However, consumer attitudes toward supermarkets (*persuper*) significantly differed based on the residence of the respondent (Kruskal–Wallis p -value < 0.039). If we look at the differences in the attitude scores for respondents from Citlalicalli and Altepétl alone, the scores for *persuper* are even more significantly different. The average score for *persuper* for residents of Citlalicalli was 0.1915 ($n = 104$) as compared to 0.5303 ($n = 44$) for residents of Altepétl (Mann–Whitney test p -value < 0.001). The average scores for *persmall*, 0.6446 ($n = 102$) and 0.5816 ($n = 49$) for Citlalicalli and Altepétl were not significantly different (Mann–Whitney test p -value < 0.556). The results of the Kruskal–Wallis test suggest that consumers living in Altepétl have a more positive outlook toward supermarkets as compared to those who live in Citlalicalli. Since the average income levels of the residents of Citlalicalli are lower than that of Altepétl, these findings reflect the results of the difference in the perception of supermarkets when controlled for income.

The retailer survey revealed that 47% of customers at small stores come from neighborhoods adjoining the stores, at a walking distance of no more than 10 min. This figure was similar (46%) for food retailers (33 out of

Table 2. Consumer Perception Differences Between Income Groups.

Cohort	Income Group	Mann Whitney Test p value for <i>persuper</i>	Mann Whitney Test p value for <i>persmall</i>
Outside supermarkets	Low middle	< 0.741	< 0.811
	Low high	< 0.472	< 0.939
	Middle high	< 0.312	< 0.727
Outside small stores	Low middle	< 0.409	< 0.745
	Low high	$< 0.027^*$	< 0.812
	Middle high	< 0.287	< 0.757
Aggregate sample	Low middle	< 0.318	< 0.813
	Low high	$< 0.024^*$	< 0.800
	Middle high	< 0.337	< 0.676

Source: Consumer Survey II.

*Significant difference between the two income groups, 5% level of significance.

the 100 stores surveyed). The first consumer survey revealed a similar pattern when 45% of the 102 consumers selected outside small stores said that they bought at a small store since it was closest to their house.

According to the second consumer survey, from the 100 respondents who were selected outside large stores, 75 said that they used cars to get to the supermarket. Seventy-two respondents from this group said that they walked to shop at small stores. Only 18% said that they used a car to shop at small stores. Based on the combined sample of 198 (selected outside large and small outlets), 92% of the respondents claimed that on an average it took them at least 20 min to reach the supermarket. In contrast, 83% of the consumers said it took them at most 10 min to get from their home to a small neighborhood store.

The two consumer surveys also collected data pertaining to store preference based on product category. It was found that supermarkets were the preferred choice for buying most products, especially processed and packaged foods. FFV was the only product category where consumers showed a marginally higher preference for buying at small stores. This information is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Consumer Buying Preferences.

Product	Large Store (%)	Small Store (%)	No Preference (%)
Fresh fruits and vegetables	43	46	11
Processed or packaged fruits and vegetables	53	24	23
Fresh meat	48	41	11
Processed or packaged meat	54	10	37
Fresh fish and seafood	43	28	29
Processed or packaged fish and seafood	52	8	40
Precooked (ready to eat) foods	49	11	40
Carbonated non alcoholic drinks	51	24	25
Milk (including milk powder)	66	18	16
Cheeses	64	28	8
Sugar	67	24	10
Eggs	56	33	11
Cooking oil	77	17	7

Note: $N = 401$, aggregate sample from two surveys. Information for precooked foods and carbonated drinks is based on a sample of 203 from the first consumer survey. Milk, cheeses, sugar, eggs, and cooking oil values are based on a sample of 198 (data only recorded in second consumer survey). No preference includes no response.

Source: Consumer Surveys.

Results of the first consumer survey show that consumers from low- and middle-income groups favor small stores when it comes to buying fresh foods (includes fresh fruits, vegetables, spices, and meats), while high-income consumers prefer buying at supermarkets. This difference in buying behavior between the income groups is statistically significant (Kruskal–Wallis test p -value <0.000). Irrespective of their income group, consumers expressed a preference to buy packaged foods (includes processed and frozen foods) at supermarkets. This behavior is also significantly different between the three income groups in the case of packaged foods (Kruskal–Wallis test p -value <0.000). All consumer groups showed a reasonably high preference to buy consumer durables at supermarkets. There was no significant difference in the buying pattern for consumer durables between the income categories (Kruskal–Wallis test p -value <0.055). The buying behavior for consumer non-durables is significantly different between the three income groups according to the Kruskal–Wallis test (p -value <0.000). Middle- and high-income group consumers favored buying consumer durables at supermarkets, while low-income consumers buy at small stores. Consumer buying preferences are summarized in Table 4.

Based on the second consumer survey, the two most popular large retailers in the Citlallicalli market area are Oxxo (52% of respondents) and Wal-Mart (47.5% of respondents). The CROM store also has a reasonable amount of popularity amongst consumers (23.2% of respondents). Table 5 summarizes percentages of respondents who shopped at a specific supermarket. While supermarkets have a high level of acceptance, the second survey also revealed that almost all consumers who reside in Citlallicalli (98%) continue to patronize small stores.

Supermarkets base their success on the ability to deliver goods at lower prices. This idea is promoted by supermarket chains like Wal-Mart and CCM with the everyday low price (EDLP) strategy. These supermarket chains regularly display comparative prices of their competitors (other supermarket chains) for selected products. As a result, most consumers get a perception that the particular supermarket under consideration offers the lowest price for almost all products. Furthermore, consumers often believe that the prices offered by the supermarket are lower than the prices at smaller stores across all product categories. In reality, however, the EDLP strategy entails offering the lowest price on selected products everyday. The results of the second consumer survey echoes this idea: over 70% of the respondents felt that (on an average) prices were lower in supermarkets as compared to average prices at small stores. When the opposite question was posed to the respondents (how were prices at small stores compared

Table 4. Consumer Buying Preferences Disaggregated by Income.

	<i>N</i>	Mean ^a
Fresh foods		
1. Low income group	66	0.5572
2. Middle income group	64	0.1042
3. High income group	54	0.3128
Total	184	0.1443
Packaged foods		
1. Low income group	66	0.0492
2. Middle income group	64	0.3125
3. High income group	54	0.4645
Total	184	0.2627
Consumer durables		
1. Low income group	66	0.5758
2. Middle income group	64	0.7813
3. High income group	54	0.7407
Total	184	0.6957
Consumer non durables		
1. Low income group	66	0.2121
2. Middle income group	64	0.2500
3. High income group	54	0.7037
Total	184	0.2174

Note: Positive values indicate preference for small stores and negative values indicate a preference for large stores.

^aMean score for product category on a scale between -1 and +1.

Source: Consumer Survey I.

Table 5. Percentage of Respondents Who Bought at Specific Large Stores (*N* = 198).

Store Name	Percentage of Respondents Who Said that They Bought at the Store (%)
Wal Mart	48
Bodega Aurrerá	28
Sam's Club	25
Superama	10
Gigante	6
Comercial Mexicana	22
Chedraui	39
Oxxo	52
CROM	23
Mini Bodega	2

Source: Consumer Survey II conducted in April 2006.

to large stores), only 34% of the respondents felt that prices were lower in small stores. Comparative prices of 12 products at different stores (see Table 6) indicate that the perception held by the consumers of Citlalicalli is not always correct. For instance, the price of 1 L of cooking oil (Capullo brand) was almost the same in the supermarket and the grocery store in the municipal marketplace. One kilogram of fresh chicken was in fact twice as costly at the supermarket. However, it should be noted that there are quality, quantity, and brand differences between store types and therefore the terms of price comparison between stores are not always the same for consumers. It should also be noted that often buying behavior is driven by perceptions rather than facts. When consumers find a few products cheaper in a supermarket, they often extrapolate lower prices to most products carried by that store. Since comparative price displays are seen primarily in supermarkets, consumer perceptions about product prices get skewed in favor of this store type.

Having seen the results from the quantitative viewpoint, let us now shift our focus to the qualitative findings of this study. The consumers who were interviewed for this study belonged to different socio-economic, gender, and age groups. Interviews offer an explanation for consumer attitudes summarized above.

Juan Montezuma (age 55), a long-term resident of Citlalicalli, lives with his married daughter in a low-income housing colony 6 km from the *zócalo*. The Bodega Aurrerá and CROM are across the street, at a walking distance from his apartment building. Today, he prefers buying all the grocery items for his household from the two supermarkets close to his house. He goes by bus to the public library at the *zócalo* everyday but finds it inconvenient to do his grocery shopping at the small stores there. Despite feeling nostalgic about buying at the marketplace in Citlalicalli, his current buying behavior reflects his need for shopping convenience.

Rocio Sagarnaga (age 40) is a middle-class workingwoman married to a university professor. She lives with her husband in the university provided house in Hueltiuhltli. The couple grew up in small towns in the hills north of Citlalicalli and cherishes the memories of going on shopping trips with their parents. Today they own two cars and can afford to travel to the large stores in Alpetel to buy their regular groceries. However, they prefer to drive to the marketplace in Citlalicalli, a distance of less than 3 km, on Sundays to re-live their childhood. Sofia Luna, a woman in her mid-forties, is a beautician and owns two beauty salons. She too, like Rocio, likes shopping in the marketplace; something that she grew up doing. For Sofia, shopping at the marketplace in Citlalicalli is not only a continuation of tradition but

Table 6. Comparative Prices of Select Products at Different Store Types.

	OXXO		Street Store		Marketplace		Wal Mart	
	Brand	Price	Brand	Price	Brand	Price	Brand	Price
Red Beans	Del Marquéz	9.70/kg		Not sold	Unbranded	16.00/kg	Verde Valle	18.40/kg
Rice	Del Marquéz	7.90/kg	SOS	10.50/kg	Unbranded	7.50/kg	SOS	10.30/kg
Sugar	Del Marquéz	10.00/kg	Unbranded	8.00/kg	Unbranded	8.50/kg	Great Value	12.30/kg
Eggs	Bachoco	16.00/doz.	Unbranded	13.00/kg	Unbranded	12.00/kg	Bachoco	16.10/doz.
Cooking Oil	Capullo	16.90/L	Capullo	20.50/L	Capullo	19.00/L	Capullo	19.20/L
Dried Chilies		Not sold		Not sold	Chipotle	13.00/100 g	Ancho	10.75/100 g
Dried Hibiscus		Not sold		Not sold	Unbranded	16.50/250 g	Verde Valle	39.40/500 g
Flower Petals								
Chicken		Not sold		Not sold	Unbranded	34.00/kg	Bachoco	69.50/kg
Tomato	Saladette	22.00/kg		Not sold	Unbranded	6.00/kg	Sinaloa	12.45/kg
Avocado	Hass	38.00/kg	Unbranded	18.00/kg	Unbranded	24.00/kg	La Huerta	28.02/kg
Canned Red Beans	La Costeña	9.50/580 g	La Sierra	7.50/360 g	La Sierra	4.50/360 g	La Sierra	9.40/440 g
Canned Jalapenos	La Morena	10.40/380 g	La Morena	8.00/380 g	La Morena	9.00/380 g	La Morena	7.25/380 g

Note: The Oxxo store and the Street store are located on Calle Principal in Citlalicalli near the *zócalo*. The marketplace refers to stores in the municipal marketplace in Citlalicalli. The Wal Mart outlet is located in Altepétl at a distance of about 12 km from Citlalicalli; One dozen eggs weigh approximately 720 g.

Source: Data were collected by Ms. C. F. Girault Castro in May 2007 on the request of the author.

also a financially prudent act. She says, “*Todo es más fresco, barato, y bueno*” (everything is fresher, inexpensive, and good). It is evident, that when it comes to price, perception is reality.

Angel Bonilla is a young college student in his early twenties from a middle-class family that lives in Altepétl. Unlike Mrs. Sagarnaga, Angel has been accompanying his parents on shopping trips to supermarkets since he was 10 years old. Both his parents frequently travel on work and often Angel has to shop for groceries. Though the marketplace and the nearest supermarket (a Bodega Aurrerá) are equidistant from his house (at about 4 km), he prefers to buy at the Bodega Aurrerá. He argues that the biggest motivation for him to shop at the supermarket is the ease of finding a parking spot. Angel emphasizes the importance of having a car. He says, “I usually go in a car. The car is not mine – at times I use my father’s car and at other times my friend’s. When I don’t have an option, I go by bus, but I almost never use the bus.” While it is possible to go shopping in a bus, it is certainly not a convenient option. Although attitudes about store types, income, distance from home, and perceptions of prices of products do play a role in the consumer’s preference for a particular store category, life experiences play an equally important role in this decision-making process.

IMPACT OF SUPERMARKETIZATION ON SMALL RETAILERS

The supermarketization of the market area of Citlalicalli has not proved to be detrimental to small retailers. I did not observe any closure of small stores, neither were any reported by my informants, during the 14-month research period. Ironically, the only closure observed during the field study was that of a supermarket, a CCM outlet. While most of my retailer informants complained that they had witnessed a reduction in the sales volume over the last few years, none of them said that they were incurring losses. If the experience from the United States and Western Europe were to replicate itself in Citlalicalli, one should have witnessed desperate attempts by small retailers to establish contractual relations with suppliers or to become franchises of retail chains in order to survive. However, not a single retailer in the study had attempted to do so, nor heard of any other retailer in the market area doing so. Only one small retailer, selling mainly packaged foods, acknowledged sourcing from the Sam’s Club in Altepétl. Being a neighborhood store, slightly away from the *zócalo* and lacking local

competition, it was financially viable for this store operator to buy wholesale from Sam's Club and sell at a profitable markup.

Some retailers, like Diana Martinez, said things like, "If there was no competition we would be self-satisfied." For Diana, competition serves as a springboard for innovation and improvement. The most interesting changes among small retailers include diversification of product range, expansion of retail space, using computerized inventory control systems, and shifting to self-service sales format. However, these changes are limited to only a handful of retailers. For the vast majority, the need to change has just not arisen. Supermarketization of the market area has not been a motivating factor for initiating changes. As one of the retailers put it, "My sales are little but assured." These words highlight the confidence amongst preexisting retailers in the face of supermarketization.

CONCLUSIONS

Modernization and development should be viewed as interrelated concepts, though not necessarily like early scholars of development who saw traditions as being detrimental to development (Gilman, 2002). Instead, development needs to be understood as the process of moving away from what is "traditional" to what is "modern." Thus, in the context of retailing, development can be considered to be the shift from traditional retailing to modern retailing – from small retail outlets to supermarkets. Undoubtedly, today supermarkets are not confined to the limits of the developed world. In the last two decades, most developing countries in Asia and Latin America, and more recently Africa, have seen a change in their retail structure with the influx of large retail chains. The belief that self-exploitative, family owned, independent small retail establishments impede the process of supermarketization in developing countries (cf. Geertz, 1963; Tokman, 1978; Dannhaeuser, 1997, p. 152) is far from the truth today. The driving force for supermarketization in the developing world is rooted in a complex mix of demand- and supply-side factors as identified by scholars such as Moyer (1962, p. 55), Morgan (1965, p. 1337–1338), Tokman (1978), Wolinsky (1983), Riethmuller (1996), Sim (2000), Reardon and Berdegue (2002, p. 376–377), Reardon et al. (2003, p. 1141), Goldman and Hino (2005, p. 274), Ibrahim (2005), Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti (2005), and Reardon and Hopkins (2006, p. 253). This chapter has presented the consumer side of supermarketization in emerging economies from a micro perspective.

Supermarkets are the favored choice of most consumers for most product categories. The exception in this regard is the FFV category. This behavior encompasses all income groups. However, buying decisions are sometimes restricted by life experiences and transportation options. In general, consumers walk to small stores and drive to supermarkets. Thus, the absence of efficient and affordable alternatives to privately owned vehicles (buses and taxis) prevent many residents from buying at supermarkets. But this does not dissuade the proliferation of supermarkets. Supermarkets create their own niche by locating themselves on urban peripheries to maximize their potential consumer base.

Consumers in Citlalicalli faced the problem of lack of choices until the process of supermarketization accelerated in the 1990s. The fears then were that small retailers would be eliminated in this process and that consumers would again be left with few choices among retail outlets. Often this fear of choice reduction prompts public protests against supermarkets. Mexico has seen several instances of such public outrage. For instance, outraged residents of Juchitán, Oaxaca vandalized a Sears store and eventually forced it to shutdown in the 1970s (Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies, 1999, p. 111). In the case of the Wal-Mart Supercenter in the vicinity of the famed pyramids of Teotihuacan, Mexican environmental activists protested against the opening of the store in 2004 (BBC, 2004a). Unlike the Sears case, protests in Teotihuacan did not prove to be an impediment for Wal-Mart (Stevenson, 2006). This store opened in November 2004 to hordes of shoppers who waited in long queues to enter the outlet (BBC, 2004b). The entry of supermarkets into the market area of Citlalicalli in the last decade has been smooth. The findings of this study corroborate this favorable consumer attitude toward supermarkets in this region. The fear of restricted choice is unfounded: supermarkets and small stores can coexist.

Many of the findings presented in this paper are corroborated by findings from the Mexico City study by Duhau and Giglia (2007). The case of Citlalicalli suggests that supermarkets and small stores cater to different income groups and product categories. Favorable attitude toward supermarkets does not imply a negative attitude toward small stores (and vice versa). This study shows that there is a definite possibility for the coexistence of both store types. One has to take cognizance of the fact that consumer buying behavior will make or break retail stores. When it comes to consumer choices, accessibility of stores and affordability of products play a crucial role. What goes in favor of supermarkets is the ability to create a perception that they offer prices that are lower than those offered by small stores. However, in reality this may not always be true. What goes against

supermarkets in developing countries is their location on the urban periphery.

It is worth noting that most consumers patronize both modern as well as traditional stores. Various factors discussed in this paper contribute to the frequency with which a particular consumer would buy at a traditional store vis-à-vis a modern store. Besides income differences, this dual patronization of the traditional and modern stores can be understood using the concept of hybrid cultures proposed by Néstor García Canclini (1990). The concept of hybrid cultures emphasizes the futility of viewing traditional and modern as being dichotomous and therefore incompatible. Based on a 1-year study, it is difficult to predict with confidence the future of small retailers in Citlalicalli. A time-series analysis will be required. However, consumer buying choices do provide us with some possibilities. In the long run, only the fittest retailer will survive and the retailer's fitness will depend on the ability to satisfy consumer needs.

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A MASTER IS GREATER THAN A FATHER: REARRANGEMENTS OF TRADITIONS AMONG MUSLIM ARTISANS IN SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET UZBEKISTAN

Haruka Kikuta

ABSTRACT

Rishton, a small town in Uzbekistan, has been producing pottery for centuries. This chapter investigates how the pottery and ceramists' society in Rishton changed during the 20th century, the 70 year-long Soviet era in particular. It seeks to answer the question of how the traditions of Muslim artisans in a feudal society were rearranged and relocated in the Soviet production system. Importantly, the apprentice system especially helped to preserve many older methods and customs, such as the veneration of Islamic patron saints, among ceramists. This chapter also sheds light on the ways in which these traditions have changed in the shifting economy since Uzbekistan became independent in 1991.

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INTRODUCTION

Uzbekistan, a former Soviet Union republic, is famous for its handicrafts, such as embroidered clothes, woodcarvings, carpets, pottery, and metal works. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of visitors to Uzbekistan has grown, and many handicraft goods are now purchased as souvenirs. These generally represent exoticism to their buyers, reminding them of the long history of the Silk Road.

However, little is known about the production of these handicrafts and the artisans' lives in the 20th century, especially during the Soviet era. Regarding industry in the Soviet Union, most Western research has focused on agriculture and heavy industries, almost ignoring light industries such as crafts.¹ For Soviet ethnographers, small-scale crafts were a major subject, but their main interests involved the developmental stages of societies in the pre-Soviet era because Soviet ethnography was a branch of history. They argued that artisans' activities in pre-Soviet era Uzbekistan were marked by many feudal features, such as exploitation of apprentices by patriarchal masters, child labor, the performance of heretical rituals, and so on (Dzhabbarov, 1959; Peshchereva, 1959; Sukhareva, 1962). For them, the modern Soviet era meant a release from such feudal ways, and they did not describe in detail how traditional activities and ideas of artisans were treated in the Soviet production system.²

Beginning in the late 1980s, however, research on ordinary people and their everyday lives in the Soviet Union received a boost from policies such as perestroika and glasnost (Akiner, 1997; Fitzpatrick, 1999; Humphrey, 1983; Ilkhamov, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1998; Ries, 1997; Werner, 1998). Results show that pre-Soviet traditions were not always opposed to, or oppressed by, the regime. Instead, some old customs and ideas were rearranged as part of the general Soviet way of life or "the Soviet type of modernity." For example, life-cycle ceremonies in Uzbekistan might seem to operate in the way of a traditional gift economy, but they were used and strengthened as occasions to form networks, which were very important in obtaining goods or services in the Soviet "mature socialism" (Koroteyeva & Makarova, 1998, p. 582). Moreover, recent studies (Abashin, 2006; Constantine, 2001; Fathi, 2006; Hann, 2002; Harris, 2004; Kikuta, 2005b; Kuehnast & Nechemias, 2004; Luong, 2004; Rasanayagam, 2006; Sahadeo & Zanca, 2007; Takakura, 2000; Watanabe, 2000; Yoshida, 2004) show that Soviet-style modernity still strongly influences many features of the social environment and ideas of the people in Post-Soviet societies.

This contribution shares the interests of the above-mentioned investigations. By focusing on craft production – Rishton pottery in this case – in Uzbekistan during the 20th century, it answers the question of how the traditions of artisans were rearranged and relocated in the Soviet production system. It also sheds light on the soviet type of modernity and its influences on artisans today. First, a brief sketch of Rishton and its pottery is necessary.

The town of Rishton (*Rishton shahri*) is located at the south edge of the Fergana Valley where more than six million people live. The Fergana Valley is the most densely populated region in Central Asia (comprising Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan). The population of Rishton was about 30,000 in 2001 (*Iqtisodiyot va Statistika bo'limlari*, 2001). Its main nationalities are Tajik and Uzbek. Although the Tajik language is Persian and the Uzbek language is Turkic, the two have almost the same lifestyle as settled Muslims of Central Asia and almost all the residents are bi- or trilingual. Uzbek, Tajik, and Russian are their everyday tongues. People's main means of making a living are producing pottery and farming. Major crops include cotton, wheat, and apricots. Rishton pottery has a long history. Glazed pottery appeared in Central Asia around the 8th century (Zhadova, 1974, p. 15). Rishton is blessed with fine clay and its pottery industry is said to have started around the 10th century. In the 19th century, it was the main center of the Fergana Valley's blue type pottery (Mirzaakhmedov, 1990, p. 67). During the Soviet era, the biggest pottery factory in Uzbekistan was located in this town (Rakhimov, 1961, p. 21). After the independence of Uzbekistan, thousands of the inhabitants of Rishton began to produce many types of pottery individually.

This chapter demonstrates how Rishton pottery has been maintained and how it has changed through the 20th century: from the beginning of the century to the Russian Revolution, during the Soviet era, and after the independence of Uzbekistan. Its analytical focus is on the production system, the society of ceramists, and the apprentice system. In particular, it demonstrates that the apprentice system has played an important role in the maintenance and application of techniques, the continuation of customs, and the sustentation of the ceramists' identity in the Soviet production system. Though child labor was prohibited, in Rishton there were always boys who helped masters as apprentices in the Soviet pottery factory. The idea that "a master is greater than a father" has been shared among them. In general, any apprentice respected his master deeply and learned from him not only techniques of pottery but also polite manners, traditional ceramist customs, and the ways of conducting rituals for Islamic patron saints (*pir*).

Thus, this contribution also provides a glimpse of the conditions of Islam in the former Soviet Union. It is interesting that even though the general environment in the Union was unfavorable for Islamic (or any) religious practices, the veneration for patron saints among Muslim artisans has been maintained to a greater degree than in many other Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Turkey, and Syria for example (Baer, 1964, 1982; Lapidus, 1967). The main fieldwork for this study was conducted from 2002 to 2003. I stayed with an ordinary family in Rishton, and while staying there I conducted interviews in Uzbek with a total of about 100 people in the town, including almost all the fine ceramic masters. I also observed pottery manufacture, and collected literature on Rishton pottery. Additional follow-up research was carried out in 2004, 2006, and 2007. This study has benefited much from the work of Soviet ethnologist Peshchereva, particularly her outstanding comprehensive monograph on Central Asian pottery (Peshchereva, 1959). Her account employs a Marxist framework and sometimes reveals a bias in regarding ceramists' older customs as "feudal" and having disappeared during the Soviet era, but her detailed description of Rishton pottery is reliable and useful if a reader carefully reads around this bias. In this chapter, italics are used to mark Tajik or Uzbek words. Many words relating to pottery in Rishton originated from the Tajik language, but today they are used in Uzbek, too, so they are treated equally here. Also, all photos accompanying this chapter were taken by the author in 2003.

ARTISANS IN THE FEUDAL SOCIETY: THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The Production System

In the 19th century, a feudal state, the Kokand Khanate, governed the people in the Fergana Valley. According to Askarov et al. (1993, pp. 205–227), there were about two million people in the Fergana Valley at that time. The palace was situated in Kokand (*Qo'qon*) where about 80,000 people lived. The Khan had absolute authority and his cronies governed small cities. Villages were under the command of elders called *oqsogol* who had certificates proving they had been chosen by the Khan. The Khan chose judges called *qozi* who solved problems in accordance with the provisions of the Islamic law (*shariat*), and customs (*odat*). The main industries of the Kokand Khanate were

agriculture, trade, and handicrafts. Many kinds of handicrafts developed in the Fergana Valley at that time, such as silk materials, cotton textiles, paper, pottery, and so on. Most artisans were engaged both in handicrafts and agriculture, making goods mainly during winter.

Rishton was already famous for its various types of pottery at that time. According to Peshchereva (1959, pp. 201–209, p. 229), some ceramists in Rishton made half-china called *chinni*. It was said to be brought from Mashhad in Iran or Kashgar in China, in the middle of the 19th century. *Chinni* was usually painted with delicate cobalt blue figures and covered by natural glaze. It was purchased by wealthy consumers from the Fergana Valley. Besides *chinni*, much earthenware for daily use was produced in Rishton. Each living segment (*mahalla*) of the town was known for its own unique pottery. For example, *Chinnigaron Mahalla* mainly produced *chinni*, and *Ko'zagar Mahalla* mostly produced *ko'za* jugs. These products were mainly sold in the Fergana Valley. Wholesalers would visit some ceramists' workshops to buy pottery pieces and take them to other towns. Other ceramists sold their products themselves at bazaars around Rishton.

Most of the ceramists in Rishton were Muslim Tajiks (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 201). They produced pottery by hand at their homes, but specialization and divisions of labor already existed at the end of the 19th century. For example, there were ceramists who specialized in producing dishes or teapots or bowls. Furthermore, some ceramists turned out semi-manufactured goods, baked only one time, which were purchased by others for painting, baking, and then selling (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 208). Peshchereva pointed out that a few ceramists were similar to entrepreneurs because they did not work themselves, but hired other ceramists to produce pottery (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 347). In addition, I also heard from one informant (the 75 year-old former master of the Rishton pottery factory) in 2003 that his grandfather had owned a two-story workshop with several kilns and pottery wheels. About 15 ceramists worked there, receiving wages after their products were sold.

In 1876, the Kokand Khanate fell to the Russian Empire and became a part of the Empire's colony: the province of Turkestan. However, the Russian Empire did not intervene in the Muslim society very much. It primarily gathered taxes and took charge of law and order because it expected that the Muslim society would eventually collapse by itself (Brower, 1997). Some crafts were displaced, however, as imports from Russia and other European countries increased (Skallerup, 1990, p. 21). For Rishton pottery, porcelain brought from Russian factories became a serious threat because it was more durable than earthenware and because it was



Fig. 1. A Large Plate of Rishton Pottery Made at the Beginning of the 20th Century.

fairly cheap. Rishton pottery was known for its delicate designs (see Fig. 1), but because it did not contain kaolin, it did not have the strength of porcelain. As Peshchereva (1959, p. 203, p. 356) explains, when the railway from Russia was extended to the Fergana Valley in 1899, more and more Russian porcelain flowed into this region. Ceramists in Rishton could not adapt fast enough and Rishton pottery gradually lost its place.

In short, at the beginning of the 20th century, the production system of Rishton pottery was still largely medieval in nature, with ceramists working by hand at their homes. However, they formed an intricate society at that time. We will consider this in some detail in the next section.

The Society of Ceramists

According to Peshchereva (1959, p. 344), at the beginning of the 20th century, ceramists in Rishton were called *kulol* and almost all of them were men. Their wives and daughters did help with light work, but they were not recognized as *kulol*. There were two types of *kulol*. One was *tovoqchi*, makers of glazed pottery such as dishes and bowls, and the other was *ko'zagar*,

producers of unglazed jars and ovens for bread. They considered each other to be rivals. *Tovoqchi* were generally proud of being wealthier than *ko'zagar* because glazed pottery was much more expensive than unglazed wares. However, *ko'zagar* in turn had strong pride in the fact that their occupation was more ancient. *Kulol* in Rishton can be estimated to have numbered around 700 at that time, of which about 600 were *tovoqchi*, the rest being *ko'zagar*.³ In both groups, there were three levels of craftsmen. At the top, an *ustakor* was a master who owned his own workshop. Next, a *xalifa* was a skilled ceramist who did not have his own workshop but worked under an *ustakor*. Last, a *shogird* was an apprentice, and most of these were teenage boys (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 346).

There were guild-like organizations of artisans in Central Asian cities since the middle ages (Mukminova, 1976). Ceramic masters in Rishton in the 19th century also formed this kind of organizations, called *kasaba* (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 311). There were two *kasabas*, one was of *tovoqchis* and the other was of *ko'zagar*s. According to Peshchereva (1959, pp. 375–376), these *kasabas* monopolized the pottery trade and all masters had to belong to the appropriate one, or else they would not have been able to produce earthenware. The elder masters were called *oqsoqol* and one of them served as the leader of each *kasaba* (see Fig. 2).

One function of a *kasaba* was to allocate to members large projects such as decorating buildings with tiles. But if a member failed to behave in accordance with *oqsoqols'* orders, he would likely be expelled from the *kasaba* and would not be allowed to make pottery in Rishton (Peshchereva, 1959, pp. 353–355). Masters could sell their products by themselves, but *kasaba* regulated the price of pottery, considering costs of materials and firewood (Peshchereva, 1959, pp. 375–376). *Oqsoqols* of *kasaba* also settled conflicts between member masters, many of which among *tovoqchis* related

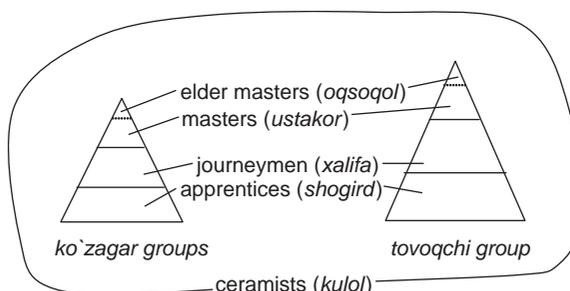


Fig. 2. Stages of Rishton Ceramists in the Beginning of the 20th Century.

to the head-hunting of skillful apprentices (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 355). In short, *kasaba* were the organizations that protected ceramists' interests and kept order among them.

Members of *kasaba* recognized themselves as *hampir*, which means they shared the same masters and patron saints, *pir* (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 365). In most Muslim societies, *pir* signifies a leader of a Sufi order. Settled Muslims in Central Asia also use this term to refer to a spiritual guide. But they also believe that there are patron saints for every occupation, who had initiated that occupation and who guard their successors (Andreev, 1927). They call these patron saints *pir* too. When a *kasaba* held a meeting, its members commemorated their *pirs* and prayed together for guardianship in their work (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 350; Tursunov, 1972). The legend of the origin of the occupation and a code of rules concerning *pirs* and technology were written in a pamphlet called *risola*. It had to be in a sack hanging on a wall in the workshop or the artisan's home (Bacon, 1966, p. 76; Peshchereva, 1959, p. 359). Before the Russian Revolution, competition between ceramists intensified because of the growing amount of porcelain coming from Russia. Even *kasaba* and *oqsogols* were unable to solve this problem and consequently their influence gradually decreased (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 356). The old social system was approaching its limit at that time.

The Apprentice System

Peshchereva reported that most ceramists were engaged in pottery as their hereditary job in Rishton, but there were chances for boys with no blood ties to ceramic masters to become ceramists themselves. These boys had to start from the apprentice stage. Usually, a boy's father would bring him to a master with some food and ask the master to accept him as an apprentice (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 344). It was common for the parent(s) to say the following phrase to the new master: "This boy's bone is to us, his flesh is to you." That is to say, parents could not complain if their son lost weight during a severe apprenticeship period under a master. This is still heard among some craftsmen today.

The apprentice had to obey the master and his wife. Not only did he assist in making pottery, but he also did all kinds of housework such as taking care of the master's children, feeding his livestock, making tea for guests of the workshop, and so on. For these services, the master used to instruct the apprentice, give him meals at the workshop, and reward him with some ceramic wares. The apprentice could sell these ceramic wares at bazaars to

get some money or food. Such goods were called *posira* or *posra* (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 345). Although *posira* originally referred to a share of a harvest given to a farmer by the owner of the land, it later came to mean products that apprentices received and used freely (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 390–392; Sukhareva, 1962, p. 155). According to Peshchereva (1959, p. 354), among ceramists in Rishton, *posira* also meant pottery presented to *oqsoqols*. If masters gave any of their wares to their patron saint (*pir*), those wares were called *nazr* or *narz*. The *tovoqchi* regarded a famous Sufi master, Naqshband (1318–1389) as their *pir* and sometimes brought potteries as *narz* to his grave in Bukhara (Peshchereva (1959, p. 357). Naqshband was a notable Sufi, or Islamic mystic, who preached that people should undertake Islamic spiritual training amidst everyday life, without retiring from the world. It is said that he himself was engaged in farming to earn his living while seeking the spiritual truth. This must be one of the main reasons why he has been very popular among ordinary people. His brotherhood is now spread from Central Asia to the Balkans and even to East Asia.

The *ko'zagar's* *pir* was said to be Amir Kulol (d. 1371), a Sufi master of Naqshband who made pottery in Bukhara (Kawamoto, 1989, p. 175).⁴ In the 1870s, a person from Bukhara claimed to be a descendant of Amir Kulol and obtained pottery as *narz* from ceramists in Rishton (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 357). These descendants of *pirs* were called *pirzoda*. As Andreev (1927) wrote, it was a very widespread custom among Muslims in Central Asia to present *narz* to their *pirs* or *pirzodas* one or more times a year and pray for their protection in each important process of their jobs.

Peshchereva (1959, pp. 346–350) explains that once an apprentice had mastered all needed skills, he could become a *xalifa*, or a journeyman, and work at a master's workshop for wages. If a *xalifa* wanted to open his own workshop, he had to undergo a ritual (*usta rozi*), signifying the satisfaction of the master. Ceramists in Rishton, especially, called this ritual *anjuman*, which originally means a gathering. To this ritual, the *xalifa* used to invite all masters, wholesalers, and *pirzoda*, and serve them a big feast. The guests used to read the opening chapter of the Koran, which showed that they acknowledged the *xalifa's* independence. Even after their independence was granted, however, ceramists respected their masters very much and served them as real sons until the end of their lives.

If a *xalifa* were to open a workshop without undergoing this ritual, *oqsoqols* would normally come and take away the long axle of his potter's wheel. On the other hand, if a *xalifa's* father were an *ustakor*, he did not have to hold an *anjuman* until his father died (Peshchereva, 1959, pp. 347–349). The elderly former master of the Rishton pottery factory told me that holding

an *anjuman* required a lot of money and was not easy. But it was like a license at that time, and without it, one could not even buy firewood at bazaars in Rishton. Peshchereva noted that 600 *tovoqchis* gathered at an *anjuman* at the end of the 19th century, consuming 100 kg of rice (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 349). Consequently, some poor ceramists could never hold this ritual and were forced to work as *xalifas* for the rest of their lives (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 346).

POTTERY IN THE COLLECTIVE WORKPLACE DURING THE SOVIET ERA

The Production System from 1917 to the World War II: Collectivization

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, disturbances spread through Russian Turkistan, and people's lives were disrupted by conflicts between pro- and anti-Soviet groups. An elderly Rishton woman, reflecting on her mother's experiences, said that Soviet troops visited in the daytime, taking away all the food they could find. Then, at night, groups of anti-Soviet people (*Basmachis*) would come and distribute food to the poor people (after having seized it from the rich). But they apparently also made away with attractive girls. As Skallerup points out, craftsmen – ceramists included – could not market their products well under such unstable circumstances (Skallerup, 1990, p. 166). Production of *chinni* and expensive tableware decreased sharply at that time (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 203).

In 1924, the Soviet Union finally took control of Central Asia and drew new borderlines. Rishton was placed in the Soviet Republic of Uzbek. The land and water reform, designed to eradicate feudal relationships by destroying inequities in property ownership, started the following year. Land, livestock, and farming implements were confiscated from rich landowners and distributed to poor farmers. The general collectivization of agriculture began in earnest in 1929. Prosperous peasants – and even many middling ones – were exiled or perhaps imprisoned or killed, and in either case their properties were seized; and nearly everyone suffered from famine caused by this forced collectivization. However, the Soviet government did not waver in constructing the new Soviet Uzbekistan. By the time the Second Five-Year Plan finished, 99.2% of the peasants in Uzbekistan had been collectivized (Bacon, 1966, p. 155).

As for Rishton ceramists, a kind of collectivization had already begun sometime after around 1918 (Burxonov, 1983, p. 4) or at least in the early 1920s (Rakhimov, 1961, pp. 20–21, p. 24). There are few details on this, but

it seems to have occurred under the instruction of the Soviet government. At the time, more than 80 ceramists gathered to operate the first collective workplace, *Khimtrud*. Such workplaces were generally called *artel'* (originally a Russian word). Many poor ceramists, such as *xalifas*, welcomed and joined this new system because they did not need to prepare materials or find distribution channels by themselves. All they had to do was to make potteries and submit that to the *artel'*, which would then convert it into cash (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 209).

On the other hand, of course, wealthy masters avoided involvement with *artel's*, preferring to sell their products by themselves (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 209). Elderly ceramists today, though, report that private production and marketing was banned around 1937 and that all ceramists were then required to join *artel's*. Their wheels and other tools were moved forcibly into them to be used communally by all members. It is said, though, that many ceramists in general – and especially elders – hated this kind of collective work because they did not want to give away their secret techniques to others. In addition, ceramists had to work according to certain time schedules at an *artel'*, a situation that was very frustrating for such old masters who had worked freely at their homes. One ceramic master said, “Your inspiration might come at midnight, and you had to start working at once or it would go away!” Some of these craftsmen quit the *artel's*; not a few ceramists have reported that their fathers or grandfathers made pottery secretly at home in those days. However, most ceramists gradually got used to working in *artel's*. Peshchereva wrote that every potter had become a member of some *artel'* by 1941, and that there were four of them in Rishton by 1948 (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 209).

During the World War II, many men of Rishton were sent away to the front. The women and children left in the town worked at *artel's* and produced bricks and potteries, sending them on to Russia (Burxonov, 1983, p. 14). At that time, natural glaze prepared by burning special grass was replaced by leaden glaze, and *chinni*, a luxury pottery, was seldom made. People did not dare employ such difficult methods in the collective workplaces, and they were gradually forgotten in Rishton.⁵

*The Post-war Production System: Mechanization and Enlargement
of the Workplace*

In 1960 a large factory, which had been formed by consolidating the Rishton *artel's* and other workshops under one roof, received the

designation Kuibyshev ceramic factory No.1 (Rakhimov, 1961, p. 21, p. 24). This plant had about 300 workers, and its establishment set the stage for the mechanization of Rishton pottery production. Old masters recall that in this factory fuel for kilns changed from firewood to gasoline, and finally to natural gas. Machines for mixing earth and other materials were brought from Germany. Promising ceramists were sent to Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, and they brought back new techniques such as using a mold with an electric lathe. Many agree that these technologies made pottery production much easier.

In 1972, the biggest pottery factory in Uzbekistan was opened in Rishton – the Artistic Pottery Factory of Rishton (*Rishton Badiiy Kulolchilik Buyumlari Zavodi*), or simply the Rishton Pottery Factory (*Rishton Kulolchilik Zavodi*) (Burxonov, 1983, p. 6). It covered an area of about 10 ha, and contained separate plants – some with conveyer belt systems where general workers produced simpler and inexpensive pottery for daily use – and some studios for skilled masters who mainly made decorative handmade pottery. There were also some branch workplaces of the factory in the suburbs of Rishton – So‘x and Zohidon, for example (Burxonov, 1983, p. 27). Using samples was another innovation in this factory. Previously, ceramists in *artel'* had quotas imposed upon them, but they made pottery in their own ways so the products varied in their details. In the Rishton Pottery Factory, workers had to reproduce the samples precisely, or their products would be poorly rated and their salaries would drop. At factory laboratories, glazes and colors were also studied in order to make the production more uniform.

These new ways were suitable for mass production. According to Burxonov (1983, pp. 22–26), the output of this factory grew year by year. He noted, propagandistically, that in 1975 it produced more than 60 kinds of pottery resulting in sales of 1,754,000 rubles, which rose to 3 million the next year (Burxonov, 1983, pp. 22). Consequently, Rishton had become the center of daily-use pottery production in Uzbekistan by the mid-1970s (Rahimov, 1974). However, many masters were dissatisfied with this type of ceramic production partly because the samples were selected by the art committee in Tashkent and were far from the traditional style of Rishton pottery (see Fig. 3). Some specialists were afraid that the traditional pottery of Rishton was being lost and that its quality had dropped (Alieva 1998; Rakhimov, 1961, p. 82; Zhadova, 1974, p. 21). Actually, most of the old masterpieces were carried away to museums in Moscow and Leningrad, and could no longer even be found in Rishton.

This entire situation changed in the late 1980s. Following the new trend of perestroika, the right of selecting samples was given to members of the



Fig. 3. A Master with His Products Made in the Rishton Pottery Factory in the 1970s.

factory, who then chose samples that reflected Rishton's traditional patterns, designs, and figures that had remained in the old masters' memories. "Traditionalism" spread in the factory. At the same time, the way of preparing natural glaze was rediscovered and utilized on a production line by one master, Komilov Ibragim (1926–2003), who had grown up in a family that had produced pottery for centuries. He was interested in old technologies of Rishton pottery because he had heard about them from old masters during his own apprenticeship. He later sought the natural glaze technique privately for years, and finally found its recipe.



Fig. 4. A Master with His Plates, Drawn with Old Patterns, in the 1980s.

Thanks to his determination, products very similar to the lost *chinni* came to be made again.

In addition, a special group of skilled ceramists – *ijodiy groux*, meaning the “creative group” – was formed in 1988. Its members produced high-quality pottery in less quantities. The pieces came to be sold in galleries in large cities and the profits on each piece flowed back to the person who had made it. In the pre-perestroika system, workers had merely received salaries according to the quantity of goods they made, modeled on the samples. In the new system, however, members of the “creative group” could obtain additional rewards if their products sold well. These rewards encouraged ceramists to join the group and to create better products (see Fig. 4). Promising youths went to museums in Moscow and Leningrad to see their ancestor’s works and learn about the old patterns and get new inspiration. In this manner, Rishton pottery came back to life in the late 1980s.

The Society of Ceramists

The structure and organization of Rishton ceramists changed much during the Soviet period. First, because of the collectivization of pottery, the guilds called *kasaba* broke into pieces. Instead of *kasaba*, each *artel'* began to set the prices of wares and kept order among its members. An *artel'* might have

been smaller in size than a *kasaba*, but seemed to care more for its members. For example, an *artel'* called *Yangi Xayot* (New Life) offered members some basic services for daily life, such as milling flour and donkey-drawn carriages (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 209). Another big difference with *kasaba* was the equal status for ownership of the workplace shared among members of an *artel'*. Masters of *kasaba* owned their own studios, but *artel'* workplaces belonged to everyone. Thus, status differences between masters (*ustakor*) and journeymen (*xalifa*) disappeared and all skilled ceramists came to simply be called *usta*.

The rival relationship between the *tovoqchi* group and the *ko'zagar* group also vanished. Today, ceramists who can do molding are called *ko'zagar* while ceramists specialized in painting are called *naqqosh*, but they say that they are partners, not rivals. This is most likely due to the fact that they joined together in one *artel'* and became co-workers, filling various demands. When the Rishton Pottery Factory operated in the 1970s, another new category of workers – *rahbar*, or factory administrators – appeared (see Fig. 5).

Rahbars were chosen from among engineers who had a higher education, and they were required to be members of the communist party. They controlled the production of the factory under national direction. Though some masters were called “big masters” (*katta usta*) and respected highly, they seldom became *rahbars* because almost all of them had started working at the factory soon after completing their compulsory education.

Workers called *ishchi* were also new features of the factory. *Ishchis* worked at plants with conveyer belts. They specialized only in specific processes of production, and were not able to make pottery by themselves as masters. Particularly, there were many women *ishchi* in the painting section. Concerning women workers in general, there were 135 women (out of 418

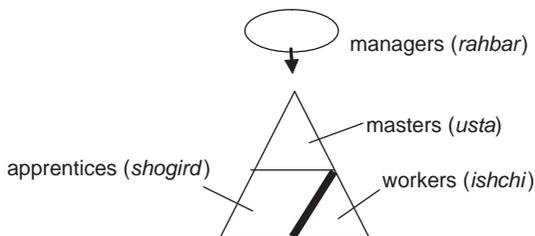


Fig. 5. The Structure of Members in the Rishton Pottery Factory in the Later Soviet Era.

workers) in the factory in 1974 (Rahimov, 1974). By 1983, however, the total number of women workers had ballooned to over 700 (Burxonov, 1983, p. 27). *Ishchis* received training at the in-service training institute (*o'quv-ishlab chiqarish kombinati*) in the factory for 6–8 months, after which time they worked at various sections in the factory. This training course continued until the end of the 1980s when the factory became saturated with *ishchis*. People say the total number of workers in the factory was around 2,000 at the time. However, the in-service training institute was not able to produce masters, or *usta*. Becoming an *usta* was possible only if one worked as an apprentice for some years. In the following section, we will examine the fate of this traditional training style within the Soviet production system.

The Apprentice System

Many features of the apprentice system did continue through the Soviet era. The main places where the apprentice system was maintained were studios (*do'kon*) at *artel'*. According to the memory of elderly ceramists today, *artel'* consisted of some *do'kons* where one or two masters worked with some apprentices or helpers, such as the master's children or wife. Each studio had its own kilns, and artisans had to work according to plans given by members of the *artel'*. Such plans called for fixed types and amounts of production, but details such as composition of the clay, temperature for baking ceramics, how to make glaze, etc., were generally unregulated. Therefore, masters could enjoy using their own pottery recipes. This kind of production was called *do'kon tarzi*, or the “studio system.”

The *do'kon tarzi* continued even after the unification of *artel'*s to form a single factory in 1972. There were many *do'kons* in the factory site. A lot of teenage children worked there as apprentices, though in principle child labor was illegal. Most of today's skilled masters learned pottery in those *do'kons*, starting out as teenage boys and going to their masters' studios everyday after school. First, they would simply watch the whole process of pottery-making. After perhaps one month, ceramists would say that a boy's “eyes had matured” (*ko'z pishmoq*), meaning that he was then ready for actual operations. Other apprentices who began learning earlier would teach newcomers such easy tasks as painting the edges of pottery. They would have lunch and sometimes even supper together at *do'kon*. In former times, one apprentice could learn from only one master. But in the Soviet factory, rivalry between masters was diminished, and therefore an apprentice could learn from several masters.

Apprentices did not only make pottery but also cleaned *do'kon*, made tea for members, and cared for their masters' livestock. Polite speech and an ability to show good hospitality to guests were especially important things to be learned, and some parents sent their children to masters for this. In this way, apprentices learned pottery-making for some years, officially joined the factory after completing their school education, and generally became masters by the time they married.

It is said that *anjuman*, the rite of passage for becoming a master, was rarely held in the late Soviet era. As all the ceramists worked in the same factory, they knew who had matured enough to become an independent master, and they say today that this is why the ritual declined. However, apprentices deeply respected their masters and held parties, or *usta rozi* ("master's satisfaction"), when they had earned enough money in order to show their appreciation. They believed that *usta rozi* was indispensable for all craftsmen in making their wages "legal" (*halol*) according to Islamic laws.

In *do'kons*, the veneration for the patron saints, *pirs*, was also passed down. Young masters and apprentices listened to various legends and miracle stories about *pirs* told by elder masters at their workplaces. *Risola* of ceramists had disappeared because of Soviet anti-religious campaigns, but the legend of the origin of the pottery was remembered among masters. Almost all the skilled ceramists today know how their *pirs* started pottery because their masters told them this as part of their essential knowledge about ceramists. It was also an annual event for masters of the factory to go to Bukhara to visit the mausoleums of their *pirs*: Naqshband and Amir Kulol. These mausoleums were abandoned and ruined, but the masters brought their products as *narz* and prayed for their protection. As mentioned above, a man who proclaimed to be a descendant of Amir Kulol had appeared in Rishton in the 1870s, but there are no reports of his descendants – or any other claimants – appearing in the Soviet period. The reason is not clear – perhaps the man had had no offspring, or perhaps he had been dissuaded by Soviet anti-religious policy.

Once a month or so, masters brought fried bread (*chalpak*) to *do'kons* and read part of the Koran for *pirs* and the souls of the deceased masters. This was called *is chiqar*, or "emitting a smell." Such a custom is widely seen among Muslims of Central Asia (Privratsky, 2001), but it was seldom reported as a living practice during the Soviet era. Ceramists also held Islamic meetings, called *xatim qur'on*, when they had saved up enough money. In this ritual, a feast is given and some chapters of the Koran are read. At the end of the ritual, people pray to Allah for prosperity and for the peace of *pirs* and their ancestors.

People today say that it was hard to perform Islamic practices under the rule of the Soviet Union because the regime championed atheism. Then, why did such Islamic customs continue in the *artel'* and at the Soviet national factory during that time without punishment? People credit this to the small number of Russian managers there. Also, many managers (*rahbars*) had actually been brought up in Rishton and understood these customs well, so they did not intervene in rituals at *do'kons*. In such circumstances, apprentices learned not only pottery-making but also many traditional ideas and customs from their masters.

CHALLENGES AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE OF UZBEKISTAN

The Production System

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the new independence of Uzbekistan in 1991 brought great changes for Rishton pottery. First, the government-managed factory was transferred to the private sector, but it soon met with failure. One part of the factory went bankrupt in 1996, and the rest was closed in 1998. More than 2,000 people lost their jobs. However, Rishton pottery did not decline. Many ex-workers constructed their own studios with kilns in their yards to make pottery on their own. Their relatives and neighbors also learned about some of the processes of making pottery because there were scarcely any other good jobs after the collapse of the old regime. Soon, private studios were scattered all around the town. To make one piece of pottery requires several processes, and each process was divided among the residents, including women and children. Men mainly did the manual work, such as mixing clay and setting pottery in a kiln. Women and children were usually engaged in drawing pictures and polishing pottery.

Uzbekistan's policy on promoting traditional handicrafts also supported some ceramists in becoming independent producers. In March 1997, a presidential decree, "Regarding the Policy on Restoring National Artistic Craftsmanship and Applied Fine Arts" was made (O'zbekiston, 1997). The policy supports artisans who suffered in the transition economy, and promotes the national pride of newly independent Uzbekistan. Under this decree, associations of artisans (*hunarmand* or artisan) were established in each province to resurrect and restore production of various handicrafts. Table 1 shows the range of the crafts designated by the policy.

Table 1. The Range of Crafts Supported by the Presidential Decree in March, 1997 (from O'zbekiston, 1997).

-
- (a) Plaster, wood, bone, and stone craftwork
 - (b) Wares decorated with metal and wood
 - (c) Copperwork and copper knives
 - (d) Pottery
 - (e) Precious metal craftwork
 - (f) Handwoven fabrics
 - (g) Artistic glasswork
 - (h) Embroidery
 - (i) Folk costumes and headgear
 - (j) Printed cloth
 - (k) Costume box (*sandiq*)
 - (l) Folk musical instruments
 - (m) Miniatures
 - (n) Lacquerwork
 - (o) Casted furnishing
 - (p) Engraving
 - (q) Ceramic or wooden toys
 - (r) Reed craftwork
 - (s) Cradles (*beshik*)
 - (t) Folk shoes and leatherwork
-

Three associations were founded in the Fergana Province: at Kokand, Marg'ilon, and Rishton. The Rishton branch covered four districts: Rishton, Oltiariq, Bag'dod, and So'x. Members of the committee of *hunarmand* judged whether or not people who applied for joining actually had the ability and equipment to make certain crafts. If one became a member, he had to pay a registration fee every year, but no tax was levied on his profits for five years. Later, this period was extended for eight years. The registration fee was about 10,000 *so'm* (the currency of Uzbekistan) to 43,000 *so'm* in 2003, differing according to income level (1,000 *so'm* was about one US dollar and the average monthly salary of a public servant was about 30,000 *so'm* at that time). Table 2 shows the number of *hunarmand* members involved in different types of handicrafts-making in the Rishton branch in 2003.

As shown in Table 2, the total number of members was 298, of which 136 were ceramists. According to one committee member, among these 136 members, 1 made baker's ovens, 15 made porcelain pottery, 47 produced high-quality pottery, and the rest turned out daily-use earthenware pieces. Members can turn to the association for obtaining financial or practical

Table 2. The Number of *Hunarmand* Members Involved in Different Types of Handicrafts-making in the Rishton Branch, 2003.

Sort of Handicraft	Number of Members		
	Male	Female	Total
Pottery	127	9	136
Miniatures	1	0	1
Knives	12	0	12
Copperwork	1	0	1
Gold thread embroidery	0	1	1
Costumes	2	40	42
Wood crafts	2	0	2
Carpets	0	1	1
Long robes (<i>chopon</i>)	0	6	6
Folk headgear	0	13	13
Costume boxes (<i>sandiq</i>)	10	0	10
Folk musical instruments	1	0	1
Cradles (<i>beshik</i>)	9	0	9
Shoes	29	0	29
Metal crafts	11	0	11
Tinware	7	0	7
Wooden furniture	14	0	14
Household furnishings	1	0	1
Folk toys	1	0	1

Note: Data from a committee of the *Hunarmand* Association, June 2003.

help, such as getting materials. They can also participate in national exhibitions called *tashabbus*, where excellent farmers, manufacturers, and artisans win awards every year. Furthermore, no taxes are imposed when a member takes his products to exhibit and sell abroad. Some members say that if the *hunarmand* association had not been founded in time, they would have abandoned pottery.

Some people have come to earn their living by selling products in other towns and cities. As Werner (2004) found in Kazakhstan, women in Rishton are fine traders too. I have met one middle-aged woman who engages in trading, although she has a steady job with a gas company. She purchases various pottery pieces in her neighborhood on weekdays, and on Friday nights she and her husband load them in a 2-ton truck and cross the Kamchik Pass. The Pass is over 2,000 m high, but it is the only way to get out of the Fergana Valley to the capital city Tashkent and Samarkand. By Monday they return with other goods to sell in Rishton. Thus, in 2003 there

were about 6,000 people earning their livelihoods from (producing and/or selling) pottery in Rishton. The fine clay and good pottery techniques have helped people in Rishton to survive in the unstable economy.

The Society of Ceramists

There were four types of ceramists in Rishton when I was there in 2002 and 2003. About 100 made high-quality pottery for foreign tourists, several thousand produced simple earthenware for daily use, about 50 made porcelain pottery, and about 10 made baker's ovens. They are all generally referred to as *kulol* (ceramists), but their production styles differ greatly, and deserve greater consideration. Ceramists who produce high-quality pottery worked as masters or their prominent apprentices in the Soviet pottery factory. They know each other very well. Usually they work separately, but they cooperate for big projects, such as the restoration of historical buildings. About 30 people of them, including four committees of the *hunarmand* association, have dinner together about once a week to see each other and exchange information. If someone holds a ritual, such as a son's circumcision, other ceramists are invited as main guests. It seems in many ways that they are still co-workers rather than rivals. Almost all of them claim to respect the *pirs* of ceramists deeply, and they go together to the mausoleums of Naqshband and Amir Kulol in Bukhara almost every year. Some deliver their products as *narz* to guardians of these mausoleums. Legends about *pirs* are told to apprentices at their studios, and they pray, saying "May *pirs* and deceased masters protect (us)" (*Pir-ustozlar quvvat maddat qilsin*) at every important process of pottery, such as molding and baking. People say that keeping a studio clean is important for ceramists because their *pirs* hate dust very much. A number of makers of high-quality pottery are members of families that have produced pottery for generations, and although their income is not generally very great (see Table 3), they are very proud of being pottery masters.

Works by these masters vary (see Fig. 6). The most famous type consists of white-based dishes with delicate blue pictures, which have been revived since the late 1980s. Jugs, flowers, knives, and pomegranates are common traditional patterns. These products are mainly sold at souvenir shops in the tourist areas of Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara, to which they are taken by wholesalers who regularly buy them in Rishton.

Besides makers of high-quality pottery, thousands of people in Rishton produced simple earthenware for daily use in the late 1990s (see Fig. 7). These are fragile but so inexpensive that people could purchase hundreds of

Table 3. Main Products and Estimated Profits of Rishton Pottery in 2003–2004.

Producers	Main Products and their Average Prices	Estimated Profits Per Month
Makers of high quality pottery	Plate, diameter of 25 cm (30,000 so'm) Plate, diameter of 10 cm (3,000 so'm) Teacup (5,000 so'm)	80,000 so'm
Makers of earthenware	Plate, diameter of 25 cm (150 so'm) Teacup (100 so'm) Flowerpot (75 so'm)	50,000 so'm
Makers of porcelain	Bowl (400 so'm) Teacup (200 so'm)	100,000 so'm
Oven makers	Baker's oven (<i>tandir</i>) (2,000 so'm)	30,000 so'm

Note: Prices and profits were calculated by the author. So'm is the currency of Uzbekistan (1,000 so'm equaled about 1 US dollar in 2003–2004).



Fig. 6. Some High Quality Pottery Intended as Souvenirs.

them at once for big feasts like weddings, circumcision parties, and funerals. Profits on this activity were good enough for average living then, but from around 2003 people began to give up on this kind of production. One reason was a decline in the price of their products caused by severe



Fig. 7. The Earthenware Bazaar in Rishton.

competition – too many people were making them. The other reason was the arrival of the gas meter. Natural gas, needed for kilns, was virtually free in the early 1990s, as it had been in the Soviet era, but gradually gas meters began to appear in each house. Once this happened, profit margins practically vanished.

As the number of simple potters dropped since 2003, though, the number of people making porcelain grew. Porcelain production started around 1995 in Rishton (Zokirov et al., 1996, p. 65). As the clay of Rishton does not contain kaolin, an essential ingredient of porcelain, special clay had to be brought from other towns like Angren – about 200 km away. Moreover, making kilns for baking porcelain costs much more than making kilns for earthenware. But because porcelain is more durable than earthenware, its domestic demand is bigger and it sells for higher prices. Thus, people with enough capital have been moving into this field (see Fig. 8). A man who led the way in independent porcelain production in Rishton spoke of many hardships. According to him, porcelain specialists deceived him many times in the beginning and he lost almost all of his money. However, at last he found the precise recipe, which resulted in his becoming one of the wealthiest entrepreneurs in Rishton. He had at least three porcelain workshops in 2003.

A bread oven (*tandir*) is an essential piece of equipment for an Uzbek and a Tajik house. It can be used for some years, until its walls become



Fig. 8. Women Polishing Porcelain Teacups.



Fig. 9. People Going to Sell *Tandir*.

too severely cracked. People who make *tandir* are called *tandirchi*, and are regarded as *kulol* (ceramists) in Rishton. There are now about 10 *tandirchi* in Rishton, producing enough *tandirs* for all residents (see Fig. 9).

The Apprentice System

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, many government-managed enterprises across Uzbekistan were closed, or merely had their staff compliment reduced. In Rishton, in addition to the pottery factory, a cotton mill was closed. These had once employed thousands of residents. Many smaller ex-state enterprises were also shut down. The consequent lack of stable jobs has driven many to try to acquire craft-making skills for their survival. The old saying “a master is greater than a father” is more widely known, or even more emphasized, in the current situation. In some ways, as the saying suggests, masters are more highly valued than fathers because they can teach practical skills for becoming self-supportive. In fact, one man in Rishton told me that although he recognized the importance of a higher education, he planned to send his children to an artisan’s studio instead of an institute or a university because making crafts would bring a better living. Thus, many children work after school to learn about baking bread, tailoring clothes, fixing machines, and so on. Pottery is, of course, one of the most popular crafts in Rishton.

Since 1988 there has been no in-service training institute or school for pottery in Rishton, so anyone who wants to learn pottery has to go to a master’s studio. People say that almost all boys of the town have experience with this work. At first sight, it seems that the way of learning pottery has not changed much since the Soviet era – an apprentice has to do all the work that his master orders. He cares for his master’s children, makes tea for guests, cleans the studio, and so on. However, there is at least one big difference between today’s way of learning and the way of the Soviet era: the curtailment of the training period. In the Soviet factory, an apprentice could become a master only if a master position became vacant. Some ceramists waited for more than 10 years until they could become a master and get a private studio. But they were proud of becoming masters under such difficult circumstances, and their techniques were highly polished. Today, many apprentices leave their master’s studios soon after acquiring mastery over two or three processes of pottery-making, declaring themselves “masters.” Yet in reality they know only one part of pottery production well, such as drawing pictures on ready-made pottery. These are actually poorly-skilled, self-acknowledged masters.

This curtailment of the training is a result of the overall economic situation of Uzbekistan, which is currently making the transition from a socialistic economy to a market economy, but is not a very stable or strong one yet. Therefore, not even teenage boys can afford to spend their time at

workshops without wages. Also, masters' incomes are generally not very high, which compels them to stop paying wages to their apprentices and let them become independent earlier.

But the growing number of poorly skilled "masters" is causing serious problems. People say that they lack pride in and love for their craftsmanship, and that they will do anything for money, such as imitate other masters' products without permission. In fact, hundreds of substandard imitation products featuring famous masters' signatures can be found at souvenir shops in tourist areas – products made by self-acknowledged "masters." Wholesalers, who order these items, are partly to blame for this phenomenon, which results in general price decline and also damages the overall reputation of Rishton pottery. One skilled master lamented that today pottery has become merely a way of getting money, not an expression of craftsmanship (*hunarmandchilik*).

Some makers of high-quality pottery (true masters) are trying to solve this problem by restoring *anjuman*, the rite of passage for becoming a master (Kikuta, 2005a, pp. 55–58). They hope that holding *anjuman* will serve as proof that someone is in fact a highly skilled master and thereby help elevate their products out of the melee of poorly crafted forgeries and touristic fakes. But the problem is that they have no legal right to sanction those who make pottery without *anjuman*. It seems there is no quick antidote to this problem.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has explored the changes and continuations in Rishton pottery through the 20th century. It charted the transformation of a medieval-style local craft into a light industry in the socialistic production system, and then into a means of survival in the transition economy of newly independent Uzbekistan. We can now summarize that process briefly here.

In the beginning of the 20th century, there were about 700 ceramists in Rishton, organized in two guild groups. They made pottery by hand in separate workshops, although specialization and divisions of labor had already developed. Then after the Russian Revolution, the collectivization of pottery gradually progressed. Spaces where ceramists could make pottery gradually became limited to the collective workplaces called *artel's*. This collectivization was completed in 1941 when the private production of pottery was forbidden and all ceramists became members of *artel's*. However, actual methods had not changed much by this time; masters

produced pottery by their own ways in their studios (*do'kon*) at *artel's*, while doing their best to avoid revealing their secrets to others. Even though masters became co-workers in the collective workplaces, it seemed that they still saw each other as rivals. The quality of products varied widely among masters.

This situation began to change in the 1960s when mechanization started. Models, machines for kneading clay, and electric wheels were introduced. Factory-made leaden glazes became standard, replacing handmade natural glazes. At the same time, *artel's* were united to form bigger mills. In 1972, the Rishton pottery factory was opened. There were some studios (*do'kon*) and buildings with conveyor belt systems in the factory. In the latter buildings, workers called *ishchi* divided the work. They could handle only some processes of pottery-making and were engaged in mass production. The number of women workers increased dramatically during this period (nearly half were female in 1983), but most of them engaged only in some parts of pottery production. Products were modeled after samples given by the committee of art in Tashkent, and the quality of these products was checked severely so that uniformity was guaranteed. Mechanization and enlargement of the workplace soon made Rishton the center of producing daily-use earthenware in Uzbekistan.

Such changes in the production system brought some changes to the society of ceramists too. Before the Soviet era, ceramists in Rishton consisted of guild-like organizations called *kasaba*, which regulated the price of the production and kept order among ceramists, but these were dissolved after the collectivization. Ceramists also became co-workers in the collective workplaces, which erased the old distinction between skilled ceramists (*ustakor*) and journeymen (*xalifa*). In the factory, masters were on better terms with each other than they had been before. Whereas head-hunting of apprentices had often caused serious conflicts among masters in former time, in the Soviet factory masters sometimes gave their apprentices to each other for help or exchanged them for the apprentice's benefit. This was probably because their work conditions and welfare were guaranteed enough to dispel serious rivalry among them.

After the independence of Uzbekistan, the national Rishton pottery factory was privatized, but it soon closed. Then people started to make pottery at their homes in great numbers. Now thousands of people in Rishton are engaging in the production of various kinds of pottery, such as porcelain for daily use, inexpensive pottery and baker's ovens. Most of the masters of the ex-factory are making high-quality pottery for foreign tourists. Thus, Rishton pottery has kept its position as the major local

industry. It may seem that Rishton pottery is one of many “ethnic and tourist arts” (Graburn, 1976), on which quite a few anthropologists have focused recently (e.g., see Chibnik, 2003; Colloredo-Mansfeld, 1999). Scholars have focused on the commercialization of crafts, linking consumers mainly in Europe and North America with producers in the so-called Third World, which has brought many changes to local societies. Traders and brokers actively take part in these processes too. Globalization and developments in transportation and information flows form the common background.

However, the situation with Rishton pottery is somewhat different. First, “ethnic” is problematic for our case. It is true that Tajiks were dominant in Rishton and that ceramists were mostly Tajiks in the beginning of the 20th century, but later the town was incorporated into the Soviet Uzbekistan and the number of Uzbek residents has been growing. Inter-marriage is common between Uzbek and Tajik because they share many customs as settled Muslims of Central Asia, and today a great many Uzbeks are engaged in pottery-making. There are Tatar ceramic masters too. People who live in Rishton can start pottery-making freely whether they are Uzbeks, Tajiks, Tatars, Kyrgyzs, or Russians. It is a local craft and not an ethnic one.

Rishton pottery is not simply a “tourist art” either. Although high-quality pottery is made for foreign tourists, not many tourists come to Rishton. This is because of its location in the Fergana Valley, which is surrounded by mountains and not easily accessible to foreigners coming from the capital or from other major tourist locations in Uzbekistan. Besides, pottery is generally too fragile for most to take back home with them. Exporting them is also difficult because Uzbekistan is a landlocked country. For these reasons, in fact, the income of ceramists who make high-quality pottery is less than that of those who make porcelain pottery for domestic demands (see Table 3). In short, Rishton pottery is more of a local and domestic craft than an ethnic and tourist art.

Finally, let us move on to a discussion of the rearrangements of traditions. During the Soviet era, in some pottery centers of Uzbekistan (such as Kitob and Shahrisabz) traditional craftwork was lost. Urgut and G‘ijduvon pottery are still being made, but there are only a few families who engage in producing them now. Compared to these, Rishton’s pottery is outstanding regarding the number of ceramists and the fact that so many technical features of pre-Soviet times are still alive. The reason for this continuity is grounded in the apprentice system in ceramists’ studios. In Rishton, usually one could become a skilled ceramist only after being trained as an apprentice in a master’s studio. A trainee had to do everything his master

ordered. Upon the granting of his independence, he felt obligated to hold a party, *usta rozi*, to honor his master. If he invited all the famous masters in Rishton to the party, it was called *anjuman* – incorporating Islamic features and requests for guidance from patron saints. Even after independence, a former apprentice would respect his master very much and try to do every favor that he could do for him.

These relationships were criticized as feudal by some Soviet scholars (Dzhabbarov, 1959; Sukhareva, 1962), and collectivization of pottery-making partly aimed to wipe them away. However, many elements and functions of this apprentice system persisted during the Soviet era, one of the most important being the passing of skills and knowledge of pottery-making to later generations in studios (*do'kon*). There were studios of skilled ceramists on the grounds of *artel's* and in the factory, where masters could work with their teenage apprentices and helpers even though child labor was not truly permitted. There, masters taught apprentices how to form ceramics by hand, showed them old patterns of the Rishton pottery, and explained their meanings. Although the technology of *chinni* and natural glaze was lost around the 1940s, it was rediscovered by a master who had risen through this apprentice system.

In contrast, the training period at the in-service training center was less than one year in duration and was not long enough for students to learn such detailed skills and sufficiently deepen their knowledge. Being an apprentice of a certain master, then, was practically the only way to become a truly skilled master. Very few people entered the factory after having completed art school – most of the masters were those who had been trained from their childhood at the studios. Thus, though it seems paradoxical, the informal activities at the studio were indispensable in raising skilled masters who could support the formal production of the *artel'* and factory.

Another important function of the apprentice system was forming the identity of a ceramist through various activities as an apprentice. An apprentice had to come to the studio almost every day and do everything his master ordered. Displaying polite manners to elders was also strictly instilled in them. It is well-known that such chores and everyday participation in work are quite effective as training skills and for the reinforcement of identity as a specialist (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Most of those apprentices are now ceramists who make high-quality ceramics and are proud of being ceramists. They tend to cooperate with one another more than to compete, and they have developed a strong sense of identity and peer consciousness as ceramists through the common experience of apprenticeship. *Anjuman*, the rite of passage to becoming an independent ceramist, was seldom seen in

the late Soviet period, but some ceramists are now trying to revive this ritual. Success in this may help confirm the distinction between ceramists with strong identities and others who engage in pottery-making only for a living.

Furthermore, the apprentice system played a big role in the maintaining the veneration of *pir* through the Soviet era. Many legends of *pirs* were passed from masters to apprentices. The *is chiqar* ritual was also held in the Soviet collective workplaces and in the national factory. Pilgrimages to Bukhara were also made almost every year in the late Soviet period. Masters in studios often prayed to *pirs* for guidance and taught their apprentices to respect them. In this way, the veneration of *pir* among ceramists has been passed down to the next generation through the Soviet era. The formal ideology of the Soviet regime was not supportive of these religious customs, but ceramists never abandoned their veneration. Now, skilled masters who had been trained in the factory know well how to perform rituals and respect *pirs*. Others who engage in pottery-making also know who their *pir* is and show their respect, at least to some extent.

Thus, this chapter has illustrated the ways in which the traditions of ceramists were rearranged within Soviet-style factory through the apprentice system. The introduction of the market economy after the Soviet era brought other changes, such as the curtailment of the training period of apprentices. However, the spirit of “a master is greater than a father” is still known or even exaggerated today, and very many people in Rishton are trying to survive on the skills of this craft while praying for the guidance of their *pirs*.

NOTES

1. Skallerup's 1990 book is one of the few works which analyzes artisans' guilds and cooperatives in Central Asia from 1865 to 1928. Also, Imahori (2006) describes how home embroidery in a village near Bukhara became a successful craft business in Post Soviet Uzbekistan.

2. Some Western anthropologists (e.g., Dunn & Dunn, 1974; Gellner, 1980; Humphrey, 1984) introduced works of Soviet ethnographers to Western academics in the period of the Cold War, pointing out negative influences stemming from evolutionistic ideology in the Soviet academic research.

3. According to Peshchereva, *tovoqchi* numbered about 600 in the late 19th century (Peshchereva, 1959, p. 349). We can estimate that this number included not only masters (*ustakor*), but also journeymen (*xalifa*) and apprentices (*shogird*) because there is information indicating that from 1900 to 1910 there were 130 private workshops where less than 250 masters and helpers worked (Rakhimov, 1961, p. 24).

Also, Razvadyskie, who investigated artisans in the area from 1915 to 1916, reported that there were 80 workshops where 300 masters, their family members, and one or two helpers worked (Kodzaeva, 1998, p. 4). As for *ko'zagar*, people in Rishton say that their number was far less than that of *tovoqchi*. Sukhareva (1962, p. 129) also pointed that there were only a few of them in Bukhara, one of the largest cities of that period. Workshops of *ko'zagar* in Rishton, therefore, could have numbered from 10 to 20 at maximum, and the number of people who worked in them should have been less than 100. The number of all the ceramists including *ustakor*, *xalifa*, and *shogird*, then, can be estimated at approximately 700 about 600 *tovoqchi* and 100 *ko'zagar*.

4. Much historical research on the Naqshband brotherhood in Central Asia exists, but studies rarely deal with current beliefs about the patron saint of Naqshband. A few, however, do refer to patron saints in contemporary Afghanistan and the Uyghur region (see, e.g., Jasiewicz, 1991; Zarccone, 2004). I am also preparing a paper concerning the veneration of patron saints among artisans today in Uzbekistan.

5. However, some old technologies such as natural glaze and traditional patterns were well preserved even in the 1970s in other towns in the Fergana Valley Gurumsaroy, for example (Zhadova, 1974).

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MARKETPLACE VENDORS, DECISION-MAKING, AND THE HOUSEHOLD IN BOLIVIA

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter I describe and analyze the decisions and strategies made by marketplace vendors in Challapata, Oruro, Bolivia, by presenting four detailed case studies. I demonstrate that rather than trying to simply gain a profit in order to accumulate capital, a variety of goals and objectives underlie the way in which vendors operate their businesses. These numerous goals and objectives can be recognized when vendors' businesses are comprehended as one aspect of household maintenance activities. I conclude that when viewed from this perspective, vendors' decisions and strategies can be understood to be shaped by moral and social obligations as well as by the rationality of the market.

In an older, but now classic, ethnography of marketplace vendors, Davis (1973, p. 173) succinctly stated that at a “general and objective level . . . the commercial problem faced by sellers is that they must acquire . . . *capital*, turn it over in such a way that profit is realized and hopefully accumulate additional *capital*” (italics mine). This statement assumes that a specific goal and motive – capital accumulation – underlies the operation of selling

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businesses. While the quote to which I have referred was penned over 30 years ago, much of the anthropological scholarship on vendors continues to make this assumption (e.g., see Clark, 1994; Horn, 1994). I argue that we cannot assume that all vendors are engaged in entrepreneurial, maximizing behavior. Instead, we must recognize that a variety of goals and objectives underlie any particular vendor's selling activities.

Many anthropological analyses of the decisions and strategies associated with marketplace trade have considered them only in light of the business activities of sellers and within the context of the marketplace itself. I suggest that this confinement limits our understanding of the goals and objectives of marketplace trade and hence our understanding of vendors. Maintaining that selling businesses should be understood as one aspect of household maintenance activities, I argue that business decisions and strategies must be understood in light of the motives and goals of vendors' households. This shift in context for the analysis of decision-making enables us to recognize the possibility that vendors, although able to augment their business fund, may not want to reinvest in their businesses. Instead, some vendors whose income exceeds their daily household expenses may use the excess for other purposes, such as savings for future household expenses, education for their children, vacations, and so on.

This issue is important for both theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically it addresses the long-term interest that anthropologists have placed on the subject of rationality. Although it has been almost a century since Malinowski critiqued Adam Smith's assertion that humans have an innate propensity to truck, barter, and trade, the issue of the degree to which people engage in economically rational behavior has never been fully resolved. Indeed, rationality and other issues raised in the formalist-substantivist debate of the 1960s have gained a fresh life in recent academic discussions (e.g., see Cook, 2004; Elardo & Campbell, 2007; Rocha, 1996; Stanfield, Carroll, & Wrenn, 2007). From a practical perspective, programs that support the entrepreneurial activities of self-employed people have become an important component of development assistance in low-income countries. These programs often assume that, given some assistance, small-scale business owners will not only increase their profits but will also expand their businesses with the end result that they will employ more people and boost local economies (e.g., see Rhyne, 2001). In other words, the long-term success of these programs is often linked to an assumed entrepreneurial behavior on the part of participants.

My contribution to this subject is neither purely theoretical nor practical. Instead, using ethnographic data from my own research among marketplace

vendors in Challapata, Bolivia, I illustrate both the diversity of, and the complexity that underlies, vendors' business decisions and strategies. I demonstrate that while some vendors do reinvest their profits to expand their businesses, many others use their income for other purposes. My discussion begins with an introduction to Challapata, its marketplace, and the vendors who sell there. I then discuss how I approached my analysis of decision-making and strategies so as to include the inherent complexity within these processes and I demonstrate this approach with four case studies. I conclude by arguing that vendors' business goals and strategies are motivated by moral and social commitments as well as profit maximization and the rationality of the market.

CHALLAPATA AND ITS MARKETPLACE

Challapata is a commercial town located in the southern Bolivian highlands about 100 km south of the city of Oruro and 220 km north-west of the city of Potosí. The town is well-known in Bolivia for the large, open-air marketplace it hosts each weekend. Although the town's population is around 7,000, the marketplace serves over 40,000 people who live in the rural area, about 100 km in diameter, surrounding Challapata. Other than the small shops that some people operate within their homes, Challapata's marketplace is the only place to purchase goods in this area. The marketplace is large and each weekend over 400 vendors congregate in the eastern end of town to sell a wide range of products that includes food, clothing, hardware, and other household goods. Although the small-scale farmers who live in the area serviced by the marketplace do produce some agricultural crops for commercial sale, these products are not sold in Challapata for household consumption. Instead, farmers sell to wholesalers who then resell the products to other distributors in major Bolivian cities, such as La Paz, Oruro, and Cochabamba. The goods sold in Challapata are produced elsewhere in Bolivia or in other countries and are purchased by vendors in the wholesale markets located in the cities of Oruro and Potosí.

The majority of vendors who sell in the marketplace are residents of Challapata. Like most Challapateños, vendors live in nuclear family-based households that are best described as multi-occupational. Almost all households in Challapata have access to a small amount of land where some products, usually potatoes, are produced for household consumption. Residents of Challapata, however, do not consider themselves to be farmers and the income-earning activities of many people are related to small-scale

commerce, such as selling in the marketplace. In fact, there are few opportunities for waged work in Challapata and most residents rely on some form of self-employment to earn an income. This dependence on self-employment exhibits a trend occurring throughout Bolivia. In 1999, 67% of Bolivia's working population was employed in the informal sector of the economy (Schneider, 2002). This predominance of the informal economy is, in part, a result of the neoliberal economic policies that were implemented in Bolivia beginning in 1985. These policies included privatization of state-owned enterprises, decreased state-funding for social-welfare programs, and others, like the elimination of price controls, which allow for greater market regulation of the economy. For most Bolivians, the outcome has been a reduction in the value of their incomes, decreased employment opportunities, and declining support from state-welfare agencies. In response, many have mobilized their own resources and have sought their livelihoods through self-employment (Gill, 2000, pp. 3–4).¹

My research focused on the lives of fruit and vegetable vendors and the work of selling these products in Challapata's weekend marketplace. I obtained my data through participant-observation and interviews I conducted in Challapata from June 1998 to July 1999 and during a brief visit in May 2006. While I conversed with and observed and participated in the activities of many vendors, I came to know seven vegetable and six fruit vendors quite well. I regularly helped these vendors with their work and spent many hours with them discussing selling, the marketplace, and life in general. It was through these conversations and my participation in selling that I was able to learn about the decisions vendors make and the long-term strategies they pursue.

I found that the decisions made by vendors in Challapata are similar to those documented by other anthropologists studying marketplace vendors. They, like other vendors, pursue a variety of options to minimize the risks associated with selling (e.g., Alexander, 1987; Buechler & Buechler, 1996; Horn, 1994) and they have a number of funds for different uses (e.g., Clark, 1994; Davis, 1973; Horn, 1994). With respect to the potential for vendors to expand their businesses, some researchers (e.g., Babb, 1989; Horn, 1994) found that most vendors barely earned enough to meet household expenses and, therefore, few vendors were likely to expand their businesses over time. Others (e.g., Clark, 1994) found that vendors' earnings varied and while some vendors were able to accumulate capital, others were not. Vendors in Challapata also have varied incomes with some only earning enough to cover household expenses while others earn more than these regular expenses.

Where my analysis differs from that of some previous scholars is in the emphasis placed on the accumulation of funds, or capital, for business reinvestment. Implicit within the analyses of some anthropologists is the assumption that vendors would indeed accumulate capital if circumstances enabled them to do so. Such analyses assume a particular choice and agency, that of profit maximization and capital accumulation, on the part of vendors. By contrast, I encountered a great deal of variation among vendors with respect to both long-term strategies and whether they accumulated a fund for business expansion. In Challapata there is no single pattern of growth or maintenance in the lifecycles of selling businesses. Some vendors said that they have always operated a small-scale business, whereas others explained the current large scale of their business to be the result of expansion over many years. A more cyclical process of first expansion, then maintenance, and finally contraction is evident in some other businesses. What these different strategies point to is the diversity of decisions that Challapata vendors make. I argue, therefore, that we need to recognize the possibility that some vendors, although able to augment their business fund, may not want to reinvest in their businesses. Instead, vendors whose income exceeds their daily household expenses may use the excess for other purposes such as savings for future household expenses, education for their children, retirement, and vacations. In other words, the strategies that vendors pursue and the decisions they make are not always related to profit accumulation. They are also the outcome of choices that are linked to a variety of motivations. This choice and agency becomes clear when we contextualize vendors' selling activities within their households.

Emphasizing the role of the household in the income-earning activities of self-employed people is, of course, not new in anthropological analysis. Some scholars concerned with marketplace vendors have noted that vendors rely on their households to access some of the resources for selling (e.g., see Babb, 1989; Buechler & Buechler, 1996; Little, 2002, 2004). As well, in research about household-based petty commodity producers the role of the household in production has always been central. What has also been recognized in these studies is the importance that households play in the decisions made by petty commodity producers. Indeed, during the 1980s there was much debate over whether such decisions are shaped by the logic of subsistence or that of the market.² Later contributors to this debate suggested that production decisions are influenced by both household needs and the market imperatives of the capitalist economy (e.g., see Bernal, 1994; Lem, 1988). Following these leads, recent analysts of petty commodity producers have emphasized both the role of the household and the market in

production activities. Important for my argument, these researchers have also observed that business profits, when realized, may not always be reinvested in income-earning activities but may instead be used for other household expenditures (Chibnik, 2003; Ehlers, 1990; Elyachar, 2005; Nash, 1993; Zorn, 2004). Some recent research about vendors has made this same observation (Little, 2004). It is this research, focused on household enterprises, that has informed my analysis of Challapata vendors. In the following section, I discuss how I analyzed their decisions and strategies and demonstrate this approach with four case studies.

DECISIONS AND STRATEGIES IN CHALLAPATA'S MARKETPLACE

I began my analysis of decision-making with an exploration of the resources at the disposal of vendors. Vendors make decisions not only about the use of funds but that of other resources as well. In Challapata I found that five resources – funds, labor, customers, skills, and a suitable selling location – are all important for the successful operation of a selling business. I also found that, with the exception of customers, these resources are accessed through the vendor's household. The fund with which vendors begin their business is often from household savings. Vendors rely solely on members of their households to assist them with their sales. They often learn the skills of selling by helping a relative as a child. Even access to marketplace stalls is linked to the household as rights to a particular stall are frequently passed from one family member to another.

I also considered the variations that occur among vendors. There are three main areas in which Challapata vendors differ from each other. First are those related to business size and the diversity of activities. Vendors may sell a large, medium, or small volume of goods.³ Some vendors limit their business activities to the sale of fruits or vegetables. Others may extend their activities to include the sale of other products. Vendors might also sell outside the confines of the marketplace by, for example, selling on the town's main street during non-market days. Some may even participate in activities other than retail selling such as engaging in wholesale trade. A second group of variations is linked to vendors' lifecycles. In terms of their selling careers, some vendors are at the beginning, others are in the middle, and still others are nearing the end of their careers. They also differ in age. Vendors' households are also at different stages of development.

Some vendors have only recently established their households and must find ways to juggle their responsibilities for childcare, household chores, and selling activities. Vendors whose households are in the middle stage of the developmental cycle usually have a number of children who are capable of assisting them in these tasks. The households of some other vendors are in a later stage of the developmental cycle and their adult children have left to establish their own households, leaving them with fewer resources upon which they can rely for managing both their households and businesses. These lifecycle variations usually, but not necessarily, overlap. The general point is that all three influence both the size of a vendor's business and its degree of diversification. Finally, there is a third type of variation evident among selling businesses. This is the difference that emerges over time and is a longitudinal pattern of expansion, stability and maintenance, or contraction of the size and diversity of business activities.

All of these variations influence, and are influenced by, both the decisions which vendors make regarding their businesses and the strategies they pursue. What we are confronted with, therefore, when trying to understand decision-making processes is a high level of complexity. I began by clarifying the relationships that exist among the different variations that occur among vendors. Vendors make certain decisions and engage in particular strategies on the basis of the context in which they operate their businesses. This context is specific to each vendor and is comprised of a vendor's goals, resources, social relations, length of selling career, age, and developmental cycle of the household. Whether a business expands, contracts, or remains stable over time is, in part, the outcome of the interaction among these variables.

Local, regional, and national political economic processes, as a number of scholars have noted, provide the broader context in which these longitudinal patterns occur. Competition, limited cash incomes of customers and poor infrastructure are just some of the circumstances beyond any individual's control that constrain a vendor's ability to expand her or his business (e.g., see Babb, 1989; Clark, 1994). In Challapata, this context has provided both opportunities and constraints. On the one hand, the marketplace has continuously grown in size since the late 1960s. Originally a Sunday market that was confined to 1 plaza, by 1998 it was a weekend market that encompassed 2 plazas and 12 town blocks. I encountered an even larger marketplace in 2006. Selling activities now begin early Saturday morning rather than mid-afternoon and a substantial number of vendors continue to sell each Monday. The size of the marketplace has also increased with another five town blocks now included in the marketplace area. This growth

in size over the past 40 years is likely the result of the increased importance of the cash economy in the southern highlands as well as an increase in population. As we will see, a smaller-scale vendor with the means and desire to do so could increase the volume of her or his sales to become a large-scale vendor.

On the other hand, with few opportunities for paid employment, more people enter the marketplace as sellers in order to gain a livelihood. Indeed, many vendors said that although the number of customers had increased so too did the number of vendors. Moreover, Challapata's marketplace serves a relatively poor area of the highlands. Most area residents and marketplace customers are small-scale farmers and, while some are engaged in largely commercial production, most combine subsistence with some commercial production. In short, most customers have very limited cash resources and this places constraints on the volume of sales within the marketplace.⁴ Indeed, as we will see, vendors who want to greatly expand their volume of sales usually diversify their activities to include wholesale selling in addition to retail sales. My concern here, however, is with vendors' decisions and strategies and the way in which they are linked to the household. Because of the specificity of each vendor, I do not present my data as a general discussion of the strategies pursued by vendors. Instead, I present four cases that illustrate how vendors, who operate their businesses under different circumstances, pursue different strategies.

Nicolasa: An Example of Expansion

Nicolasa provides an example of a vendor who has been trying to expand the size of her business. When I first met Nicolasa in 1998, she was 26 years old, at the beginning stage of her selling career and operating a medium-sized fruit vending business. At that time, Nicolasa had been selling in the Challapata marketplace for three years. Her husband, unlike the spouses of many vendors, had a steady, full-time job and their household income was not solely reliant on Nicolasa's earnings. This situation offered both advantages and disadvantages for her business. Like many vendors, Nicolasa indicated that her business started small and slowly grew in size over time. Her accumulated business fund grew along with her business. The steady income of her husband allowed Nicolasa to accumulate a fund for her business faster than other vendors whose spouses do not have steady paid employment. Nevertheless, her husband's full-time job meant that she was not able to rely on his labor for selling. Moreover, her two children,

aged two and three years in 1998, were too young to assist her with selling. Nicolasa was therefore selling alone. This limited amount of labor restricted the volume that Nicolasa was able to sell. She did, however, extend her labor contribution to the business by selling on Challapata's main street during the week. These Monday-to-Friday sales compensated, somewhat, for her lower sales on the weekend.

When I encountered Nicolasa in 2006 I found that the size of her business had expanded. Selling about twice the amount she sold in 1998, her sales are now close to that of a large-scale fruit vendor in Challapata. This increased sales volume was not the only change in her business. She had also relocated her stall. In 1998, Nicolasa sold from a small space in a crowded area of the marketplace. She now has a much bigger stall in one of the newer marketplace areas. While her husband still has his full-time job and does not, therefore, assist in selling, Nicolasa's access to labor has increased as her two eldest daughters can now help her each weekend. Their labor enables Nicolasa to sell more fruits than when she was selling alone. This increased access to labor will continue because she now has five children and, as they become old enough, they too will assist her in the marketplace. Nicolasa has also stopped selling during the week. With the increased marketplace sales there is no need for the weekday sales. Moreover, with five children, the time she must devote to household chores has placed constraints on her ability to sell during the week.

With respect to long-term business strategies, Nicolasa has not tried to diversify her business activities. She is engaged exclusively in the retail sale of fruits. She has, however, been attempting to enlarge the volume of her sales and over the past 10 years her sales have increased from that of a small to almost that of a large-scale fruit vendor. In 1998, Nicolasa said her goal was to become a large-scale vendor of fruit. One of the constraints in achieving this goal at that time was her limited access to labor. She tried to overcome this limitation by selling on the main street during non-market days. Over the course of her selling career, Nicolasa has not, therefore, spread out the number of activities in which she is engaged. Instead, she has concentrated her resources on increasing the volume of her retail sales. With her increased number of children and their greater age, Nicolasa's access to labor has become less restricted. This situation has allowed her to boost the volume of her sales and the size of her business. Relocating her stall has enabled Nicolasa to accommodate these changes. Her bigger stall can easily provide the space for the larger volume of fruit and the greater number of people selling. The growth in her business is also the result of reinvesting a portion of the sales profits into the business. Her husband's full-time waged

work has provided the opportunity to reinvest more than if the household relied solely on the income from selling. Yet, the increased income that has accompanied the increased volume of sales is not solely for business reinvestment. Nicolasa's family has also grown and therefore the cash needs of her household. Moreover, Nicolasa has accumulated savings that are not exclusively for her business. In 2005, she stopped selling for many months in order to travel throughout Europe and to visit her two sisters who live in Barcelona, Spain. Nicolasa said that she saved a portion of her selling income to pay for this vacation.

Jorge and Dora: An Example of Contraction

My second case provides an example of first expansion and then contraction. Jorge and Dora are a married couple in their mid-seventies who now operate a small-scale vegetable vending business. They have seven adult children, aged 32–51 years, who are married with their own households and selling businesses. Today the couple lives alone. Jorge and Dora have been engaged in the buying and selling of agricultural products for about 50 years and they have been selling in the Challapata marketplace for more than 40 years. Their case illustrates the multiple strategies in which vendors engage. Not only do they sell vegetables each weekend in the marketplace, they also operate a small-scale *chuño* (freeze-dried potato) and dried broad bean wholesale business, they have a small shop on the first floor of their house from which they sell packaged foods like cookies and crackers, and they own a small farm, close to Challapata, on which they cultivate some crops for their own consumption. In 1998, most of their cash income was obtained through their retail and wholesale activities. This income was supplemented by the small amount of cash they received through their shop sales. In 2006, I found that they had diversified their income sources even further by renting two houses they had recently purchased.

Jorge and Dora have employed a number of different strategies over the course of their business careers. When they first married, about 50 years ago, they lived on their farm and traded the crops and animals they produced. They began selling vegetables retail in the marketplace when they moved to Challapata in the mid-1960s. At that time they decreased the amount of their labor devoted to farming and the produce they sold was purchased from wholesalers. Jorge and Dora indicated that their retail business started small and slowly grew to a very large size. This expansion in sales volume

suggests that Jorge and Dora made a conscious decision to reinvest a portion of their earnings back into the business. Business expansion, however, was not motivated solely by profit maximization. With seven children born between 1955 and 1974, the size of their household was growing. Hence, the cash required to maintain their household was also increasing. Moreover, their children, when old enough, assisted Jorge and Dora each weekend in the marketplace thereby augmenting the amount of labor available to the business. In short, the expansion of the retail business was the combined outcome of desire, need, and ability. This same combination also underlies the recent contraction in the size of their retail business. Since the early 1990s, Jorge and Dora have been decreasing the volume of their retail sales. In 1998, they operated a medium-sized vegetable vending business. By 2006, their sales volume had decreased further and the retail business is now best described as small in scale. This gradual decline in retail sales has also been the result of a conscious choice on the part of Jorge and Dora. Yet, it too is linked to household needs and resources. Living alone, their need for cash has decreased and they can now rely only on each other for labor.

Jorge and Dora have also chosen to diversify their income-earning activities. Like the expansion and contraction of their vegetable retail business, this diversification is the outcome of desire, need, and ability. Wholesaling, shop keeping, and renting all provide important supplements to Jorge's and Dora's income. As well, all three activities are accomplished with the resources and needs of their household in mind. They began the wholesale trade of *chuño* and dried broad beans at the same time they started selling vegetables retail. Their work in wholesaling is easily combined with their retail business activities. During the end of the harvest season, Jorge purchases both products from farmers in the wholesale market where he and Dora buy the vegetables for retail sale. They store the *chuño* and broad beans in their house and, when prices are high enough, Jorge travels to La Paz to sell the products to Peruvian traders. Their shop is also easily integrated into their regular activities. Goods sold in the shop can be bought on the same purchasing trips for vegetables and, because the shop is only open at their convenience, shop sales are incorporated into their daily routines. The two houses they rent are both located within one block from the house in which they live. Thus, the effort entailed in maintaining these rental units is also easily incorporated into their daily schedules.

Today, Jorge's and Dora's retail business provides only enough income for their daily living expenses. Nonetheless, they have been able to accumulate substantial savings. In 1998, this savings amounted to at least

US\$14,000. When I asked how they accumulated so much money, they said it was through their wholesale business. Jorge and Dora have not accumulated this savings fund for reinvesting in their business. In fact, I asked them why they did not invest at least some of their savings in a truck so that they could expand their wholesale activities. They said that they had no desire to extend their business that far nor did they want to take on the risk entailed in truck ownership. Dora did say that she would like to own a car, “not to use as a taxi” as most Challapateños do when they own cars, but instead “so that I can drive around town.” The couple said that they have saved their money in order that they may one day retire from marketplace selling. In other words, their savings constitute a form of security so that they can afford to live comfortably even when they are less capable of engaging in the physically demanding work of selling. Their recent purchase of two houses for rental purposes contributes to this retirement goal as both houses constitute an investment that provides a regular income.

In terms of long-term business strategies, Jorge and Dora are currently decreasing the size of their business. Although they want to continue its diversity, they have decreased the scale of their activities in the past few years. This decline is a choice that they have made. Yet, the reduction in business size is not solely the result of their desire to retire. Living alone, the household labor to which they have access is strictly their own. As well, Dora’s health is declining and her ability to sell and perform household chores has decreased. Thus, another reason Jorge and Dora have reduced the scale of their activities is the decrease in their access to labor. Nonetheless, they anticipated this decline and accumulated substantial savings. If we consider the selling career of Jorge and Dora over the long term, we can see that they slowly built up their business. This increase in the size of their business required that they reinvest a portion of their earnings into the business. At one point, however, they also began to use a portion of their income for savings. Rather than continually reinvest in the business, therefore, they began to accumulate savings to cover their long-term goal of retirement and for the dispersal of their children from the household.

Magdalena: An Example of Stability

My third case provides an example of stability and maintenance. Magdalena is a 62-year-old, small-scale fruit vendor who has been selling in the Challapata marketplace for approximately 40 years. She has never been

married, has no children and she currently lives alone. The history of Magdalena's business also demonstrates the changes that a retail business can undergo over time. For Magdalena, these changes include the type of products sold, the size of her business, and the location of her selling stall. She began her career as a vendor with the sale of snacks. Once she had accumulated a large enough business fund, she began to sell goods that required a larger cash investment. Over the course of her career, Magdalena has sold a variety of products, including clothing, dry goods, grains, and vegetables. She began selling fruit exclusively 22 years ago.

The size of Magdalena's business has also changed over her career. This change is linked with both the location of her selling stall and transformations in the composition of her household. In 1972, she moved her selling location to what is now the central area of marketplace activity. This move provided her with a much larger stall than she had previously occupied. At the same time, she began to care for her infant niece and her youngest sister, then an adolescent, began to live with her. She was therefore able to increase the size of her business because of her larger selling space and because she had access to the labor of her sister. Furthermore, with two people living with her, Magdalena's household expenses increased and the rise in the volume of her sales was necessary for household maintenance. Twenty-two years ago, Magdalena moved to her current smaller selling location and decreased the volume of her sales. She gave her large, well-located stall to her sister because she was becoming a large-scale fruit vendor and, by then, was selling a greater volume than Magdalena. At that time, Magdalena was once again living alone. Thus, her access to labor was restricted and her household expenses had declined. She therefore decreased the size of her business and its location in conjunction with a change in her access to resources and the cash requirements of her household.

With respect to long-term business strategies, Magdalena is currently maintaining both the size and diversity of her business and this stability has been evident for the past 22 years. The history of her selling career, however, offers some insights into the trajectories that may occur in some selling businesses. Magdalena has changed the types of products she sells and she has altered the size of her business. Unlike Jorge and Dora, Magdalena did not curtail the volume of her sales as a step towards retirement. Instead, the last transformation occurred when she was 40 years old and she chose to assist her youngest sister who had decided to become a large-scale vendor. The decrease in the volume of Magdalena's sales also coincided with a change in the composition of her household. With decreased household expenses and lower access to labor, she may not have wanted to continue the

large volume of sales. In fact, she once suggested to me that she does not enjoy selling. Since Magdalena had sold a variety of products over the course of her career, I asked her which goods she preferred selling. She said “none” and then explained the difficulties associated with selling each good. Noting the insecurity of a vendor’s earnings, Magdalena said she would rather work in the mines because it provides a steady income. The case of Magdalena illustrates that stability may be the combined outcome of prior expansion, a decision vis-à-vis kinship obligations, changes in the nature of household composition, and, perhaps, a desire to curtail the time spent selling.

Teresa and Eduardo: A Clear Case of Capitalist Expansion

My last case provides another example of expansion. It differs from that of Nicolasa in the extent to which this expansion has taken place. Teresa and Eduardo, a married couple, have not only expanded the volume of their sales, they have also diversified their income-earning activities. Moreover, they have done so in a manner that requires a great amount of financial investment. When I met the couple in 1998, Teresa was 56 years old and Eduardo was 60. At that time they owned and operated a banana and an egg wholesale/retail business. They had recently added the bulk sale of packaged foods, such as cookies, crackers, and candy, to their business activities. The size of their business was, and continues to be, much larger than that of other vendors. Although some of their sales are made to individuals for household consumption, most are made to other vendors and shopkeepers in Challapata. The volume of products which Teresa and Eduardo sell has required them to invest a large business fund in their enterprise. They owned at least two 20-ton trucks and one flatbed truck the size of a 10-ton truck in 1998. Their house and lot, which is located just one block west of the main plaza of the marketplace, is large enough to store the bananas, eggs, and packaged foods, and it provides parking space for one of the 20-ton trucks. The store from which they sell all of their goods is also attached to their house.

Teresa and Eduardo have two children. Their daughter, Esperanza (30 years old in 1998), her husband and two children live with Teresa and Eduardo. Although Esperanza now works in the family business she studied nursing and worked as a nurse in the Challapata hospital. She said that upon the birth of her first child in 1990 she quit this job and began working with her parents because she could not practice nursing and care for her

daughter at the same time. Esperanza also said that she is unlikely to return to nursing since her income is higher working with her parents. Ricardo, their son, was 25 years old in 1998 and studying law at the university in Oruro. Esperanza said that Ricardo would most likely enter the family business when he finished his studies because of both the difficulty in establishing a law practice and the greater degree of financial security he might attain in the family business.

Like other vendors, Teresa and Eduardo have worked hard in their business. Unlike other vendors, however, they have never taken time off from their work. I once asked Teresa if she would like an occasional day to rest, she responded with a definite no. In 1998, their weekly schedule was very busy. Sunday, Teresa sold bananas from her stall in the marketplace. That evening, Eduardo traveled to Cochabamba with one of their large trucks carrying people and their goods. Monday, Teresa continued to sell bananas and eggs from their shop. Tuesday, Eduardo arrived in Chapare⁵ where he bought bananas from producer cooperatives and Teresa traveled to Cochabamba, by bus, to purchase eggs, also from producers. Wednesday they were busy buying goods and loading the truck. Thursday, Teresa and Eduardo returned together to Challapata in the truck with the bananas on the bottom and the eggs on top. Friday, the truck was unloaded. Saturday, Teresa and Eduardo left Challapata at 2 a.m. to travel to Macha Cruce (about 100 km from Challapata on the highway to Potosí) to sell bananas in the Saturday market in this town. They returned to Challapata that evening. During the week, Esperanza sold goods from the store and arranged the maturing of the bananas.⁶

Teresa and Eduardo have not always operated their wholesale business. Forty years ago, Teresa sold dry goods in the marketplace. She switched to selling fruits and vegetables in 1975 because she believed the income from dry goods was poor. Eduardo worked in mining and then in road construction until 1980, when he and Teresa established their banana wholesale business. At that time, Teresa began to sell bananas exclusively. They expanded the wholesale business to include eggs in 1995 and they began selling packaged foods in bulk quantities in 1998. When I spoke with Esperanza about the family business in 1999, she said her parents had recently purchased three *micros* (a bus the size of a school bus) in order to operate a bus service between Challapata and Oruro. By 2006, this service was in full operation with more than three *micros*. The family had also expanded the transit service to include a small fleet (at least 10) of taxis. During my 2006 visit, I was greeted with the sad news that Eduardo had passed away in 2003. At that time, their son, who had been practicing law in

the city of Cochabamba, moved to Challapata with his wife in order to work in the family business. Esperanza and Ricardo were now essentially running the family business with Esperanza taking on her mother's duties and Ricardo taking on those of his father. They had also taken on the responsibilities of managing the transit business. Teresa now stays in Challapata and sells from the store.

The business of Teresa and Eduardo differs in many ways from that of other vendors in Challapata. To begin with, it is much larger and requires a much larger business fund than that of other vendors. In fact, their business is the clearest example of continual investment I encountered and they have unequivocally engaged in capital accumulation. Second, the organization of their selling activities differs from most vendors. Although their selling career began in retail, the types of sales in which the family is now engaged are largely wholesale, supplemented by a smaller volume of retail. Rather than purchasing products from wholesalers, the family purchases from producers. When Teresa and Eduardo expanded and diversified the business to include wholesale, they made the decision to specialize in first one, then two, and finally three products. Further expansion and diversification has entailed engaging in activities that are not directly related to the selling of food products. Third, with only two children, Teresa and Eduardo have had a small amount of family labor upon which to draw. They have therefore employed two men on a full-time basis to perform manual tasks in the wholesale business. They are also one of the few households in Challapata that employs a domestic servant. Their use of paid labor has increased with the transit business as they now also employ drivers. None of these employees, however, sell goods in the store. This activity has been the exclusive right of Teresa and Eduardo, their children and spouses and, now, their grandchildren. Finally, unlike other vendors whose adult children have either entered a different occupation or have established their own selling businesses, the children of Teresa and Eduardo have entered the family business as equal partners. In fact, Esperanza wanted me to clearly understand that, among marketplace vendors, her family was unique in that parents and adult children shared in the work, costs, and profits of buying and selling. She also suggested that this partnership was one reason for the great success of the business.

Teresa and Eduardo's decisions to continually reinvest in their selling activities by first establishing the banana, then egg, and finally packaged food wholesale business have entailed a relatively high level of risk. Nonetheless, these have been calculated risks. On the one hand, the amount of business fund required for establishing and operating the business is

large. Furthermore, both bananas and eggs are fragile and perishable and the potential exists for a high level of waste if they are not transported and stored properly, or sold within a particular time period. On the other hand, with only one other banana wholesaler and one other egg wholesaler in Challapata, Teresa and Eduardo have had minimal competition.⁷ Moreover, the products they sell have a high level of continuous demand because they are regularly consumed in all households. Bananas, eggs, and packaged goods are sold by most of the many, small retail shops in Challapata. Thus, there are a large number of retailers to whom Teresa and Eduardo sell. The establishment of the transit company also entailed risk, especially so given that Challapata already had four bus companies. None of these companies, however, used the smaller *micros*, which make the trip between Challapata and Oruro in less time. Operating a taxi service on a daily basis was new and they therefore faced no competition. In short, the investments in which Teresa and Eduardo have engaged have all entailed a certain degree of risk. Nonetheless, this risk has always been cushioned by innovation.

The business decisions Teresa and Eduardo have made are not just about capital accumulation and risk assessment. They are also inter-related with those they have made regarding their household. The original business fund invested in the wholesale enterprise came from their household savings and a bank loan. The savings were from Eduardo's employment in mining and construction and were accumulated because the couple continued to live in Challapata where the cost of living is far less than in the larger urban centers where Eduardo worked. Living in Challapata also allowed Teresa to establish a retail business in the Challapata marketplace. Nor have Teresa and Eduardo invested solely in their business. They ensured that their children were well-educated with professions to which they could turn in case of need or desire. In fact, both Esperanza and Ricardo began their working careers in these professions. It was the needs of their households and families that brought them into the family business. Esperanza gave up her career as a nurse in order to care for her children. Working with her parents allowed her to combine income-earning activities with domestic responsibilities. When his father died, Ricardo gave up his law practice in order to take on the role his father had previously played in the business. Without his contribution, the business would probably not have continued at the same scale. In other words, concerns for the household and kin have been inter-linked with those of the business.

One of the most interesting aspects of Teresa and Eduardo's business and household is how their adult children are incorporated. Married adults in Challapata rarely live in their parents' homes and, when they do, it is

because they either cannot afford to establish their own household or they are saving money in order to purchase a house. Esperanza did not establish her own household for any of these two reasons. Instead, her membership in her parents' household is an important aspect of her participation in the family business. Ricardo, on his return to Challapata in 2003, did not move into the house in which his parents lived. Instead, he and his wife established their home in another house owned by Teresa and Eduardo. This collaboration between two generations not only increases the resources that can be invested in the business but also speaks to the goals of the business owners in relation to long-term continuity. Retail businesses of vendors in Challapata terminate when the vendor either retires or dies. The wholesale business of Teresa and Eduardo, by contrast, is being continued by their children. This inter-generational continuity suggests two points for consideration. First, this longevity may have increased the willingness of Teresa and Eduardo, and now Esperanza and Ricardo, to continue to invest and, therefore, expand the business. This investment is evident in the expansion of wholesale selling to include packaged foods, the purchase of buses to establish a transit service between Challapata and Oruro, and, most recently, the operation of a taxi company. Second, in Challapata the only other cases of family continuity in business occur among the few wealthy and large-shop owners. Despite the humble beginnings of their household, Teresa and Eduardo, and now their children, have obtained the status of one of the wealthiest families in Challapata and their goal of inter-generational continuity both reflects and permits this status.

THE PRACTICAL RATIONALITY OF VENDORS

These four case studies illustrate just some of the long-term business strategies that vendors pursue. Nicolasa, over the course of her more than 10-year selling career, has been expanding the size of her business. Jorge and Dora illustrate how a business can slowly increase in both size and diversity, maintain that size and diversity for many years, and finally, slowly contract in size. Magdalena also demonstrates a pattern of growth, maintenance, and then contraction in size, only in her case contraction has been followed by another, but longer, period of stability. Teresa and Eduardo and now their children have continued to expand both the size and diversity of their business and this has entailed capital accumulation. The selling careers of other vendors in Challapata have followed different paths. Some vendors with small-scale businesses indicated that they have always sold a small

volume of produce and have had no desire to expand their businesses. Other vendors, instead of increasing the volume of their sales, have expanded the diversity of their income-earning activities. Still some other vendors with diversified businesses have sought to maintain the volume of their retail sales and decrease the variety of their income-earning activities. In short, there is no single path along which vendors pursue their careers and develop their businesses. Moreover, given the variety of options available to vendors and the different points in time in both their career and lifecycle when they might pursue these options, each vendor's long-term strategies are unique to that vendor. It is this diversity among vendors that I am underscoring in my argument that we must not assume that vendors want to engage in capital accumulation and, instead, recognize their agency and capacity to make choices. The question my data raises, therefore, is the degree to which marketplace vendors can be understood as profit-maximizing entrepreneurs and it, in turn, is linked with two inter-related concerns: the rationality of people's actions and the motives behind these actions.

Rationality is a concept that is frequently interpreted through the lens of economics. Humans, in this perspective, are understood to be trying to maximize their gains or they are said to be economizing by seeking to obtain the highest possible returns while using the smallest amount of resources. The central assumption is that people's wants are unlimited, but their resources are finite. People therefore act rationally so as to use their resources in a way that provides the best possible outcome. This position was, of course, one of the key assumptions of formalists in the formalist–substantivist debate in economic anthropology (e.g., see Burling, 1968; LeClair, 1968). Substantivists claimed that such economic rationality was not universal and that conditions of scarcity are not always present when people make economic choices. They argued that decisions are not influenced solely by maximization goals. Morals, or cultural notions of what is right and wrong, also have an effect on the decisions people make. In short, substantivists argued that decisions are not only shaped by the economic rationality and maximization associated with western markets but also by other social institutions (Dalton, 1968; Polanyi, 1968; also see Elardo & Campbell, 2007).⁸ One important point in the formalist–substantivist debate, therefore, was the degree to which people's decisions and actions are embedded within social relations and social institutions and the extent to which actors engage in goal-oriented behavior.

Recent theoretical discussions have sought to incorporate this multiplicity of influences in understanding rationality and the motivations behind actors' choices. Some scholars, influenced by Polanyi's concept of

embeddedness (Elardo & Campbell, 2007; Granovetter, 1992; Rocha, 1996; Stanfield et al., 2007) have argued that, even in market-based economies like capitalism, economic processes are integrated within culturally specific social relations and social institutions. Others (e.g., Cook, 2004; Peet, 1997; Wilk, 1993), emphasizing that people engage in goal-oriented behavior, have sought to incorporate cultural and social mores and norms in their analyses. Wilk (1993), for example, maintained that in analyzing decision-making, social scientists have used three competing models that he terms selfish, social, and moral. He suggested that rather than treat these models as different alternatives for analysis, scholars should link them together. In short, Wilk (1993) argued that actors' decisions are always influenced by selfish rational action, concern for social groups, and cultural notions of right and wrong. Cook (2004) has suggested that actors are motivated by a prudent or practical rationality. This concept of practical rationality is meant to illuminate that people's economic decisions, although directed towards goal-oriented behavior, are always shaped by "moral constraints and commitments" (p. 81). Cook also goes on to explain that practical rationality "presupposes that prudent regard for self, family and community welfare are potentially of motivational importance in economic behavior and that patterns in that behavior can be understood as an aggregate consequence of individuals acting according to such a model."

It is this multi-faceted nature of decision-making that I have been emphasizing in my analysis and argument. Indeed, although I have been highlighting the diversity of Challapata vendors, what they do share in common is their engagement in goal-oriented decisions and strategies which, as both Cook (2004) and Wilk (1993) have argued, are shaped by a number of motivations. Vendors do, indeed, seek to gain a profit from selling as that is the point of marketplace trade. Moreover, they often do so at the expense of another vendor as that is the consequence of the competition they encounter. Hence, the immediate goal of selling goods at a price that is higher than that which the vendor paid can be understood as motivated by the rationality of the market. Nonetheless, profits from sales are used first and foremost to meet the cash needs of vendors' households, and second for the long-term goals of their households and businesses. It is here that morals and social commitments influence decisions and strategies. When vendors do earn an income that is greater than that required to meet their households' regular maintenance they will accumulate savings. As I have demonstrated, these funds are frequently used to meet both the long-term goals of their households, like retirement, and social commitments such as obligations to kin. By accumulating a fund for retirement, Jorge and Dora

are pursuing a moral and social commitment to self-reliance. They do not want to burden their children with the responsibilities of, at least, their financial care when they are unable to work as vendors. Magdalena passed the rights to her large, well-located stall to her sister, with a resulting decreased size of her own business, because of her social and moral responsibilities towards kin. We see the same pattern in the case of Teresa and Eduardo. The couple have built-up an enterprise that they can pass on to their children and thus ensure their future financial security. Both Esperanza and Ricardo quit their professional careers and joined the family business because of their social and moral responsibilities toward family. With Nicolasa we find that the growth of her business has been accompanied by the growth of her family. Her increased income is therefore not only related to profits but also to her household's needs and, hence, her social and moral responsibilities toward her kin. In other words, as these Challapata vendors clearly illustrate, even reinvestment for profit maximization can be understood as rooted in moral and social commitments as well as the rationality of the market.

CONCLUSIONS

I began this chapter by noting that many anthropological studies of marketplace vendors implicitly assume that the decisions and strategies of vendors are fueled by entrepreneurial and maximizing behavior. I argued that we cannot make this assumption. When selling businesses are conceptualized as part of the household, and when the activities related to the operation of such businesses are understood as activities associated with the daily maintenance of the household, we can recognize that a variety of factors influence the decisions made and the strategies pursued by vendors. I suggested that a number of differences occur among vendors in Challapata. These variations include the size of the business, the degree of diversification of activities, the career cycle of vendors, their age, the developmental cycle of their households, and the longitudinal patterns of expansion, maintenance, and/or contraction. Inter-related with these variations are the resources to which vendors have access through their households. I suggested that decisions and strategies are linked with these differences. Indeed, they both affect, and are the outcome of, vendors' decisions and strategies. I demonstrated, through four case studies, that goals for expansion, maintenance, or contraction differ among vendors and they are, at least, partly the result of the diversity among vendors.

In all four cases, I underscored the way in which the household – its resources, developmental stage, and the activities of its members – influenced the decisions and strategies of vendors. I also emphasized that such decisions and strategies are not pursued solely for the long-term requirements and interests of the business. While some vendors are reinvesting a portion of their earnings in their businesses in order to expand, many others are using all of their earnings for other purposes. In other words, vendors in Challapata are not necessarily trying to accumulate capital, as suggested by Davis (1973). Instead, when possible, they accumulate savings that can be used in a variety of ways. Their decisions and strategies regarding the accumulation and use of these funds are shaped by the complex inter-linkage among market rationality and moral and social responsibilities.

NOTES

1. For recent detailed discussions of neoliberal economic policies in Bolivia see Dunkerley (2007) and Kohl and Farthing (2006).

2. I am referring here to the petty commodity production debate of the 1980s. For one of the strongest arguments for the logic of subsistence see Friedmann (1980). Chevalier (1983) provides one of the most detailed arguments for the logic of capitalism.

3. I categorized small scale vendors as those who sell less than 2,000 pounds of produce each week, medium scale vendors as those who sell 2,000 4,000 pounds of produce each week, and large scale vendors as those who sell greater than 4,000 pounds of produce each week. Although these are my categories, they do match how vendors view the size of both their own and other vendors' business.

4. One government document, based on 1992 census data, estimates the incidence of poverty in the area served by Challapata's marketplace to be between 90% and 97%. The same figure for the total population of Bolivia was 70.5% (República de Bolivia, 1995).

5. Chapare is an agricultural area of the Department of Cochabamba. Although it is best known for the cultivation of coca, the warm climate is also suitable for tropical fruits such as bananas and oranges, both of which are produced in Chapare.

6. The bananas are purchased green and must be matured in a heated room. Teresa and Eduardo have a storage area in their house where the bananas are matured.

7. These other wholesalers deal in much smaller volumes. According to Teresa and Esperanza, their business was the first to sell both bananas and eggs wholesale in Challapata.

8. The formalist substantivist debate was not focused on decision making only. For some of the original contributions to this debate see the collection of Schneider and LeClair (1968). For recent reassessments of the debate see Cook (2004), Elardo and Campbell (2007), Isaac (1993), Rocha (1996), Stanfield et al. (2007), and Wilk (1996).

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GENDER, WORK, AND OPPORTUNITY IN OAXACA: SOME THOUGHTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE RURAL VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

Rural Oaxaca is plagued with economic problems. There are few jobs available and ideas concerning gender often limit the work that women are able to pursue. In this chapter, we explore how rural Oaxacan women create economic opportunities. We focus on work at home that is both voluntary and remunerative, craft production, and entrepreneurial activities. We show that rural Oaxacan women are able to create unique economic niches that build upon their domestic roles and enhance the economic status of their households.

There are few opportunities for work in rural Oaxaca, Mexico beyond agriculture, craft production; service and construction work in nearby cities,

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and migration to the United States. Opportunities in rural Oaxaca are constrained by the state's limited economy and lack of infrastructure, limits on local education, internal ethnic divisions, and perhaps most importantly for this chapter, gender. Men and women in Oaxaca do not and often cannot make the same choices. Wage labor particularly in construction is typically something for men. Service work is available to women, but the choices are limited by assumptions concerning what men and women should and can do (Safa, 1995). Women have access to jobs behind the counter (often as cooks) and less often in more public settings. Subsistence-based agriculture is defined as a male activity although women are involved in nearly all aspects of farming; and craft production, while accessible to both men and women, is often dominated by men, particularly at the high end of production (Wood, 2000).

Work and labor choices for Oaxacan women are often limited and migration to the US job market is also not always an option (Cohen, Rodriguez, & Fox, 2008; Rees & Coronel Ortiz, 2005). Local assumptions concerning gender (whether real or perceived) and what are reasonable kinds of opportunities for men and women restrict migration as a choice for women.¹ Nevertheless, Oaxacan women are able to create ways to succeed even with the few opportunities and limited options that face them (Howell, 1999). They do what is often expected. This typically includes activities focused on the reproduction and maintenance of the household. They also creatively build important niches where new opportunities are found.

It can be very hard to discover and document the efforts that involve women as they support themselves and their households. Unlike men, rural Oaxacan women do not enter the wage labor market as there are few real opportunities for work in the area. Thus, women chose from possibilities that are rooted in their domestic responsibilities. These opportunities (paid and unpaid) put Oaxacan women in new economic relationships in their households, communities, and the market systems that have developed around them (see Fussell, 2005).

The fieldwork for this chapter is based on research conducted between 2000 and 2004 and includes surveys and interviews with nearly 600 households in 12 central valley Oaxacan communities (Cohen, 2004). In addition we conducted ethnographic research in Santa Ana del Valle in 1992–1993, 1996, and 2004–2006 (Cohen, 1999; Everett & Cohen, 2004). The authors lived with families in Santa Ana, conducting fieldwork on cooperative relationships (Cohen, 1999), gardening (Everett & Cohen, 2004), and food choices (Cohen, Mata Sánchez, & Montiel-Ishino, 2009). Participant observation and interviews were the rule during much of this fieldwork.

Discovering how women earned money during our fieldwork was difficult. We could not simply ask women if they had jobs. In fact, when we asked rural Oaxacan women about work, most responded, "I don't do anything, but my husband works." Women would typically continue and talk about the wage work of other family members, farming done by husband, and the efforts of migrants living in the United States who often remitted bimonthly to their sending households. Nevertheless, it was quite obvious to us that rural Oaxacan women were involved in the sociocultural and economic reproduction of their households. Women's work was typically informal and took place in the household. Because women often worked on the margins of the economy and their efforts did not fit the category of a "job," according to local perceptions they generally discounted and described their experiences as something other than work (Beneria, 1999; Chiappari, 2001; Hartmann, 1976; Sánchez & Pagán, 2001). Rather than accepting what women told us and leave with perception that only men work in rural Oaxaca, we asked a series of questions to further probe women's work. We enumerated a list of potential jobs, asking women to tell us about any they may have experienced. "Do you bring in laundry? Do you make *tortillas*? Do you sell food out of the house?" Everett worked with women in households in Santa Ana to document these efforts. Her work concentrated on the kitchen gardens that women managed and the plants, fruits, and herbs that supplemented a family's food budget. A third project with Montiel-Ishino and Polsky focused on women's work in Oaxaca's marketplace and around the sale of chapuline (grasshoppers).

We found that women create myriad opportunities for themselves both in and out of their households to support themselves and to supplement their households' budget. They combine a foundation of household work (unpaid efforts that are quite typical worldwide) with wage work that generated income (see Katz & Correia, 2001). Women gardened at home and participated in paid work in their households and beyond and effectively secured an income that sometimes rivaled the income of wage workers; and when there was no wage work, women's income was critical to a family's success. The outcomes of women's efforts created a supportive environment where family members were cared for, fed and clothed.

Working in and around the household, women became active economic players and earned the funds necessary to survive and prosper. The money earned from the effort of Oaxacan women is not a supplement to a household's budget, although it is often framed as such by the women and men we interviewed. Instead, these funds are an important source of cash for the household and the work these women did effectively moved them out of

Table 1. Paid and Unpaid Labor in the Rural Oaxacan Household.

	Household	Agricultural	Non Agricultural	Entrepreneurial
Paid	Laundry, child care, ironing	Selling vegetables	Wage labor work (craft production)	Market work (<i>chapuline vending</i>)
Unpaid	Kitchen gardening, meal preparation	Assisting in the <i>milpa</i>	Support work (craft production)	Support work

Note: Text in bold is discussed in the text.

the passive roles that they were often perceived to inhabit and into active roles through which they are able to define their economic well-being (Cook, 1990).

In this chapter we describe the efforts of rural Oaxacan women in their kitchen gardens, as paid and unpaid craft producers, and the marketing of *chapulines* to capture just a small sample of the ways in which women respond to the challenges of daily life. Table 1 is grid that illustrates the efforts of women we encountered. We divide women's work between paid and unpaid labor, and then we classify those efforts by their nature: do they take place in around the household or in the field; are they non-agricultural (service related); or are they entrepreneurial (market related)? While there are many other activities that involve women (de Grammont, 2003; Howell, 1993; Rees, 2006), for this discussion we have limited ourselves to the four activities given in bold in Table 1.

The central valleys of Oaxaca, includes the state's capital, Oaxaca City and the surrounding valley regions (see Fig. 1). The people of the central valleys divide their time between local subsistence-based agricultural work, some wage labor (locally and in area towns and Oaxaca City), and migration (see Cohen, 2004). Wages in Oaxaca (as with the country) have lost value over the last decade, dropping by 60% since 1982 and losing 23% of their buying power since 1992 (Wise, Salazar, & Carlsen, 2003). In Oaxaca, more than 50% of the state's agricultural workers are not paid and 91% of those who do earn wages earn less than twice the minimum (which is about US\$10 a day). Women who participate in agriculture are in an even more difficult position, with 70% earning nothing for their efforts in 1999 (de Grammont, 2003). If we add that health care, education, and general infrastructure are lacking in the state the situation likely seems quite grim. Yet, Oaxacan women create opportunities where none seem to exist and in doing so, support themselves and their families.

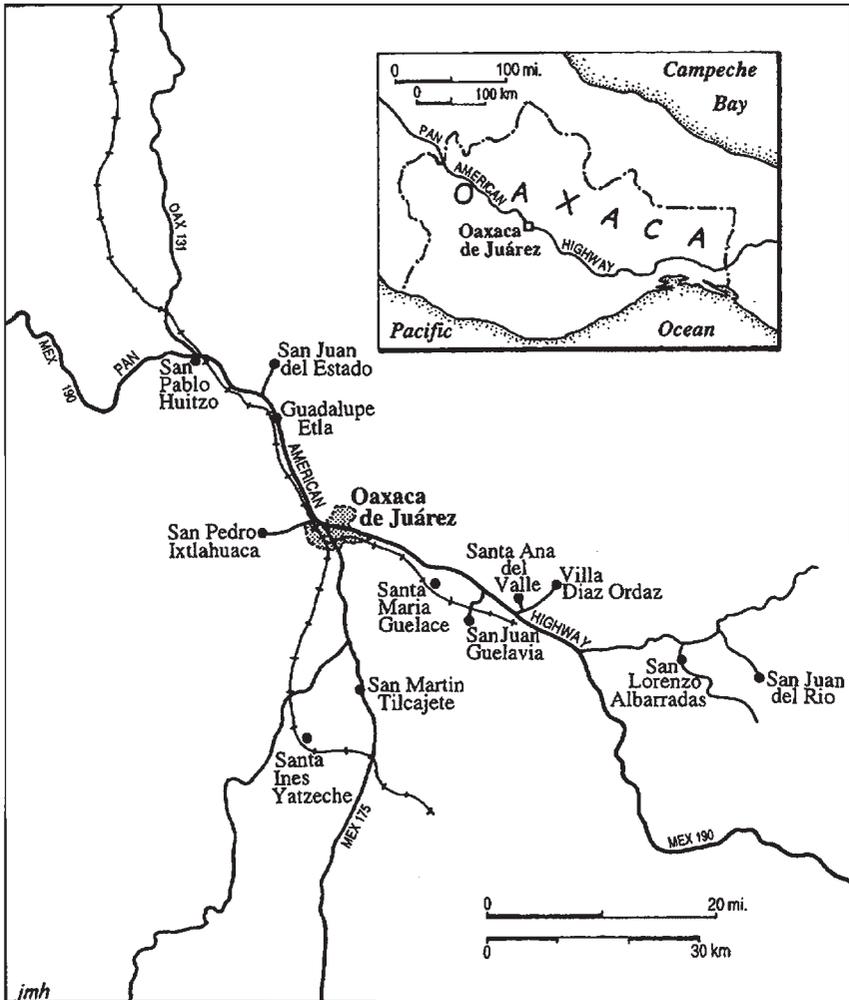


Fig. 1. The Central Valleys of Oaxaca. Source: Cohen (2004).

PAID AND UNPAID WORK IN THE RURAL OAXACAN HOUSEHOLD

Opportunities for rural Oaxacan women are often established in and around their households and around activities that are expected of them.² The women and men we interviewed (particularly older women and men) made

many assumptions about what women and men are required to do. While women can work and earn money, that work should ideally be balanced with care for the family and managing the households (Cook & Binford, 1990; Howell, 1999).

Many different activities – paid and unpaid – occupy rural Oaxacan women. Paid activities include taking in laundry, ironing, and the sale of foodstuffs, particularly *tortillas* and *tlayudas*. Unpaid activities in the household include working in *milpas* (fields) with their families, and managing kitchen gardens. Paid labor in the household, taking in laundry, the sale of *tortillas* was often dismissed by both men and women as not particularly effective. Women described such efforts typically as an extension of their domestic activities. Sometimes going so far as to ask us why we would think that their efforts were anything other than what was expected of them as women and homemakers.

Typical were women who described their mornings as filled with making *tortillas*. Many would tell us that they cooked for four or more hours preparing their *tortillas* and sometimes even more time depending on the quality of the *masa*. Women typically took their maize to a *molio* (automated grinder) for grinding, paying for the service. Other times they would use their *metate* and grind their own maize to make *masa*. There were also women who would regrind prepared *masa* on their *metates*. While the second grind is often made for delicious *tortillas*, it added a good deal of time and effort to production. Women who prepared *masa* and *tortillas* told us that they would spend additional time making extra *tortillas* to sell two or three, and sometimes even four times a week. Taking in laundry, selling some vegetables and *tortillas* were extremely effective ways for women to earn money.

Women who took in work or sold their produce and foodstuffs did not only earn a small bonus that could be added onto a household's collective budget, although many talked about their earnings as if they were negligible and claimed that only their husbands worked for wages. In fact, women often earned a day's wage – about 50 pesos for their efforts – and in a week they could effectively double their household's income. For many women who were married to men who had migrated to the United States, this effort was critical and was the only source of locally earned money. By earning locally, the women were able to save more of the money remitted from the United States – and effectively bank that money for future expenses. These earnings also mitigated some of the stress women experienced as they managed households and children on their own. Margarita, the wife of a US-based migrant from Santa Ana who spent 2000–2002 working in a

Chinese restaurant in Santa Monica, described her experiences to us. She told us that her husband did not want her spending his remittances on food; rather, he wanted her to earn that money. This was quite difficult for Margarita and in response, she had returned to her parent's home. Living with her parents allowed Margarita to focus on her work and find some help with childcare. Her parents also covered some of her expenses. Nevertheless, her husband returned to Santa Ana in 2002 quickly moved the family and back to their home. He was quite critical of Margarita's decision to move back with her parents and did not appreciate the difficulties she had faced during his sojourn as she organized to support their family. By 2003, Margarita refused to allow her husband to return to the United States (she did not give him any support, but rather an ultimatum to choose to stay or leave). Her husband chose to stay in Santa Ana and currently the family survives on the mixture of subsistence agriculture, occasional wage labor, and Margarita's efforts that include the sale of *tortillas* three times a week.

Other rural Oaxacan women sold vegetables and plants earning fairly substantial amounts of money. Garlic growers in Santa Maria Guelace supplied restaurants throughout Oaxaca. While some women visited restaurants several times a week to deliver their garlic, others waited for chefs and buyers in their homes. Garlic brought a good price and a family could save a little money from their efforts. Typically, women managed plots of garlic while their husbands spent their time growing subsistence crops (maize and alfalfa). Other women were in a position much like Margarita. Maria Mendoza, a mother of three in Guelace, sold garlic directly to buyers and was able to save remittances from her husband who was working near Monterey, CA.

Other women sold *nopal* cactus. Besides using the *nopal* as a food source for a family, the *nopal* pads or "paddles" were sold in local markets (in 2003, they sold for one peso each). The sale of this abundant product was one way that women were able to strategize economically. They could use the *nopals* in their homes or sell them if the price was high and there was demand "mak[ing] it possible for them to respond to market fluctuations or to raise cash more readily as the need arises" (Cook & Binford, 1990, p. 61).³

In Santa Ana and other weaving communities, the *nopal* is useful as a resource and not just a food source. Cochineal beetles, a beetle that produces a red dye when crushed, is cultivated on *nopal*. Cultivating cochineal to use as a dye in weaving means a family does not have to buy dyes for their yarns. When there is extra it can also be sold and in the early part of the twenty-first century, dried cochineal cost about 1,500 pesos for a kilo (US\$15.00), which was rather expensive.

There is a sense that unpaid labor has little to offer in terms of a household's overall economic well-being. Yet, a second but just as important way in which women support and supplement their households and care for their families was through their organization and management of kitchen gardens or *huertos familiares*.⁴ Kitchen gardens are assortments of various spices, *chiles*, fruits, and some vegetables that women grow around their households (Everett & Cohen, 2004). Sometimes the produce grows just outside a window, other times in a clearing in a household compound (sometimes the spot looks nothing like a garden and more like a place where compost is piled), and still other plants are grown in pots. The main difference between the *milpa* and the kitchen garden is that while the *milpa* is a largish plot that is typically dedicated to the production of maize for consumption (and often at some distance from home), the kitchen garden is around the home and includes a variety of herbs, plants, and fruits. Not all of the plants grown in the kitchen garden are for food and flavor. Some plants, like *epazote* (*Dysphania ambrosioides*), contribute to well-being and health. *Epazote* grows as easily as a weed, adds flavor to foods, and supports good digestion. It is an herb that commonly appears in soups and stews, for flavor, but also because women know it is a cure-all for stomach problems.

Although the gardens do not appear as though they are tended to on a regular basis, women constantly move in and out of their *huertos* using the resources they grow like *chiles*, *epazote*, and other herbs, fruits, and spices in their daily cooking. They work and survey their gardens throughout the day, and gather ingredients for meals as needed. The gardens are not particularly pretty, with plantings neatly aligned in a single plot. Rather, the plots are polycropped and set in and around a house as space and needs permit (see garden map in Everett & Cohen, 2004).

Considering the work that women perform in their kitchen gardens as well as in their *milpas*, the dichotomy of "men produce food, women process food" does not hold true in rural Oaxaca (Safa, 1995; Sánchez & Pagán, 2001). Women are involved in food production all the time. This may mean that they are tending to herbs they have planted in a corner of their *solar*, collecting wild plants growing, tending the *milpa*, or processing foodstuff and organizing meals. In any case, they oversee the production and collection of many different foodstuffs in and around their homes, and they are adept at strategically using these resources. Doña Garcia (an older widow living in Santa Ana del Valle) described to us how her father had trained her to plant maize, herd cattle and goats, and harvest as a way to care of herself. These skills proved extremely important after the untimely

death of her husband. Doña Garcia's example reveals how the efforts of women in the household can ease the economic burden of food even as a family's well-being is secured (see Kanaiaupuni, 2000).

CRAFT PRODUCTION

Rural Oaxacan women are integral to craft production in the central valleys; in fact, in many communities women have organized cooperatives that allow them to better manage access to the market and prices for their goods (Clements, 1987; Stephen, 2005). But not all women join cooperatives, and many who participate in craft production do not make goods, rather, they manage their households to support production by others and the sales of finished goods. What this means is that women find themselves involved in the preparation of various items that are used in a craft. In weaving communities, like Santa Ana del Valle and Teotitlán del Valle, women dye yarns, prepare bobbins for weaving, and clean finished textiles for sale. In San Martín Tilcajete, a wood carving town, women prep wood for painting, this often entails sanding and putting down base coats of paint to be finished at a later date. Most of this work takes place within the craft household and women will do this prep work as an extension of their domestic activities. They are not paid, but their labor is an important resource that means work is completed faster and reaches markets sooner.

Other women do their prep work for pay and commute to area villages where they are employed in workshops doing piecework for set wages with little or no direct link to the final product. This work is not done in combination with domestic labor in the household, but as an addition to domestic labor. Often, a woman will have daughters take wage work, or let them cover domestic chores while attending to work outside of the household.

In San Martín Tilcajete, women are often employed to do the base painting of *alebrijes* (wood carvings). "Women have skills, they can paint and prep wood for us to work later. They don't mind working for long hours. For men it is harder. They do the final work," said Señor Mendes in his workshop. Women in his shop earned a set wage for their work. The prepped figures are turned over to Señor Mendes who will complete the details with his sons and older daughter. Other women produce low-end goods that can be quickly sold and that complement high-end items produced by shop owners – these more elaborate and larger figures sell much more slowly and are personalized by the artisan.

ENTREPRENEURISM AND RURAL OAXACAN WOMEN

Rural Oaxacan women also use their households as a base from which to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Women will open *tiendas* (stores), restaurants, beauty shops, and the like in their homes, effectively building upon the physical structure of their households. This work is often not formalized by schedules and there may be days that go by when *tiendas* are empty of customers or no clients appear for the beauty shop. In fact, there were days when we would visit small stores and have to ask a young child sitting behind the counter to find her or his mother so we could conduct our interviews. Furthermore, incomes from *tiendas*, restaurants, and the like can be quite erratic as the store owners wait for customers to arrive. Nevertheless, as both Acheson (1972) and Stephen (1991) note, these stores while perhaps not machines that will drive economic development are important resources that generate incomes and some savings for the women who manage them. *Tiendas* are a way to store or amass value and resources that if held in cash might lose value over time. The goods in a store are also fairly liquid and convertible if and when necessary, and because mistrust of banks is high and economic crisis is still clear in the minds of most adults, *tiendas* are seen as a reasonable means for savings (Acheson, 2002).

Entrepreneurism can extend the efforts of women beyond their natal village. It builds upon their domestic efforts and takes their resources from local to regional markets (see Clark, 2003; Stephen, 1993; Tice, 1995). Entrepreneurs use their activities as a base for broader economic action, which further emphasizes the economic value and importance of rural Oaxacan women for their households. Women are not tangential or marginal, nor are they dependent on men, rather, as entrepreneurs – the owners of businesses – they become economic actors and decision-makers in their own rights (see Chiñas, 1973). Potential earnings from these activities are not trivial, rather, earnings can be greater than those of men – in fact, for men who spend most of their time farming, a women's earnings may be the most important source of cash income.

While rural Oaxacan women engage in many entrepreneurial activities, here we focus on those women who sell *chapulines* (grasshoppers). *Chapulineras* (women who sell *chapulines*) exemplify how entrepreneurial activity builds upon domestic work and establishes women as independent, economic players in the market system. Chapulineras use household labor to catch and prepare grasshoppers for sale. Rural Oaxacans consume several different insects, but grasshoppers remain an important resource

(Ramos-Elorduy, 1997; Ramos-Elorduy & Pino Moreno, 2004). For women who collect *chapuline* from their own fields (or fields to which they have access), the grasshoppers are a free source of protein for the family when they are in season (May–October). Lightly toasted on a comal, they are an important supplement to the daily diet (Cohen et al., 2009).

Women who sell *chapulines* (in other words, entrepreneurial women) take an additional step in the production cycle and sell chapuline on the market and by the kilo. These women earn from 90 to 100 pesos a kilo (US\$4–5 in 2006–2007) for their efforts. This is a good deal of money, particularly when the minimum wage continues to stagnate around US\$10 for a day's work in the state. Women who catch and prepare their own *chapuline* can make a good profit on their effort. Children and non-wage workers in the household often catch *chapuline*, and the costs of preparation are minimal, thus sales can play a critical role in sustaining a household.

Selling *chapulines* takes women out of their households and communities, but does not take them away from their domestic duties. Rather, they depend on their families (particularly teenaged children) to catch and prepare grasshoppers. They typically hold some of their resource in reserve to feed their own families and the returns they earn go to household maintenance.

A smaller group of women move from petty to bulk sales of *chapulines* often cannot produce enough grasshoppers from their home plots to support their efforts. Therefore, these women will pay other families and friends to collect and sometimes prep *chapulines* to supplement supplies for sale. Many of the women who sell bulk, or combine bulk sales with small petty sales of *chapulines* as well as other goods own and manage set stalls in regional markets. Some vendors have spent decades selling *chapulines*, turning to relatives, siblings, and friends to manage the stall when they are indisposed. Social network ties between family and with friends are as critical to the success of the *chapulineras* as are the economic ties to buyers who frequent stalls to make purchases. Thus, the outcome of this entrepreneurial effort is founded in the household, builds upon the domestic identity of the women, uses her familial networks to manage production and sales, and invests in the success and maintenance of the household over time (see Fussell, 2005; Katz & Correia, 2001; Rothstein, 1999).

One rural Oaxacan woman has taken an additional step in her efforts. Senora Donaji Martinez uses traditional foods, including *chapulines*, to attract people to her restaurant (Restaurant Donaji, in Mitla, Oaxaca). Her restaurant is built around and upon the social and physical foundations of her household. Staffed by her family (whom she trains and manages),

Donaji is able to limit some of the labor costs that are often associated with managing restaurants. Because Donaji has built the restaurant as an addition to her home, she further reduces her overhead and enhances her ability to manage domestic life, even as she becomes an active business woman. The restaurant is in fact the most important source of money in her household and through its success she has managed to put one daughter through high school and into college.

CONCLUSIONS

Our goal here is to suggest some of the ways in which rural Oaxacan women actively participate in the economic life of their families and households and become economic actors in their own right. Too often, rural women are portrayed as passive, as tied to domestic life and its demands, and as peripheral to the economic health of their households. What we have shown is that rural women are not peripheral; rather they are central to the success of their households. Their efforts, whether paid or unpaid, agricultural, non-agricultural, or entrepreneurial, are not simply an add-on to the efforts of men. Rather, what women do in rural Oaxaca is critical to household success and in some cases is a critically important source of money. There is a sense that rural women (and certainly rural Mexican women) only participate in the economic life of their households during times of crisis – when the pesos crashes and inflation spikes. But in fact, women are always working for the health of their households and their efforts in the garden, managing the preparation of materials for crafts, or selling *chapulines* are critical to the household's success. As importantly, these women have become effective economic actors who are directly linked to global markets, the impacts of reforms, and the outcomes of economic change as they are felt throughout rural Oaxaca as a whole.

NOTES

1. While internal migration rates are more or less balanced between men and women, migration to the United States remains skewed toward men and only 11% of the central valley population in the United States is female. Furthermore, most of these women follow fathers and remit to their natal homes unlike men who typically use remittances to establish new households and support their families (see Cohen et al., 2008).

2. There are women who chose to leave their households to pursue opportunities in area cities; others migrate to other parts of Mexico and the United States. Nevertheless, the majority of rural women remains in their homes and follow traditional roles (see Howell, 1999).

3. MENA (Mujeres Envasadoras de Nopales), founded in Zitmatlan, Oaxaca, is an example of how small scale production can move from supporting local consumption to entrepreneurial action. In this case, women have organized themselves into a cooperative that produces prepared (sliced, cooked, and jarred) *nopales* for sale in area markets (see <http://naid.ucla.edu/projects.mena.htm>).

4. In most cases, “gardening” is a term with connotations of a leisurely activity and many gardeners consider their gardens to be a relaxing “hobby.” Nothing could be further from the truth for the women in Santa Ana del Valle: the main goal of their gardens is provisioning their families with food (Everett & Cohen, 2004).

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MONEY DOESN'T MAKE THE WORLD GO ROUND: ANGKOR'S NON-MONETISATION

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ABSTRACT

It has been observed that, in contrast to other Asian and Southeast Asian polities, there are no records of monetary transactions in Angkor's 6th–14th century inscriptions, and no reference to a unit of account after the late 8th century. Explanations for this have been offered, but none of them have much support. In fact, a considerable range of monetary concepts are expressed throughout the study period, and it is unlikely that there was no unit of account. Differences between records of temple inventories and exchange transactions suggest that perhaps display was more important in temples, and that quantitative values such as weights were important in the exchanges. An explanation for the lack of monetary transactions may lie in the fact that the epigraphy is written by and for an elite seemingly concerned more with merit, hierarchy and display of wealth than bureaucratic detail.

THE ISSUES

At its peak, the Angkorian Empire (9th–15th century) covered much of present day Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. A degree of sophistication in

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management, including accounting, would be expected in an empire that extended across 7 centuries. Yet researchers have suggested that markets and trade seem not to have been important to it. Further, it has been said, and this has not been challenged, that at the beginning of the Angkorian period (9th century), the Khmer may have abandoned a practical, universally accepted basis of accounting used by other organisationally complex societies, that is, a unit of account. Angkor's administrative complexity, territorial expansion and building achievements have been acknowledged: its society appears to have been more integrated and hierarchical than that of the Pre-Angkorian (6th–8th century), with more comprehensive communication networks across a larger area. Yet instead of reflecting a transaction system adapted to a more complex society, the Angkorian period inscriptions show less concern with monetary values than before.

The inscriptions commemorate the consecration of new religious foundations, record gifts to the gods on these occasions and specify requirements for maintaining the foundations, as well as privileges granted. The merit gained by the founders and donors is frequently recognised. The texts also seem to have served as legal records, setting out land transfers, privileges granted and court rulings. They sometimes record details of exchange prices for land, servants or services, but never payments for goods and services outside the elite world of the rulers, religious foundations and titled officials. Indeed, the Khmer epigraphy is never explicit about issues of money and markets.

This study looks at a number of explanations for the absence of indicators of monetisation. It examines Angkor's record of external trade and contact and compares the evidence for its low level of monetisation with that for other societies. It discusses the epigraphic records of purchases and gifts to foundations, and analyses the goods used for barter. It argues that a unit of account is inevitable in a complex society such as Angkor's, and suggests that its absence in the inscriptions may derive both from simple expediency and from the importance to the elite of status, display and merit.

MONETISATION

Monetary Systems

Monetary systems enable efficiency in accounting and transactions. Pryor (1977, p. 182) observes a direct relationship between the presence of money

and the level of economic development of society, which may be seen in its administrative complexity. However, Angkor, notably from the 9th century, appears to some to be almost consciously prohibiting a monetary system (Wicks, 1992, p. 313). In fact, some perceive that Angkor might not have used a unit of account at all.

Yet a complex economy could not function without a unit of account, being restricted if goods and services could not be consistently and regularly exchanged for one another (Melitz, 1970, p. 1028). It is needed in order to deal with the so-called 'non-coincidence of wants' in bartering (Jevons, 1883, p. 5; Mill, 1868, p. 293; Stiglitz, 1996, pp. 718–719). An alternative is to use intermediate items for indirect trade, and many societies have settled on metals, commonly gold, silver or copper (Melitz, 1974, pp. 53, 91–92). Others have used non-metal objects, such as cowrie shells, rice or lengths of cloth (Wicks, 1992). Provided there are fixed exchange equivalences between objects bartered, there may be no real need for a common unit of account. However, with diversification of products, services and requirements, this becomes essential (see Einzig, 1966, p. 257; Melitz, 1970, p. 1028, for example).

The decision to produce a coinage will be based on its benefits and costs. The benefits are most obvious where there is a large range of goods in circulation. For money to be beneficial, there must be significant trade and a need for comparing prices across a large range of goods. Money can reduce the cost of this comparison more economically than other methods (Melitz, 1974, pp. 57–67). Among the costs are metal production or import; minting and standardisation; upkeep and replacement; and augmentation if the economy expands. In other situations, barter transactions in a central marketplace may be the most efficient means of exchanging wares.

Another view maintains that the use of money arose not as a medium of exchange, but as a social relationship in non-market economies (Henry, 2004; Hudson, 2004; Innes, 2004). In ancient Egypt, this may have occurred in the transition from egalitarian to class society, when some previously reciprocal social obligations shifted from operating within the clan to non-reciprocal requirements, or taxes, levied by ruling classes in the name of a semi-divine king. The *deben*, an arbitrary standard, referring successively to grain, copper or silver, was introduced to account for tax obligations and annulment. Although such a unit of account could have become a medium of exchange, in Egypt it did not, and payments were made in goods (Henry, 2004, pp. 92–95). Smith (2004, p. 91) has noted the dearth of research on units of account and archaeological data on early money. This study aims to begin remedying this situation for Angkor by examining some aspects of its

domestic and foreign commerce and addressing the question of why Angkor, in an age of at least partial monetisation, chose not to use money.

Monetisation in Southeast Asia

Monetisation in pre-modern Southeast Asia was neither uniform nor continuous, and early coinages were mostly localised. No Southeast Asian economies were fully monetised before the 15th century (Wicks, 1992). Some early Indianised states (Funan, Dvāravatī, northern Arakan, the Mon of Pegu, the Pyu of Burma, etc.) seem to have adopted coinages to various degrees, but after their demise, coins were replaced by barter, cowrie shells, metal bars or lumps (Gutman, 1978, p. 9; Wicks, 1992, p. 3). The 1st–5th century Funan site of Oc Eo on Cambodia's coast, then on the East–West maritime trade route, has produced some Southeast Asian silver coins and a Roman gold coin (Malleret, 1959, 1960, 1962), but there is no evidence that Funan minted its own coinage (Sahai, 1971, p. 4; Wicks, 1992, p. 186). The Chinese reported that taxes in Funan were paid in gold, silver, pearls and perfumes (Pelliot, 1903, p. 252).

Indigenous gold and silver coinage was in use in Central and East Java from the 8th century. From the 9th century, multiple denominations were minted, though their use may have been restricted to high-value transactions for administrative and religious purposes and perhaps international trade (Wissemann Christie, 1998, p. 359). At this time, the epigraphy starts to refer to markets, but it is not known to what extent these were monetised. Where coinage was adopted, such as in Central and East Java and Bali, rice or other commodities may still have been used for local purchases. Base metal coins (Chinese copper cash) were only successfully adopted as measures of value and means of payment in the 13th century and apparently in relation to Java's increased role in international trade (Wicks, 1992, p. 297). In Bali, in a 9th century record, a range of metals, kitchen ware, slaves, buffalo and cattle to a certain value of gold were to be reserved for funeral expenses (*ibid.*, p. 273).

Markets are first mentioned in the epigraphy of Pagan in the 11th–12th centuries, and the earliest monetised transactions, religious transfers, appear there in the late 12th century. In the 13th century, a weight of silver, the *klyap*, was used for payments and valuations, though paddy was often used in local markets. Copper, cloth, lead, paddy, etc., were used for paying taxes (*ibid.*, pp. 130–150).

THE EXCHANGES

The evidence for moneyless Khmer transactions from the Pre-Angkorian period to the 14th century is outlined below. The inscriptions describe some quite complex payments, and refer to practices which are not always understood. A single donation may entail multiple transactions. The examples below illustrate this complexity.

And Poñ Chañ delivered the ricefield of the Poñ which Poñ Matisakti, former servant of *lanas* (?) to Kañrap Amac (at) Purandarapura, delivered in reimbursement to the people of the Young God (Vrah Kanmeñ), who asked in addition for 4 *yau* of double garments, as payment of the tax (of these people). (K. 493/657 CE; Cœdès, 1951, p. 151)

Land of the establishment of Vrai which Kamsteñ Vnur Kh^aval gave in compensation for the rice which he owed to the royal service, and for the 6 *vaudi* and spittoons together weighing 7 *iyai*, borrowed with interest from V.K.A. of Vrac to pay the fees (to the Brahmins) at the inauguration of the holy basin. Servants: 1 supervisor, 3 men, 6 women, 1 *gval*. (K. 420/11th century; Cœdès, 1952, p. 164)

An analysis of the inscriptions shows that in the Pre-Angkorian period, the 7th century has the largest number of inscriptions referring to exchanges, while the greatest number of Angkorian period inscriptions with transactions occurs between the mid-10th and mid-11th centuries (see Fig. 1), a period in which many officials were producing texts containing what appear to be embellished details of genealogies, land histories and legal disputes, aiming to establish the rights to land (Vickery, 1985).

Twenty-four per cent of the 376 transactions recorded are Pre-Angkorian and 76% Angkorian. Overall, 75% are for land (27% of these are Pre-Angkorian and 73% Angkorian) and 18% for servants (9% of these are Pre-Angkorian and 91% Angkorian). Many of the remaining 7% are Angkorian period payments for boundary marking and witnessing. One late Pre-Angkorian text, K. 124/803, refers to purchases of temple supplies (Cœdès, 1951, p. 173).

Pre-Angkorian Exchanges

There is no evidence that the Pre-Angkor economy was 'monetised', nor do the recorded exchanges of goods refer to market transactions (Vickery, 1998, pp. 257, 314). Overall, there are a few references to Khmer commerce and taxation, especially when compared with what was recorded in the 7th–9th century inscriptions in a similar inland agrarian state in Java

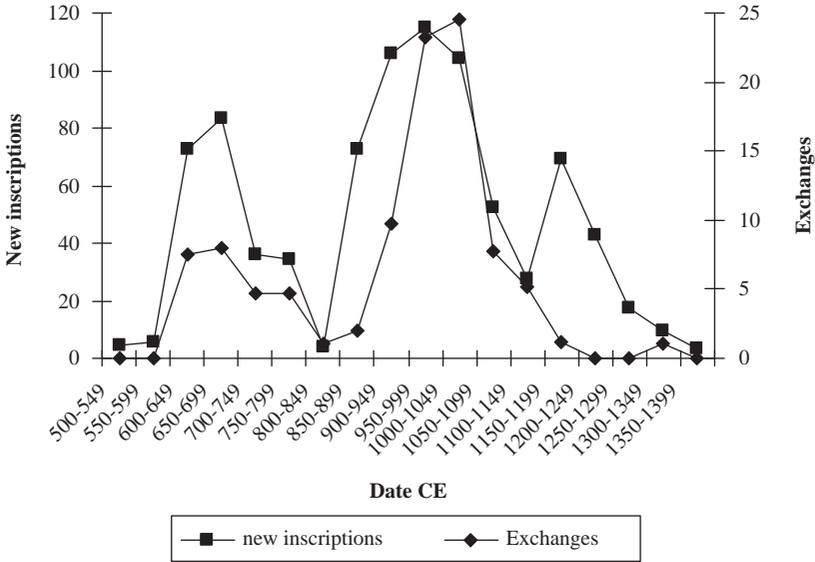


Fig. 1. Distribution of Pre Angkorian and Angkorian Inscriptions and Exchanges.

(see Wisseman Christie, 1993, for example). Pre-Angkor transactions were often complex, with some inscriptions, notably K. 726/8th century and K. 493/657, containing several different kinds of transactions. These include donations of ricefields, sale of land to the foundation paid for with ‘goods of the god’, payment to one god for something which was given to another god, payment of indemnity and redemption of one thing by another, pledging and redeeming of workers and land given in partial payment of a debt. In K. 124/803, temple provisions were purchased in exchange for produce (honey to buy oil, cloth to buy syrup, etc.) (Vickery, 1998, pp. 281–292).

The range of items used in Pre-Angkorian exchanges is not extensive. Most common are paddy, fabric and silver (e.g. K. 493/657, Ka 13/8th century, K. 726/8th century and K. 1214/726 in Table 1), but there is an instance (K. 910/652) where a conch was given in exchange for ricefields and another (K. 493/657) where a ricefield was exchanged for two female *khñum* (slaves, servants) and a quantity of *yugala*. Vickery (1998, pp. 284, 292–293) suggests that some of the goods produced and exchanged by the Pre-Angkorian foundations may have been prestige goods because the totals of listed goods are sometimes not consistent or because the units of

Table 1. Pre-Angkorian Exchanges Showing Equivalent Values.

Inscription	Object	Size	Price (<i>jnāhv</i>)
K. 493/657 CE Tuol Kok Prah	<i>sre</i> (ricefield)	0.5 <i>sare</i>	2 <i>kñūm kantai</i> (female servants), 1 <i>caṃdak</i> (?), 3 <i>yau canlek yugala</i> (double garments)
Inscription	Object	Size	Equivalent Price (<i>niṣkraya</i>)
Ka 13/8th century CE Kong Pisei	<i>sre</i> (ricefield)	3 <i>mās</i>	1 <i>lii</i> white silver, 6 <i>canlek yugala</i> (double garments), 63 <i>kamvala</i> (covers)
Inscription	Object	Size	Price (<i>jnāhv</i>); Value (<i>mūlya</i>)
K. 726/8th century CE Tan Kran	<i>sre</i> (ricefield)		Acquired for a price of a quantity of paddy having a value of 4 <i>tamlii</i> of silver, and 1 <i>yau</i> of <i>yugala</i> (double garments)
Inscription	Object	Size	Price (<i>tlai</i>); Value ? (<i>argha</i>)
K. 1214/726 CE Duol Trabamn Samron	<i>ku</i> (servant)		Price of the <i>ku</i> a value (?) of 15 <i>lii</i> of silver

measurement of the textiles *aṃval* and *yugala* are Austronesian borrowings, suggesting these were imported, perhaps at an earlier stage. Inconsistent accounting is, however, ubiquitous throughout the corpus, though it is probable that textiles and other items, as in more recent times (Chandler, 1996, pp. 21, 90), would have been prized for their prestige value.

The inscriptions provide details on the size of the land exchanged. The boundaries were delimited according to landmarks such as reservoirs. The size may be indicated in units of fields or other plots, or by the amount of seed required to sow the field. In one inscription, K. 79/643, two plots of the same size are valued at different amounts, suggesting that the quality of the lands may have been relevant. Interestingly, the Pre-Angkorian texts contain two terms, *argha* and *mūlya*, which are thought to denote 'value', while none are discerned in the later Angkorian corpus. In K. 493/657, *sre ktiiñ argha khñūm* is glossed as 'the ricefield . . . surrendered in payment [of a debt (*ktiiñ*)] for a slave' (Cœdès, 1942, p. 150) – that is, the slave was the value of the debt. K. 1214/726 contains the expression *tlai ku argha prak lii 10 IIIII* (price of the *ku*: a value of 15 *lii* of silver), and the translator comments on the use of the two different words, one Khmer (*tlai*) and the other Sanskrit (*argha*), each denoting 'price' (Griffiths, 2005, p. 27). A possible explanation is that *argha* again has the connotation of 'value' and

that goods other than silver were used for the payment, that is, the price of the *ku* was goods which were worth 15 *lin* of silver. In the 8th century K. 726,¹ both ricefields and labour were valued (*mūlya*) using the extrinsic standard of *tamlin*, a weight, of silver and possibly² also *yau*, a length, of *yugala* (double cloth), although payment (the medium of exchange) was in weight of paddy (see Table 1). These items may have had relative values which were commonly understood and been used as valuational standards in other sectors of the economy (Jacob, 1979, p. 415; Wicks, 1992, p. 191). There is no other direct evidence of a common unit of account until the late 13th century and the reports of the Chinese envoy Zhou Daguan (1993).

Angkorian Exchanges

In the Angkorian records, there are no references to a common currency or valuational system. The lists of exchange items, often much longer than in the Pre-Angkorian period, contain a variety of barter items, most commonly cloth, *vaudi* (pitchers), livestock, silver, paddy and spittoons. However, trays and other utensils, elephants, *khñum*, copper and spices were also exchanged.

As with the Pre-Angkorian texts, it is difficult to compare prices of land (see Table 2, for example). This is either because the relative sizes of the plots and their productivities are not stated or because the aggregated value of the often-numerous exchange items is difficult to assess. Table 3, listing transactions for purchases for servants, illustrates why it is said there is little evidence of price equivalence. The servants, with or without children, would have been of different ages and abilities, and there is no way of knowing how the different exchange items were valued against each other. Yet, as shown in both tables, the records often indicate the precise weights of the metal objects given in exchange.

With exchanges comprising such a variety of goods, the question arises whether this negates the need for a unit of account. Indeed, it is conceivable that the elite of Angkor could have afforded to provide the variety of goods to satisfy the range of a vendor's wants, as we see in the epigraphic exchanges. On the other hand, Wicks (1992, p. 195) supposes that 'at least some of the items, such as *vaudi* (pitchers) and spittoons, commonly seen in temple inventories as well, were dictated by custom or ceremonial requirements', rather than accepting the 'mere piling up of goods in order

Table 2. Angkorian Period Prices of Land of Varying Capacity: K. 258 Early 12th Century CE (?). Measures are Given in Brackets.

Measure of Land	Land Price: <i>duñ</i> (Bought For)
100 <i>vroh</i>	2 gold rings (1 <i>pāda</i>), 4 <i>padigah</i> [spittoons] (1 <i>tula</i> 2 <i>jyāi</i>), 4 <i>dlah</i> [metal cooking pots] (1 <i>tula</i> , 4 <i>kuntika</i> [pitchers]) (2 <i>tula</i> 12 <i>jyāi</i>), 3 <i>go</i> [oxen], 5 <i>yau ca thmi</i> [new fabric] of <i>tap hat</i> (10 cubits), 1 <i>thlvāi</i> paddy
40 <i>vroh</i>	2 bronze <i>tanlāp</i> [boxes], 4 <i>liñ</i> silver, 4 <i>dlah</i> (19 <i>jyāi</i>), 2 <i>kuntika</i> (10 <i>jyāi</i>), 2 oxen, 2 <i>yau</i> new fabric (10 cubits)
10 <i>thlvāi</i>	2 gold <i>aṅgulyaka</i> [rings] (1 <i>pāda</i>), 1 silver <i>khāl</i> [bowl] (3 <i>liñ</i>), <i>prak</i> [silver] . . . (6 <i>liñ</i>), silver <i>gum</i> [?] (1 <i>jyāi</i> 1 <i>liñ</i>), 1 <i>dlah</i> (7 <i>jyāi</i>), 5 <i>kuntikā</i> (1 <i>tula</i> , 1 <i>jyāi</i> 10 <i>liñ</i>), 1 <i>vardhañ</i> [vessel], 2 water vases, 5 <i>śarāva</i> [plates] (total of last 3, 1 <i>jyāi</i>), 3 tin <i>bhājana</i> [utensils] (10 <i>jyāi</i> 8 <i>liñ</i>), 1 <i>valvay</i> [candle holder ?] (5 <i>jyāi</i>), 1 . . . (3 <i>jyāi</i>), 1 fine fabric <i>amsūka</i> (20 cubits long), 1 . . . (10 cubits long), 2 fast oxen, 2 <i>yau</i> new fabric (10 cubits), 3 goats
100 <i>vroh</i>	3 gold rings (1 <i>pāda</i> , 2 <i>sliñ</i>), 5 silver bowls (1 <i>jyāi</i>) 10 <i>dlah</i> (2 <i>tula</i> 15 <i>jyāi</i>), 10 <i>kuntī</i> (2 <i>tula</i> , 2 <i>jyāi</i> , 10 <i>liñ</i>), 3 tin utensils (10 <i>jyāi</i> 10 <i>liñ</i>), 2 <i>go parat</i> [fast oxen], 15 <i>yo</i> new fabric (10 cubits), 2 <i>vave</i> [goats]
10 <i>thlvāi</i>	2 silver bowls (5 <i>liñ</i>), 4 <i>chnāi</i> [cooking pots] (10 <i>jyāi</i> 10 <i>liñ</i>), 4 <i>yo</i> new fabric (10 cubits), 2 ^a <i>var marica</i> [pepper]

Table 3. Angkorian Period Price of Personnel (*khñum*): K. 933/1014 CE.

<i>khñum</i>	Bought (<i>duñ</i>) For
1 <i>teñ</i> +4 children	60 garments
1 <i>teñ</i> +3 children	1 buffalo, 1 <i>vaudi</i> (6 <i>jyāi</i>), 1 ring (2 <i>pada</i>) [or 2 foot rings ?]
1 <i>tai</i>	1 buffalo
2 <i>tai</i> +1 child	50 (measures) paddy, 1 silver bowl (5 <i>liñ</i>), x pairs <i>thnap</i> , . . . garments, 2 <i>vaudi</i> (10 <i>jyāi</i>)
1 <i>tai</i>	20 (measures) paddy
1 <i>tai</i>	1 buffalo, 1 <i>vaudi</i> (6 <i>jyāi</i>), . . . 5 garments
1 <i>tai</i>	1 <i>kadaha</i> (6 <i>jyāi</i>)
1 <i>tai</i>	. . . 1 <i>vaudi</i> (x <i>jyāi</i>)
1 <i>si</i>	1 pair <i>dop</i> , 2 pairs <i>thnap</i> (sic)
1 ?	10 <i>yo</i> garments, 20 (measures) paddy

to equal the purchase price' as in Pharaonic Egypt, because the goods appear to him to occur in the same proportions in land and 'slave' purchases. While this seems to be the case at certain sites, overall there is considerable diversity, and it may be that the availability of goods was also important.

Late 12th–13th Century Markets

Markets and marketing in Angkor are first mentioned at the end of the 12th century in the Ta Prohm inscription of Jayavarman VII, where clothing and produce were to be taken ‘from the weaver’s shop, from the villages, from the market, etc.’ (Cœdès, 1992, p. 25). The Chinese envoy Zhou Daguan, living at Angkor in 1296–1298 CE, refers to local markets, which closely resembled markets seen today in Southeast Asia. By the late 12th century, large quantities of Chinese coins were in circulation in different parts of Southeast Asia. However, there is no indication that the Khmer imported Chinese cash (Wicks, 1992, p. 206). The only evidence for the use of metal as a medium of exchange before Zhou Daguan is the 1225 CE mention by Chau (1966, p. 53) that rice in *Kamboja* could be purchased with lead. Zhou (1993, p. 43) recorded that rice, grain and Chinese coins were used for small transactions, then fabrics, and for the largest transactions, gold and silver. Apparently, strong ‘slaves’ could be worth up to 100 pieces of cloth (*ibid.*, p. 21). Gold and silver, which he said were not found locally, were brought to Cambodia by Chinese merchants to trade for ‘agricultural products’ and were much in demand (*ibid.*, p. 45).

SUGGESTED EXPLANATIONS FOR NON-MONETISATION

Some earlier explanations for the absence of money are outlined below: lack of precious metal reserves; Angkor’s status as an inland agrarian state; and the desire on the part of rulers to maintain centralised control. On the evidence available, none appears plausible.

Lack of Precious Metal Reserves

The lack of precious metal reserves (Wicks, 1992, p. 218; Zhou, 1993, p. 45) and China’s bans on the export of its metal supplies in times of shortage (Hall & Whitmore, 1976, p. 324; Wicks, 1992, p. 24) are not strong explanations for Angkor’s failure to monetise. According to Bronson (1992, p. 87), Cambodia’s only recorded metal production between 1500 and 1800 was iron, mainly from Preah Vihear Province. However, in the pre-modern world, metals, even base metals, were often sufficiently valuable for small ore deposits to have been mined (*ibid.*, pp. 64–72). Today, the general

knowledge of metalliferous deposits in the region has improved, and recent mineralogical maps (ESCAP, 1990, 1993, 1996) indicate copper (in the Vat Phu area of Laos), gold (Banteay Meanchey) and tin (Kompong Spu) among others. There is evidence of iron ore smelting at Preah Khan of Kompong Svay in Kompong Thom (Jacques & Lafond, 2007, p. 177). Further, large-scale iron and salt production in the Khorat area of northeast Thailand is said to have been carried out during the period of Khmer dominance in the region from 1000 CE (Welch, 1998, p. 229).

While the degree of monetisation could, in some cases, be linked to the availability of precious metals, some Southeast Asian societies chose base metals or non-metals, such as imported cowrie shells, as measures of value and currency (Egami, 1974; Wicks, 1992, p. 166; Yang, 2004, pp. 74–77). Precious metal currency was also imported. From the 10th century, the Song minted large quantities of copper cash. Although its export was restricted in periods of shortage in the Song and Yuan dynasties, it generally flowed out of China, albeit not to Angkor, as exchange for trade goods, and in response to the increased monetisation in other parts of Asia and Southeast Asia. Monetised Java imported most of its precious metals. In fact, shortages of metals and stones may have been a motivation for Java's early overseas trade (Wisseman Christie, 1998, p. 345). Neighbouring Champa, with records of some gold and silver in exchanges (Wade, 2006, p. 28; Wicks, 1992, p. 210), apparently introduced copper cash during the 10th–12th century during the boom in maritime trade (Wade, 2006, p. 28).

Inland Agrarian State – Not a Trading State

A point frequently raised is that the Khmer, in particular after the 9th century, were not primarily traders, and that Angkor was an inland agrarian state, concentrating on land and labour (Hall, 1985, pp. 171, 177; Jacques, 1986, p. 330; Lieberman, 2003, p. 223; Vickery, 1998). Agrarian states typically have lower population densities and grow food, while trading states engaging in maritime trade can buy it. From this, it might follow that for the former, the costs may outweigh the benefits of setting up and maintaining a monetary system. Yet, as already noted, a contemporary agrarian state in Java was monetised. It is argued that the Khmer too maintained an interest in foreign trade, which would have exposed them to the resources, technologies and economies of prominent trading societies.

Wade (2006, pp. 1–2) has presented evidence that the period from about 900 to 1300 CE represent an 'early age of commerce' in which flourishing

maritime trade between South and Southeast Asia brought about political, social and economic changes throughout Southeast Asia. A vital influence was Song China (960–1275 CE), which was experiencing a period of great commercial, agricultural and industrial growth (see Elvin, 1973, pp. 113–199, for example). Much of the motivation for Angkor's expansion and the shifts of its power base may have been for access to this international trade and control of ports or overland routes (Hall, 1985, Chapters 7–8; Schweyer, 2007; Vickery, 2005, pp. 4–7). The three rulers whose reigns were longest, Sūryavarman I, Sūryavarman II and Jayavarman VII, may have extended Khmer administration control for this reason (Hall, 1985, Chapters 7–8; Vickery, 2005, pp. 4–7). There is some indication that Sūryavarman I sent a gift to the Chōla king Rājendra Chōla, possibly to facilitate trade (Hall, 1975, pp. 331–334; 1980, p. 174; 1985, p. 196; Kulke & Rothermund, 1998, p. 116),³ and that Sūryavarman II also did so in the reign of Kulottunga (Kulke & Rothermund, 1998, p. 117).⁴

According to Hall (1985, p. 171), it was not till the period of Sūryavarman I's territorial expansion that commercial activities were encouraged by the Khmer. He cites increased mentions of merchant activity⁵ and administrative development north of the Dangrek Mountains, into Dvaravati in central Thailand and to the Isthmus of Kra, as well as the much greater number of place names ending in *-pura* (=city or fortress in Sanskrit) or *-grāma* (=village), which is more than double those under Sūryavarman's two predecessors (de Mestier du Bourg, 1970, p. 308; Hall, 1985, p. 170).

Despite Angkor not having direct access to the major East–West maritime routes, goods from China could reach Angkor via the Chao Phraya system in Sūryavarman's reign (Hall, 1985, p. 177). China's Southern Silk Roads linked up with this system via Yunnan and Burma and with the Mekong River at today's Vientiane from as early as the 7th century CE (see Yang, 2004, map 2). The communities of Khmer speakers living in present day Thailand, in the Menam Chao Phraya valley, and possibly in the Kra Peninsula region of Southern Thailand from the period of Funan or earlier (Wittayarat & Antelme, 2004), might have facilitated Angkor's westward expansion and the establishment of trade links in that direction.

Sūryavarman II (1113–1150) and Jayavarman VII (1181–1220?) expanded toward the east and the coast of Champa, presumably in order to be able to take part in the growing maritime economy, or more precisely the central Champa ports. Sūryavarman II renewed relations with China (Hall, 1985, p. 207; Vickery, 2005, p. 5). According to Maspero (2002, p. 75), Sūryavarman had his own fleet, and although this might have been confined to the Mekong and other river systems, later Vietnam sources do report

Khmer attacks in 1128 by more than 700 ships, to loot the coasts of Thanh-hoa. In 1147, honours were conferred on the Khmer (Chenla) king by the Chinese, after which some commercial issues which existed between them were settled (Briggs, 1999, p. 189; Cœdès, 1968, p. 162).

The few mentions of merchants in the inscriptions listed in Table 4 give us some indication of their status in society, but they do not inform us whether they operated locally or were itinerant. An 8th century inscription, K. 259, refers to a merchant chief who might have been the guru of a king of the time of Queen Jayadevī (Vickery, 1998, pp. 313–314), suggesting profitable trading activity and high rank. In the Angkorian period, merchants are not seen carrying out their profession, but as participants in the endowment of foundations and therefore of some wealth and status. If so, it should follow that trading was an economically important activity.

Khmer merchants are recorded as being in the Chinese protectorate of Annam in the 9th century where they were attempting to purchase horses and weapons in exchange for salt (Taylor, 1983, p. 238) and in Tongking early in the 11th century (Wolters, 1958, p. 599). In Java, foreign merchants were active in tax farming in the 9th, 11th and 14th centuries (Barrett, 1968,

Table 4. Epigraphic Mentions of Merchants.

Inscription	Province	CE Date	Merchant (?)	Comment
K. 259S (IV) (Sk text)	Siem Reap	8th century	<i>vanijam adhipah</i> (merchant chief)	Individual given title by King Nṛpaditya
K. 105	Kompong Cham	987	<i>yvan</i> (Vietnamese)	Vendor of <i>tai</i> (not specified merchant)
K. 221N	Battambang	1011	<i>vanik</i> (merchant)	Gift of 1 <i>tai</i>
K. 221S	Battambang	1011	<i>khloñ jnval vanik</i> (merchant chief)	Participant in sale of ricefield
K. 221S	Battambang	1011	<i>khloñ vanik</i> (merchant chief <i>jnval</i>)	Title of the <i>kamsteñ</i> , principal donor
K. 220S	Battambang	1012	<i>khloñ jnval vanik</i> (merchant chief <i>jnval</i>)	Donor of 2 <i>tai</i> via <i>kamsteñ</i>
K. 843B	Siem Reap	1025	<i>vanik</i> (merchant)	Legal: objects claimed from a trader
K. 249	Siem Reap	1109	<i>mula tamrvac vyavahari</i> (merchant inspector)	Amongst those who prepared list of property

p. 129; Wisseman, 1977, p. 207; Wisseman Christie, 1998, pp. 367, 369). There are no mentions in the Khmer inscriptions of organisations of merchants, as in India (Hall, 1980, pp. 141–61; Sinopoli, 2003, pp. 103–105) and Java (Wisseman Christie, 1998, pp. 361–365).

Trade with China, which consumed various Khmer forest products, appears to have been continual (Briggs, 1999, p. 189; Groslier, 1981; Hall & Whitmore, 1976, pp. 316–317; Vickery, 1998, p. 316; 2005, p. 5). Late-12th century *bas-relief* images at Angkor of Chinese shopkeepers suggest commercial relations with China. As well as Zhou's (1993, pp. 41–45, 59) references to various Chinese imports, Sung dynasty maritime reports give details of commodities traded between China and the Khmer (Chau, 1966; Wheatley, 1959). As well, Chinese ceramics have been excavated at Angkor, mostly from elite contexts (Brown, 1988; Franiatte, 2000; Groslier, 1981, 1998). Most recently, in early 2007, the earliest known (9th century?) Chinese ceramics and some glass beads of unknown origin were found in the moat of Prei Monti at Roluos (Amat, 2007). Groslier (1998) identified mass-produced Chinese ceramics in dwellings in Angkor's royal palace, mainly dating to the 11th–12th century. Groslier considered the unglazed specimens to be discarded packing.

There are a few epigraphic mentions of imported items from China, Javā (?) and perhaps India between the 9th and the 13th centuries (see Table 5). It is also thought that luxury textiles (Green, 2000) and some pharmaceuticals listed for the hospitals of Jayavarman VII (K. 386/1186) – long peppers (*pippali*), for example – were indigenous to India and Sri Lanka. In summary, the evidence to date is that Angkor participated in international trade, possibly continuously. However, lack of trade cannot be cited as a reason for Angkor's low level of monetisation.

Desire for Centralised Control

The disappearance of coinage after some early Indianised Southeast Asian mainland states lost their strategic importance has also been attributed to the desire for states to have tighter control over resources and populations. This view is linked to the work of Polanyi (1957), who regarded the so-called archaic palace economies as primarily redistributive. Polanyi argued that markets were of minor importance and that external trade was usually conducted without money and controlled through fixed exchange ratios or agreed price controls (Polanyi, Arensberg, & Pearson, 1957). While these generalised views have been disputed on a number of accounts, associated theories remain influential, in particular the view that rulers chose not to allow

Table 5. Epigraphic References to Imports.

CE Date	Source	Commodity	Material	Origin
7th century	K. 407 (Vat Maheyang ^a)	<i>cīnadv(aj)</i> (banner of Chinese fabric)		China
894 ?	K. 947 (Lolei)	<i>1 dramvañ</i> (tree, object in form of flower ?)	Hanira	China
		<i>1 dramvañ</i> (tree, object in form of flower ?)	Silver	China
		<i>1 nu parivara</i> (cover, accessory, container)	Hanira	China
		<i>1 tanlap</i> (box, small box)	Hanira	China
		<i>1 tanlap dramvañ</i> (box with dramvañ)	Hanira	China
		<i>1 tanlap kralyak</i> (box for type of offering)	Silver	China
		<i>1 tanlvat</i> (unknown ritual object)	Silver	China
		<i>1 vodi</i> (pitcher, jug, vase)		Java ^b
972	K. 669 (Prasat Komphus)	<i>1 adarśana cīna</i> (mirror)		China
		<i>1 tanlap deśa</i> (box)		India/foreign ^c
		<i>1 van deśa</i> (cup with feet?)		India/foreign
984	K. 662; K. 663 (Vat Prah Einkosei)	<i>3 noiñ cīna</i> (gourd shaped utensils?)		China
		<i>3 noiñ cīna</i> (gourd shaped utensils?)		China
1026	K. 618 (Sek Ta Tuy)	<i>canlyak deśa</i> (garments)	Cotton	India/foreign
		<i>phnañ deśa</i> (hangings)	Cotton	India/foreign
1186 1191	K. 208 (Prah Khan)	<i>520 cīna samudga</i> (boxes)		China
		<i>323 maśakartha cīnamśuka</i> (mosquito nets)	Silk	China
		<i>paṭa cīnamśuka</i> (superior silk)	Silk	China
1186	K. 273 (Ta Prohm)	<i>20 cīnaśayya</i> (beds, couches)		China
		<i>20 amśuka cīnapata</i> (cloth)		China
		<i>500 cīna samudga</i> (boxes)		China
1200	K. 485 (Phimanakas)	<i>100 dhvaj cīnapaṭṭa</i> (cloth for banner)	Silk	China
		<i>1 dhvaj cīnamśuka</i> (banner)		China

^aGiven the date, and the location on the Isthmus of Kra, this inscription, despite the language used, is unlikely to be 'Pre Angkorian' (Michael Vickery, 2007, personal communication). Nevertheless, it indicates trade with China in the region.

^bThe location of Java has not been determined (Dominique Soutif, 2007, personal communication).

^cPou (1992, p. 256) glosses *deśa* as country, region, India, the land of Indians or its products, especially textiles. According to Monier Williams (2005), it means country, place, province or kingdom.

money, as part of a strategy to maintain central control in an administered economy, by reducing market trading to small-scale barter transactions and thereby the scale of interaction between people (Miksic, 2006, p. 9).

Command economies are often imposed to achieve specific purposes, generally for resource mobilisation to achieve national objectives, for example, in emergencies or for expansion (such as with the Inka). It requires relative centralisation by the state, with restrictions placed on the local management of resources and labour and on money. Prices tend to be controlled and to have little impact on the allocation of goods and services. However, full centralisation poses logistical problems, and it becomes expedient to allow an increasing degree of local flexibility. Market institutions are gradually allowed to function in some sectors, and as marketing becomes more active, it ultimately takes on an essential role in the economy. This allows the accumulation of power outside the control of the state, so that central control is inherently of limited duration (Ericson, 2008).

Although the Inka may be considered to have employed a command economy to help implement its expansionist strategy, Angkor differed in several ways: the span of its empire was over a longer period and was not always in expansion mode; it traded with money-using societies; there is no evidence that Angkor's rulers established similar production enclaves to mobilise resources; and there is little support for the idea of communal facilities for the redistribution of resources.

The epigraphic evidence, including details of large numbers of officials acting in various capacities, and the greatly varying prices for land purchases taking place in many regions, suggests Angkor did not administer its empire uniformly from the centre. Moreover, given the maximum extent of the Angkorian Empire, at over 350 km from the centre, a single communication may have taken one to two weeks to reach the recipient, rendering an administered economy difficult to sustain for extended periods. It follows that the Angkorian Empire, which lasted for 6 centuries, could not have operated under a command economy.

Finally, command economies need not be moneyless, nor are all moneyless societies command economies, since the mere existence of a unit of account can facilitate price setting for goods and services in a non-money economy (Melitz, 1974, p. 42). It does not follow that because barter was used, the economy of Angkor was administered by the state. Removing money would not necessarily limit the scale of interaction and thereby allow populations to be controlled more easily, since, as discussed, barter may be more efficient than monetised trade. As it is, a limited scale of interaction was typical of many pre-modern societies, with or without money.

While Angkor's recorded exchanges were not in money, this cannot be linked to a strong central administration.

A state's modes of control of its territories might encompass a range of different socio-political-economic strategies. The nature and strength of each mode could vary over time and with geographical location (D'Altroy, 1992; Heitzman, 1995; Mabbett, 1978; Smith, 2005; Wolters, 1982). To associate the absence of money with a single political agenda, such as central control, would require substantially more justification. The earliest coinage in Cambodia was relatively late (in the 16th century), but it must be borne in mind that monetisation and coinages were introduced into different regions at different times, in different ways and for different purposes. Introduction entails a perception that the costs will be less than the benefits. Indeed in the case of Angkor, one of these costs might be the effort of overturning an existing, working system.

VALUATION

On the basis of the low level of monetisation in the recorded transactions, the question arises how valuations were arrived at.

No Angkorian Period Expression for Valuation?

Although precise meanings cannot always be known, it appears that several terms found in Angkorian exchanges may deal with the same concepts as those in Pre-Angkor exchanges. In some cases, only the spelling differs. In others, new terms have been introduced. As it is, there are terms for buying, bartering, trading, selling, price, debt, borrowing with interest, repayment, indemnity and redemption in both periods (see Table 6).

While only 27% of the dated inscriptions are Pre-Angkorian, the proportion of inscriptions with exchange expressions is approximately the same for both the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods (10–11%). Yet while two Pre-Angkorian texts contain expressions suggesting extrinsic value (see [The Exchanges](#)), none have been found for the Angkorian period. This discrepancy therefore might reflect societal or economic differences. Did the Angkorians simply not bother with the detail of value? Or, is there an inferred expression of valuation? The significant range of monetary concepts present in both periods makes it improbable that a unit of account would not have existed in the Angkorian period as well. Although we cannot

Table 6. Transaction Concepts Expressed in Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian Periods.

Concept	Pre Angkorian	Angkorian
Value; equivalent price	<i>mulya; argha</i>	
Buy	<i>duñ; daṃṃnuñ</i>	<i>duñ; daṃṃnuñ; dvañ</i>
Pay; buy; barter; acquire by exchange; bartering price	<i>jaṃṃnau; johv; jahv; jnahv; pañjahv; pañjau; jauhv; jo; jau; jaṃṃnahv; jaṃṃnohv</i>	<i>jo; jau; jauv; jov; jav</i>
Price; value	<i>tlai</i>	<i>thlay (y); thlai; thlaiy</i>
Sell	<i>lak(k)</i>	<i>lak(k)</i>
Trade; swap	<i>tnor; panlas(s)</i>	<i>tvar; thnvar; thnur</i>
Debt	<i>ktiñ</i>	
Borrowed with interest		<i>pul</i>
Interest		<i>guṇa</i>
Repayment; redemption; compensation	<i>niṣkraya; soñ</i>	<i>soñ; snoñ; lapp</i>
Indemnity; compensation; payment		<i>phlas; thlas</i>
Claim; receive	<i>dar</i>	<i>dar</i>
Offer in payment (to god?)		<i>thvay</i>

know if expressions such as those for redemption, debt, interest and reimbursement carried the connotation of a specific extrinsic valuation, this seems likely.

Furthermore, the exchange terminology used in one text, K. 257N/994 (Cœdès, 1952, p. 148), shows that the Angkorians understood the concept of equivalent price. In the inscription, a *vāp*, a member of the *varna* of Boxers, borrowed (*pul*) silver, metal objects and garments from a *mratāñ khloñ*, to make a purchase. Following a court order, the price/value (*thlāy*) of this was repaid by the *varna* (a number of *vāp*) and the *mratāñ khloñ* was given a plot of land, Gamryāñ, representing the interest (*guṇa*) on the loan, and perhaps the capital as well. The *mratāñ khloñ* then gave each *vāp* various garments, salt and metal objects, as the price (*jāv*) of another piece of land for a sanctuary for the deity at Gamryāñ. The goods received were to be used for fulfilling their royal service obligation (*rājakāryya*) and the remainder for their subsistence. The limits of the land given in payment (*thlāy*) for the goods are given. Thus, in this text, *thlāy* was used both for price value where *mūlya* or *argha* might have been used in the Pre-Angkorian and for the actual amount paid. Further, the proposed uses of the transaction goods here do not suggest prestige exchange. Thus, at least here, market considerations, including extrinsic valuation, had a role.

Differences between Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian Economy

A basic graph of the duration of lexical items⁶ might enable us to discern trends within the epigraphic record. Fig. 2 shows the dates and durations of all 1,571 object types in the database. A sizeable number of terms introduced in the Pre-Angkorian period endure well into the Angkorian period. Changes in lexicon occur in all languages in response to contact with new languages, and changes in political organisation or technology. Here the increased frequency of new words in the 10th century is largely due to the long lists of temple items in the Angkorian period. This points to a period of increased political and economic unification and concentration of resources, allowing for larger foundations.

The number of new words appears to correlate closely with the number of inscriptions (see Fig. 3). Thus, the apparent differences in the frequency of the introduction of new words in Fig. 2 do not appear to reflect changes in the language or the economy to any significant extent.

Examination of the distribution of the lexical terms in Fig. 2 reveals a marked continuity of some objects but localisation of others. A significant proportion of the terms are seen in one site only. However, this may be due to inscription loss over time. A few terms do not continue after the point of

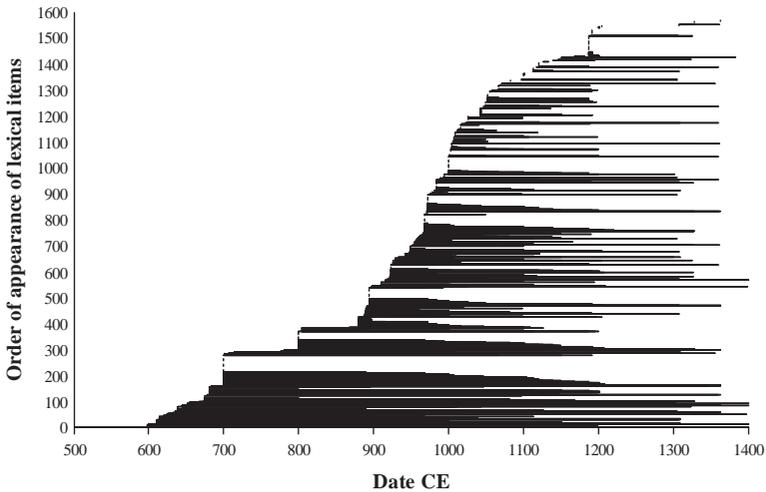


Fig. 2. All Database Objects: Dates and Durations, Based on the Earliest and Latest Mentions. A Single Mention Appears as a Dot. Inscriptions Known to be Within a Date Range are Assumed to be at the Mid Date.

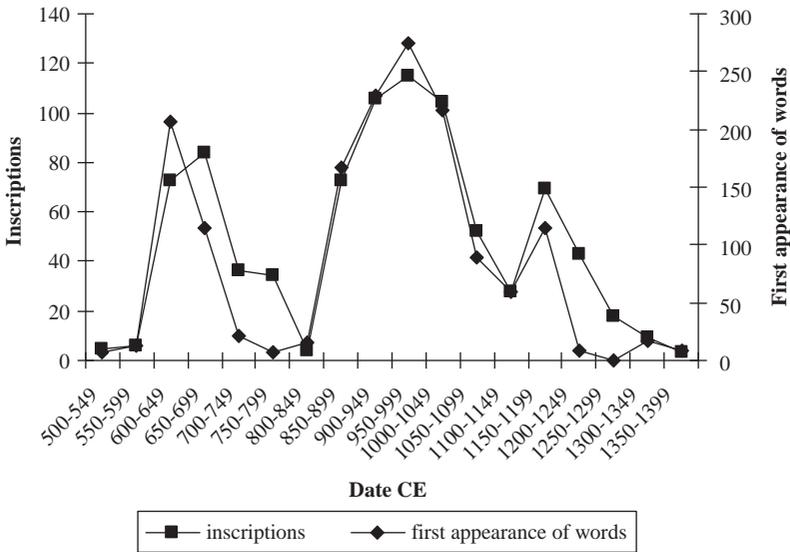


Fig. 3. Number of Inscriptions and Number of New Words in Each Period.

transition between the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods, and many new words appear subsequently. Many of these are associated with sites in the northern part of Cambodia and surrounding areas, where most Angkorian period temples were located.

In Figs. 4 and 5, we can see temporal change occurring within two categories of the material economy (jewellery/precious stones and animals). There is a contrast between the shapes of the two graphs, with the appearance in the first (jewellery/precious stones) of significant numbers of new manufactured items from the 10th century CE, contrasting with relatively greater continuity in the terminology in a portion of the agricultural sector (animals) between the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods.

Analysis of items used in exchanges indicates gross changes in categories of the material economy between the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods, although the transition period is poorly represented.⁷ However, from 928 CE, the changed economy can be observed. By this time, a greater diversity of goods were used for payments than previously, with less rice and textiles but more manufactured metal objects and animals⁸ (Fig. 6). This points to an increasingly wealthy elite having greater capacity to display status symbols than in the Pre-Angkorian period, as do the larger scale and quantity of non-royal temple construction, the valuable contents of some

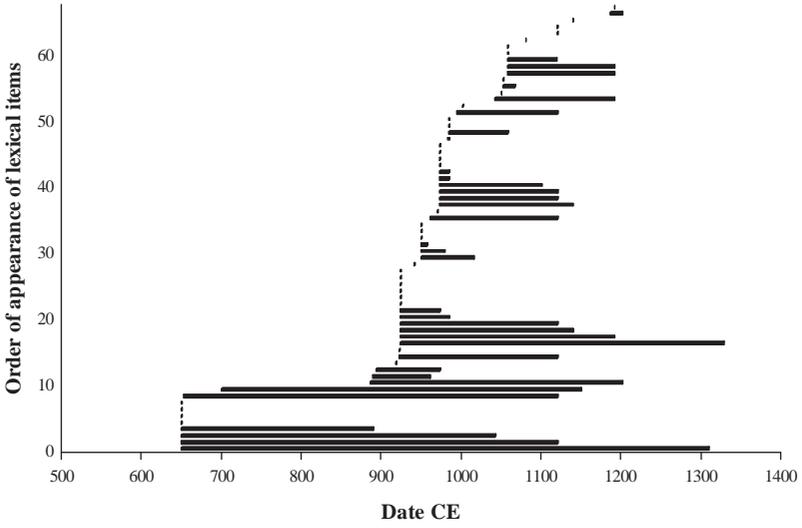


Fig. 4. Duration of Terms for Jewellery and Precious Stones.

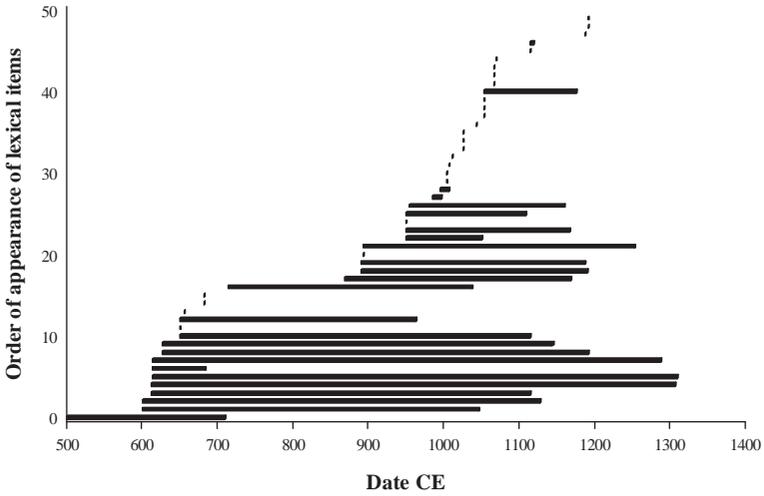


Fig. 5. Duration of Terms for Animals.

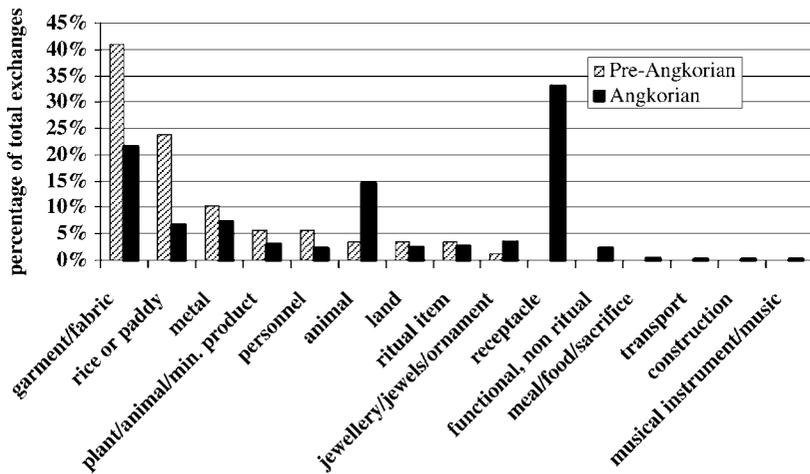


Fig. 6. Percentage of Exchanges by Category: Pre Angkorian and Angkorian Periods.

temple inventories and also the gifts and insignia given by rulers to their supporters. For example, in K. 156/10th century, the king presented the founder with a gold palanquin with the head of a *nāga*,⁹ a golden staff, a white parasol, a parasol of peacock feathers, a pearl and a spittoon.

These changes are seen at about the same time as those of the 10th century inscriptions in Java, where records of gifts given at *sīma* grant ceremonies list relatively fewer textiles and more money than earlier, and which are linked to the opening up of foreign trade (Wisseman Christie, 1993, p. 185). According to Hall (1985, p. 206), much of the precious metal the Khmer used to finance the activities of courts and temples and to reward officials may have been plundered,¹⁰ particularly from expeditions waged against the Vietnamese and Cham, mentioned in some inscription eulogies from the late 11th century. Regardless, the wealth of the elite was sufficient to acquire the imported goods they wanted, including precious metals.

Metal items have replaced some of the rice seen in the Pre-Angkorian exchanges. Given that it was widely available and could not be kept indefinitely, rice may not have been as desirable a store of value as metal. The relative reduction in textiles in exchanges is perhaps not significant in itself, given the introduction of the many new items. Some of the exchange items appear to have served more for display of wealth or as a store of value than for use. Even so, these were not prestige exchanges, since they had been bartered, with detailed weights and measures of many items recorded.

Valuations in Temples and Exchanges

Comparison of the objects recorded for both temples and exchanges in the Angkorian period reveals some differences between the economies of these two sectors.¹¹ Not only do certain objects occur uniquely in one category or the other (pointing to their ritual or non-ritual function), but the metals used in manufacturing temple objects also occur in different proportions to those in exchanges (see Fig. 7). While overall there are more silver than gold objects, gold objects were more likely to be found in temples and silver objects were more likely to be in exchanges.

About 1,350 Angkorian period references to manufactured metal objects (ritual items, receptacles and jewellery or accessories) were analysed (Fig. 8).

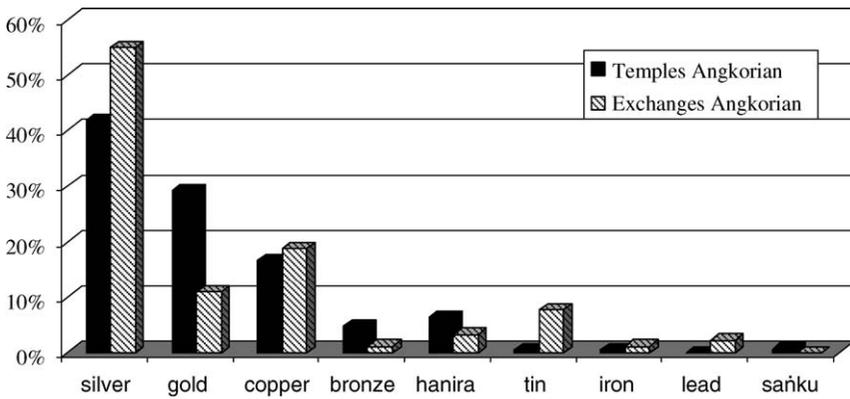


Fig. 7. Metal Objects in Angkorian Temples and Exchanges.

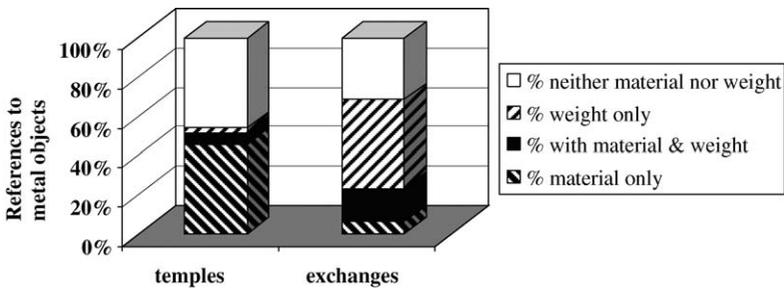


Fig. 8. Angkorian Metal Objects: Differences Between Temples and Exchanges.

Of these references, 35% state only the material, 12% state only a weight but not a material and only 9% list both material and weight.

Temples have a much higher proportion of objects with stated materials (51%) than stated weights (10%), but it is the converse for exchanges, where 57% of all objects have a stated weight and 24% have a stated material (Fig. 8). In 45% of temple objects and 36% of the objects in the exchanges, the materials are not mentioned, and these may sometimes have been of low-value materials. However, they were probably metal, since the same items appear in similar contexts and are frequently of metal. Garments and fabrics are also more likely to have a measurement recorded in the exchanges than in the temples, but the difference is not so marked as with metal objects.

It would seem that the sometimes seemingly random assortments of exchange goods were in fact carefully calculated. This is highlighted in K. 258A/1094 (Cœdès, 1952, p. 195), where the totals for different metals are stated separately. The much higher proportion of weights found in exchanges than in temples suggests that the weights were important when bartering for exchanges, whereas accurate valuations were not so important for the more prestigious temple items. The exchanges may have been recorded when the dimensions of transferred land were officially registered (e.g. in K. 205/1089; K. 207/1042). Such 'legal documents' could have served as important evidence in matters of litigation and taxation assessments. Conversely, it may have been more important to record the material of a gift to a temple than the material of an exchange item, since the material of the gift could be important for proclaiming the status or merit of the donor, and these objects were presumably not going to be used for subsequent transactions.

Values of Hierarchy, Status and Merit

Besides what has been outlined above, other differences between the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods have been observed. These include increased central control of populations and foundations, changes in the names of commoners and in the classes of officials, notably the disappearance of the *poi*, and spelling and vocabulary changes, the latter mainly in administrative and technical language, together suggesting institutional changes (Vickery, 1998, p. 87).

The organisation of the foundations also changed. Pre-Angkorian foundations tended to be organised through transfers of land by individuals who obtained ricefields and other basic needs from others. The foundations

often appear to have been run as economic units. Although deities were frequently referred to in the inscriptions, they may not have all been religious institutions (*ibid.*, p. 278). The Angkorian period foundations, on the other hand, were mostly established by rulers or wealthy individuals. These establishments sometimes maintained large numbers of people to provide for the deities and produce surpluses, much of which would have been consumed by the founders and their associates. The Angkorian period inscriptions highlight an elite society seemingly more focused than earlier on ritual and gaining merit. As well, there is more emphasis on hierarchies and status (Sahai, 1978, p. 18; Wolters, 1982, p. 19), reflecting a more complex society.

As elsewhere in Southeast Asia and up to relatively recent times, status, hierarchy and merit were important. Political activity had a strongly hierarchical basis adapted from India. The centre regulated status by specifying the privileges of different ranks of people, bestowing marks of legitimacy: titles, posts, regalia and other symbols of honour and favour. Social distinctions were reinforced by ideology and merit acquisition (Ebihara, 1984, p. 284; Errington, 1983, p. 199). In Java from the 11th century (Wissemann Christie, 1986, p. 83) and in Angkor in the late 13th century (Zhou, 1993, p. 7), social differences were enforced through laws restricting the wearing of particular fabrics.

Since Angkor's bureaucracy was not institutionalised as in China, administrative roles such as tax collection, levies of corvée labour, mobilisation of troops and adjudication of legal cases were given to officials appointed by the king. Rulers exercised patronage in appointing people to these positions, or to others with ceremonial functions (Mabbett, 1977; Wolters, 1982). The complexity of the system of offices and titles may have served 'to prevent the consolidation of power at any point by dispersing functions, creating overlapping roles and fostering crosscutting loyalties' (Mabbett, 1977, p. 40). The flow chart in Fig. 9, representing the chain of authority from the king down to village elders for a legal dispute over land (Cœdès, 1952, p. 115), gives an idea of the protocols that would have been needed in accordance with titles, ranks, positions and other marks of status).

Donations to a foundation are frequently recorded in the inscriptions as 'works of merit', presumably enhancing the donor's status in the eyes of the gods and helping ensure a comfortable and prosperous afterlife. Offering a share or all of the merit of a private foundation to the ruler would have been a judicious move on the part of the founders. The practice was based on the Indian idea that the king shared the spiritual merit of his subjects (Sahai, 1970, p. 122). A 10th century inscription from Banteay Srei explains

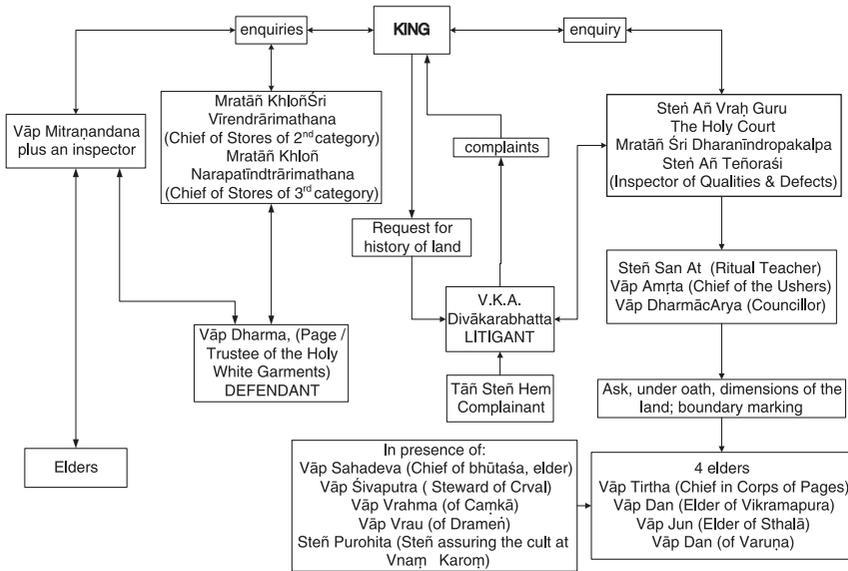


Fig. 9. Chain of Authority Inferred from K. 262/982 CE.

how the share of the merit of the foundations of the Vraḥ Guru (Yajñavarāha) and his brother is allocated to the king and others. The merit was apportioned in line with status.

Of all the merit of these foundations, the king should receive either one quarter or one sixth; the king, who will protect them, should receive half the merit; the favourite of the king, who will protect them, should receive one quarter of the merit. If ill fortune comes to the temple, the Śivaite master who is the Superior, the Chief Minister of the royal family and the good people who will inform the king seven times, should still receive half the merit. (K. 842/968)

It was not uncommon for people to be rewarded on the basis of their status. In K. 206/1042 (Cœdès, 1951, p. 16), payments to members of the court for boundary marking services appear to be in accordance with status (see Table 7).

It is likely that artisans were paid according to their recognised status which may have been in proportion to the demand for their work and/or hereditary factors. Weavers, temple builders and sculptors were often held in high esteem and paid accordingly in societies such as Vijayanagara (Sinopoli, 2003, Chapter 6) and Pagan (Aung Thwin, 1976, pp. 210–211). While there is some evidence that commodity prices in Pagan were not

Table 7. Payment with *canlyāk* (Garments), *thnap* (Covers) and *ullāra* (a Textile) for Boundary Marking: K. 206/1042 CE.

Payment/Fees (<i>thlas</i>)	To Members of the Court (<i>vrah sabha</i>)
2 <i>thnap</i> , 10 <i>yo canlyak</i>	V.K.A. Purvaśramadhipati
1 <i>thnap</i> , 5 <i>yo canlyak</i>	V.K.A. Vidyaśrama
1 <i>thnap</i> , 10 <i>yo ullara</i>	V.K.
1 <i>thnap</i> , 1 <i>yo ullara</i>	Kamsteñ Yanap, <i>vrah sabha</i>
1 <i>thnap</i>	Mratañ Khloñ Mat Chlañ, <i>khloñ vala</i> of Urvaśrama

centrally administered (Wicks, 1992, p. 154 – c.f. Aung Thwin, 1985, p. 111), the Khmer inscriptions are not informative on this subject. Yet, even if hierarchy or merit influenced the terms of these transactions, it is unlikely that such a system could have functioned in the rest of the economy, since all prices would then vary according to the relative status of buyer and vendor, and this would be unworkable. Nevertheless, whatever the situation in the rest of the economy, in these elite transactions, the participants would have had more than wealth in mind.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted material differences between the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian economies, which are consistent with other findings of linguistic and organisational differences between the periods. While the Pre-Angkorian elite may have used silver as a unit of account, the increase in diversity of recorded items and the apparent disappearance of a unit of account in the Angkorian period are unlikely to be due to a shortage of metal, since this was accompanied by a significant increase in manufactured metal objects for gifts, ritual display and exchanges. This points to greater elite wealth, which, accompanied by a more stratified hierarchy, would make symbols of wealth and status more important. The changes in Angkor may have been analogous to those in Java, where an increase in the records of metal in inscriptions has been ascribed to increased wealth due to trade.

Since barter existed in many parts of Southeast Asia, at times alongside monetised economies, post-9th century Angkor epigraphy seems remarkable, not for lacking a coinage, but for its lack of mention of any common unit of account. We cannot unequivocally interpret the meaning and significance of the few occurrences of the terms signifying value, *mūlya* and *argha*, in the late Pre-Angkorian texts, nor indeed of many other terms of

transaction in both periods. Nevertheless, it is likely that, in a complex society such as Angkor's, the diverse items recorded in the epigraphy were valued against a common unit in the Angkorian period. The diversity of expressions in both the Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods for different types of transactions suggests a sophisticated understanding of monetary concepts. The apparent absence of expression for value in the Angkorian period would thus seem to have more to do with the society having changed priorities than regressive economics.

If the weights of metal objects signified value in transactions, this might explain why they were recorded more frequently for exchanges than for temples in the Angkorian period. However, if someone wished to display wealth or generosity, publicising the high-value material in temple donations could be more conspicuous, which might account for the more frequent mentions of the type of metal in the temple lists. The question then arises why the Khmer, in order to simplify the accounting, did not record the prices paid in terms of a unit of account that must have existed. Perhaps the lists of transaction items may have been a further means of highlighting the wealth of the donors.

In small-scale transactions, such as for food, people may have bartered without the use of a unit of account. However, it would have been impractical for a range of different items to be used in small transactions. For larger value transactions, such as for precious metal objects, a common unit of account becomes essential, especially to deal with the problem of the non-coincidence of wants. Without doubt, the elite were familiar with transactions at both levels.

Even if the availability of precious metals had been limited, there is no reason to think that this or Angkor's being an inland agrarian state would have hindered development of the market principles in evidence around Southeast Asia. While trade items and traders are rarely mentioned in the epigraphy, there is increasing archaeological and historical evidence of commercial contact with other states. This was probably true of the Pre-Angkorian period, as well as the Angkorian period. Contact with other economies would certainly have exposed the Khmer to monetisation. If they did not adopt such a system, it may have been because the rulers perceived no advantage to themselves and because the existing system worked for them.

As it is, it is neither necessary nor sufficient for a command economy to be without money. Command economies have used money, and moneyless societies have been marketised. Extensive, highly controlled economies are unlikely to be sustainable in the long term, particularly an economy such as

Angkor's. With its long lines of communication, it could only have endured by being decentralised, and could not have relied on centrally administered prices.

Regardless of the material differences between the temple and exchange sectors, the transactions outlined in the temple inscriptions should be viewed as intrinsically bound to the elite milieu of the rulers, officials, religious institutions and gods, where merit, hierarchy, status and displays of wealth played a significant role. The Angkorian temple economy should not be seen as separate from nor wholly representative of the greater economy, because the temple sector, run by and for the elite, impacted, and was in turn influenced by, the greater economy – while a secular economy of barter and a unit of account existed for local markets and probably for other transactions outside the temple setting. However, from the viewpoint of the writers of the inscriptions detailing the purchases of goods and services, status, hierarchy, merit and public display of wealth appear to have overridden market concerns.

NOTES

1. Michael Vickery points out that K. 726 is unusual. It is the only inscription with *mūlya*. The inscription is thought to be of late Pre Angkorian period (8th century), a time when other texts were showing changes from the 7th century. Thus it 'may not be representative of economic institutions throughout' and it may not be justified to use this inscription to establish a standard of valuation for the whole Pre Angkorian period (Michael Vickery, 2006, personal communication). Nevertheless, the concepts were expressed at this time.

2. In Cœdès' (1953, p. 79) translation of K. 726B, the comma between silver and *yugala* suggests the rice was worth 4 *tamlin* of silver, while Wicks' (1992, p. 191) interpretation is that the payment was valued at 4 *tamlin* of silver plus one *yau* of *yugala*.

3. This may also have been to solicit aid against Srivijaya during the period of their greatest threat to regional trade and/or assistance against Sūryavarman's rival Jayaviravarman (Hall, 1975, p. 332).

4. After 1050, possibly because of internal problems, the Khmer withdrew while the Burmese expanded into this region (Hall, 1985, p. 198). In the 12th century, the Isthmus of Kra was the centre of interaction involving Sri Lanka, Burma and Angkor (Hall, 1985, pp. 202 205).

5. There is no evidence, however, that the *khloñ jnval* and *vāp* were actually merchants. Hall's (1985, p. 172) claim that under Sūryavarman I merchants were involved in the state's revenue collection is unsubstantiated (Vickery, 1987, pp. 211 212).

6. The analysis includes all lexical items from the database. Because the study focuses on the economy, most of these terms are of objects from the Old Khmer

texts. A large proportion of these terms (31%) are Sanskrit loan words. Data from non eulogic Sanskrit texts were included, though not in the case of the bilingual inscriptions (K. 235/1052 and K. 254/1129).

7. Of the thirteen 8th 9th century Pre Angkorian inscriptions recording exchanges, only two, K. 1214/726 and K. 124/803, are dated. The latter records purchases only of temple provisions, and not land or servants.

8. Private ownership of working livestock, even today in the countryside, still indicates relative wealth.

9. A supernatural serpent often associated with water regions.

10. Plunder has been described as an integrative activity of empires, compensating for lack of absolute royal power in the decentralised peripheries of empires by mobilising the military capacities of regional chiefs to participate in raids and share in the gains (Spencer, 1976).

11. The 'temple sector' in this analysis is taken as that part of the economy relating to the establishment or maintenance of religious foundations. It includes donations, offerings and provisions for deities and temple personnel. The 'exchange sector' includes transactions for goods (mostly land) or services (payment for official duties, such as boundary marking). Because the number of metal objects in Pre Angkorian exchanges is small, only Angkorian artefacts have been analysed.

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MOVING BODIES: THE INTERSECTIONS OF SEX, WORK, AND TOURISM

J. S. Eades

ABSTRACT

Historically, sex, tourism, and the labor market have long been inextricably linked, but media concerns about sex as the main purpose of tourism, and its effects on the host group and its sex workers, date from the mid-1990s, in the wake of the spread of HIV, the collapse of communism, the rise of the Internet, and the increasing influence of NGOs concerned with women's and children's welfare. This chapter argues that in order to understand fully the relationship between tourism, sex, and the labor market, we need to adopt a broader perspective and look at the various intersections between the three factors, and how they blend into and influence each other. It conceptualizes the three domains of tourism, sex, and work as intersecting circles and analyzes the forms of activity typical of each. "Sex tourism," as popularly defined, is the space where all three overlap, but there are significant areas of sexual activity associated with tourism that are not commercial, and yet that generate significant and increasing business activity in some destinations. There is also a tendency for partners in commercial sex to define their relationships in terms of other sectors, as "love" or "romance." The chapter concludes that with economic development, there is a tendency for roles in

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the sex industry to become increasingly professionalized and differentiated, and that as the industry is unlikely to disappear, regulation should focus on the empowerment and welfare of sex workers rather than abolition and suppression.

INTRODUCTION

In any discussion of the relationship between the body and the economy, sex and prostitution are likely to surface as issues at some point. After all, sex work involves the commodification of the body, and sex workers are often a significant part of the local informal labor market. In addition, a disproportionate percentage of these sexual encounters seem to take place within the context of tourism, given that people on holiday seem more prone to casual sex than when they are at home (Herridge, 2002). However, the relationship between sex and tourism became an increasingly important issue in the latter part of the 20th century, as travel boomed and increasing numbers of people from richer countries began to purchase cheaper sexual services elsewhere. The relationship between prostitution and tourism was raised as an issue in the early 1980s (e.g., Graburn, 1983), and concern escalated rapidly with worries about the spread of HIV infections (Hooper, 1999), and about the exploitation of women and children in developing countries. However, a concentration on commercial sex in a single country or region tends to obscure other important relationships between sex and tourism. This chapter is therefore an attempt to look at the wider field of these relationships; the economic, social, and political forces driving them; and their implications for the policy debate and the future.

Sex and travel have, of course, always been closely linked. Crick (1989) linked “sex” with “sun” and “sights,” as one of the prime characteristics of tourism in his review article, and the possibility of sexual encounters is often present in the minds of travelers, given the freedom from customary constraints that travel can offer, together with the sexualized images with which it is advertised and marketed (Ryan & Hall, 2001, pp. 28–35). However, “sex tourism” as a labeled phenomenon only emerged as an issue in the media in the early 1990s. There were many reasons for this, as will be discussed below: the link between sex tourism and the spread of HIV infections (e.g., Fordham, 2004; Law, 2000; Paul, 1994), the collapse of communism leading to new waves of sex workers appearing in the sex industries of countries scattered throughout the world (e.g., Carter & Clift, 2000, p. 8;

Shelley, 2005; Tiuriukanova, 2004), the emergence of the Internet resulting in related moral panics concerning pedophilia and pornography (e.g., Eades, 2007; Hughes, 1996), and the well-orchestrated lobbying by “End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism” (ECPAT) and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) campaigning against the exploitation of women and children in developing countries (e.g., Hoose, Clift, & Carter, 2000, pp. 80–81; Montgomery, 2001, pp. 29–33, and see also <http://www.ecpat.net/EI/Index.asp>).

However, this sudden media interest in the topic was based on a narrow interpretation of the relationship between sex and tourism. Despite arguments against narrow definitions (e.g., Ryan, 2000, pp. 36–37), nearly all the attention was given to forms of commercial sex taking place between foreign men and young women or children, mainly in Thailand (e.g., Bishop & Robinson, 1998; Fordham, 2004; Montgomery, 2001; Truong, 1990) and other countries in Southeast Asia, such as the Philippines (Law, 1997, 2000), Cambodia (Douglas, 2003; Leung, 2003), or Vietnam (Agrusa & Prideaux, 2002; Cooper & Hanson, 1998; Marsh, 2006).

As I discuss further below, the standard definitions of sex tourism in the literature tend to focus on this aspect, and have tended to ignore other forms of sex-related tourism that have proliferated in other parts of the world, especially sexual relations between consenting individuals within the tourist population, even though this may be the commonest type of sexual activity for many tourists (Carter & Clift, 2000, pp. 13–14). There are clearly resorts in many parts of the world where these kinds of activities are common, including the more relaxed parts of the Mediterranean (Venton, 2003), the Caribbean (Santilli, 2006), or California, and Florida in the United States, with their similar concentrations of “clothing-optional” resorts (for lists, see, e.g., <http://honeymoons.about.com/cs/nakedescapes/a/nudebeaches.htm>). There are also sites for voyeurism where the main attraction consists of erotic displays of dancing, stripping, or on-stage sex by performers, rather than sexual relations involving tourists (e.g., Liepe-Levinson, 1998, 2001; Ryan & Martin, 2001). These categories of activity may overlap in specific places such as the red-light district of Amsterdam (Brants, 1998; Carter, 2000; Wonders & Michalowski, 2001), the Bangkok nightlife district of Patpong (Askew, 2002; Manderson, 1992), or Western “lap-dancing” venues (Lewis, 2000). However, conceptually at least, the roles of erotic entertainment and prostitution are different, and erotic entertainment per se does not necessarily bear the same serious policy or medical implications as physical sexual relations with tourists, especially if unprotected.

In this chapter, therefore, first I survey definitions of sex tourism, followed by the reasons for the moral panic of the early 1990s. Second, I argue that the concentration on commercial sex in Thailand was understandable, given the conditions of the period, but that this excludes many significant wider issues. Third, I consider the relations between sex, work, and tourism in more detail, by exploring each of the zones and the intersections. Finally, I weigh the implications of this expanded definition of the field for our understanding of the relationship between sex and tourism in general.

DEFINING SEX TOURISM

Two of the most readily available definitions of sex tourism can be found in the Wikipedia entry on the subject. Wikipedia's own definition is as follows: "Sex tourism is travel (by men or women) to engage in sexual intercourse or sexual activity with prostitutes, and is typically undertaken internationally by tourists from wealthier countries whose payment for services may then be rendered either in cash or in kind" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_tourism). This explicitly equates sex tourism with prostitution, and implies that inequality in wealth between countries is one of its underlying causes. The Wikipedia entry then quotes the more elaborate definition by the WTO (World Tourism Organization, 1995), that is, "trips organized from within the tourism sector, or from outside this sector but using its structures and networks, with the primary purpose of effecting a commercial sexual relationship by the tourist with residents at the destination." Prostitution has here been replaced by the more value-neutral "commercial sexual relationship," although only those with "residents at the destination" are discussed. The entry then gives a concise list of the problems arising from these activities, as defined by the WTO's parent body, the United Nations. "The U.N. opposes sex tourism citing health, social and cultural consequences for both tourist home countries and destination countries, especially in situations exploiting gender, age, social and economic inequalities in sex tourism destinations" (*ibid.*). In other words, sex tourism results in the spread of disease, social problems, the erosion or destruction of local cultures, and the exploitation of women, the young, and the poor. This statement implies two other themes common in the sex tourism literature: sex workers are basically victims, and it is up to the state or international organizations to take action.

The most important contributions to the sex tourism literature to date are probably the collections of papers edited by Oppermann (1998), Carter and Clift (2000), and Bauer and McKercher (2003), and the survey of the field by Ryan and Hall (2001). Carter and Clift (2000, p. 7) suggest, as a “normal working definition of sex tourism,” “travel for which the main motivation is to engage in commercial sexual relations,” although they note that it is oversimplistic to separate it from other forms of tourism and travel. Ryan’s chapter in the Carter and Clift volume also takes a wide view, suggesting that sex tourism:

may simply be described as sexual intercourse while away from home – an all inclusive term, but one which permits a discussion of different paradigms. To restrict definitions of sex tourism, as is often done, to the red light districts of places like Amsterdam and Bangkok is to limit our understanding of the phenomenon, and to artificially separate the location from the social context. (Ryan, 2000, p. 36)

In their joint book, Ryan and Hall also take a wide view:

Sex tourism may be defined as tourism where the main purpose or motivation of at least part of the trip is to consummate sexual relations. It might be thought that these relationships are usually of a commercial nature. However, the apparent solidity of such a definition soon starts to fade as the marginalities and states of sexuality start to be explored in more depth. (Ryan & Hall, 2001, p. x)

Thus they note that for some tourists, sex may only be part of the trip – indeed even informants on organized sex tours tend to deny that they are sex tourists (cf. O’Connell Davidson’s “situational prostitute users,” 2000, p. 65) or otherwise rationalize their behavior (Garrick, 2005), and the sex may or may not be commercial. Gray areas therefore abound. For this reason, Ryan and Hall suggest discussing sex tourism in terms of the continua suggested earlier by Ryan (2000, p. 35): the degree of commercialization, and the degree of power inequality, and therefore exploitation. To this they add a third dimension, the degree of the assault on the integrity of the self (Ryan & Hall, 2001, Chapter 3).

Despite this wide approach, however, much of the Ryan and Hall book still concentrates on commercial sex. Chapter 4 focuses on relations between sex workers and clients, and how they perceive themselves and each other. Chapter 6 discusses the trafficking of sex workers, while Chapter 7 describes the role of the state in Southeast Asia in either regulating or organizing the sex industry, in a multistage historical model. They argue that the origins of modern sex tourism often lie in indigenous sexual institutions and the mobilization of sex workers by militarist and authoritarian governments, paving the way for the emergence of the modern industry in the postwar

period. Indeed, the only chapter of the Ryan and Hall book that moves away from the sex worker–client paradigm is Chapter 5, on gay and lesbian tourism. But otherwise, it is the traditional definition of sex tourism that dominates in their discussion. This is not surprising due to the moral panic that developed around sex tourism and prostitution in Southeast Asia during the previous decade.

SEX TOURISM AS MORAL PANIC

A keyword search of major international newspapers for the years between 1990 and 2007 using LexisNexis reveals an interesting pattern: media interest in sex tourism as a specific named concept is surprisingly recent (see Table 1).

This table suggests that the term was surprisingly little used until the early 1990s. There was a sudden burst of interest in the subject, starting in 1995, peaking in 1996, and declining in 1997. After this, there was a fairly steady flow of stories until another rise began in 2003, with peaks in 2004 and 2006.

Table 1. References to Sex Tourism in Major World Publications, 1990–2007.

Year	References
1990	8
1991	22
1992	22
1993	44
1994	51
1995	171
1996	282
1997	103
1998	102
1999	105
2000	102
2001	92
2002	105
2003	138
2004	213
2005	181
2006	258
2007	180

Source: LexisNexis Total Research (www.lexis.com), searching “Major Newspapers,” retrieved November 30, 2008.

(As of late 2008, there appears to be another decline, with only 117 hits from January 1 to November 30.) This raises the question of why the issue suddenly appeared as significant in 1995. The answer lies in a combination of factors.

First, although the AIDS/HIV epidemic of the 1980s first became prominent in North America with the spread of the virus among the gay population (Hooper, 1999, Chapter 3), it soon became apparent that in parts of the world, such as Africa, it was spreading among the heterosexual population as well (*ibid.*, Chapters 2 and 6). In the late 1980s, there was a sudden rapid increase in HIV infections among commercial sex workers in Thailand. This spread rapidly to the rest of the country, with the northeast region particularly badly affected. By the late 1980s, the epidemic was spreading in that country faster than anywhere else in the world (Fordham, 2004, pp. 18–20). Fordham (2004, Chapter 6) argues that one of the results of the moral panic is that the authorities in Thailand have increasingly looked at teenage sexuality, or even dating, as pathological, using moralistic discourses derived from outdated Western middle-class views of sex. Meanwhile, and ironically, other types of sexual activity and sex tourism are booming among the Western middle classes, thanks to a more liberal attitude to personal morality, expressions of sexuality and sexual minorities on the part of the state.

Second, the revolution in air transport, which followed the deregulation and the introduction of larger planes in the 1970s, greatly reduced the cost of air travel in real terms, allowing many more people to enjoy international tourism. This included travel to many destinations that had been constructed in the popular imagination as tropical “paradise,” in which sexual services were relatively easy to come by (Manderson, 1997; Manderson & Jolly, 1997; Ryan & Hall, 2001, pp. 28–35). Third, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe meant the emergence of some East European cities as centers of the sex industry (see Carter, 2000 on Prague), while East European women started to turn up in the entertainment and sex industries of nightspots throughout the world (Shelley, 2005; Tiuriukanova, 2004). Fourth, as a result of the successful lobbying by ECPAT and similar organizations, a large number of countries rushed through legislation giving them extraterritorial jurisdiction over the sexual activities of their nationals while overseas on holiday, beginning with Australia in 1994 (Hall, 1998; Hoose et al., 2000, p. 79; Seabrook, 2000). Hoose, Clift, and Carter noted that 25 countries had similar legislation by the turn of the century, and a number of them, including Norway, Sweden, Australia, France, and the UK, have mounted successful prosecutions (Montgomery, 2001, p. 167;

Nyland, 1995), although the numbers of individuals prosecuted are tiny in comparison with the size of the industry. The United States introduced similar legislation in 2003 (AJIL, 2003). Fifth, the issue was starting to attract scholarly attention. In addition to publications based on ECPAT meetings (e.g., Srisang, 1991), and pioneering contributions by Graburn (1983) and Cohen (1986), work was coming on stream by scholars such as Truong (1990), Hall (1992, 1994), Oppermann (1998, 1999), and Bishop and Robinson (1998).

Finally, all of this coincided with the rise of the Internet as a means of communication. In the early years of the Internet, many of the most popular sites provided hard-core content on an unprecedented scale (Ryan & Hall, 2001, p. 66). With continued exposure, however, the comparative importance of porn soon waned. The most popular Web sites are now those providing information or access, such as Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft, with most popular porn sites much further down the list (for details, see current rating sites such as http://www.alexa.com/site/ds/top_sites). But the early appearance of porn on the Internet, including images of children, fueled the moral outcry against both pornography and sex tourism. In a number of countries, the downloading and possession of child pornography became a criminal offense. ECPAT itself changed its name to reflect the new concern (“End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes”), and the media coverage reinforced the links between sex, tourism, pornography, and pedophilia in the popular imagination.

SEX, WORK, AND TOURISM: OUTLINING THE FIELD

To clarify the nature of the field, we might start with the observations that sex tourism involves three main types of activities: sex, tourism, and work. Representing each of these types of activity with a circle, the range of intersections between them is illustrated in Fig. 1. The classic definition of sex tourism involves all three: sex taking place between sex workers and tourists in a tourist location (zone 7 in Fig. 1). But there are also partial intersections, for instance, that between tourism and sex between consenting singles or couples without payment (zone 6 in Fig. 1), or where sex and work intersect as commercial sex but not necessarily as an adjunct to tourism (zone 5 in Fig. 1).

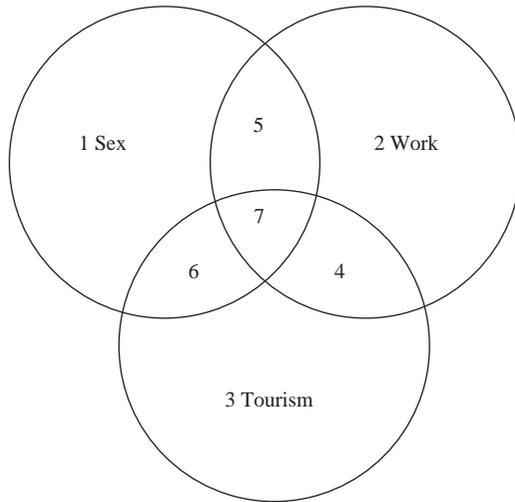


Fig. 1. Intersections Between Sex, Work, and Tourism.

The Changing Nature of Sex (Zone 1)

Sex is both biological (for reproduction) and cultural (for recreation), but with the decline in family size and the birthrate, and more open expressions of sexuality in the postwar period (at least in the West), it is the recreational side that has been of increasing significance. As Edlund and Korn (2002, p. 185) suggest, prostitution is about *nonreproductive* sex, the delinking of sex, children, and the family.

This relates to Castells' discussion of the collapse of patriarchy and the patriarchal family as the basis of social structure as a result of changing patterns of work (1997, Chapter 4). Castells argues that this collapse is a result of the transformation of work and consciousness, thanks to the impact of the informational economy on the labor market, changes in the technology of reproduction, and the development of the women's movement since the 1960s. The result has been a rise in the numbers of single and single-parent households, an increasing age of marriage, a declining frequency of marriage with a consequent rise in the number of children born outside wedlock, and a decline in the birthrate. The classic nuclear family is now a minority lifestyle. Alternative forms of sexuality and sexual identity have become increasingly popular, and the gay and lesbian movements have become increasingly visible and well organized (*ibid.*, p. 205). The result, according to Castells, is the increasing delinking of marriage, the family, heterosexuality,

and sexual expression. Many marriages are “used as a home base for both partners who have only a slight emotional investment in one another” (*ibid.*, p. 155). In addition, an increasing number of both singles and couples have experimented with recreational sex outside marriage, apparently reaching over 20% in the more trendy parts of the United States (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994, cited in Castells, 1997, p. 238).

Increasing numbers of people are therefore living on their own, looking for companionship or partners, either for casual sex or longer term relationships. Tourism provides many people with an excellent opportunity to search, particularly if they are single. The rise of the Internet is also highly significant. Matchmaking sites typically provide information on sex, age group, sexual preferences, physical appearance, location, and personal statements, as well as e-mail services and/or chat rooms where they can converse online and/or post their experiences, photographs, and videos. “Cruising online” (cf. McClelland, 2003) is common, and has allowed singles, couples, and groups with all kinds of sexual preferences to make contact to share experiences or activities. The number of people using these Internet sites is enormous. As an example, Swinging Heaven (www.swingingheaven.co.uk) in the UK claims to have over 930,000 registered members (singles or couples), half of which have posted photos or videos in their profiles and advertisements, with over a thousand online most of the time and around 4,000 at peak periods. This is only one of several such sites in the UK. The sites provide information on the location of clubs, saunas, and similar establishments where they can meet, and many of them are concentrated in tourist destinations.

But a large number of people seek sexual gratification abroad, where it is often available more cheaply and readily than at home. A recurring theme in the sexual tourism literature is the way in which both males and females act out their fantasies through sex on holiday, with overtones of racism, domination, and power (usually in the case of males – e.g., Kruhse-Mount Burton, 1995; O’Connell Davidson, 2000, pp. 61–68) and reinforcement of femininity (in the case of women, e.g., Sanchez Taylor, 2000, p. 46).

The Changing Nature of Work (Zone 2)

If sex has become increasingly casualized in the West over the last 30 years, so has work. In the 1970s, social scientists became increasingly interested in the “informal sector” of the economy in developing countries (Hart, 1973), together with its capacity to provide employment and cheap services, and

absorb labor. The informal sector encompassed both legal and illegal activities, and a number of researchers began to look also at women's labor – including that of sex workers (Nelson, 1987; White, 1990). As Edlund and Korn (2002) have theorized, prostitution is likely to be more common where there is a surplus of males, and where alternative earning possibilities for women are low, conditions likely to be realized in developing countries with rural poverty and high rates of urbanization. Meanwhile, in the West itself, many of the traditional forms of production were collapsing, and researchers began to look at the growing informal sector there as well (e.g., Henry, 1973, 1981). Their interest was heightened further by the collapse of communism in the 1990s, the impact of information technology (Castells, 1996), and the transition from socialism via the black economy to capitalism in the former socialist countries (Castells, 1998, pp. 180–190).

The restructuring of the economy resulted in increased polarization between the rich and the poor. Even the middle classes in many Western countries felt the pressure, and an increasing number of them took on second and third jobs in addition to their primary occupations. In the major cities, the rich had larger disposable incomes to spend on entertainment and recreation, and many of these services were labor intensive, involving the employment of large numbers of local or immigrant workers, in bars, hotels, restaurants, and related establishments. At the bottom of the labor market, there were increasing numbers of the long-term unemployed, an underclass outside the formal labor market increasingly involved in illegal forms of work in drugs, gambling, or sex. Sex workers soon become the object of social research in their own right (e.g., Day, 1999; Kempadoo & Doezema, 1998; Weitzer, 2002).

The results of these trends have interesting if complex implications for the tourism industry. On the one hand, increasing numbers of people from wealthy countries are able to travel abroad, including the more exotic locations in the developing world. There, money is to some extent power, and they are able to buy in goods and services, including sexual services unavailable back home. But the trends described by Castells mean that there are increasing numbers of people in the market for sexual services in the wealthy countries themselves. The result is a highly stratified force of sex workers, some catering to wealthy clients through exclusive establishments and/or agencies, with others forced to work in the streets, harassed by both police and local undesirables. The criminalization of sex work helps to maintain this stratification, although it also forces up the price of some forms of sex work, attracting more would-be workers into the industry. Thus, even though much of this work is legally dubious, it may pay better

than other forms of work available for some men and women (Edlund & Korn, 2002), and provides a source of income on which they can fall back when necessary.

The Changing Nature of Tourism (Zone 3)

The reasons for the rise of the international tourism industry are well known: on the demand side, they include increased leisure time, longer life expectancies, and the falling cost of air transport; on the supply side, the realization by both developing and developed countries that their cultural heritages, natural environments, and local cuisines are potentially marketable. Many countries and regions have made tourism development the centerpieces of their economic development strategies. Hotels, resorts, sports facilities, and theme parks have all proliferated, along with the tourists.

The attitude of social scientists to tourism was at first highly ambivalent. In his 1989 survey of the tourism literature up to that time, Crick (1989) noted the disdain of many observers, including complaints about the inauthenticity of the tourist experience (Boorstin, 1961), the invasion of the beaches (Turner & Ash, 1975), and the commodification of local culture (e.g., Greenwood, 1975; Wood, 1980). Within this context, sexual relations between guests and their hosts, whether consensual or commercial, were defined as major problems. The main focus of attention was Thailand, where there was a moral panic in the early 1980s. Organized parties of tourists, mainly Germans and Japanese, were soon traveling to Thailand, where sex workers provided by the tour organizers were ready waiting (Hughes, 1996). A number of other countries also gained reputations over the years as destinations providing easy access to sex for either men or women, including the Gambia (UNICEF, 2004), the Philippines (Law, 1997, 2000), Cambodia (Douglas, 2003; Leung, 2003), Cuba (O'Connell Davidson, 1996), Egypt (Bahbehanian, 2000; El-Gawhary, 1995), Kenya (Kibicho, 2005; Omondi, 2003), Jamaica (Lynch, 2003; Sanchez Taylor, 2000; Santilli, 2006), and Vietnam (Cooper & Hanson, 1998; Marsh, 2006).

Thus a combination of late-20th century trends in the realms of sex, work, and tourism all tended both to reinforce the links between tourism and sex: an increase in the proportion of individuals in the West without stable sexual partnerships, an increase in the number of tourists, an increase in the number of sex workers, and conditions in the labor markets of both developing and developed countries that left many people with sex work as one of their only options for making ends meet.

Work and Tourism (Zone 4)

This intersection can be dealt with briefly, although it does raise issues relevant to the rest of this chapter. First, tourism is a major employer, but much of the employment is seasonal and casual. Many destinations only operate at particular times of the year, and one of their major problems is how to generate a stream of tourist business in the off-season months. For this reason, employment is often seasonal and casual as well. Typical industries such as the hotel trade, the restaurant trade, the bar trade, and entertainment all fall into this seasonal pattern, and the result is a large amount of casual labor, often poorly paid, and often filled through the recruitment of outsiders, or of local people as a second occupation during the tourist season. The sex industry follows this pattern as well.

A second characteristic of the tourism trade is that it involves an influx of tourists who do not necessarily have up-to-date information on the attractions available (a probability that was greater before the arrival of the Internet), or the language ability to communicate with the local people. In these kinds of circumstances, there are employment opportunities for cultural brokers of one sort or another, including guides, translators, and providers of sexual services. These roles may overlap. In some cases, brokers are also willing to arrange or offer sexual companionship. Good examples are the “bumsters” attempting to befriend foreign women tourists, often middle-aged Europeans, in the Gambia (Moxon, 2002); “rent-a-rastas” who perform a similar role in Jamaica (Lynch, 2003; Martin, 2006); Arab youths hanging around female tourists in Israel (Cohen, 1971); and male guides offering sexual companionship in some parts of Egypt (Bahbehanian, 2000). Where sex enters into the relationship, the transaction may move in the direction of zone 6 (a sexual relationship within the context of tourism without payment, i.e., the holiday romance), or zone 7 (the relationship becomes one of sex work for payment within the context of tourism). Given the differences in wealth between hosts and guests in the context of the Gambia or the Caribbean, a shift to zone 7 is more likely.

Sex as Work (Zone 5)

This is one of the most significant zones in the model, as it refers to sex work in general, not necessarily within the context of tourism. Historically, this suggests a project of dimensions worthy of Foucault: at a more modest level, however, we can start with the model suggested by Ryan and Hall for the

development of the sex industries of East and Southeast Asia (2001, Chapter 7). Even though they introduce this in terms of state involvement in *sex tourism*, they are clearly dealing with the wider issue of the sex industry in general.

The first point they make (pp. 139–140) is that indigenous prostitution traditions existed in the countries of East Asia long before the tourists arrived. Both Thailand (Jeffrey, 2002) and Japan, for instance, had long traditions of both concubinage and prostitution, which lasted into the 20th century, and they might have included China in this list as well (e.g., Evans, 1997, Chapter 7; Hershatter, 1997; Jeffreys, 2004). In the case of Japan, the “floating world” of the Yoshiwara licensed pleasure quarters on the outskirts of Edo (Tokyo) (Bornoff, 1991, Chapter 10; Longstreet & Longstreet, 1970; Seidensticker, 1983, Chapter 4; Seigle, 1993), which survived into the 20th century, combined visits to the courtesans with theater (*kabuki*), and sport (*sumo* wrestling), all immortalized by the *ukiyo*e artists of the period. As with the demimondes of many of the great civilizations, sex went hand in hand with entertainment and cultural refinement, and in the world of the Japanese geisha, this tradition survives in an attenuated form (Dalby, 1983), alongside the modern Japanese sex industry, in all its variety (Bornoff, 1991; Constantine, 1993).

The second stage that Ryan and Hall describe is that of “economic colonialism and militarization” (2001, pp. 140–141). While Japanese militarism led to the forced military prostitution during the Second World War (cf. Hicks, 1997; Soh, 1996; Watanabe, 1995; Yea, 2003), and Japanese settlers established their own brothels around the region (Yamazaki, 1999), the presence of the American military led to the development of large sex industries around centers for “rest and recreation” (R&R) in a number of countries in East and Southeast Asia, including Japan (Dower, 1999, pp. 128–139), Korea (Lie, 1995; Matsui, 1977; Moon, 1997, 1999), the Philippines (Law, 1997, 2000), and Thailand (Askew, 2002; Montgomery, 2001, pp. 46–47).

Ryan and Hall’s third stage is that of “international tourism” (2001, pp. 141–142). They argue that the earlier involvement of the military in the sex industry paved the way for the later development of mass sex tourism, as governments considered how to restructure their economies after the departure of the American troops (p. 141). They cite the example of Korea, in which “governments through the 1970s to the late 1980s played a major role in the commoditisation of women through *kisaeng* [sex worker] tourism.” Similarly, the Thai government encouraged provincial governments to consider “forms of entertainment that some of [them] might

consider disgusting and shameful” (Bishop & Robinson, 1998, p. 10, also cited in Ryan & Hall, 2001, p. 142). Hoose et al. (2000, p. 79) note that Australian business rapidly moved into the Philippines to make use of the excess supply in the sex industry after the withdrawal of American troops – one of the reasons why the Australians later took the lead in extraterritorial legislation against sex tourism in the 1990s (for other reasons, see Ryan & Hall, 2001, pp. 129–132).

However, O’Connell Davidson (2000, p. 60) has pointed out that a number of countries have developed sex tourism industries without this background, including the Gambia, Cuba, and Brazil. Here, she argues that:

tourist development has been associated with the emergence of an informal prostitution sector (in which adult and child prostitutes solicit in hotels, discos, bars, beaches, parks or streets, often entering into fairly protracted and diffuse transactions with clients) *as well as* the reproduction of an existing, formally organized sector. (emphasis in original)

This suggests a dual labor market for sex workers, a more formally organized market dating back before World War II that involves large-scale transnational human trafficking, particularly of women and children who are then employed in brothels, usually with low pay and appalling working conditions, and a more informal market in which sex workers move on their own, have more control over their working conditions, and are often looking for long-term relationships and support, with less formal contractual arrangements and payments. This kind of market is to be found in many of the best documented sex tourism situations, and will be discussed in more detail in relation to zone 7 of the diagram.

Ryan and Hall’s fourth stage is that of “rapid economic development and international controls” (2001, pp. 142–145). They focus mainly on the attempts, both national and international, to control the sex industry in Thailand (pp. 143–144), but a more general point could also be made: once countries reach a high level of industrial development and wealth, tourism (including sex tourism) becomes a less important component of the economy and the workforce itself is restructured.

Countries such as Japan and Korea may still be in transition in this regard, even after many years of high-speed growth. By the 1980s, Japan had a diversified sex industry (Bornoff, 1991; Constantine, 1993), with hostess clubs (Allison, 1994), erotic shows, themed sex clubs, an adult film industry, and commercial sex, much of it controlled by the Japanese organized crime group, the yakuza. Trafficking still seems to be a problem, with reports of women, particularly from Thailand and the Philippines, being brought into the country to work in highly exploitative conditions,

amounting to sex slavery (see Matsui, 1991, 1993, 1995). Large-scale trafficking from Thailand and the Philippines apparently started in the 1980s, when international protests led to the scaling down of sex tourism trips by Japanese men to Southeast Asia. At that point, the *yakuza* simply started to bring women to Japan instead (Brown, 2000, pp. 93–95; Ryan & Hall, 2001, pp. 122–123). Large-scale sex tourism to other countries in the region apparently continues, to judge from the scandal that erupted in September 2003 in the Chinese city of Zhuhai. A large party of Japanese construction workers had gone there for a weekend with a large numbers of local sex workers in a hotel, but the party ended when the police responded to the complaints of other guests and raided the hotel (Eades, 2007, p. 268). However, this seems to have been something of a throwback to an earlier period. In the case of women from the Philippines in Japan, however, the trafficking argument does not really tell the whole story. As Dizon's recent research makes clear, many women from the Philippines are encouraged to travel to Japan by women who are already there. Traditionally, they went on "entertainment" visas, even though it was well known that many of them would end up working as hostesses in clubs, where they would also on occasions be required to dance, strip, or date their customers. However, for many women, finding a husband to give them security in Japan was one of the main aims, and bar work gave them excellent opportunities to meet Japanese men. Although many of these marriages are unsuccessful, the birth of children (who are Japanese citizens) gives their mothers a degree of security in staying in Japan, whether or not they stay with their husbands, and they still encourage other women to come (Dizon, 2004). This explains why, when the Japanese government responded to criticisms of its involvement in trafficking by a drastic reduction in the number of entertainment visas being granted, there was a substantial demonstration outside the Japanese embassy in Manila by would-be women migrants who saw one of the main avenues of being able to get into Japan and its labor market being cut off (Dizon, 2006).

But it is in the countries of Europe and North America that one finds the most diversified sex industries, with less trafficking and exploitation, and with well-established niches ranging from commercial sex to various forms of dancing or performance in erotic stage shows and films. Interviews with the participants suggest that even though stories of hardship and exploitation abound, the picture is much more nuanced and varied than the stereotypes of trafficking and exploitation would suggest, as in the papers in the volume edited by Kempadoo and Doezema (1998). Some women like Ryan and Hall's (2001, p. 92) informant Claudia, who ran out of money in

New Zealand and took up sex work as the only option, are undoubtedly marginalized, but others like the stripper Jasmine are much more positive (*ibid.*, p. 94). Indeed, she reported that her self esteem had increased as a result of her work – although she was unwilling to tell her religious-minded parents. Sex work is often just a phase in the lifecycle, often a response to poverty, after which the workers move on. As Kempadoo says:

sex work is commonly just one of the multiple activities employed for generating income, and very few stay in prostitution for their entire adulthood. In most cases, sex work is not for individual wealth but for family well being or survival; for working class women to clothe, feed and educate their children; and for young women and men to sustain themselves when the family income is inadequate. (Kempadoo, 1998, p. 4)

This is similar to the comments of one of Ryan and Hall's informants:

We would be doing sex workers a disservice to categorically state that all or even most sex workers are mad keen vocational hookers. My experience is that most of us are seasonal or situational workers. We work to pay off the car, send the kids to private school, get through university, etc. Some of us will go on to be career prostitutes, but most of us will step out of the industry with no long lasting emotional scars from our experiences. (Ryan & Hall, 2001, p. 99)

Sex and Tourism (Zone 6)

This zone represents the intersection of sex and tourism, without the implication of work. It is the realm of holiday romance, but also of other forms of sexual encounter between the tourists themselves. This may be without the intervention of the local people, but local entrepreneurs have in some cases set up clubs and other establishments where sexual encounters can take place. This is one of the major areas of the intersection of tourism and sex, which is not discussed in Ryan and Hall, or in other studies which have concentrated primarily on selling sex in developing countries rather than selling encounter space.

The social movements of the 1960s resulted in a questioning of authority of all types, and a new willingness for open expressions of sexuality. By the 1970s, a new phenomenon could be observed: swinging, in which singles and couples met together, exchanged partners, or indulged in group sex. Swinging arrived (Palson & Palson, 1972). The threat of the traditional sexually transmitted diseases of syphilis and gonorrhoea was reduced by the introduction of new drugs, and the threat of pregnancy was reduced by the take-up of contraceptive pills and vasectomy procedures.

Even the onset of AIDS failed to stop the development, as the swingers simply took to condoms and carried on to the present. In Europe and North America, swingers' clubs and saunas have sprouted in most major cities, some of them dating back to the 1970s. Jenks' (1998) paper noted that the number of clubs had doubled in the previous 10 years. The facilities they offer are fairly standard: a lounge and bar where people can meet and chat, a locker room, showers, saunas and steam rooms, pools of various dimensions, and themed play areas, suitably equipped with beds, mirrors, pornographic films, swings, and sometimes other more exotic sadomasochist paraphernalia. Establishments catering to gay men tend to describe themselves as saunas or spas, but to judge from the Web sites and reviews, the facilities on offer would appear to be much the same.

Nudity became increasingly popular on beaches, and many resorts soon had either official or unofficial areas where nudity was tolerated. A number of resorts and entrepreneurs in different parts of the world realized the potential of this new market for clothing-optional and/or adult tourism. Purpose-built naturist resorts started to appear in Europe, North America, and the Caribbean, of which the most famous in Europe is perhaps the "naturist quarter" at Cap d'Agde in the southwest of France (Frey, Malepeyre, & Renault, 2001). This has four large apartment complexes, a full range of commercial establishments, and an enormous beach where nudity is obligatory when the weather is fine in the summer. It is also well equipped with swingers' nightclubs offering discos and dance floors, restaurants, pools, and play areas (Venton, 2003). Similar resorts include the Hedonism resorts in Jamaica (Santilli, 2006). These appear to be tourist enclaves rather than sites in which tourists and local people come into contact, as they did with the "rent-a-rasta" syndrome.

To return to Fig. 1, these kinds of activities represent the intersection between sex and tourism. However, these kinds of encounters are no longer confined to the major tourist destinations, even though resorts such as Cap d'Agde or Blackpool in the UK may have a concentration of these kinds of establishments. Dating sites on the Internet mean that these kinds of activities have spread throughout the country. In the UK, open-air sexual encounters off the beaten track, known as "dogging," have also become extremely popular. There are a number of UK Internet sites that provide information on when and where the action is likely to take place, including *Swinging Heaven* mentioned above. Dogging is not without its risks, however – in addition to an upturn in the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, the police can also read the Internet, and sometimes turn up to disturb the party.

What is culturally interesting about these practices is that they represent the ultimate delinking of sex from marriage and reproduction. While most of the concern about sex tourism has been directed at a single form of activity, foreigners engaging in commercial sex in Southeast Asia, other forms of sex linked with travel have quietly proliferated and in some cases have become a central feature of massive tourist industries such as those in southern France or Jamaica. They pass with little notice because they mainly appeal to the rich, they generally do not involve the exploitation of the poor or the weak, married couples often join in together, and the sex that takes place is generally safe. Even academic researchers virtually ignored them for some 20 years (Jenks, 1998), although they have attracted more attention recently from both academic and popular writers (Bellemeade, 2003; Bergstrand & Blevins, 2000; Gould, 2000; Thomas, 1997). Finally, the rise of the Internet and the dating sites have allowed these activities to become part of mainstream social life, partly delinking them from tourism as well.

Sex, Work, and Tourism (Zone 7)

This is the zone in which all three types of activity come together. As a starting point, I return to the observation by O'Connell Davidson (2000, p. 60) that sex work often involves both a formally organized and an informal sector, and there is evidence from a number of countries that it is indeed the informal market that caters for many of the foreign tourists.

A good example of this is Brennan's studies of sex workers in the Dominican Republic who cater for foreign (mainly German) male visitors (2004a, 2004b). She argues that "women who work with foreign clients have a greater degree of control over their working conditions than women who work with Dominican clients in Sosua." There are thus two types of women in Sosua: those that play on a local stage "in Dominican bars in the backstreets of Los Charamicos, far from tourist establishments, as well as in Dominican towns where local women sell to local men," and those who play on a global stage, which differs from the local stage in "the absence of pimps and the opportunities that accompany meeting foreign men." In other words, women work on their own terms and conditions, not on those imposed upon them (Brennan, 2004b, p. 154).

Askew's (1997, 1999, 2002) studies of sex workers in Bangkok suggests similar conclusions. He similarly argues that women have a degree of agency in some sectors of the sex work trade: "Bangkok's red-light districts . . . are

as much made, sustained and manipulated by women sex workers themselves as by the infrastructure and foreign clientele of commercialised sex services” (2002, p. 251). Like Brennan, he documents a high rate of long-term relationships arising out of sex worker–client relationships: of his sample of 50 workers, 10 married foreigners during the five years of his research (1994–1998), and another 10 were living with their foreign boyfriends (2002, p. 281). In other words, in the world of sex workers looking for long-term relationships as a way out of poverty, “[w]hen commercialised sexual encounters between customers and bar women become personalised and ongoing, the understanding of exchange itself becomes more generalised, and not tied to payment for specific sex acts” (*ibid.*, p. 279). In terms of our diagram, both sex workers and clients in this realm of diffuse, would-be long-term relationships often play down the commercial aspects of the relationship. In terms of the diagram, they try to shift it from zone 7 (the intersection of sex, tourism, and work) to zone 6 (the intersection of sex and tourism, or the realm of holiday romance).

Of course, like O’Connell Davidson’s “situational prostitute users,” they might at times be deluded that their relationship is noncommercial (2000, pp. 65–66), but clearly many long-term and emotionally more satisfying relationships do grow out of these situations (Cohen, 1986, 2003), as also do partnerships of foreign women with local men (Yamashita, 2003, Chapter 7). Given that many of Askew’s sample entered sex work because of disillusionment with previous relationships (80% were married, and 80% had children), he describes prostitution as a “project in the recovery of self” (2002, p. 256), and to judge from his account, a large number of the women involved in the industry to some extent succeed. Even the children in the trade described by Montgomery, in one of the most generally horrifying accounts of Thai prostitution, attempt to do something similar, in conceptualizing their relations with foreign tourists through the idiom of kinship and reciprocity rather than the market (2001, p. 87), and skillfully manipulating their European clients whenever possible.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though the link between sex and travel is historically long established, I have argued in this chapter that a number of trends in modern society have tended to reinforce it: demographic changes such as the breakdown of patriarchy and stable nuclear family partnerships; changes in work that have led to increasing polarization between rich and poor countries, and between

rich and poor social classes; and the falling cost of travel, which means that a substantial proportion of the citizens of rich countries travel elsewhere more often, whether for work, sex, tourism, or all three. These patterns could well be intensified in the years to come. For instance, the growing economic power of India and China means that their middle classes will increasingly take to international tourism as well, and the increasingly skewed sex ratio in both countries, due to the selective abortion of female fetuses (Croll, 2000), will mean that there will be a lot of men looking for companionship outside marriage and outside the country.

I have also argued that most discussions of sex tourism over the last 20 years have tended to concentrate on a limited range of phenomena: commercial sexual relations between foreign tourists (usually men) and local sex workers (usually women) in Southeast Asia (usually Thailand). In terms of the importance of the welfare issues this kind of tourism raises, such as the spread of HIV in the late 1980s and the early 1990s or the exploitation of vulnerable groups of women and children as sex workers, this concentration is perhaps valid, but empirically and theoretically, it has tended to ignore or underplay other relationships between sex and tourism, which are nevertheless important, socially, culturally, and economically.

I have suggested that in order to take the whole field of the relationships between sex and tourism into account, one way is to include work in the equation as well and consider the intersections of the three spheres: sex, work, and tourism. Classic sex tourism falls into the center of the space created by these circles, where all of them intersect. Nevertheless, even though sex between hosts and guests may be a straightforward commercial transaction, both hosts and guests often try to see it differently, in terms of “romance,” “love,” or the establishment of quasi-kinship obligations over time, involving exchanges of “gifts” rather than a fee. There is evidence from several countries often cited as sex tourism destinations of many longer term relationships resulting from these casual contacts within tourism, and tourism is therefore an important site in which transnational social relationships are negotiated, in addition to being an important part of the local economy, particularly in poorer countries and regions.

Perhaps the space within the circles that has been given least attention is the intersection of sex with travel, in which tourists form sexual liaisons with each other rather than with the local people. This is hardly surprising – tourists from the same country and social class can be expected to have much in common, including sexual interests and emotional feelings. But with the increasing delinking of sex from marriage and procreation that has taken place in the West over the last three decades, and particularly among

the wealthier, better educated groups who are more likely to travel, alternative forms of sexual encounter, arrangements, and lifestyles have become increasingly common. Holiday resorts and destinations in different parts of the world have gone out of their way to cash in on this market by creating the facilities in which these kinds of encounters can take place. Thus clothing-optional beaches and resorts, sex clubs, gay and mixed saunas, and the like have become an increasingly important part, not only of the tourist geography, but even of towns and cities that are not known as major tourist destinations, where they cater for the mainstream local population. Meanwhile, the Internet has facilitated these encounters to the extent that they are no longer primarily associated with travel and tourism. In other words, for many people, sex is becoming delinked not only from the family but from tourism also. It is becoming a weekend hobby in its own right, and its devotees comment on the clubs that they visit in the same matter-of-fact language that they would describe restaurants, hotels, or other more conventional tourist spaces.

The rise and transformation of local sex industries can be linked with broader patterns of economic development, as suggested originally by Ryan and Hall, but with some modifications of their model. It is true that in the context of East Asia, there are many continuities between historic sex industries in the urban centers, and the sex-related tourism that has appeared more recently. It is also true that the development of R&R facilities for the military produced in some countries such as Thailand and the Philippines the infrastructure on which later sex tourism was able to take root and flourish. But as O'Connell Davidson (2000, p. 60) has pointed out, other countries such as the Gambia, Dominica, Cuba, and Brazil have developed flourishing sex tourism industries without the benefits of these historical antecedents, so it seems that factors such as poverty, the lack of alternative occupations, and the gap between the power and wealth of the rich tourists and the local people are the crucial factors in determining where and when these kinds of industries will develop. Sometimes, the results are extremely unpleasant, as in the use of child prostitutes in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, although even here it is remarkable how resilient the sex workers can be, as shown in the case of Montgomery's children in trying to salvage a degree of dignity or economic advantage from the foreign clients. It is also probably true, as Fordham (2004, pp. 29–32) pointed out, that some of the worst abuses take place in brothels frequented by local people rather than tourists, as it is here that the victims of trafficking such as Nepali women in India (cf. Rao, 2003) or the other flows of women described by Brown (2000) end up. But because "foreigners" (usually meaning Westerners or

Japanese) are not involved in the transaction, they have not received as much attention from the media, international civil society groups, or the state.

I would argue that with continued high-speed economic development in regions such as East Asia, a more segmented market for sex work and sex tourism will eventually appear. In developing countries, and even in contemporary Japan, the roles of sex workers, erotic dancers and performers, and hostesses or escorts still often overlap. In Europe and North America, these roles are increasingly separated from each other, each type of work is becoming more organized, and the informal linkages between clients and sex workers that are common in relations between foreign tourists and the locals in Southeast Asia will become less common. But countering the professionalization of the sex industry will be the fact that successful sex workers tend to be, by definition, young. This means that, like work in sports, it can only be one part of the lifecycle. This leaves the more fortunate older workers with the options of establishing long-term relationships, moving into other jobs, or moving into managerial or brokerage roles within the sex industry, such as establishing their own clubs, bars, or agencies, or, as in the case of the pornographic film industry, moving from performing to production. The rest remained trapped. However, with all its attendant evils, the sex industry, like alcohol or drugs, is unlikely to disappear, despite the increasing ease with which many people can contact potential sexual partners for unpaid consensual sex, thanks to the Internet. There will always be a market for the slick, professional delivery of sexual services, both within and outside the tourist industry, for those in search of opportunities to act out their male identities (Kruhse-Mount Burton, 1995) and other fantasies.

These services will take one of three forms. The first is the provision of commercial sex, as discussed by most of the literature on sex tourism at present. The second is the provision of venues and spaces where tourists can interact romantically or sexually with each other. The third is the provision of erotic spectacles, as in the more liberal cities of the developed countries, where increasingly risqué sex shows have been around for a generation. All three can form the basis of local tourist industries, but these need a degree of regulation by the state, to empower the workers and prevent the grosser forms of exploitation in the sex tourism industries of the 20th century. Abolition is not an option: given the macrosocial trends outlined at the start of this chapter, these activities are likely to continue and possibly become even more popular. If they are criminalized, they will still continue, but under the patronage of organized crime. In the long run, this will lead to

much worse exploitation and other undesirable repercussions such as the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, as is clear from the experience of trying to control alcohol and drugs. If we have to live with sex tourism, the best we can hope for is the empowerment and protection of the vulnerable against the uglier kinds of exploitation that the growth of the sex tourism industry has thrown up, rather than recoiling in moral panic and rushing to bring in draconian but unenforceable legislation, in the hope that the problem will go away.

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“MADE IN CHINA” – POLITICAL AND CULTURAL VALUATION OF BRAND IMAGES, TRADE, AND COMMODITIES: ETHNOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FROM EUROPE AND ASIA

Lionel Obadia

ABSTRACT

This chapter considers the importation of brand images, a key concept in marketing studies, within anthropological approaches to culture and consumption. It does so through examining modes of cultural valuation toward “Made in China” products on the part of consumers. Following theoretical lines recently established by anthropologists in the study of culture, commodification, and consumption in global settings, and their emphasis upon culture as a label for goods, it also brings into the discussion issues in geopolitics and ethnicity, especially from the viewpoint of ethnographic evidence collected in France and Nepal. “Made in China” products are enmeshed in complex, intermingling, and conflicting imaginations of the Other, brand images, and are associated with the

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underlying social logic of consumption or avoidance of consumption, often paradoxical, but intelligible in both broad-ranging and local contexts.

Made in China, ramro chhaina.

“Made in China,” it is not good. (Nepalese proverb)

TROUBLES WITH CHINA’S INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The year 2007 will go down in history as one of the worst years ever for Chinese international trade. Each month brought its share of controversial public health threats, and the list of incriminated “Made in China” products, such as toothpaste, children’s toys, animal food, paint, and dairy products, expanded steadily through the year. The tally of toxic and defective merchandise, most now off the market, has yet grown in 2008. In the West – notably North America and Europe – to which most of these commodities were exported, the news media quickly seized the chance to underscore the “dangers” of consuming “Made in China” products, echoing a prominent cultural value in highly developed societies: “risk” (Beck, 1992). In the flood of excessive reactions against the “Chinese” threats to public health, one can easily see a proliferation of internet sites dedicated to damning these products, and laying blame on *China* itself rather than pointing the finger at particular *Chinese* business industries.¹ This totalizing stereotype clearly shows that “harmfulness” or “toxicity” of trade goods relates to their national origin, and it amalgamates trade and culture in a fuzzy representation of China.

It is worthy to note that the withdrawal of defective products from the market, occurring over a relatively short period of time, stands in relief against China’s ambivalent position in the global market. Today, the ancient “Middle Kingdom” truly is standing in the “center” of the global economy, as the producer of two-thirds of manufactured goods crossing the globe. As China has increasingly become organized around efficient industrial production, “Made in China” has also surfaced on the virtual market with promotional and retailing websites.² China has long been accused of flooding markets with low-quality products, but it has now found itself more stigmatized than before, thanks to the global media calling attention to the perils to which consumers expose themselves, as members of “somatic” societies, governed by the widespread ideological norms of “health” and “well-being” (Turner, 1996).

These developments not only reinforce prejudices about *certain* brand images tied to the global distribution of *certain* nations’ manufactured products, but also show how framed images of Chinese culture spark off an “ideological battleground” – an allusion to the expression that Wallerstein (1990) coined for culture *in general*, in the context of globalization. The defects of “Made in China” products, objects of polemics, and analysis in the Western media, have been appraised in the economic and political spheres, resulting in tighter controls, including expanded restrictions on their import. The worst case scenario in such a situation would be a total ban on the source country, but this is unrealistic within the current global economy. While countries dealing in “Made in China” commodities have attempted to lower the risks for their consumers, only smaller pressure groups have called for total bans on “Chinese” products, and some have used this as a political weapon – notably the supporters of the “Free Tibet” movement, who appeal to consumers’ “moral responsibility.”³ The case of the petition supported by Tibetan exiles, some Western sympathizers of Buddhism, and supporters of the “Tibetan cause” is, in this perspective, one piece of evidence of *local* resistance (but with minor consequences) against a *global* economy convicted of the World’s problems.

Debates on the vicissitudes of Chinese industrial production and exports in the worldwide market economy might have been confined to business and economics, commercial law, international law and political science, and, to a certain extent, sociology. But “Made in China” lies also at the very heart of the subject matter of current anthropological research on globalization, culture and trade, and new directions in the study material culture. Furthermore, the case of the Chinese brand image in globally distributed commodities raises issues in the connections between *ethnicity* and *politics*, especially with respect to observations in Himalayan societies, on the borderlands of China itself. Indeed, strong reactions to defective imported products from China have primarily resonated in Western and/or highly industrialized countries intensely interacting with world markets (Europe and North America, in particular). And, social science research on the making of commodities’ “Asian” cultural labels have paid more attention to geographically and culturally distant nations, in light of these binding, culturally constructed relationships – such as Japan and France, Japan and the United States, China and France, etc. (Goldstein-Gidoni, 2001; Julien, 2004; Mansfield, 2003). Few works, to my knowledge, have considered the same processes and their outcomes in Asian countries – so as to understand, for instance, what “Made in China” could stand for amidst cultural exchanges between Asian continental societies. This chapter accordingly

offers a variety of ethnographic evidence, based upon empirical data collected in the West (France) and in Asia as well, precisely in the centre and north of Nepal, among populations residing on the Nepal–China border.⁴ These people are both actors in, and targets of, the economic routes by which “Made in China” merchandise circulates in the South Asian continent.

GLOBALIZATION, COMMODITIES, AND CULTURE: EMERGING TRENDS

The global expansion of the capitalist system, a major force driving globalization (Wallerstein, 1979; Waters, 2001), in the early 1990s inspired a “globalist” paradigm, succeeding to “modernization” in the genealogy of the social sciences. Supporters of the “economic globalization” theory – even anthropologists (Appadurai, 2001) – depict the world as a conglomerate of companies, dominated by the worldwide extension of capitalism, but also as a mosaic of cultural regions, crossed by flows, networks, and multi-polar circuits by which travel people, ideas, economic wealth, and consumer goods (Lash & Urry, 1994; Spybey, 1996; Waters, 2001). This focus upon “flows” is supposed to have radically changed our perspective on societies, cultures, and economics, especially within the anthropological and sociological disciplines, which are shifting from the classic *territorialized* forms of social life, to the newer *fluid* and expansive forms of culture and human production (Appadurai, 1999; Bauman, 2000; Waters, 2001). “Modernity” or “globalization” is defined as historical *disjunctions* between territories and societies (Giddens, 1991), and between economies and cultural forms (Appadurai, 1999). In the context of a “global economy,” signs and objects are alleged to emancipate themselves from their meaningful cultural backgrounds (Baudrillard, 1993) or are reduced to exchange values in a (global or other) market, a cultural “degeneration” that has also been challenged (Baudrillard, 1981).

The blurring of the semantic and practical associations between territorial references and culture is allegedly driven by a general process of “commodification,” a consequence of the global economic market, and a “deterritorialization” of cultural products, whether symbolic or material (Waters, 2001). But global commodification does not entail a deficit in territorial and cultural references: their contents and relationships are simply redefined in the modification processes of political, cultural, and

economical landscapes in global settings, as Sinclair (2008) has accurately demonstrated. If the classic themes of economic anthropology were mainly founded on *social* approaches to the flow of material or symbolic exchanges within and between ethnic groups and/or “primitive” societies (so as to explore the *social* theories of exchange, values, or gifts), the recent focus on a global perspective and on “modern” societies has allowed the resurgence and relocation of *culture* in the heart of theoretical discussions (Tomlinson, 1999) – it has never actually been expunged from economic or political perspectives on the global expansion of capitalism and the rise of transnational markets. In the “economic-globalist” paradigm, “culture” surfaces under many forms.

First, consistent with the classic approaches of anthropology, it represents assemblages or “systems” of value and practices, affected by the “impacts” of the modern capitalist economy, in particular in the “traditional” contexts: *cultures* are designated as the target of the development of a market economy (Warnier, 1999). The locally observed influences of new forms of globalized trade indeed affect and alter the values and symbols underlying traditional trading systems and economies (in Kenya, see Dolan, 2007), even if such systems also demonstrate a capacity for resistance and reinvention (in China, see Yang, 2000). The second perspective, equally sociological and anthropological, considers the rapid development of global tourism (Waters, 2001). Local cultures are *alienated by* the market and transformed into commodified objects (Nash, 2000; Shepherd, 2002). They are not only *affected by* the market but also *absorbed* into it. The third viewpoint, notably championed by cultural studies, is that of the rise and expansion of a *consumer culture*, that is, ideological and social transformations impelled by new forms of consumption (Gottdiener, 2000). Contrary to the previous stance, the theory of consumer culture underscores the *absorption* and the *domestication* of the market economy *by* society and culture, and provides interesting views on the economies of culture in global settings – or “global cultural economy” (Appadurai, 1999). A final standpoint on culture epitomizes, yet again, the continuity of classic anthropological approaches, while demonstrating that cultures remain, even in global conditions, *local* ideological and practical frames by which commodified and globalized products are adopted, reinterpreted, and adapted: the globalization of denim is an archetypal model of a widely distributed but locally acculturated commodity, or in a more fashionable term, “glocalized” (Miller & Woodward, 2007). A final perspective which has informed this chapter reintroduces the role of culture in the core of economic globalization, and highlights the cultural “careers” of

commodified objects. Contemporary research is indeed reexamining the meaning and function of cultural categories, such as spatial and territorial ones – national, as “Americanization,” and regional as “Californization,” (Spybey, 1996) – that the global economy reintroduced under the theoretical tag of “brand images.” Following this work-in-progress thematic field, this chapter explores the *ethnography of brand images* in commodity exchanges.

Anthropologists, in sharp contrast to marketing researchers, have paid little attention to the brand images of commodities. Researchers in international marketing maintain that brand images of places (and even nations) in resembling other marketable “goods” (especially in tourism), hinge on the “knowledge” potential consumers “have” in mind, influencing their decision processes regarding consumption. For Woodward (2000), *knowledge* is a neutral and heuristic term for the description and the theorization of these spatial entities: rather than being a *concept*, it is defined as a complex of “nodes of associative representations” contained in “memory” (pp. 121–122). Marketing studies hence offer interesting insights into the development of the study of *place brands* as powerful representations, but with the aim of rendering these more efficient – “place marketing.” These tactics are encroaching on the “push and pull” strategies of the business industry (*ibid.*).

Brand places are, still, not only mental images but also social constructs: they are collective and distinctive representations, and potential tools of cultural differentiation. Rompf (1999, p. 254) states, “Brand is defined as any name, term, sign, symbol, or any combination of them, and its primary role is to identify a product or service and differentiate it from competitors.” But the study of this “differentiation” process has been limited to the cultural fashioning of commodifiable objects in the context of market competition, and needs therefore to be extended to other facets of the life of worldwide economic systems, that is, the dynamics of ethnicity among trading groups, political issues and conflicts, societies’ internal negotiations within civilizational encounters, and other obliquely observable phenomena associated with global capitalism. Furthermore, the restriction of “brand” to a concept – and the characterization of its distinctive features – aiming at market strategies, does not entirely elucidate the complex relationships between commodities and culture, and above all of the singularity of objects expressly labeled “cultural,” in the context of their commodification. On the other hand, anthropological approaches to culture and economy, concentrating on objects with the purpose of elucidating their cultural identifications, have recently created much fertile theoretical ground in *globalization studies*.

To assert that objects are associated with meaning and values, and that they “express” something beyond the realm of materiality, is a commonplace in social sciences and anthropology. The assumption that collective meanings are fluctuant, in that they are associated with symbolic systems, culturally differentiated, assuming historical and societal variations, shaping social behaviors, is also a basic premise – predominantly acknowledged by cultural anthropologists such as Geertz (1973) and his followers. But while embarked in the dynamics of use (De Certeau, 1984) and especially exchange, objects turn into “commodities” (Baudrillard, 1996) encoded in the semiotics of a “consumer culture” (Baudrillard, 1998) or into mirror images of cultural and social dynamics underlying or sustaining commodities’ exchanges (Douglas & Isherwood, 1996; McCracken, 1988). Subsequently anthropology has only recently shown interest in collective figurations carried by brand images, and to ideological projections to which they are subjected: not the anthropological subject matter per se but the theater of social processes and cultural dynamics.

“ASIA” AND “CHINA’S” BRAND IMAGES: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON COMMODITIES

“Asian” case studies (among societies actually in Asia or elsewhere) have played a significant role in the capture, by anthropology, of “cultural” labels connected with economic activities. But anthropology has also introduced broader issues, such as political symbolism and cultural imagination, (ideologically) shaping merchandise fluxes – especially in the case of Asian markets and societies. Waters (2001) writes that a difference exists between the globalization of material and of symbolic culture – the former spreads out locally, whereas the latter expands globally. The global dissemination of a symbolic “product” of Asian societies – Buddhism (Obadia, 2004) – should corroborate such views. The rapid conquest of worldwide economic markets by Chinese commodities encapsulates, on the other hand, an unequivocal counterexample to these “meta-theories” admired by globalization studies, but anthropologists are cautious, favoring a *local emphasis* before making extensive generalizations (Miller & Woodward, 2007). Mathews (2000) has, for example, drawn attention to the complex interplay between cultural labels in the flow of signs and objects in the global cultural marketplace. “What’s in the world is Japanese?” he asks, while observing on

the one hand the worldwide dissemination of Japanese foods, and on the other hand Japanese youth reinventing their generational identity in line with “Western” musical and clothing styles. Although Mathews’ analysis places stress on the *cultural* (or *cultures*) *marketplace*, other studies have investigated the place and role of culture and cultures *in* the marketplace. Mansfield’s (2003) study of the relocation of Surimi seafood production, from Japan to the United States, has illustrated these processes of geographic “deterritorialization,” and the rearrangement of products in new cultural settings: while “marketed” for the West and “Americanized” for a local market, she suggests, the “cultural biography” of the “Japanese” Surimi seafood has changed: a disembodiment that epitomizes, in her view, the cultural entanglement of commodities in flux. Mansfield yet explicitly emphasizes the use of “cultural” labels in the production and the promotion of displaced “Japanese” seafood, and therefore, pays little attention to the processes of construction of cultural images and “brands” themselves and, subsequently, to their effect on consumption.

One of the major issues concerning China’s “trademark” is the persistent general impression of cheap and plagiarized industrial products. “Made in China” means, in this case, low-quality and quickly made items, and it carries the stigma of a “culture of piracy” (Montgomery & Fitzgerald, 2006). Since China’s succession to the WTO in 2001, its political and industrial leaders have faced the challenge of aligning their industries with international standards of copyright and intellectual property (*ibid.*). International legislation fails to soften the parallel reality of a market still dominated by industrially fabricated products at reduced costs and often reproducing existing brands without legal permission. Surprisingly, “Chinese” products and brands are also copied in the West. In her study of Chinese lacquered furniture-making in France (“Chinese” but “Made in France”) by French artisans, Julien (2004) demonstrated that the brand image of “Asian” furniture (a “neotradition”), was subject to contradictory processes: on the one side, cultural “unbinding” by artisans and suppliers, on account of the transmission of technical abilities and materials to other national contexts, and on the other, a rationalization of their “authenticity” by consumers backed up by reference to the “Asian” origin of the furniture. While her study focuses upon the appropriation of “Chinese” products in France (far from China), her analysis moves from the classical anthropological issue of genealogical “accuracy” of cultural products, to more recent views on the dynamics of image production and strategic reinvention of cultural references to commodities. In this perspective, the works of Goldstein-Gidoni (2001) on overseas Japanese seafood offer the most

innovative insights on how these ordinary material objects support national or cultural images in the context of commodification and advertising: they produce oppositional identity references, and reify a *Japaneseness* (of food or clothing) – a symbolic marker of an inclusive identity fashioned to mirror another reified one (such as, “Frenchness” or “Americanness”). *Japaneseness* is not a synonymous of “Made in Japan,” since many “Japanese” products are both produced and distributed outside Japan, and adapted to consumers’ tastes in non-Asian countries (see also Goldstein-Gidoni, 2005). The cultural brand images of “Asian” commodities, therefore, emerge as ambivalent semiotic categories, equally but paradoxically *territorialized* (pertaining to the national or local assigned origin of commodities) and *detrterritorialized* (with respect to the relocation and acculturation of the same commodities). But she essentially explores issues in cultural hybridity of food and material products in globalization processes, and prospects empirical fields devoid of political violence – at least in recent years. If the theoretical fields opened by these scholars are fascinating, other Asian cases, such as those of Tibetans, require an extension of these reflections, and the restitution of political conditions transcending, embracing, and also shaping the context of economic exchanges. In due course, and anthropologically speaking, “Made in China” is accordingly not only a matter of material culture, nor a mere trademark of exchangeable goods: it is above all a culturally determined figuration of the Otherness and the Self, a discriminating ethnic or national marker, and a significant arena for political issues.

A CHINESE CARPET FOR A TIBETAN MONK IN FRANCE: POLITICS AND MATERIAL CULTURE

The uprisings surrounding the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing have revealed the capacity of mass mobilization of Tibetans in diaspora and of supporters of their cause, in defense of human rights in the autonomous region of Tibet and of Tibetan sovereignty over this territory. In several Western metropolises, and especially in Europe, the anti-Chinese demonstrations during the running of the Olympic flame were widely covered by the media – most notably the protests in Paris, where the procession of athletes ended in struggling with opponents to the Chinese regime. Consequently, the authorities had to abbreviate the ritual of displaying this symbol of the universal friendship between nations.

This local antagonism, between Chinese and Tibetans, is one contemporary political cause that has become an international problem. Supported by transnational networks, this dispute ties into a *political* globalization which crosses and interferes with other globalizations – cultural, religious, and economic. While China spreads its industrial production, its economic networks, and its financial power around the globe (especially westward), Tibet has globalized its religious institutions in the same areas, that is, in Western industrial countries. Chinese goods gain ground when and where Tibetan goods also “boom” (to borrow Baumann’s term, 1997). In one way or another, they were compelled to meet, and they often do in an unexpected arena – the religious sphere.

The cultural labeling of objects, and the political issues in which they are enfolded, indeed appear prominent in French Buddhist temples. My own presence in Tibetan-oriented temples (*gompas*) for ethnographic fieldwork in the 1990s clarified for me the importance of this dimension of Buddhist religious life. Two observations are relevant here. First, Tibetan temples (for a Western audience) were not only sites of religious practice: they were also spaces where material culture flowed, and contributed to the transplantation and the resettlement of institutional forms of Tibetan worship in exile (Obadia, 2001). Buddhist temples are vital ingredients of globalization of Buddhism, and they even epitomize, if obliquely, the role of economic globalization on this form of religious globalization (Obadia, 2004). The *gompas* are fulfilled with religious ornaments including paintings, statues, altars, furniture such as seats for monks, cushions for lay devotees, and liturgical objects such as sacred bells, trumpets, drums, bowls, and other material artifacts recreating to a certain extent, and under the conditions of new social and cultural settings, the material and architectural environments of Buddhist temples in the Tibetan area (see Obadia, 2008). Tibetan Monks and priests used to travel in between Asian and Western temples, repatriating religious items from Asian countries (India, Nepal, or Tibet). These objects were not only for decorating the temples – they also circulated within the Buddhist communities in series of ways, in particular in an institutionalized form of *gift*. The Buddhist system of the gift, or *dana*, is a complex symbolic and material institution of exchange, by which the monks, supposed to be freed from economic (i.e., “productive”) obligations, offer *practical and symbolic* religious services and transfer “merits” to the lay followers. The latter offer in return *material and secular* goods and money, and also assist the monks in the organization of the community. *Dana* is a cultural and social institution, similar to the classical Maussian meaning of the gift, but in the case of Tibetan Buddhism, it is also a

yardstick of the devotees’ loyalty to the community, or *sangha* (one of the three pillars – *triratna* in Sanskrit – of Buddhism) and of the reverence to their monks and masters’ charisma.

The second observation is that the physical and cultural origin of the objects used for decoration, liturgy, furniture, or gift in the *gompas*, was of the utmost importance to the supporters, who cherish Tibetan-style items *from Tibet* (even small pieces of ordinary textile) far more than they cherish the more abundant artifacts from Nepal (even stunning statues). “Made in Tibet” branded objects have a symbolic value above others, a value that largely appeals to the Western Orientalist imagination – they are the remnants of a “magic” Tibet. Tibetan masters, as well as their followers and sympathizers, have been instrumental in maintaining a worldwide “mystic” image of Tibet that was invented by Western Orientalism as early as the nineteenth century, and which remains a powerful source of a *territorialized* Western fantasy projected upon Asian countries, especially Tibet (Bishop, 1989, 1993; Korom, 1997; Lopez, 1998). Additionally, this image is appropriated in return by the Tibetans of Asia, reinventing themselves in a mimetic process (Korom, 1997), and in the West as well, especially among monks, who have been instrumental in recycling Orientalist figurations in their religion for promotion (Obadia, 1999). The progress of Tibetan Buddhism in the West – France and elsewhere – is related to these “branding Tibet” strategies. While the Tibetan Buddhist masters have explicitly opted for a strategy of extraterritorial expansion with the explicit aim to “preserve their civilization” (Lavine, 1998), their attempts to exemplify a model of “Tibetanness” outside their homeland rely both on idealized images for the West and on a message of peace and conciliation for China (as also for the Dalai Lama, especially since receiving a Nobel Peace Prize in 1989). On the other hand, resistance strategies against China are different for Tibetan monks in the West (peaceful and non-violent, although “socially engaged”) and for the lay Tibetan diasporas in India and Nepal (which are much more vividly nationalist and hostile to China – see Frechette, 2004). The unofficial but effective boycott of “Made in China” products in Tibetan temples in the West is one resistance strategy adopted by the religious Tibetan personnel in exile. In his study of the networks of religious commodities in the North American Buddhist milieu, Padgett (2000, p. 67) indeed noticed that Tibetan-oriented groups avoid unequivocally the purchasing of “Made in China” meditation cushions for “ethical” reasons. This is the evidence that national “labels” crystallize the ethnic tensions between “branded” groups, and that consumption can serve as an instrument of passive and discrete resistance, observed in a local context. The situation is, however, not always

so clearly governed by such principles, as the following example from my own fieldwork illustrates.

In a Tibetan-oriented Buddhist community in the late 1990s, worshipers were anticipating a visit by a “precious” leader (*rinpoche*) of the religious lineage of the temple (the *Drukpa Kagyu*), his Holiness the Gyalwang Drukpa Kagyu. The *rinpoche* generally devoted a lot of time in traveling between his monastery in Ladakh and the many temples his followers had founded worldwide. For this particular visit, a series of teachings, religious initiations, and other rituals were planned, and this French community (*sangha*) was busy preparing for religious sessions to be led by the *rinpoche*. There was much to do, considering the nature and volume of items to be used in this occasion, in particular for welcoming and accommodating the *rinpoche*, in addition to many French disciples who were expected. In order to honor the presence of a master of such authority, the most eminent members of the community decided to demonstrate their respect and fidelity with a gift. After considering what a *rinpoche* of such authority might accept – that did not conflict with the norms of monastery life or religious codes regarding material goods and their possession – the members of the community decided to acquire a rug. This gift was intended to decorate the Tibetan temple but also to fulfill liturgical needs. During services, the disciples would bow before an altar and before a throne upon which the *rinpoche* would sit: the rug was to be placed before these. Some days before the arrival of this eminent figure, one disciple was to return to the temple with a beautiful, ornamented carpet with “Asian style” symbols (i.e., lotus flowers and a dragon). She did this, and all seemed well until other members of the community noticed that the carpet was...“Made in China”! A dispute then erupted between community members, with some accusing the purchaser as being impolite and lacking respect for the religious leader. In the end, however, the *rinpoche* quietened the community by explaining that he cared little about the origins of the rug, as “it was not responsible for the situation in Tibet.”

TIBETAN CARPETS FOR ASIAN MARKETS

Ironically, the “carpet controversy,” while localized in the West – far from the “real life” of Tibetans in Asia – echoes another “carpet issue,” the economic production of Tibetan refugees, since the invasion and annexation of their homeland by the Chinese armed forces in 1951. Tibetans indeed fled by the thousands after 1959, following the Fourteenth Dalai Lama’s exile in

India, and have since been scattered among camps in China's borderland countries, mainly Nepal and India. Since settling in Nepal, the Tibetans – mostly monks (a non-productive elite social class) but also peasants and merchants – have had to invent new modes of economic production. Due to lack of sufficient land rights for proper cultivation in their host countries, and constrained by their refugee status, the Tibetans have chosen carpet production, and this industry has become their primary source of subsistence and reorganized their socioeconomic situation (Jha, 1992). It has even become essential in their connections with international circuits of humanitarian aid and economic support for their extraterritorial resettlement (Frechette, 2004). Unfortunately, however, the Tibeto-Nepalese handmade carpet industry has not exactly flourished, due to competition with their close rivals, India and China, in regional markets (Lal, 2001; Sharma, 2002, p. 245; Vaidya, 2002). Carpets and garments, among handicrafts in general, are major components of Nepal's export economy, comprising 80% of foreign exchanges, but they have failed to compete with similar products in the continental markets. Incongruously, the rate of export in garments, handicrafts, and carpets began to drop dramatically when Nepal finally gained access to the world economy by joining the WTO – after all, this brought it into direct competition with its immediate neighbors, notably China (Pant, 2003, p. 113).

The quick development of a tourism industry (see Karan & Ishii, 1996) offered new opportunities. One perceptible effect of global tourism on the Tibeto-Nepalese carpets has been an aesthetic homogenization. If O'Neill's (1999) account of the standardization processes of Tibeto-Nepalese carpets designed for Western markets is accurate, during my own empirical research in Tibetan refugee camps of northern Nepal (in a village called Chialsa, in 2003), only some elderly Tibetans were persisting in the production of these "traditional" rugs. The youngest refugees, the most active and ambitious, preferred to embark on monastic life, or sought more "Western" careers through graduate studies, or opted for economic expatriation. The commodification of carpets has not yet become a battleground for the labels "Made in Tibet" and "Made in China," for Tibetans' religious services or spiritual production are better exported than their secular material production. The choice was judicious: given the appeal of their spiritual traditions, and global sympathy for their "cause," Tibetans in exile managed to transform once more their modes of subsistence, and plugged in international assistance and support networks, which are a more proficient source of wealth than making carpets (Frechette, 2004).

CHINESE “DEFECTIVE” ARTIFACTS FOR NEPALESE: ECONOMIC HISTORY, CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS, AND TRADE ROUTES

In the complex interlacing of economic exchanges and mirroring cultural figurations, the products identified as “Made in China” are drawn against identity resistance, from China’s political opponents, the Tibetans, and also from its economic opponents, the Nepalese. In Nepal, the local peoples’ attitudes to “Chinese” products are somewhat ambivalent. Certain South Asian researchers aspire to a restoration of “cultural harmony” in the wake of difficult commercial relations between the different groups living in the Himalayan economic routes. Vasan (2006, p. 54) evokes sentimental values over economic ones, but also expresses enthusiasm for opening new markets between neighbors, supposedly harboring “nostalgia about traditional trades and sociocultural links with communities across the border” (p. 53). “There appear no specific reason for not encouraging such trade since it encourages mutual friendships and trust along the border,” according to Vasan (p. 52).

Trade has clearly had a big impact on the people of the Himalayas (Fürer-Haimendorf, 1978, p. 339) – a major factor in intercultural encounters, exchanges, and cooperation (Vasan, 2006). The trade routes for silk, salt, and wool have long constituted an interdependent economic network between Nepal, Tibet, and China, supported and developed by the colonial presence of British authorities in the south Indian continent since the nineteenth century. The Himalayan region has for centuries been crossed by a complex network of trade routes between India (Himachal Pradesh) and China (the Tibetan area), with Nepal as the core. The dream of achieving reconciliation through the market, where diplomacy has failed, remains rather utopian – even though the convention of exchanges between India, China, and Nepal tends to reduce political antagonisms they have inherited from their national histories. Recent bilateral conventions and treaties, in particular between Nepal and China, represented the results of long negotiation process between them. Between 1956 and 2008, agreements have regularly associated trade with mutual “friendship” or interstate “fairness.”

The invasion of Tibet in 1951, and annexation in 1959, profoundly transformed the economies of the Himalayan region. People notably affected by these events were the *bothias*, an ascribed ethnic category including a mixture of groups of Tibetan origin, sharing the Tibetan language and culture in Nepal (Gellner, Pfaff-Czarnecka, & Whelpton, 1997). The annexation of Tibet, and 1960s tensions between China and

India, led to a disruption of historical trade routes (Vasan, 2006, p. 42). The closing of the northern (Chinese) frontier of Nepal, and the consecutive significant reduction of exchanges with Tibet, compelled Nepal to shift its international economic exchanges southward, toward India. This has made Nepal economically dependent on India, its political rival since the mid-nineteenth century.

The relationships between geopolitical conflictuality and economic trade (the latter supposing a minimum of intersocietal cooperation) are not systematically synonymous to a decrease in trade flows. Actually, however, latent hostility between two countries can even have a positive effect on trade (Kastner, 2007). In such a perspective, Nepal is torn between fluctuating economic and political relationships with its two neighbors. Maintaining throughout its history an ambivalent relationship with both, China and India, Nepal historically alternated its economic routes between them, depending upon changing political relations. Nepal's sole dependence on India is a very recent development. “Civilizational” discords are therefore not systematically accompanied by economic ruptures, as the Himalayan case illustrates. The historical tensions between the societies and nations of the Himalayas never truly were obstacles to effective mercantile trade routes and economic exchanges between these three countries.

The *bothias* of Nepal and the Nepalese, like the Tibetans of Himachal Pradesh, India, nevertheless *select* commodities in reference to their country of origin. Vasan (2006, p. 50) explains that these preferences are accountable to two factors, the logic of the market and the proximities of the cultures. Manufactured products and packaged goods from India will be of better quality and availability, so therefore products imported from China are primarily raw materials and silk. In the Tibetan and *bothias* communities located in rural north Nepal, Chinese products are used daily – even in *religious* contexts. One of the most widespread is the thermos flask, made of colored metal, found in great numbers in many houses and Buddhist temples – Nepalese and *bothias* being particularly fond of sugary and salty drinks, which they consume regularly. In rituals of Tibetan Buddhists in Nepal, “Made in China” soups or teas are regularly served in “Made in China” thermoses. The obvious paradox is the Tibetans' tacit acceptance and use of food and items manufactured by the country that is responsible for their exile, similar to the Nepalese, who are constantly reminded of their neighbors' prevalence in and influence over their domestic economy. This paradoxical acquiescence can be explained in accordance with two parameters: local or regional cultural conditions, and global conditions surrounding the transformation of Nepal's national economy. Contrasting

with the ancient commercial routes, that were more geographically balanced, modern market circuits currently favor the flow of merchandise from north (China) to south (India) crossing Nepal, which lacks a competitive industry (Vasan, 2006, p. 54). Furthermore, China's productive power places it in a position of regional, as well as global, leadership on the economical level.

Contrary to other developing nations, China has indeed quickly adopted a market strategy implemented by politics of "self-reliance" over its national economic development. For observers of China's economic development, the country has "profited more from globalization than any other country" with an average growth of 4.5% a year (Jilberto & Hogenboom, 2007, p. 306). Since 1978, China has favored an "open-door" economic policy, allowing for the rapid extension of trade networks and strategies of investment, resulting in the Chinese government's openly embarking in a development race with the other giant of Asia, India (Park, 2002). China's economic advantage is based upon massive informal trade networks that dominate exchange relations between India, China, and Nepal (Taneja, Sarvananthan, Karmacharya, & Pohit, 2004). But although China has been successful in integrating global economic networks, Nepal's attempts to "modernize" its economy have not been very effective (Sharma, 2005, p. 243), as 42% of Nepalese people still live below the standard international poverty line (Baral, Baral, & Morgan, 2004, p. 187).

Nepal's response to economic globalization has been the liberalization of its economy – the privatization of large portions of domestic production – since the mid-1980s, a choice that precipitated the disorganization of its national economy. In the regional and global economic race, China and Nepal exemplify two extreme cases: notable success and virtual failure. In addition to this competitive foreground, Nepal's economic relations are also tributary to the geopolitical tensions between China and India. To a lesser degree of conflict, the position of Nepal itself is considered to be "a strategic location in the Himalayas" (Upreti, 2003, p. 258) located between two great nations with flourishing economies: Nepal hence maintains ambivalent relationships with both of them, in view of the fact that Nepalese nationalism is equally *anti-Chinese* and *anti-Indian*. Not only its economy is one of the poorest in the region, highly dependent on direct import from its neighbors, but unfortunately it has not succeeded in gaining a competitive position in the global markets (Sharma, 2002), despite the country's existing resources and infrastructures (Bista, 1994; Lal, 2001). Yet, at the continental and global levels, China obviously has "won the race" on merchandise trade and export, but "cheap" Chinese imports to neighboring

countries has been hurting domestic manufacturing companies of Nepal and India (Jilberto & Hogenboom, 2007, p. 306). Adding to these paradoxes, China occupies such a dominant position in industrial production that even some “Free Tibet” flags flying in anti-Chinese demonstrations – often calling for a boycott of Chinese products – have been “Made in China” (BBC, 2008). This gets at the heart of the matter of the regular consumption of Chinese products by many Nepalese; despite lack of confidence in their quality, they have little choice in what they can obtain, thanks to their historical and economic circumstances.

MADE IN CHINA?... RAMRO CHHAINA! IRONY IN CULTURAL VALUATION

Given that the distinction between “tourist” and “ethnographer” is not very clear in the eyes of the Nepalese (after all, are both not amateurs in different cultures?; Obadia, 2003), the foreign (Nepalese: *Videshi*) scholar interested in the traditions of one of the many ethnic groups of Nepal is inevitably confronted with its material culture – a common anthropological experience. But in the case of Nepal, he is also solicited, as a *Sabh* (a Western “patron” similar to others), to consume the local cultural artifacts. During my time in Nepal, I have lived in the capital, Kathmandu. After returning from mountain villages, my Tibetan informants took particular care to ask about my harvest of objects, they were convinced that I was an assiduous collector, “as all the other *sabh* who came before” – they said. But this was said not merely out of misunderstanding, but also because the protocols of hospitality and the norms of etiquette in Nepal involve complex modes of giving, receiving, and exchanging gifts. This is even more so for the Tibetans, among whom religious artifacts, silk scarves, amulets, protective fetishes, etc., permanently circulate. I was continually directed to shops where I could find the “most beautiful,” the “best,” or the “most authentic” Buddhist objects, such as *malas* (prayer strings made of 108 beads), *thangka* or sacred paintings, statues, chanting bowls, amulets, and other religious objects, but also more secular ones, like teapots, necklaces, bags, and musical instruments. Nobody seemed to agree with anyone else about the shops where I would be able to find the “best” objects they persevered to make me buy. The differences in opinions regarding shops and the quality of products they offer would suggest that, even for the Tibetans, there exists no unitary and collective representation of what a “good” product is, but any

object's origin was, on the other hand, always a clue for determining its value:

Old Tibetan: You should buy these [Buddhist] items in the shop I told you about. My wife will show you.

Ethnographer: Are they good?

Old Tibetan: Good? Yes, very good. High quality. You should see.

Ethnographer: OK. I'll try. Where do they come from? Are they made in Tibet?

Old Tibetan: In Tibet? [smiling] "No, no. Just made in Nepal. *But* good quality...

A more informal circulation and distribution of merchandise can equally be observed in mountain villages of the north of Nepal, on the Chinese borderland. But the cultural valuation of artifacts here resembles more clearly the territorial and cultural curriculum of commodified things. In the Tibetan camp of Chialsa, I ignored the carpets the refugee retailers expected me to buy, to more closely examine religious artifacts, such as amulets and *malas* instead, some of which I did buy. Again, the bargaining dialogue, apparently trivial, uncovered the issue of the cultural and territorialized origins of the articles:

Seller: I have real ones, real good ones.

Ethnographer: They look old and they're bad.

Seller: They have been used by great masters. *They come from* Tibet.

Ethnographer: I found better ones in Kathmandu.

Seller: Maybe. But these are *rare* and you'll never again find such items.

I was otherwise astonished to notice how often "Made in China" products were discernible in the ordinary cultural and religious lives of the *bothias*, and notably the Sherpas and the national Tibetans (refugees), who are demographically dominant in this region. The majority of responses to my questions were of the same humoristic formula, so regularly verbalized that it turned out to be a kind of slogan: "Made in China, ramro chhaina!" The sentence consists of an assemblage of two homophonous terms, *China*, the country, and *chhaina*, the negative turn of phrase in Nepalese. Based on the acoustic repetition of the two homophonic words, the pun could be literally translated as: "What is made in China is not good." The irony of this sentence highlights and renders the paradox of a dependent Nepalese economy, and the peoples' defiance against it – it underlines their

resignation to consume “Made in China” products but hints at their derision as a form of ideological resistance. As a matter of fact, the quality of the products are less the targets of mockery than the symbols of economic domination, and the burden of historic and ethnic conflicts between China and Nepal, that are ridiculed in joking.

BABIES’ SLIPPERS IN FAKE YAK HAIR: NEPALESE DOMESTIC COUNTERFEITING AND THE TOURISTS’ TASTE FOR “CULTURE”

Despite sarcastic remarks, which make fun of and transfigure the economic domination of powerful China next door, there is no great Nepalese national pride manifested in support for “Made in Nepal” products to serve as a counterbalance, such as in the invention of “national” styles through commodities, as Goldstein-Gidoni (2001, 2005) has demonstrated for the “Japaneseness” of globalized Asian foods. Nevertheless, there exists among Nepalese peoples a feeling of historic and political pride – culturally constructed self-esteem born of their being citizens of a country that has never been colonized, a patriotic heritage that makes the tiny ancient Kingdom of Nepal distinct from its outsized rival, India. But in the economies of commodified culture, this pride has little meaning: the projective stigmata of a negative cultural stereotype in the direction of China also permutes to the national level.

Since its economic and touristic opening in the early 1950s, Nepal has become one of the most fashionable destinations in South Asia, and the small country (home to about 23 million) welcomes almost half a million visitors annually. Recent decades witnessed the rise of industrialized tourism and of an economy of services such as trekking, “cultural” tourism, and mountaineering, alongside a marketplace economy that largely sustains the *patrimonialization* of local traditions, and offers promises of a brighter future (Bista, 1994). The annual increase in the flow of tourists enhances the number of potential consumers of the commodities produced by local artisans or small-scale manufacturers: religious artifacts, most of them Buddhist (including “singing bowls,” ritual masks, *thangkas*, etc.), but also “souvenirs” such as *kukuris* (large traditional knives and national emblems), musical instruments (such as false shamanistic drums or *dhyangro* available in the shops, and *saranghi* violins that are sold in the streets by unauthorized vendors). These products are principally for tourists and are available in the

countless open air markets scattered throughout the towns, alongside the many pedestrian streets at touristic crossroads. The poor quality of these products is unmistakable: most of the artifacts are visibly counterfeited, artificially transformed to capture – if only superficially – the air of an “authentic” ancient artifact.

These products pertain to what Shepherd (2002, p. 185) calls “identity merchandise” produced by natives as a response to the tourists’ appeal for the “authentic,” and they compete with a more discrete and restricted market of high-quality antiques and crafts. These quality items are much more difficult to identify and their trade falls under strict national economic laws controlled by the National Bureau of Antiquities of Nepal. Unsurprisingly, these antiquities, targeting an international market, cannot be exported without a “certificate of origin” (Upreti, 2003, p. 266), that is, a national “brand.” This “rule of origin” was born of a series of agreements between Nepal and the WTO, in order to “determine the country in which a product will be deemed to have originated,” but it is nonetheless modulated by an informal rule of “flexibility,” since all countries in the Himalayan area (including Nepal), “devise their own criteria” for the national labels of import and export (Pant, 2003, p. 128). In such circumstances, the cultural and national labels of manufactured objects are blurred at every level of the commodity chain: production, distribution, advertising, and consumption.

Interactions between artifact producers and successive generations of tourists have motivated the design and making of new products, still supplying items for a demand of “culture,” but less “traditional” or “primitive” – which Shepherd (2002) deems to be the primary purpose of a commodification of non-Western cultures in the tourism industry. Modern-style stores today flourish in Kathmandu, and supply “ethnic” products. Wandering the streets and observing the everlasting sea of merchants and tourists, I came upon a brand new store specializing in textile objects – bags, shirts, and slippers – in light colors, being sold as “handmade.” This category of commodities is found equally in other shops, but sold under the guise of “real Nepalese yak wool” – in other words, “authentic fakes.” As I entered the shop, I noticed a number of baby slippers for sale. These have appeared recently, created to fulfill a Western demand. I started a conversation with the proprietor and began bargaining on the price, a customary routine in Nepal. One possible justification for the relatively high price of the items would have been the high quality of the material, especially “Yak wool.” “Yak wool?” said the retailer with a giggle, “if all that’s sold as ‘Yak wool’ in Nepal was really made with Yak hairs, then all the Yaks in the country would have disappeared by now . . . I sell products

that are industrially manufactured in India, with ordinary wool . . . nothing Nepalese!” Hence, even the products that are sold more or less explicitly as “genuinely Nepalese” can be fakes. When the Nepalese aim at distinguishing themselves (ramro chhaina) from a significant and territorialized Otherness (Made in China), their own identity (*Nepaleseness*) is not strengthened nor homogenized, neither supporting the “quality” or “authenticity” of “Made in Nepal” products, contrary to what Goldstein-Gidoni (2005) suggests with reference to the *Japaneseness* of exported products. Quite the reverse, circumspection prevails in the Nepalese attitude toward the quality of nationally produced goods, at least those for foreign consumers. This dubious attitude toward national production is but one factor accounting for the fragile domestic and international economy, but there is one facet of recent Nepalese history whose impact is more salient on the economy – political changes.

With the rise of the Maoists in the mid-1990s, and leading up to their recent political takeover, political instability and domestic violence, culminating in the 2001 slaughter of the royal family, have continuously affected Nepal’s brand image, the national label became synonymous with “risk” and “insecurity,” and Nepal became an “unsafe destination.” The tourism sector, which is supporting the service industry, and which enjoyed uninterrupted growth since the early 1990s – and which also contributed to a dramatic increase in the GPD – broke down one decade later (Baral et al., 2004, p. 188). The flow of tourists began to decrease dramatically in the early 2000s, and consequently, the handicraft and “identity merchandise” market collapsed (Baral et al., 2004, p. 189; Pant, 2003, p. 114). Business activities have ceased or been dramatically reduced, in response to military operations throughout the country (Sharma, 2005, p. 249).

MADE IN . . . WHERE? FINAL REFLECTIONS

A purely economic approach to the global marketing of Chinese products, and to international competition emerging from this situation, might put emphasis on the impacts of neoliberal capitalist systems on “developing” Asian countries as well as on “developed” Western countries: in both cases, the factors influencing the supply and demand of products from China have been framed in classical terms of “cost,” “quality,” “tariffs,” or “utilization” (Zhang & Hathcote, 2008). Such perspectives emerge from a belief that the factors surrounding a consumption of these products are exclusively economic or psychological. Without denying the importance of the

morphology of the markets and rational choice theories of consumption, culture, and geography, in particular, as *spatial* and *ideological* representations, infuse simultaneously in Asia and in the West as *tangible territories*, where commodities have been produced and distributed, and as *imaginary territories*, an ideological plot where the cultural Self and the cultural Other are negotiated in the course of consumption processes.

The discussion here began with “brand images” of commodified material culture, and showed that the anthropological approach – empirically and locally grounded – differs from that of marketing studies, and also from sociological and economic perspectives of globalization. The anthropological focus on the notion of culture, and its transformations in the context of a globalized economy, draws attention to the need to think of culture and economy in different ways: cultures *of* commodification, *commodified* cultures, and cultures *in* commodification processes. The case of the Tibetan and Nepalese valuation of “Made in China” products demonstrates that in the context of economic globalization, not only are cultural and national identities not dissolved into the circulation of commodities, they are rather reinvented and crystallized under a unified form, that is, stereotyped “cultural labels” (or “putative national origin,” in Sinclair’s (2008) words) celebrating the uniqueness of a producing nation or a region, and allocating a cultural “marketability” to commodities (Goldstein-Gidoni, 2001, 2005; Mansfield, 2003). But above all, the relationships between culture and consumption are also always intelligible in the lens of complex political and historical relationships between societies.

China’s brand image, from an anthropological outlook, is therefore rather a mosaic of representations framed in different cultural settings (too often limited to Western ones), and replete with antagonistic contents and symbols. “Made in China” can indeed be a marker of quality. It can even be a translation of an exemplar model of entrepreneurship, distorted, according to Sull and Wang (2005), by the “lack of knowledge” among Westerners of the unique Chinese culturally assimilated form of capitalist economy. But the idea of a “cultural gap” between the West and China, regarded as a “misunderstanding,” is too simple in anthropological views, since it ignores the dynamics of the production of Otherness underlying the careers of goods or services in market exchanges. Further, it fails to take into account the complexity of “culture” in economic exchanges and the somewhat paradoxical tension existing between the brand image of the products, the local valuation of its quality or usefulness, and the actual attitudes of consumers toward them. Why, after all, do the Nepalese and the Tibetans buy and use “Made in China” even as belittle their quality?

According to Rompf (1999, p. 254), there exists a close link in a consumer's mind between the familiarity with products bearing a brand's name and the established beliefs toward the brand, and therefore, a new product with a similar label facilitates its adoption as a commodity for the same person or population. In other words, from the moment a consumer or a group of consumers has a satisfactory experience with a product associated with a nation's brand, any new commodity associated with the same brand would be similarly accepted as "good." But in the examples presented in this article – Chinese and Tibetan carpets, and Chinese artifacts – this link can also be characterized by much ambivalence.

Brands are socially constructed spaces for the negotiation of the Self and of Otherness, and within exchange markets, the latter is built by means of material culture. This chapter has, conclusively, attempted to bring attention to four points. First, totalizing representations of "national" and "cultural" brand images do not actually rely upon symbolic homogeneity: rather, they stand for a galaxy of cultural, historical, territorial referents, encompassing a continuum of signs and figures, from the most positive ("Made in China" – a guarantee of quality for products such as silk or antiques) to the most negative ("Made in China" – a symbol of counterfeits and standardized, dangerous products). But anthropology goes further: it opens ways to the understanding of the dialectical process of identity and otherness formation, by which are produced, simultaneously, oppositional references implicitly formulated ("Made in Tibet" beliefs) or more explicitly expressed ("Made in Nepal" artifacts), in reference to the yardstick – "Made in China." Second, these complex interlays between culturalized references crystallize large-scale historical issues, political competition, and ethnic conflicts, and they also epitomize the diachronic and broad background of synchronic and observable acts of purchasing (or refusal to purchase) "Made in China" products – which is in this case, an active (and Western) pro-Tibetan affirmation, but which can also be suspended for pragmatic reasons (among the Tibetans). This ethnographic evidence calls to the possibility of conducting ethnography on popular uses of "brand images," on the consumption side, in accordance with the traditional (or more recent) aims and scope of anthropology. The significant gaps observed between brand images (depreciative) and the habits of (regular) consumption establish an arena in which the issue is cultural identity, much more than (but not *rather than*) price, quality, or product utility. Third, these are truly ethnic crystallizations and historical ambivalences that shape this strange configuration of consumption of little admired Chinese products by the Tibetans and the Nepalese. This particular case calls for the necessity to

confine the analysis of globalized commodification neither solely to the economic perspective, nor completely under the exclusive focus of cultural dynamics: ethnographic data in this region of Asia suggests inflecting the analysis toward the *anthropology of political economy* (from Léons & Rothstein, 1979, but in a rather different context) beyond the *politics of aesthetics* of material culture. But unlike a *political economy* inspired by anthropology, it would be a *political anthropology of economics* (market and commodification). Finally, history – far from pacifying the interethnic or intersocial relationships between Nepal, China, and India – has on the contrary offered fertile ground for conflict and violence. The market regenerates these weakened societal links, but engenders new forms of violence, those of economic domination, adding to political antagonisms. In this context of *double bind*, torn between the forces of political disjunction (i.e., competition), on the one side, and of economic conjunction (i.e., cooperation), on the other, the pressure of trade and consumption, and the obligation to consume “Chinese,” things in a region dominated by the economy of the “Middle Kingdom,” only allows the cultures and ethnic groups of Nepal the option of economic submission to one of their main political and historical rivals, by displacing the experience of symbolic violence, in the realm of resistance – with humor and distance.

NOTES

1. One example is <http://www.madebadinchina.com>.
2. See, for example, <http://www.madeinchina.com>.
3. See <http://www.boycottmadeinchina.org>.
4. I studied Western adherents to Tibetan Buddhism in France over about five years during the 1990s, and have undertaken numerous fieldwork missions in villages of the Solukhumbu district (northern Nepal) and in the valley of Kathmandu (central Nepal) between 1999 and 2003.

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THE EXPANSION OF IMMIGRANT NETWORKS AT ORIGIN: A CASE STUDY OF A RANCHO IN JALISCO, MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

Although the theory of cumulative causation posits a “saturation point” at which all members of a rural community who are potential transnational migrants will have migrated, in the case of dynamic out-migration centers, this saturation point may never be reached. This is because growth centers – the growth often having been propelled by wages and remittances of prior migrants – attract in-migrants from poorer, less dynamic, surrounding ranchos that eventually become incorporated in transnational migration networks of the more dynamic rancho. It is also due to intermarriage as well as friendship and ritual kinship ties between members of the core rancho and surrounding ranchos.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of kinship–social–*paisano* networks in transnational migration between Mexico and the United States has been explored in great depth

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in the migration literature of the past two decades (e.g., Cornelius, 1991; Durand & Massey, 1992; Kearney, 1986, 1991; Massey, 1987; Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Massey & García España, 1987; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, & González, 1987; Massey, Goldring, & Durand, 1994; Mines & Massey, 1985; Portes & Bach, 1985; Wilson, 1992, 1994, 1998; and others).¹ It is widely argued that transnational immigration begins among pioneering immigrants economically capable of affording the risks of failure and the costs of the trip north, usually young men, but that as networks linking origin and destination communities mature and a settlement process occurs, the landless, less well-off, and women and children are also incorporated into the migration stream (e.g., Durand & Massey, 1992; Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Massey et al., 1994). Eventually, Massey and his colleagues show, as migration networks become increasingly viable, immigration to the United States becomes a relatively lower-cost, lower-risk strategy for all members of the origin community (e.g., Durand & Massey, 1992). Ties of reciprocity assure that each migrant will extend aid to the members of his network; as more people enter the migration stream such aid reduces the costs and risks of migration for even more potential migrants, leading to a cumulative model of transnational migration (Massey et al., 1994; Massey & García España, 1987). This model predicts that once every member of a given community has network ties to the United States, when larger and larger numbers of community members reside abroad, and when prevalence rates for migration reach approximately 80% among males, “networks reach a point of numerical saturation” and “the process of migration loses its dynamic momentum for growth” (Massey et al., 1994, pp. 1502–1503). Massey (1990, p. 8), writing about the dynamics of network expansion at origin, holds that:

Eventually, of course, communities reach a point of network saturation, where virtually all households have a close connection to someone with migrant experience When networks reach this level of development, the costs of migration stop falling with each new entrant and the process of migration loses its dynamism. At the same time, the rate of out movement ultimately reaches a stage where labor shortages begin to occur and local wages start to rise These developments act to dampen the pressures for additional migration and cause the rate of entry into the migrant workforce to decelerate and then fall off.

In a more recent work Massey, Durand, and Malone (2003, p. 20) reiterate their “saturation” thesis: “In any *bounded population* . . . processes of cumulative causation cannot continue ad infinitum. If migration continues long enough, networks eventually reach a point of saturation within any particular community” [*italics added*]. They argue that emigration using

networks based in that community then falls off, as “the stock of new migrants becomes very small and is increasingly composed of women, children, and the elderly” (Massey et al., 2003, p. 20).

My argument in this chapter is that such a saturation point in some cases need never be reached, as networks are constantly expanding at origin, through inter-community marriage and *compadrazgo* relationships, and through in-migration into dynamic sending communities. Such communities are often economically well-off because of investments by transmigrants. Also, I argue that the idea of a saturation point is derived from the fact that the researchers are defining a community as isolated from other communities and essentially closed; that is, they are talking about “bounded” population centers as if these were totally closed and endogamous.

Rouse (1992) moves from the level of single communities to the level of a *municipio*, a governmental entity similar to a county. A *municipio*, in rural regions of Mexico, always contains a *cabecera*, or a county seat, which is usually the most populated town (*pueblo*) in the *municipio*. The *municipio* also contains outlying population centers, usually smaller *pueblos* or *ranchos* (unincorporated rural settlements). These population centers may be linked by kinship, *compadrazgo*, and friendship networks, though of course such networks can expand beyond the boundaries of any *municipio* to include people in *pueblos* and *ranchos* in other *municipios*. Although Rouse mentions specific *ranchos* within the *municipio* of Aguililla, Michoacán, he unfortunately does not theorize how *interlinkages* between population clusters can facilitate transnational migration. Furthermore, Rouse (1989, 1991, 1992) conceptualizes the multi-stranded “social fields” (Basch, Glick Schiller, & Szanton Blanc, 1999, p. 22; Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1) as grounded in network dynamics that connect origin and multiple destinations as contained within a “transnational migrant circuit” (e.g., Rouse, 1991, p. 14). I find the metaphor of a circuit somewhat confining, as it implies an enclosed space. This is notwithstanding Rouse’s otherwise multi-local and dynamic view, with his emphasis on the circulation aspects of circuits, and his disclaimer about the fact that Central Americans can be drawn into the Aguillian circuit in the United States (Rouse, 1991, footnote 18, p. 20), thus showing the expansion of networks at destination.

Networks expand at destination, often through the “strength of weak ties” (Granovetter, 1973; Wilson, 1998). Such weak ties may eventually be converted into the strong ties of fictive kinship, marriage, or firm employer–employee relations whether in the formal or informal sectors or in the “immigrant economy” (Light, Bernard, & Kim, 1999, p. 11) in which non-coethnic immigrant entrepreneurs often hire wage-labor immigrants from

Mexico. Such network expansion at destination has been widely commented upon (e.g., Massey, 1987, 1990; Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Massey et al., 1987; Wilson, 1998) if perhaps insufficiently analyzed as to its dynamics. While network expansion *within* more than 30 given communities of origin – with each of these numerous communities treated as an isolated entity – has been explored by Douglas Massey and his colleagues, little has been done concerning networks of kinship, friendship, and *compadrazgo* (ritual kinship) relationships across local and even spatially distant communities and how these more broadly based networks can aid in the migration process. Such inter-community network expansion can be established through in-migration to a population center from other, less economically dynamic communities or by intermarriage between members of various communities in the sub-region. It can also expand through the establishment of ritual kinship relationships: Nutini and Bell (1980) have shown exhaustively (and seminally) how population centers were interlinked through *compadrazgo* in rural Tlaxcala, and how these relationships were facilitated by and in turn facilitated internal migration. Nonetheless, the transnational migration literature so far has had little to say about the geographical overlap of kinship–social networks in multiple communities at origin, which incorporate even more family and population clusters into transnational migration streams.

It is argued in this chapter that transnational immigration networks facilitating the crossing of the border by undocumented workers are grounded in local networks with their own dynamics of expansion and inclusion. There is often in-migration from less economically developed *ranchos* to “core” transnational migration *ranchos*, many of which are more dynamic population centers because of investments in infrastructure by previous transnational immigrants. Thus, a consideration of migratory networks at origin must take into account their possible expansion to include geographically near population clusters or in-migrating members of these. More geographically distant population clusters may also send members into a “core” rancho or *pueblo*. Those in-migrants from poorer *ranchos* eventually become members of the transnational migration networks of the more dynamic *ranchos* to which they migrate. Poor in economic and social capital upon arrival, by partaking in reciprocity networks (including immigration networks) in-migrants augment and draw upon their newly acquired social capital.² Nonetheless, the in-migrants from poorer *ranchos* may initially have stronger network linkages to cities within Mexico than to the United States. Alternatively, marriage and *compadrazgo* relationships may be contracted among a web of local communities located

within a few miles or farther of each other. Also, such relationships are also established with the offspring of in-migrant families; *compadres* may be sought by the in-migrating head of household and his wife among “insiders” in the destination community as well.

Analysis of interviews with 152 male heads of household resident on a *rancho* in Jalisco I call Los Arboles,³ and conducted in 1989 and 1990, showed the following. First, there was much in-migration into Los Arboles, primarily from outlying *ranchos* in Jalisco and in neighboring Zacatecas.⁴ Second, as can be expected, these in-migrants tended to own less land; furthermore, they initially have immigrated to the United States in lesser proportions than the Los Arboles born. This was due to their lower social capital. Third, there was much intermarriage among those born in Los Arboles and those born elsewhere. The networks of both in-marrying wives and in-marrying husbands were thus meshed with their insider spouses’ networks. Fourth, those born elsewhere tended to have more siblings who had migrated to the capital city than those born in Los Arboles, but those born in Los Arboles tended to have more siblings in the United States. Fifth, over time, in-migrants to the *rancho* have become increasingly involved in Los Arboles-based migration networks leading to the United States, even those without marital ties to families native to the *rancho*. Sixth, in-migrants to the *rancho* have more offspring in the United States than that of residents of the *rancho*, as a result of both their greater poverty and their increasing ability to access the social capital embedded in migratory networks.

IN-MIGRATION TO THE *RANCHO* LOS ARBOLES

Of the 152 male heads of household resident on the *rancho* Los Arboles in 1989 and 1990, 83 (54.6%) had been born elsewhere and 69 (45.5%) had been born in Los Arboles – a growing *rancho* on the main highway between Guadalajara and Zacatecas. The dynamism of Los Arboles is to a great extent due to the wages and remittances of migrants to the United States, whether recurrent migrants or those settled semi-permanently. Such wages and remittances have been used to start up small businesses and to capitalize agriculture. Unlike smaller, outlying *ranchos*, it has electricity, running water, sewage services, a small but modern clinic, and a *telesecundaria* (a secondary school taught with the aid of educational programs made available by the national government on television), as well as a number of small enterprises, including two small general and grocery stores, two stores selling school supplies, a clothing store, a small restaurant, and a taco stand.

Having large *ejido*⁵ and private property sectors, field hands have been hired during the planting and harvesting periods of the farming cycle. Although the ownership of tractors – many funded by wages earned in the United States – has been accelerating since the 1970s, and the rental of harvesters has been common among the better-off since the mid-1980s, some farm laborers are still employed to apply pesticides and to glean the fields of the well-off after the harvester has gone through. On a number of *ejido* and private property parcels the harvest is still mainly done by hand, as is the case of all lands sharecropped by the landless. Some of the *ejidatarios* and private property owners who have not mechanized pay those who have tractors to till their fields. They may employ farm laborers at various times in the agricultural cycle as well.

Most of the laborers come, and have come in the past, from the nearby, more impoverished state of Zacatecas. Earlier in-migrants from that state, as well as from more outlying *ranchos* in Jalisco, came to sharecrop the lands of *ejidatarios* and private property owners who lacked an adequate family labor force to farm their holdings, lacked the capital to employ farm laborers, and/or were absent in the United States.

For example, in 1964 Angela Murillo,⁶ now a widow, along with her husband, seven sons, and one of their two daughters, migrated to Los Arboles after working in Durango and sharecropping lands on other *ranchos* in Jalisco. There, Angela's husband, with the help of Angela and their offspring, sharecropped lands for an absentee landowner. The harvests were so good that they were able to buy almost 2 ha of land. House lots were portioned out to each of their offspring present on the *ranchito*. All of Angela's sons eventually and recurrently migrated to the United States for work, intermittently using kinship networks based in their *ranchito* of origin in Zacatecas, and intermittently using network aid from friends in Los Arboles (Wilson, 1992). Some of them invested their migrant earnings in purchasing more land.

In 1990, farm laborers from Zacatecas and outlying *ranchos* in Jalisco still arrived to seek wage-work during the harvest and the planting seasons. A number of them, especially married couples, lived in borrowed houses. Lending an empty house to the "homeless" is a Mexican tradition, found not only on the *ranchos* but in the urban colonias populares (working class neighborhoods often arising from squatter settlements). There were several empty houses in Los Arboles, built and left, as in the case of the village in Michoacán studied by Fletcher (1999), by quasi-permanent immigrants to the United States. Most of the farm laborers who come seeking work in Los Arboles eventually return to their *ranchos* of origin. Some, however,

may elect to stay. Of those who stay, a number of them tap into international migration networks formed by longer-term residents of the *rancho*.

A few of the in-migrants from other *ranchos* have done well for themselves after immigrating to the United States. Born of an impoverished family from another *rancho* in Jalisco, Concepción Gomez, for example, in-migrated into the *rancho* with his parents and siblings while still a young man. He crossed the border six times, the first time under *bracero* contract in 1959. A year after returning, he married the daughter of a well-off *ejidatario*. He crossed five more times, without documents, using networks based in Los Arboles, and with the money he earned in the United States, he was able to buy an *ejido* right and a tractor as well as a small herd of Holstein cows (the most common milk breed on the *rancho* and in Mexico). His last crossing was in 1979; he stayed until 1981, first working in the beet fields in Merced, California, then 11 months in a factory in Thousand Oaks. With the money he earned from his work in the United States on this crossing, he bought 10 ha of private property. Concepción's success story is not often repeated. It does illustrate two important facts, however. First, in-migrants into the *rancho* can tap into transnational migration networks first established by those born in Los Arboles, often to parents with transnational immigration experience. Second, wages in the United States can permit former "outsiders" the possibility of buying land in the *rancho*, and thus become identified with the better-off "insiders." Nonetheless, as can be expected, those men who migrated into Los Arboles are less likely to be landowners than those born in Los Arboles. This is partially due to the grip that the original inhabitants have over the distribution of *ejido* lands.

DIFFERENTIAL IMMIGRATION/CONTROL OF LAND

There are differences both in rates of immigration and in control of land between the in-migrants to Los Arboles and those born on that *rancho*. Of the 152 male heads of household resident on the *rancho*, 115 (75.7%) have crossed the border to work in the United States. Of these, 58 (50.4%) were born in Los Arboles and 57 (49.6%) in-migrated into Los Arboles. Those numbers are deceptive, however, for only 57 of 83 in-migrants (68.6%) have US experience, whereas 58 of 67 (86.6%) of the Los Arboles-born have worked in the United States (see Table 1). Thus, those from Los Arboles have both the economic sufficiency and social capital in the form of network aid (Massey et al., 1987, 1994; Massey & Espinosa, 1997) which

Table 1. Transnational Immigrants ($N = 115$) of 152 Male Heads of Household Resident in Los Arboles, by Place of Birth.

Type of Immigrants	Number of Immigrants	Number of Immigrants Having US Experience	Percentage of Immigrants Having US Experience
Male heads of household	152	115	75.7
Born in Los Arboles	67	58	86.6
Born elsewhere	83	57	68.7
Born in other state	15	13	86.7
Born elsewhere in Jalisco	68	44	64.7

Table 2. Property Ownership in Los Arboles, by Place of Birth.

	Born in Los Arboles		Born Elsewhere		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
No property	30	43.5	9	71.1	39	58.6
1-4 hectares	10	14.5	7	8.4	17	11.2
5-9 hectares	6	8.7	8	9.6	14	9.2
10-19 hectares	18	26.1	5	6.0	23	15.1
≥20 hectares	5	7.2	4	4.8	9	5.9
Total	69	100.0	33	99.9 ^a	102	100.0

^aDifference from 100% is due to rounding.

many of those from elsewhere lack. The exceptions are those from other states, some of whom in-migrated into the *rancho* via contacts made with those from Los Arboles in the United States, where networks at destination are also expanding (Wilson, 1998).

As can be expected, landownership or control is starkly different among those born in Los Arboles and those in-migrating into the *rancho* (see Table 2). Whereas 71% of those from elsewhere own no land, only 43.5% of those born in Los Arboles are landless. Viable farms for the rain-fed corn crop, those which supply most income needs, are usually 10 ha or larger. Whereas 33.3% of those born in Los Arboles control this amount of land, only 10.8% of those from elsewhere do. Fewer than 4 ha, if planted in corn, provides only supplemental family income: a situation shared by 14.5% of male heads of household born in Los Arboles and 8.4% of those born elsewhere. Many of those with less than 4 ha acquired this land with money earned in the United States. In total, 79.5% of men born elsewhere must seek income from a source other than farming, as compared to 58% of those

born in Los Arboles. While many of those who do not immigrate to the United States for work sharecrop lands, this source of employment is drying up for the poor (landless and near-landless), while more and more wealthier farmers with tractors are sharecropping lands for aged or absentee *ejidatarios* and private property owners. As in Chiapas (Collier & Quaratiello, 1999, p. 103), many of the poorer farmers rent or let their lands for sharecropping to wealthier farmers who can afford the pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer package. For example, Javier Contreras, one of the wealthiest *ejidatarios* on the *rancho*, controls 16 ha of *ejido* lands and 20.5 ha of private property acquired on nearby *ranchos*. He also owns two tractors, one of which his nephew (he has no sons) drives to earn money for tilling the fields of other *rancheros* who have not accumulated sufficient capital to invest in farm machinery. Javier is constantly seeking lands to sharecrop, both in Los Arboles and on nearby *ranchos*. Javier was hoping to buy his own harvester, to rent out as well as use on the lands he owns and sharecrops. He would be the first on the *rancho* to do so. Most of the private property he has bought, as well as the two tractors, was financed by money he earned in the United States. He is, however, also the son of one of the original *ejidatarios* in Los Arboles, who assured that each of his sons would have control of a parcel of *ejido* lands.

Some *ejidatarios* who plan to work in the United States for a limited period, usually as “target earners,” do sometimes allow their lands to be sharecropped by several poor families at a time. At the lower end of the scale, and among the poorest families on the *rancho*, Juan Rodríguez sharecrops land for a young *ejidatario* who has recurrently immigrated to the United States over a period of 7 years. The sowing and harvesting on these sharecropped lands is done by hand, with the help of his wife and six daughters. Juan’s eldest son was working in the United States, and his youngest son was still too young to help. Juan himself has no migration experience, having been poor not only in economic resources, but also in network resources.

INTERMARRIAGE BETWEEN THE *RANCHOS*

Endogamous marriage is most common among those born in Los Arboles, with 58% of men born on that *rancho* marrying women born there; nonetheless there is extensive exogamous marriage as well (see Table 3). Of 69 male heads of household born in Los Arboles, 39%, or almost two-fifth, of the married male population of the *rancho* married women from

Table 3. Marriage Partners of Male Heads of Household Resident in Los Arboles, by Place of Birth.

	Born in Los Arboles		Born Elsewhere		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Wives born in Los Arboles	40	58.0	25	30.1	65	42.8
Wives born elsewhere	27	39.1	54	65.1	81	53.3
Single	2	2.9	4	4.8	6	3.9
Total	69	100.0	83	100.0	152	100.0

Note: Bold face emphasizes that spouses were born elsewhere.

elsewhere. Of 83 male heads of household born elsewhere, 30% married women born in Los Arboles. Many of the men who married Los Arboles-born women had come into the *rancho* with their families as children. Most of the men born elsewhere who are married to women born elsewhere (65%) moved into the *rancho* Los Arboles with their wives. Many of their wives, however, were not from the same *rancho* as they were, but came from nearby *ranchos*, other *ranchos* where their parents had labored or sharecropped prior to coming to Los Arboles, or, in a few cases, from Guadalajara. Wives from Guadalajara were often found when the in-migrant tried his hand at working in that city. Thus, a husband's and a wife's respective families often had networks independent of one another until after marriage, when it can be hypothesized that the networks came to overlap, with husbands able to seek aid through wives' networks and vice versa.

In other words, the marital bond with the Los Arboles born can be assumed to give entry to Los Arboles-based migration networks to the United States. Eighteen of the 25 men born elsewhere with Los Arboles-born wives have immigrated to the United States for work (72%). A good number of these men have used the aid of wife's relatives to migrate. Those who have not married "insiders" have tapped the aid of friends and *compadres* from Los Arboles in their transnational migration efforts. Others, but fewer, have emigrated to work in the United States using aid from networks in their or their wives' places of origin. Some, who have made a career of crossing to work in the United States, sometimes use Los Arboles-based networks and sometimes use place of origin networks.

For example, Arturo Esposito Murillo, Angela's son, born in Zacatecas, joined friends from Los Arboles in Compton, California, in 1967 where he spent 2 months picking tomatoes and then 8 months in a window curtain factory. In 1979 he joined cousins of his mother, from his mother's *rancho* in

Zacatecas, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and picked apples for 6 months. In 1981 he joined a Los Arboles-based brother in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and worked with him in a metal mold factory where a number of male heads of household from Los Arboles were employed. With the money he earned in the United States, he was able to buy 5 ha of private property and initiate a hog-raising business. The importance of his story is that migrants can tap networks not only in their place of actual or permanent settlement, but also networks in places of previous residence or origin. With a few nodal personnel in these different networks, they come to intermesh for friends and kin. Thus, networks based in a variety of locales can be accessed. And, it can be argued, those who are members of non-overlapping networks can act as bridges between these various networks, permitting members of one to access the resources of another.

SIBLINGS ELSEWHERE IN MEXICO OR IN THE UNITED STATES

It has long been known that internal migration is the choice of the least well-off (Roberts, 1981; Shadow, 1979): this would include poor in social capital as well as economic capital. A minimal quantity of social and/or economic capital is essential for international immigration to occur, especially among the undocumented (e.g., Cohen, 2004; Massey et al., 1987; Wilson, 1992). The vast majority of the male heads of household who came to Los Arboles from other *ranchos* were landless laborers or offspring of landless laborers whose *ranchos* of origin were more impoverished than Los Arboles. Whereas many non-inheriting sisters and brothers of those landed born in Los Arboles migrated to Guadalajara, the nearest and thriving center of employment, far more of those from other *ranchos* had siblings in Guadalajara

Seventeen of the 69 household heads born in Los Arboles (24.6%) have sisters living in Guadalajara, of which 6 also have brothers living there. Two other heads of household have only brothers living there. In total, 19 male heads of household born in Los Arboles (27.5%) have siblings who have moved to Jalisco's capital city. In comparison, a higher percentage of those born elsewhere have siblings who have migrated to Guadalajara. Thirty-two of the 83 heads of household born elsewhere (38.6%) have sisters living in Guadalajara, and 16 of these also have brothers living there. An additional four household heads have only brothers living in that city. Thus, those born elsewhere, many without access to transnational migration networks

prior to moving to Los Arboles, have a greater incidence of siblings who have migrated internally (43.4% as compared to the 27.5% of those heads born in Los Arboles). Those from Los Arboles were primarily non-inheriting brothers because the practice on the *rancho* is to leave the entire *ejido* parcel to one son. Women tend to be passed over as inheritors of *ejido* plots. Of the two women on the *rancho* who had *ejido* lands, one was a widow who inherited the right and the other was a wife of an *ejidatario* who was enabled to acquire a second right only by passing the first parcel to his wife (his male children were under 18 or unmarried and thus could not legally acquire *ejido* lands). Both women plan to pass on their *ejido* rights to sons.

On the other hand, the strength of transnational immigration networks is shown first by the higher numbers of male heads of household born elsewhere who have brothers in the United States as compared to Guadalajara, and second by the Los Arboles-born having greater numbers of brothers and/or sisters in the United States than those born elsewhere, due to the longevity of their transnational networks. Furthermore, there has been a shift in destinations over time: from agricultural towns primarily in California to cities such as Los Angeles and its environs and Milwaukee.

In the first place, whereas 47% of those born elsewhere have brothers (not including sisters) in the United States, only 24% have brothers in Guadalajara. Nonetheless, 38.6% have sisters in Guadalajara, whereas only 25.3% have sisters in the United States. The presence of women immigrants in the United States is related to the time the migration stream has been in existence, and the accelerating density of networks (Massey et al., 1994). Because those from elsewhere tapped into the migration network later, it can be expected that their networks are less dense.

In the second place, more male heads of household born in Los Arboles have siblings in the United States than those born elsewhere. Thus, almost 64% of the Los Arboles born have brothers in the United States, while only 47% of those born elsewhere do. And more than twice as many of the Los Arboles-born male heads of household have sisters in the United States than do those born elsewhere (55.1% as compared to 25.3%). The fewer number of sisters in the United States among male heads of household born elsewhere is because of two factors: first, the more recent involvement in migration streams by the majority of those born elsewhere; second, because the smaller, outlying *ranchos* tend to be stricter with the movements of their womenfolk (thus, they are more "traditional"). In any case, of the 21 male heads of household born elsewhere having sisters in the United States, 18 also have brothers there. Among those born in Los Arboles, of the

38 households who have sisters in the United States, 32 also have brothers there. In rural communities where gender relations tend toward the “traditional,” brothers’ presence in the United States is often a prerequisite for sisters to immigrate, unless they do so under their husbands’ auspices. Sisters who migrate under husbands’ auspices, however, can also become a link in the network pulling siblings into the migration stream. In either case, 72% of the Los Arboles heads of household have siblings in the United States, whereas only 53.8% of those born elsewhere do. This fact can be attributed to their shorter history of migration: but they are catching up.

INCREASING INVOLVEMENT OF “OUTSIDERS” IN THE UNITED STATES MIGRATION STREAM

Over time, in-migrants to Los Arboles, most of whom arrived after 1960, are beginning to have US work experience in similar, if slightly less, proportions than those male heads of household born in Los Arboles (see Table 4).

Most of the male heads of household who crossed the border prior to 1965 went under the auspices of the Bracero Program, whether they had

Table 4. Years of First and Last Crossing to the United States by those Born in Los Arboles and those Born Elsewhere.

	Born in Los Arboles (N = 69)		Born Elsewhere (N = 83)		Total (N = 152)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
First Crossing						
Before 1965	13	18.8	17	20.5	30	19.7
1965-1979	37	53.6	32	38.6	69	45.4
In or after 1980	8	11.6	8	9.6	16	10.5
No US experience	11	15.9	26	31.1	37	24.3
Total	69	99.9 ^a	83	100.0	152	99.9 ^a
Last Crossing						
Before 1965	9	13.0	6	7.2	15	9.8
1965-1979	18	26.1	21	25.3	39	25.7
In or after 1980	31	44.9	30	36.1	61	40.1
No US experience	11	15.9	26	31.3	37	24.3
Total	69	99.9 ^a	83	99.9 ^a	152	99.9 ^a

^aDifference from 100% is due to rounding.

formal contracts or worked without documents. Those born elsewhere crossed from their *ranchos* of origin in most cases, not from Los Arboles, and they crossed in almost equivalent percentages. However, such experience did not always lead to strong migration networks. Although almost twice as many male heads of household born elsewhere have no US work experience as compared to those born in Los Arboles (31.3% as compared to 15.9%), the numbers crossing the border are again almost equivalent after 1980. Because those born elsewhere are more impoverished, once network aid is in place, they should be expected to seek work in the United States in greater numbers in the future than their relatively well-off brethren born in Los Arboles (Massey et al., 1994).

There is evidence that this was already happening by 1990. Twenty-seven de facto female heads of household had husbands in the United States at the time of the interview. Seventeen of these 27 women (63%) were from other *ranchos*, though I do not have data at hand on their husbands' origins. Many men who crossed after 1980 were permanently or semi-permanently absent from the *ranchos*: they were the siblings of those present on the *ranchos* who had changed their status from "sojourner" to "settler" in the United States (Chavez, 1988; Massey et al., 1987). From the data in Table 4, it can be seen that those born elsewhere have been substantially incorporated into the transnational immigration stream from Los Arboles to the United States: whereas 31 men from Los Arboles worked in the United States between 1980 and 1990, 30 men born elsewhere did.

Other evidence showing that those from elsewhere will have higher out-migration rates to the United States is shown by the percentage who have offspring in the United States. Both married and unmarried sons and daughters have also crossed the border. Those heads of household born elsewhere have higher numbers of offspring ($N = 37$) in the United States than those born in Los Arboles ($N = 25$). Thus, 36.2% of the male heads of household born in Los Arboles had offspring in the United States, whereas 44.5% of those born elsewhere had offspring there. Thus, the transnational migration networks based in Los Arboles are incorporating more in-migrants without economic capital.

Those male heads of household born in Los Arboles and born elsewhere have an equivalent proportion of daughters in the United States (20.3% as compared to 20.5%). Daughters chafe against the parental regime to join their brothers or their husbands in the United States, and many have succeeded in overcoming parental objections. Thus, Concepción, the father of two sons and five daughters, had one married daughter, two single daughters, and his eldest son working in restaurants on the west side of

Los Angeles in 1992. The younger, single daughters were allowed to cross the border because they would be living with a married sister, as well as having the protection of their brother. Twenty-nine of the 31 male heads of household (including those born elsewhere and those born in Los Arboles) who have daughters in the United States also have sons there. That more offspring of those born elsewhere would be in the United States shows, first, their full incorporation into sending community networks, and second, that once migration networks mature, the poorer members of the community, often equivalent to in-migrants without a land base, will use them to a greater extent than the well-off. Most of the better off on the *rancho* can assure at least one of their sons an *ejido* rights and/or private property of sufficient extent that they need not immigrate. This option is not always available to those born elsewhere, though it sometimes becomes available through marriage to the daughter of one of the better off *ejidatarios* or landowners born in Los Arboles. In sum, as has long been shown in the literature on Mexican immigration and most recently underscored by Cohen (2002, 2004), those who do not migrate remain “non-movers” for three primary reasons: (1) lack of economic resources that would permit them to face the costs and risks of the move; (2) lack of social network resources that might substitute for economic resources; and (3) relative affluence or well-being that makes migration unnecessary.

CONCLUSIONS

When examining a locus of heavy out-migration to destinations in another country, it is important to look at in-migration to that locus as well as other extra-community linkages. A dynamic and growing population climax such as the rural *rancho* of Los Arboles tends to incorporate in-migrants from outlying, more impoverished, *ranchos* into its transnational migration networks, through marriage, friendship, and *compadrazgo*. Networks therefore expand not only at destination, in the United States (Wilson, 1998), but also at origin, providing people originating in other locales the social capital/network resources at the command of the sending *rancho*. The in-migrants may later offer aid in the migration process to friends, relatives, and *compadres* in their own *ranchos* of origin or even to relatives who have migrated elsewhere in Mexico in search of work. The migration network at origin must, in many cases, be seen as an extensive and expanding web linking a variety of population centers.

In-migrants to a dynamic population center often have relatively less economic and social capital than the locally born to aid them in the transnational migration process. But, over time, they become included in the local reciprocity networks (including immigration networks) through marriage, friendship, or ritual kinship relations. Being poorer, they often take advantage of the immigration option to a greater extent than those locally born; however, they can only do this as their social capital increases.

Fictive kinship ties often link a variety of communities, as Nutini and Bell (1980) showed for the community of Belén, in Tlaxcala. In the 1900s, Belén was linked to communities in 6 other *municipios* through *compadrazgo*; by the 1970s, they had ties with 69 other communities in 24 of the state's *municipios* (Nutini & Bell, 1980, pp. 240, 251). They also had fictive kinship ties with members of communities in Puebla, Hidalgo, Morelos, Michoacán, and Mexico City (Nutini & Bell, 1980, p. 151). Most of these ties were formed at work sites through processes of internal migration, most of it seasonal and temporary. Los Arboles transnational immigrants have forged ties through marriage and common deportation experiences, which sometimes led to settlement in Los Arboles, with people from Veracruz and Guanajuato, among other states.

The expansion of networks at origin is an important phenomenon as it explains why a given migration stream may not dry up even though extraordinarily high proportions of household heads born in the primary sending community have entered that stream and have offspring and siblings living permanently or semi-permanently in the United States. Such prior immigration by those of the locally born may lead to a community's development, with "luxuries" such as access to electricity, potable water, upgraded housing, and small businesses selling food, clothing, or other consumer goods. Such "luxuries" constitute a "magnet" for residents of poorer, outlying *ranchos*, as do the chances of finding work as sharecroppers on lands owned by those who are absent in the United States or as day laborers with those whose land class is large enough for them to require workers at peak periods in the agricultural cycle. These in-migrants, initially poorer than those born in the sending community, eventually become incorporated into local reciprocity networks (including migration networks) and can access the social capital which such networks bear. Such social capital can be converted into the economic capital associated with working in the United States. In-migration to dynamic sending communities thus increases transnational migration. Marriage and *compadrazgo* relationships with members of spatially near communities can also result in the access by "outsiders" (such as wives' or husbands' siblings and other relatives) to a

locally based transnational migration network. Community boundaries are breached to incorporate others: bounded, in the sense of closed, communities do not exist and networks keep expanding.

NOTES

1. Within Mexico, internal migration is also facilitated by kinship, friendship, and *paisano* based networks that aid in the migration process itself by providing temporary housing, for example, and in the adaptation process at destination by help in finding employment and orientation to city life (Balán, Browning, & Jelin, 1973; Browning & Feindt, 1971; Butterworth, 1962; Cohen, 2002, 2004; Hirabayashi, 1983, 1993; Kemper, 1977; Lomnitz, 1976, 1977; Ugalde, 1974; Wilson, 1992, 1994). Most of the internal migrants from Los Arboles went to the nearby city (less than 2 hours by bus) of Guadalajara, though some families tried their hand as far north as San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora, and Mexicali, Baja California. Although I did not interview these internal migrants though I conversed with several of them my impression from talking to their relatives is that some migrated for educational reasons and then stayed on, some left looking for employment, and others married people from that city and decided to remain there.

2. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 119) defined social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintances and recognition. Portes (1995, p. 12) defined social capital as referring “to the capacity of individuals to command scarce resources by virtue of their membership in networks or broader social structures.” I would argue that scarce resources can include time, labor (including affective labor), goods, and services, as well as monetary aid. Durrenberger (2002) challenges the use of the idea of social capital because if everyone has social relations, then everyone controls capital, a syllogism that makes class differences invisible (see Wood, 2007, pp. 7–8, for a summary of arguments for and against using the concept). Bourdieu (1986) was careful to distinguish between economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. As Natrajan and Ilahaine (2003) point out that the differentiated positions of individuals within social space can be mapped “according to the distribution of different forms of capital.” They follow a Weberian, rather than a Marxist, definition of class, however. A strong distinction between economic and social capital may be sufficient to overcome Durrenberger’s more Marxist informed objections. The tension between social capital, wherein some people without resources (economic capital) may have kinship or social ties to the more affluent, and economic capital, wherein different people within a social network may have differential access to the means of production, is important to underscore and may throw light on the dynamics of class societies. For example, social network ties and the capital they bear may account for the quiescence of the dispossessed when looking at economic capital alone rebellion or revolution would be expected. Furthermore, as I have shown elsewhere, transnational immigrants who occupy different class positions at origin are often homogenized into an underclass at destination (Wilson, 2004).

Notably, in his study of internal migration from three villages in Oaxaca, two of them Zapotec, Hirabayashi (1993) has sought to substitute “cultural capital” for social capital. Though this may be a useful idea when discussing well defined ethnic/cultural groups, it might be less useful in trying to map a “national character” by looking at some segment of the society to define the culture of the whole. In any case, networks have been shown to provide aid and assistance for immigrants from different countries living in a variety of countries, and thus the concept of networks bearing capital seems to be a social, rather than a cultural, phenomenon.

3. In July and August 1989, José Jesús Cano Paredes and Margarita Montijo Moreno, two sociology students at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Mexicali, and I interviewed 211 members of 203 of 207 households resident on the *rancho* I call Los Arboles. All members of seven other households were living in the United States. Male heads of household were interviewed except in cases where husbands were absent in the United States or where females headed households as widows. In total, 152 male heads of household answered questions as to their birthplace, spouse’s birthplace, immigration, and work history, including years of crossing, destination(s), which network members accompanied the migrant, and which offered aid at the destination point in the United States on each trip. There were also questions as to which relatives were in the United States and where. More in depth, open ended interviews were conducted with members ($N = 32$) of five extended families by me during a two month stay on the *rancho* in 1990. I wish to thank the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research for a small grant that facilitated the study of the *rancho* in Jalisco. Notably, all personal names used, and the name of the *rancho*, are pseudonyms.

4. In his study of the rapidly diversifying Zapotec mountain village of Ralu’a in Oaxaca, Hirabayashi (1993, et passim) also found in migration from surrounding Zapotec villages despite coinciding high rates of out migration of villagers to Mexico City. Whether these in migrants to Ralu’a were eventually incorporated into local village networks is not explored.

5. In Los Arboles, *ejido* lands are communally owned but individually tenured lands, not to exceed 10 hectares per parcel. At the time of the study, *ejido* lands could not legally be rented or sold, though this often happened. They could be handed down to eligible offspring; according to the local *Ejido* Commission of Los Arboles, they were to be handed down as an integral parcel, with preference given to a son. Since changes in the Agrarian Reform Law under President Salinas de Gortari (1988 1994), *ejido* lands can now be rented, sold, or mortgaged.

6. All names are pseudonyms.

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RESTAURANT TIPPING: SHORT-CIRCUITING THE MORALITY OF THE MARKET

Daniel Suarez

ABSTRACT

Current theoretical frameworks within economics have so far been unable to adequately explain why people tip. This chapter synthesizes anthropological method and theory into a symbolic interactionist approach, attempting to access, through ethnography, the negotiated meanings underlying and actuating tip payment in Vancouver restaurants. Customers tip for a variety of reasons, including (1) for good service, (2) to follow a social norm, (3) out of sympathetic feelings, (4) to demonstrate or enhance social standing, and (5) to secure a specific preference. The disconnect between common rationalizations for tipping, which are often reflections of formalist economic canon, and how customers actually tip, that is, according to social, cultural, and moral factors, suggests that the popular distinction between “economic” and “non-economic” exchanges is ideologically maintained. Tipping illustrates the existence and contours of what Hart (2005) refers to as the two circuits of social life – but also that these two circuits are ideological constructs.

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How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature which interest him in the fortunes of others and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it.

Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*

It's about salesmanship, whether you're selling food or wine or clothing ... or yourself along with it.

Christina, server

THE VAGARIES OF THE TIP

Across the United States, an estimated \$42 billion is exchanged in restaurants alone in the form of gratuities, or tips, every year (Azar, 2007a). Its presence in contemporary North American society is ubiquitous and participation appears difficult to avoid: on average, 10% of Americans dine out on a given day, with 58% doing so in a given month (Lynn, 2006). These exchanges provide financial support to millions of service sector employees and often account for a substantial proportion of their income. Yet, tipping remains an unsettled and fundamentally disorienting puzzle, as it so effortlessly defies and confuses the guiding concepts of both academics and restaurant diners alike. Imagine, for a moment, that familiar scene. The server has almost ceremonially and with a courteous smile placed the bill face down on the table, conspicuously withdrawing and leaving behind a hushed (and possibly awkward) silence for you to consider: *how much do I tip?* As much ritual as proper economic exchange, the ensuing transaction is fraught with revealing ambiguities. This chapter presents exploratory ethnographic research in Vancouver restaurants specifically addressing the motivations underlying and actuating tip payment. It then interprets and contextualizes these results against a number of ongoing discourses, drawing special attention to how these approaches may render, undermine, or even reify the ideology and peculiar moral order subtending capitalist societies.

The theoretical implications of tipping suggest a challenge to prevailing and fundamental assumptions of “the rationality of economic man” (Lynn & McCall, 2000, p. 8), while also presenting a revealing window into how individuals conceptualize the position of markets in organizing social life. Hart (2005, 2007a) describes an implicit yet forceful dichotomy dividing capitalist societies into two separate and morally disconnected “social circuits.” Their respective flows distinguish, for example, personal domestic exchanges from impersonal market ones. Hart (2005, pp. 166–167) explains:

One sphere is a zone of infinite scope where things ... are bought and sold for money, *the market*. The second is a protected sphere of domestic life, where intimate personal

relations hold sway, *home*. ... Money in capitalist societies stands for alienation, detachment, impersonal society, the outside. ... Relations marked by the absence of money are the model of integration and free association, of what we take to be familiar, the inside.

The tip poses an apparent paradox, as it is at once both profoundly moral yet inescapably economic, using money as its symbolic medium. This chapter presents the tip as an especially incongruous and ideologically subversive monetary exchange, a conceptually disfiguring point of collision, where the two circuits of modern life converge and the distinction between “economic” and “non-economic” transactions collapses.

Research on restaurant tipping has generally gravitated toward the economist’s domain, often with an applied focus (Azar, 2003; Bodvarsson & Gibson, 1999; Lynn, 2004; Lynn & McCall, 2000; Rind & Strohmets, 1999). However, theoretical problematization reveals critical shortcomings harbored by standard economic conceptions for fully understanding these transactions (Azar, 2004a, 2007b), as tipping evidently departs from that discipline’s basic assumptions of the “selfish” consumer as economic actor and thus has been generally considered both “irrational” and “mysterious” (Lynn, 2006). Most notably, tips are an entirely voluntary expense that is technically free to avoid, found to be only weakly related to the actual quality of the service rendered (Lynn & McCall, 2000), and given after the provision of service. Butler and Skipper (1981, p. 15) observed that tips are not “specified by contract” and are thus largely “dependent on trust and the anticipation of reciprocity.” Including game theory, which considers the anticipation of future behavior of other transactors (thus allowing “return visitors”), does little to help, as informants in this ethnography and other studies still overwhelmingly admit to tipping when traveling or where the chance of a return visit is extremely unlikely (Azar, 2007a; Conlin, Lynn, & O’Donoghue, 2003). It would appear that either “tippers are poor game theorists” (Lynn & McCall, 2000, p. 24) or that something else animates this apparently anomalous circulation of money beyond the scope of the economic assumptions outlined above.

The question then arises: *why are we tipping?* Although many of the factors resulting in increased tip payment have already been the subject of much scrutiny from economists, these patterns and what actually motivates these patterns are two separate problems. The latter problem, that is, why transactors believe they give and receive tips, why they should give and receive tips, and how these beliefs are constituted, is the primary concern of this ethnography. Here, we enter the theoretical domain of symbolic interactionism, a place the neo-classical economist is poorly equipped to

deal with as we find a field of interaction permeated by a richness of socially constructed and variably conceived expectations, meanings, values, and social norms negotiated in a variety of ways by participants. This indeterminacy, as server and customer often lack a clear idea of what would constitute an appropriate tip amount, further distinguishes the exchange and results in a highly negotiable and hypersensitive field of symbolic interaction. Azar (2005) acknowledges that the inclusion of “social norms” and “feelings” into economic explanatory models remains controversial. Thus, while economists have meticulously broken down how individuals tip, they have also largely sidestepped why.

The question of tipping evokes what Polanyi (1944) argued was the theoretical schism between economic “formalists” and “substantivists,” a debate which anthropologists quickly and enthusiastically joined (Bohannan, 1955; Dalton, 1960; Cook, 1966; Isaac, 2005). In contrast to the “embeddedness” (cf. Granovetter, 1985) promoted by substantivists, the formalist perspective, in essence, that of neo-classical economics, asserts a specific kind of logic as guiding economic and thus human behavior. Bodvarsson and Gibson (1997, p. 189) preface their analysis of tipping by explaining the standard view that “in order to generate unambiguous predictions about the most important elements of human behavior, the strict adherence of a simple, consistent view of human motivation is necessary.” Such a reductive approach, however methodologically expedient or practical, both explicitly and implicitly views the social human as an individuated utility maximizer, fundamentally self-interested, minimizing costs while maximizing benefits. Fourcade and Healy (2007, pp. 286–287) note, “At both micro and macro levels, so it seems, economic theory elevates egoism to paradigmatic status . . . today, the neoclassical approach that formalized modern economic theory generally posits that individuals maximize their utility in all social relations.” The “billion dollar exception” (Lynn & McCall, 2000, p. 7) of restaurant tipping seriously challenges this postulate whose propositions, as we shall see, reverberate beyond the academy and penetrate into the lived experience of the restaurant dining table itself.

The tip’s hybridity presents another challenge to familiar categorizations. It displays properties of conventional economic exchange in that a service is rendered for money, fitting neatly into what is generally understood to be a highly commodified, alienated, capitalist framework alongside other similarly structured market transactions. At the same time, however, we see elements of Maussian gift exchange and other social dynamics that we typically associate with markedly non-market and non-capitalist modes of interaction. This conceptual confusion resounds in the controversies

surrounding the tip's legal and moral status as its practice proliferated in North America in the early 20th century. Zelizer (1994, p. 95), sifting through this period in economic history, found that "tipping presented ... a fundamental puzzle: it lay at the boundary of other critically different transfers, not quite a payment, not quite a bribe, not quite charity, but not quite a gift either." Similarly, Shamir (1984, p. 61) recognized that because of its "flexible and evasive character ... no single line of reasoning can satisfactorily account for the phenomenon," and he surmised that the act rests upon a convoluted and sometimes uneasily conflicting tangle of economic, social, and psychological motivations.

Of particular interest to this chapter is that tipping, as revealed by these ambiguities, presents a conceptually problematic point of convergence between two ideologically separated circuits of social life: it is but one short-circuiting of both the calculative rationality ascribed to market relations and the sheltered morality residing at the market's periphery. The assertions from informants concerning why people tip when contrasted to the ways customers actually tip renders this superimposed compartmentalization transparent and leaves the emperor without clothes. What remains appears drastically different from what I and even servers themselves at first anticipated and suggests that the tip is as much ideologically motivated and morally compelled as straightforwardly rational.

METHODOLOGY

Economic research on tipping has generally had a strong empirical footing, but its theoretical inflexibility often overlooks many of the tip's defining social features. Conversely, explicit anthropological forays into the topic have remained somewhat abstract (Shamir, 1984; Foster, 1972). This study attempts to apply a symbolic interactionist theoretical approach, with an emphasis on ethnographic fidelity, to the ongoing discourse on tipping within economics and to relevant anthropological perspectives on exchange. The research used in formulating this chapter is composed of my own experiences and observations serving and a series of formal and informal interviews with servers and customers in Vancouver restaurants. In some contexts, for example, in many restaurants when tables exceed certain size thresholds or in some other countries, the gratuities are commonly included in the final price quoted in the bill as a service charge. This ethnography focuses on voluntary tip payment, where the tip is left wholly at the discretion of the customer.

My own experience consists of 5 years of working my way through the service industry, from serving over Vancouver café counters to waiting tables at a fine-dining restaurant in a five-star Edinburgh hotel. This experience, having worked in restaurants in a variety of capacities and places, has afforded me a sort of emic familiarity with how the tip works and what it represents across a diverse range of contexts. I can recall the satisfaction of receiving a tip larger than the bill, the frustration of finding no tip at all (along with the tension of the ensuing confrontation), the uncomfortable pause after being asked by embarrassed foreign guests how much they ought to tip me, and many other memorable footnotes that inevitably color 5 years in such a profession. While admittedly, my intentions were initially more financially minded than explicitly motivated by an interest in participant observation, the accumulated discussions, observations, and insights made possible by these interactions have been indispensable in guiding this ethnography.

This personal experience complements the formal and more explicitly research-oriented component of this study, conducted in 2007 and 2008. This research consists of a series of structured interviews with several of the more experienced servers I met supplemented by many more informal interviews with other servers and customers. I initiated contact with informants at urban Vancouver restaurants with consistent and fairly moderate price-points and non-niche menus. I encountered an exuberant diversity of responses, ranging from tipping critics to tipping defenders, non-tippers to over-tippers, and from sheepish confessions to judgmental sermonizing. This abundant and richly varied data set, even in restaurants deliberately selected for similarity, was more than sufficient for the exploratory scope of this study, so I opted to maintain this narrow focus. All of the servers participating in this study were evening servers. I interviewed them as their shifts ended, so as to access their perspectives on tipping as closely as possible to their last encounter with it. I interviewed both men and women of varying ages and with varying levels of experience. In nearly all of the restaurants I contacted, both the managers and servers were enthusiastic to participate. I realized that the prospect of studying the tip was often as entertaining for them as it was for me. I have frequently observed the enjoyment many servers find in gossiping about their customers, exchanging advice, and trading memorable and often didactic restaurant anecdotes, with the tip as the central currency of storytelling. In this light, their cooperation is understandable, as my research attempts to access a fairly ripe discourse already established within restaurants.

Defining my field of interest became an important methodological issue, given that tipping is not isolated to any particular group of people but instead diffuses throughout society often in manifestly different ways. As many servers are intuitively aware, a given customer's tipping behavior and corresponding beliefs about what it represents appear to vary sharply depending on that customer's specific background. Again, given the exploratory scope of this study, a more pointed approach seemed more appropriate than directly attempting to assess the heterogeneous and overwhelming totality of customers' views on tipping. Although this study certainly draws on perspectives provided by many customers, this overview is hardly exhaustive, and so this chapter privileges the perspective of the server. As the central protagonist in this study, the server's intimate familiarity and unique frame of reference with respect to the tip provides the most extensive vantage point from which to view the tip's underlying patterns and mechanics. Perhaps predictably, the most articulate and fruitful responses came from more experienced servers and so I analyze their perspectives especially closely. Their assertions concerning the tip, including their inferences about what generally compelled people to leave them, tended to correspond closely with the impressions of customers. While there were few fundamental disagreements in this respect, I did find discrepancies between responses from servers and customers concerning which motivation prevailed over the others and especially on moral evaluations of the practice, both of which I will discuss later in this chapter.

The geographic heterogeneity of the tip presents a further methodological hurdle. Although my own experience extends beyond Canada, this study examines the tip as practiced in Vancouver, a unique setting hardly representative of the tip universally (if such a construction is even useful to consider). This setting does, however, come with a few benefits. First, as I can personally attest, tipping in Canada appears as widespread as in the United States, with Canadians leaving an estimated \$5 billion in tips annually (Azar, 2007a). Vancouver is also decidedly multi-ethnic: by 2001, 18.2% of the city's working-age population was composed of immigrants who had arrived in the decade leading up to that year (Statistics Canada, 2003), often originating from backgrounds with more subdued or even non-existent tipping traditions. This pronounced ethnic diversity, combined with the multi-billion dollar contribution to food services from the city's growing tourism sector (Dobinson, 2008), presents an enticing set of cultural interfaces across which the tip's idiosyncrasies become more readily apparent. I shared some especially interesting discussions with servers about these cultural differences, which have

apparently generated a lot of confusing, anxious, and also highly amusing scenes.

I initially planned to interview servers and customers in pairs so as to compare and contrast their interpretation of the same meal and tip. However, it became immediately apparent that both servers and customers felt uncomfortable with this idea – itself an informative demonstration of the social influence that the tip and its delicate protocols can muster. While perhaps from a research perspective this squeamishness made the idea even more attractive, these concerns ultimately forced me to conduct interviews with customers and servers independently, although at the same restaurants. I also did not examine tipping in restaurants with varying price-points, ethnic types, and management styles, again, given the exploratory scope of this study.

WHY DO WE TIP?

I found that customers tip for a variety of different reasons, and coded responses into the following five categories: (1) *service-tipping* to ensure good service and to discourage bad service; (2) *expectation-tipping* to avoid social sanction, embarrassment, or other negative consequence from violating a social norm; (3) *sympathy-tipping* to satisfy feelings of sympathy, compassion, or guilt; (4) *status-tipping* to demonstrate or enhance social standing; and (5) *bribery-tipping* to secure some specific desire or preference (e.g., a better table or non-menu item). These categories reflect responses from both customers and servers, and are emphatically not mutually exclusive, nor necessarily discrete as they operate in varying combination and extent. Note the diversity of these motivations. While informants seemed to intuitively recognize and experience them as acting in conjunction, accommodating the wide conceptual gulfs that separate these factors proved a much more disorienting (and interesting) exercise. Before moving onto more theoretical discussion and analysis, I will briefly explain and illustrate each motivating factor. One server, Lindsay, a waitress at a South Main Street restaurant, remarkably explained all five categories (which I have numbered) in almost a single breath:

By tipping, you're ensuring you're getting good service [#1], and if you tip really well, the next time you go in, the manager might even buy you a drink, you might get a better table [#5]. I mean, and some people just like to show that they have a lot of money sometimes. It's kind of fun to be like, "oh you know keep the change I guess" [*masculine*

accent] [#4]. Hmm It's just become expected [#2] and, like I said, many people have been in the service industry [#3].

Bribery-Tipping: Many informants explained to me how customers would use the tip to actively secure “extras” to service, for example, a better table, a non-menu item, or some other special desire beyond the usual expectations of a meal: essentially, tipping as bribery. However logical such a rationale may be, none of my informants themselves admitted to using the tip in such a way, which would entail tipping before service for some specified preference, and most claimed they were reluctant to do so in the future. Shamir (1984) suggests that the ambiguity of the tip, where the obligations of customer and server are left unspecified, distinguishes tipping as a social rather than an economic exchange. Comparing the tip to another similar and more obviously social exchange, that of gifts, helps to clarify the resistance of the tip to such a utilization. In either scenario, specifying too directly and vehemently the terms of exchange, in other words, making overly explicit what one expects for what one gives, circumvents the voluntary character and appearance of spontaneity central to both exchanges. In the restaurants I examined, customers perceived the bribery tip as somewhat garish, servers described it as slightly crude and undignified, and both found even the prospect of tipping in such a way a discomforting breach of tipping norms that they would prefer to avoid.¹

Status-Tipping: In contrast to customers, servers readily volunteered their frustrations with the power relations connoted by the tip. Specifically, they voiced their impression that the tip is one instrument of consumption where the customer can (and, they say, frequently does) make explicit his or her differential status, whether that is through generosity or condescension or both. Lindsay expressed her perspective:

You know, every now and again, you get to the point where you're like, whoa, I'm serving somebody. Like, I'm serving somebody!?! I don't want to be *servin*g. I mean, you get that subservient feeling sometimes. And so you do it for the money, but then, I think, after awhile you feel like you don't want to do it as a career. I don't want to *serve* people my whole life. You know what I mean? The money is great. . . . But I think eventually you get tired of sucking up to some asshole.

Although servers said they were generally happy to receive this extra income, they sometimes construed the tip as a patronizing and thus latently aggressive gesture meant to elevate the giver and belittle the receiver. Zelizer (1994, p. 96) notes one early critic's public denunciation of the tip as it became increasingly popular a century ago as “what one American is willing

to pay to induce another American to acknowledge inferiority.” Rob, a server at a Broadway restaurant, described how:

People look at me, you know, like I’m the lowest piece of crap on the planet I don’t know where that comes from. Maybe they have more money. But I mean that position of “serving” or “service industry” job I’m somehow a rung lower than, say, a lawyer? Who does the same thing, who serves people a certain service?

The power dynamics implicit in the tip tend to receive much attention from those considering its social dimensions. Shamir’s (1984) largely theoretical exploration of the tip reiterates the “social exchange rationale,” which places the tip squarely within the realm of gift exchange. This line of reasoning focuses on its aggressive character and suggests that transactors, through acts of giving and reciprocal counter-giving, vie to discharge their obligations and thus their own potential subordination while trying to cultivate this same sense of indebtedness in others to establish superiority. Shamir (1984, pp. 64–66) explains:

The exchange of gifts is seemingly voluntary, but in fact highly obligatory. . . . Free giving becomes a way of establishing and maintaining social status and power. . . . The customer is both unwilling to be dependent on the service giver and interested in maintaining personal superiority. In order to do so, he tips the service giver and so escapes his obligations under social exchange and imposes his superior identity. . . . The gratuity from this perspective is not an expression of gratitude, as is commonly believed, but rather a *defense* against gratitude. . . . Its aim is not so much to motivate the service giver as to confirm the superior status of the customer.

While the extension of this rationale to tipping encounters several problems (which I will revisit), the view that status inequalities play a central part in setting the tone of the server–customer relationship is common among customers and especially servers. Christina, a server at an East Vancouver restaurant with 18 years of experience, had much to say on this issue:

I mean, essentially, you’re receiving money for servitude. Let’s not get away from that. And there is a slightly desperate quality about that which is, I think, what can be kind of humbling about this business: it is about servitude . . . and that is what we’re being paid for. . . . I think when you’re dealing with ideas of servitude, when you are talking about jobs that, in medieval times, in renaissance times, even 150 years ago, would have been done by a household staff, who is . . . carrying your food on a tray, hemming your pants, polishing your shoes, when you’re talking about those kinds of things, because we no longer live in a culture where we live in mansions or where it’s even politically correct to have a fleet of servants and maids . . . but when you walk into a restaurant you can pretend that you do have them. And I think that that’s the power trip that a lot of people have . . . why some people are so degrading and so patronizing and so condescending to their server, because, for a moment, *it makes them feel like a feudal lord*. So I think when you’re dealing with those sorts of professions, do you know what I mean, where you are

being buffed, and polished, and served, and stroked, your ego's being stroked along with it. It makes you feel like some feudal lord of yesteryear ... you're paying for that privilege. It's why you tip the guy who gives you a massage, a shave, your haircut, but not the guy who does your taxes, you know? There's an element of power.

Her remarks begin to illustrate the tip's psychological as well as social dimensions. As with many rituals, the tip not only plays a role in reinforcing and structuring social relationships, but it may also "cater to psychic comforts and ego gratifications" and "enhance the customer's sense of psychological well-being" (Shamir, 1984, p. 69). As Christina observes, "the tip ingratiates the customer not only to the perceptions of others, but also to the tipper himself." From her perspective, the tip evokes a historically loaded set of nearly caste-like power relations, which customers leverage to make themselves feel privileged. Many female servers independently admitted to fearing groups of middle-aged women for similar reasons. Jennifer, another server at Rob's restaurant, described "Middle-aged women who are bitter and angry. And jealous of us. ... I really think so. They would treat male servers different. I think when you get the bitter middle-aged women, they pay down women and I think they're angry and they'll be really cheap." Christina had come to a similar conclusion, charging that "groups of teachers are brutal. Especially if they're female teachers ... large groups of middle-aged professional women are pretty much the worst. I don't know why." Gender roles, it would seem, also play a central part in the tip's interplay of status inequalities. Christina later began to speak more generally and attempted to discern a motive behind the occasional customer's hostile behavior, especially when followed by a generous tip:

Some people really do talk to their service staff like they're less than human, and I hate to say it, but they're the ones who tend to tip well, and I think there's maybe a little bit of misogyny wrapped up in that, probably a little bit of racism sometimes, and I think that they're paying to appease that beast.

Jennifer, again independently, similarly said: "I find that there are people who abuse the server, being mean and snappy, and then they tip *big*. And my theory is that ... they're paying for the privilege of being mean to the server. It happens. More often than I'd like." Ironically, as I will discuss later, servers also suggest this dimension of tipping as providing them with the opportunity to consummately exploit this apparently anxiety-inducing status differential, by manipulating, accommodating, and controlling customers' sense of comfort and sense of their respective roles, giving the server a sort of countervailing agency.

Sympathy-Tipping: Both customers and servers believed tips were at least partially given out of a sense of sympathy, and, at times, charity, guilt, or pity. Servers especially would regularly describe the “unspoken rule” among current and former service-sector employees and particularly restaurant workers, which instills a kind of compulsion to tip generously, and emphasized how their shared experience (how “we’ve all been there”) engenders a special kind of appreciation. Rob described how one of his customers, who he later found out was a server at another Vancouver restaurant, returned hours after his father had paid a bill with no tip to supplement it with a large tip because of the guilt he experienced. Many informants said they also felt a sense of solidarity rooted in the mutual awareness that servers earn minimum wage, and described an emotional reaction and sensitivity to what they perceived as the structural inequality that serving represents. The tip is thus given partly to appeal to the customer’s personal sense of fairness or equity, to assuage a “guilty conscience” as Rob suggests. One limitation of the social exchange rationale for tipping is that, in contrast to ritual gift exchange, the tip is usually given privately and inconspicuously. Both servers and customers acknowledged that something more psychological also contributes to tip payment, something directed inward and resembling Adam Smith’s “moral sentiment” quoted in the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter, essentially internalized feelings of compassion, guilt, or even pity.

Expectation-Tipping: Expectation-tipping (simply “following the rules”) was stated by all informants to be a principal determinant of tip payment. All informants recognized that, for better or worse, the custom is now an entrenched, powerfully compelling, and highly respected social norm whose rules are greatly sensitive to deviance. Rob stated simply that “they just don’t want to look bad, which is what happens when they don’t tip,” and admitted that because “some people . . . may not want other people to know that they only tip 10%,” the tip is to some extent coerced through fear of embarrassment. The possible shame and culpability of even associating with a known violator of these tipping rules apparently exerts enough social pressure to compel customers, as in Rob’s example of the son who returned to rectify a tip hours after his father’s infraction, to not only tip on their own bills, but to proactively enforce tip payment on others’ bills as well. The customers I spoke with were generally mortified by the idea of a confrontation with a server over an inappropriately small tip, although some also reacted defensively, criticizing what they perceived as an undue sense of entitlement on the part of servers.

Most customers I interviewed claimed to tip according to some rough but conveniently consistent baseline, which streamlines the exchange and allows transactors to avoid dealing explicitly with the tip's latent symbolic potency. This baseline is the reference by which both customer and server parse the tip's meaning. It is often highly specific by customer and mediated by social context. Most servers I spoke to had developed a sophisticated customer typology, a heuristic sense for what kind of tip they could expect of customers from various places of origin or from different age, gender, race, or other group types as they walked through the entrance. Most informants said they themselves tended to tip around 15% on the bill for the meal (the implicit standard in North America, they said), but many servers believed that Vancouver tippers tended to tip more cheaply. Servers described the dreaded 0% tip, or "stiff," but they explained that often the more provocative infraction is when the customer leaves a tip of nearly but not quite 0%, which signals both acknowledgment of participation in tipping and also disrespect or even contempt for the server.

Service-Tipping: While many informants recognized the combined importance of the motivating factors I have just described, Jennifer maintained that "there are some people who tip the same no matter what, but I think that's more of a minority . . . because I think it works. I think it encourages better service." This pervasive belief, that "tipping ensures good service" was reiterated in some form by nearly all my informants and often in virtually the same words by servers. What is most striking about these assertions is that they do not coincide with the empirical observations made by economists.

Perhaps surprisingly, Lynn and McCall's (2000) meta-analytic review of tipping, encompassing over 2,000 dining parties, shows that such a relationship between service quality and tip rate is weak and that any effect is overshadowed by strong correlations with mood, attractiveness, friendliness, and social norms. This discrepancy is compounded by the fact that an individual's tip cannot retroactively improve the quality of a service that has already been provided, further contributing to why economists find the exchange so inexplicable. Tip payment, which is itself wholly discretionary and non-contractual, comes after service; it cannot ensure good service but merely rewards it, again, with no contractual obligation to even do so. That any of this did not suggest itself to most of the people I interviewed was frankly astonishing, as they told me, one after the other, that customers tip for good service. This belief, although perhaps not very accurate in practice, is widespread and firmly adhered to among tipping participants and especially servers.

Economists pursuing the related suggestion that repeat customers tip to secure better service for future visits have also achieved limited success at establishing a strong connection between patronage frequency and the provision of these extra niceties (Azar, 2007a; Bodvarsson & Gibson, 1997; Lynn, 2006; Lynn & McCall, 2000). Despite the empirical elusiveness of such a relationship, from the point of view of those in the restaurant, its intuitive logic is clear, persuasive, and readily conforms to popular and familiar sensibilities; many of my informants expressed a great deal of confidence in this principle, that their tip helped secure some tangible but undefined future return. This disjuncture between empirical evidence and the assertions of servers and customers betrays a major divergence between understanding and actual practice: it seems that *how* people tip, as detailed by economists and even servers themselves, appears far removed from participants' understandings of *why* they tip. As I will argue, this wishful rationale conceals the tip's highly ideological nature: the tip depends on transactors' beliefs about its rationality, accurate or not, whose ideological underpinnings are deeply rooted and invite serious consideration.

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE TIP: RATIONAL OR RATIONALIZED?

This discrepancy between the believed rationality of the exchange against its actualized performance requires special attention. While most customers acknowledged various factors as compelling motivators, servers strongly preferred to think of their tips as service tips, from Rob, who stated that "people tip because they like the service they receive," to Christina, who, without hesitation, also responded to the question with a frank "I think it ensures good service." Not only that, but servers felt a peculiar anxiety when considering the implications of what the tip would mean if it is not a straightforward conventional market transaction like they had thought, where the server's specialized talent and professional skill are of economic value and thus, at least in the server's mind, legitimately exchanged for money. We are here presented with a disconnect between the server's assertion of tipping as rational market exchange, and the starkly contrasting practical reality. After telling me a story of a particularly good tip she once got (100%), Lindsay reflected more generally:

I'd want to know like I really *earned* 15 dollars from them. You know, I almost feel kind of guilty if they leave a really good tip if I didn't really do a good job. . . . I mean, I guess

it's expected in my job, like, we'll expect tips, but sometimes, you know, if you're getting 20 dollars just for bringing some food over to a table, sometimes I think it's like . . . Ah! Like, I want it for a *really good job*.

In moments such as these, the server confronts the underlying puzzle of the tip. If the timely movement and orderly presentation of food is only one (apparently subsidiary) aspect of a diverse plurality of precipitating motivations for tipping, the server is left to ask a prickly and uncomfortable question: what kind of an exchange *is* this, really? While, indeed, a service is rendered and money changes hands, something besides the cold dictates of the market animates the transaction. I argue that their expected transactional roles are as much ritually inscribed, morally compelled, and ideologically motivated as economically rational. This line of reasoning, however, encroaches on the legitimization provided by capitalism's fundamental logic and undermines the ideological alchemy transmuting *given* money into justifiably *earned* or *deserved* money. Such thoughts tug at Lindsay's sense of guilt. If the tip is morally obliged, requiring customers by courtesy, custom, and coercion to leave a payment, what room does that leave for service as an economic value to be bought and sold like any other? Christina explains when seriously contemplating the discrepancy between her extensive experience and skill as a server and the fact that people will tip (or not tip) regardless of this quality of service:

It doesn't hurt because of the money. It feels insulting. It's hurtful I think . . . I bring to the table 18 years of experience. Extensive food knowledge. In my career I have been a food critic, I am an excellent server, I am an excellent judge of needs and all of those things and I do feel that it is hurtful to me to feel like those things are of no value. It makes me question my career choice. It makes me question where I'm situated. This? I love working here. This can apply to any restaurant. But it makes me question things like that.

Once again, to the server's consternation, the tip appears unanchored from the comforting legitimacy bestowed by economic convention. The anxiety Christina expresses results in a cognitive dissonance, which is partly neutralized by a belief in the ideology of the capitalist market: the server maintains that serving is a valuable and respected skill, and not a morally inscribed social position warranting the charity, pity, or patronization of others. Here, the formalist's rationality provides an expedient and beguiling rationalization.

Note that this rationalization "reflects not simply a shift in scholarly fashion, but also trends in the public justification of the contemporary economic order itself" (Fourcade & Healy, 2007, p. 286). Tipping exposes a reification of the market. Fourcade and Healy (2007, p. 302) describe "the performativity of economics," where "economic technologies do not just

describe the world, but are profoundly involved in shaping it – to the point of making real agents behave in the way theory says they ought to ... in a world saturated by economic thinking, actors are thus progressively turned into calculative agencies.” They note that the very formulation and cultural deference toward economic theory can “alter the economic actors or process” (Fourcade & Healy, 2007, p. 24) such that they increasingly imitate economic models. Here, the incongruity of the tip provokes the fetishization of economic canon over a practical reality where non-market social dynamics actually prevail. This discrepancy between understanding and practice illustrates the actuation of a compelling and pervasive ideological construct, here drawn to obscure the paradox that tipping itself represents. While informants may have thought they were merely describing the tip using the familiar and authoritative language of economics, they had not yet fully realized their role in reproducing its own peculiar ideology.

Tipping is certainly not alone in North America in revealing these dynamics. Herrmann’s (1997) ethnography of garage sales uncovered another similar and idiosyncratic exchange system. While superficially resembling straightforward market exchange, garage sales also elicited some economically unexpected behaviors and, at times, seemed to resemble gift exchange as well. Herrmann observed garage sale vendors selling items, often of great personal significance, at nominal prices and with little chance of future reciprocity. Significantly, she also noticed that vendors would sell these items cheaply but only in exceptional circumstances for free. In so doing, Herrmann argues that those obligations and decidedly non-economically motivated relations implicit in the gift are neutralized. Once again, we see this neutralization – of the latent feelings of indebtedness and compulsion to reciprocate – in the ideology of market capitalism humming meaningfully in the back of both transactors’ minds. Transactors must exchange some amount of money, “the grease that enables goods to circulate” (Herrmann, 1997, p. 916), however nominal or insubstantial, to assuage the buyer’s sense of guilt, debt, or obligation, and ultimately facilitate an otherwise incongruous non-market social exchange. Herrmann notes that in the event that sellers attempt to give away items of personal importance for free, the buyer may actually insist on paying to maintain this economic rationalization and, in a sense, “bring it into conformity with the expected market model ... to confer some value on the items” (Herrmann, 1997, p. 917) for what would otherwise appear to be gift exchange between strangers or even an act of charity. Herrmann concludes that “the metaphor of the market – that is, all the apparent trappings of buying and selling – simultaneously cloaks and facilitates a web of transactions that

are often as much or more socially engaged as economically rationalized” (Herrmann, 1997, p. 912).

In much the same way, during interviews, servers bent backwards agonizing and trying to articulate and legitimize just why they “deserved” the tip, but the more they thought about it, the less comfortable they became. They began to seriously consider what the tip meant if it was predicated on factors apparently unrelated to service quality, the economic value they thought they brought to the table. When Christina confides: “When I get a tip I don’t see it as a gift. I feel that I’ve *earned* it, and I’ve worked for it. I see it as my wage. It’s my income,” she expresses a common striving among servers. She also, perhaps inadvertently, reveals the ideological obfuscation of a non-market exchange beneath a largely artificial market one. While minimally adequate service is no doubt a precondition for tipping, what precipitates its payment and makes it the “right thing to do” in the diner’s mind appears to transcend straightforward economic rationality.

“AND ONE MAN IN HIS TIME PLAYS MANY PARTS”

While servers may prefer to frame tip payment from the perspective of service-tipping, they admitted that much of what they actually do consists of providing a kind of experience and making customers feel certain ways. Servers would recurrently use highly dramaturgical language when describing their job, and the unmistakable and almost pre-packaged aptness of Goffman’s (1959) “dramaturgical” model for interpreting social interaction immediately suggests itself. Jennifer explained:

Make [customers] believe that they’re special. Because they are. For this moment, for this hour and a half we spend together I get paid to make them feel like they’re special I don’t think I’m being paid to be nice. I think I’m being paid extra to play a part. I mean, it’s an act . . . figuring out what they want and acting giddy, acting aloof, whatever it is.

While servers would often complain of the semantics of status-tipping and sympathy-tipping, they also suggested that the talented server is distinguished by his or her facility for actively assessing and exploiting this same field of symbolic interaction to cajole, manipulate, and control the social perceptions of their customers to maximize their tips. Christina elaborates:

I think most customers who come in, I think 70% of customers, don’t really want to make a decision, they want you to make it for them You either make that process

easy for them or difficult for them. You either patronize them and make them feel silly for not knowing exactly what they want, or you help them . . . most people who go out to eat don't want to think too hard about what they want to eat. I know a lot about food, that doesn't mean most people do. Most people actually don't and they want me to help them out and educate them. And maybe they even want me to tell them what *they* want as opposed to having to think about it themselves. People don't always know they want me to make a decision for them. But they *do*.

As I mentioned earlier, economic research attempting to discern the mechanistic determinants of tipping has often been rather meticulous, and from the literature it would appear that servers have a sizable array of semantic tools at their disposal. Studies have demonstrated that a server can, for example, increase her tips by squatting rather than standing when taking orders; by touching the customer's shoulder or chair ("*The Midas Touch*"); by introducing herself by name; by smiling broadly rather than with pursed lips; by putting flowers in her hair; by drawing a "smiley face"² on her bill; by writing "thank you" and the server's name on the bill rather than just "thank you" or not at all; by remarking about nice weather or how the weather will be nice in the future; by delivering the bill on a check-holder displaying a credit card logo; and so on (Lynn & McCall, 2000; Oveson, 2004, pp. 465–466).

Ritually speaking, tip payment is highly structured and sensitive to deviance. From the beginning of the practice, "the etiquette of tipping became increasingly complex, instructing not only how much to tip, but whom to tip, when to tip, and how to tip" (Zelizer, 1994, p. 95). The situation places servers in a position of authority, however subtle and transient, in terms of setting the pace or tempo of interaction, managing, as Christina describes, a virtual monopoly on the guiding social cues of the meal. Fred Davis's ethnography of cabdrivers describes a "category of persons who, in some social encounters, are treated as if they were not present, whereas in fact they may be indispensable for sustaining the performance" (Davis, 1959, p. 160). Even more so with servers, this position amounts to holding the reins of the ritual structure, with all of the risk of potential embarrassment and etiquette breaches that this structure entails. The intimacy and visceral closeness of the encounter allows the canny server to deploy a semantic and theatrical arsenal, a performance, designed to guide the now unguarded, somewhat vulnerable, and largely sensitized customer's mood, disposition, graciousness, and sense of guilt, carefully shepherding the customer's money into the server's tips. This performance reaches a surprising level of sophistication, as the impulse to "over-serve" is quickly overcome by aspiring servers. Many informants expressed their

belief that sometimes the greatest tip-earners were also the mean ones. As Jennifer explained, their job is not always to make the customer feel at ease or to be maximally friendly, but to play a specific part whose formulation is highly contingent on the particular social context. That same semantic system, which results in so much discomfort and anxiety for the server, also contains within it the potential for them to control and manipulate it, granting a kind of countervailing agency.

Goffman's dramaturgy, reinforced by the responses of servers themselves, urges us to consider tip payment as a form of symbolic social interaction and communication, where the money that changes hands in the tip represents only one facet of a multilayered and nuanced exchange. Peeling these layers away leaves behind a very different and theoretically incomprehensible sort of encounter, and results in the predicament through which economists currently attempt to wade. The tip traverses a shifting and often imprecise field of symbolic interaction, characterized by individually negotiated meanings and values, highly contingent roles, and the visceral and largely improvised interplay of emotion, personality, and feelings. A satisfying explanation for what motivates customers to tip must look beyond the constricting language of prevailing economic theory and language to directly address rather than exclude the social, cultural, and moral dimensions of the exchange.

MAUSS AND THE RECIPROCITY OF THE TIP

Appadurai (1988) observes that anthropologists have experienced some difficulty reconciling the largely non-monetary transactional exchanges characteristic of their traditional research interests and the money-saturated market contexts that increasingly form a part of them, noting that "the tendency to see these two modalities of exchange as fundamentally opposed remains a marked feature of anthropological discourse" (Appadurai, 1988, p. 11). However, unlike sociologists and economists, the anthropologist's preoccupation with cultural variability approaches this dichotomy from the opposite side of the coin. Hart (2007b), alongside other social theorists (e.g., Appadurai, 1988; Carrier, 1991; Herrmann, 1997; Parry & Bloch, 1989), looks back to French sociologist Marcel Mauss, one of the chief instigators of this discourse within anthropology, whose strongly comparative approach and engagement with the broad diversity of known societies (of which modern capitalism is a minority) may prove indispensable in transcending ethnocentric assumptions of contemporary economic exchange.

In his seminal essay, *The Gift*, Mauss (1970) attempted to discern an abiding rationality and logic to ritual gift exchange, whereby a compelling sense of indebtedness is cultivated between giver and receiver. He asks what force in the gift compels the receiver to reciprocate such a display of generosity so reliably. In the so-called “archaic” societies that Mauss discusses – for example, in that of the Pacific Northwest *potlatch*, Maori gift exchange, the Trobriand *kula* ring, and the New Guinean *moka*, he argues that economic exchanges are “totally” engaged, operating as much on the level of the collective as on the level of individual actors. Mauss’s explanation of gift-giving as ritual exchange ruled out the assertion that actors are truly independent or detached from exchanges and can simply withdraw at any time without consequence. The gift, in Mauss’s sense, is not really “free,” as it entangles each transactor’s pride, honor, prestige, and relative status, and is accompanied by a compelling set of obligations and expectations, depending on whether and how it is handled by each transactor. According to Mauss, “The gift not yet repaid debases the man who accepted it, particularly if he did so without thought of return . . . charity wounds him who receives, and our whole moral effort is directed towards suppressing the unconscious harmful patronage of the rich almoner” (Mauss, 1970, p. 63). Thus, “to give is to show one’s superiority” (Mauss, 1970, p. 72) and to accept such a gesture directed at oneself without reciprocation is to publicly acknowledge it in another. The gift is neither inert nor alienable but bundled with a plethora of meaning and symbolism, connecting the giver and the receiver: the gift bears a trace of where and who it came from and is, Mauss argues, profoundly *in*-alienable.

He describes the *hau* in Maori gift exchange, the spiritual component of the gift, and how it compels reciprocity to the initial giver, marking the gift and forming a powerful connection between those who circulate it. Just as the *hau* inscribes the gift with some moral content demanding reciprocity, and just as Herrmann’s garage sale commodities become inalienable through past ownership, so too do tips represent something more than the money that ostensibly comprises them. Foster notes that “even though we may never expect never to see him again,” the waiter “in some fashion haunts us” (Foster, 1972, p. 167) long after the money itself has changed hands. Tip payment, as in these other exchanges, is socially defined, culturally regulated, and involves not only specific transactors, but also the moral status of the community bearing witness and obliging conformity. Mauss refers to this wider social engagement and cultural embeddedness of economic exchange as “total prestation,” where the gift, in a typically Durkheimian fashion, links social actors and comes to represent the dense

web of social relationships and overarching societal structure connecting giver with receiver – and tipper with server. While on an individual level, tipping may appear superficially irrational, we must recognize wider definitions beyond narrowly operationalized notions of economic benefit, such that we include Mauss's consideration of prestige, honour, and relative social status, as well as emotional and psychological factors. Shamir (1984, p. 65) references these considerations in his analysis, noting that "the tip, like the gift, is given under voluntary guise, but in fact under a constraining normative framework" with social implications much as Mauss imagined.

Azar (2004b, p. 756) acknowledges, however delicately, that "feelings and social norms should be included in the utility function of individuals," while Bodvarsson and Gibson (1997, p. 200) admit that "an explanation of gratuities lies beyond the ability of neo-classical economics with its assumption of strict, myopic self-interest." Although tipping is absurd from such an individuated one-off point of view, the tip becomes much more comprehensible when we acknowledge, as Mauss did, that "human beings everywhere find the personal character of the gift compelling and are especially susceptible to its evocation of the most diffuse social and spiritual ties" (Hart, 2007b, p. 481). We must recognize the collectivized and morally significant character of many ubiquitous micro-scale economic exchanges, of which the tip is emblematic. Mauss's reasoning allows us to appreciate that tipping, now almost an institution, transcends individual transactors; it is an activity shared by servers and customers generally, an interaction dispersed into a real (or imagined) community, variously serving collective and individual interests.

Davis's (1959) ethnography of taxi drivers found that despite the anonymous roles of large cities, the kind of informal constraints and regulations that apparently govern tip payment there similarly necessitates something at least approximating a community. Mauss considered these types of exchanges as logical, interested, and functional on a level that includes but is not limited to individuals. The profound social engagement, dramatic visibility, and involvement of social standing and prestige in giving and taking, he reasoned, effectively and tightly controlled the countless potential prisoners' dilemmas that both constitute and threaten any society. In such a way, collective interests beyond those of the individual can overwhelm the occasional errant thought of stiffing one's server. Across these various contexts, from the restaurant, to taxicabs, to hotels, a particular tip represents the focal point of a confluence of social and cultural processes. It is a moment where, as much as transactors are involved in a straightforward optimizing calculus, the cultural medium bridging

transactors crystallizes into a plainly visible dollar payment leaving the customer's hand. Mauss prompts us to consider the tip as both performance of social impulse and deliberate calculated action, where the line dividing theory from praxis intractably blurs.

While this contextualization of the tip may help in rendering it more coherently, the tip also becomes a distinct reminder that, submerged beneath layers of "economic prejudices" (Mauss, 1970, p. 64), the social scaffolding of economic life still endures, and that "if we were not blinded by ideology, we would recognize that the system of *prestations* survives in our societies" (Hart, 2007b, p. 481). Reflecting on contemporary economic exchange, Mauss (1970, p. 66) muses that "the theme of the gift, of freedom and obligation . . . of generosity and self-interest in giving, reappears in our own society like the resurrection of a dominant motif long forgotten." He criticized what he viewed as the perverse structural tendency in modern capitalism to inhibit this sociality of economic life that he observes operating so strongly in other societies. For him, exchanges like the tip represent oases of "good faith, sympathy and generosity in the contracts of hire and service, rents, and sale" (Mauss, 1970, p. 67) in an otherwise dehumanizing economic desert. However, if we are to extend Mauss's line of reasoning to the custom, we must first address its discordant hybridity. Despite sharing many characteristics with gift exchange, it remains firmly yet incongruently attached to money and the constraints of the modern commercial market.

MONEY: THE FRATERNIZER OF IMPOSSIBILITIES

Hart (2007a, p. 14) criticizes the tendency by anthropologists to inflate the contrast between commodified exchange in capitalist societies and exchange in non-market contexts, sometimes allowing themselves to imagine that "money symbolises the world they have rejected for something more authentic elsewhere. This lines them up with the have-nots and against the erosion of cultural diversity by globalisation. Accordingly, they have long had little of interest to say about money." Money is, of course, also increasingly unavoidable: it is the instrument of tip exchange, and ultimately of the whole capitalist system, forcing us to confront its role in defining all kinds of exchanges.

The role and uniqueness of money in tipping somewhat strain the extension of Mauss's interpretation to it. While he viewed gift objects as inalienable and as possessing some strong connection between it and the person who gave it, the tip is made of money, the ultimate alienable commodity, to be exchanged

fleetingly between anonymous transactors. I argue that despite this character of money and rather than losing significance, those situations where money and activities like gift exchange converge actually reveal a semiotic extravaganza and provide useful insights into the ways individuals organize their social lives. The results of this ethnography are in full agreement with Fourcade and Healy (2007, p. 300), as they note that “the intertwining of market activity and moral valuation is so pervasive . . . that the image of a clean division between market and non-market spheres is of very limited utility.” Monetary transactions – rather than rendering “social life cold, distant, and calculating” (Zelizer, 1994, p. 1) – form a compromise with the moralizing cultural forces within which they are embedded.

Zelizer (1994, p. 6) discusses how earlier theorists were “deeply worried about an ever-expanding market relentlessly invading and desiccating all social spaces.” Marx, assessing the interchangeability that money facilitated as it increasingly commensurated anything and everything, argued that money turns “the world upside-down” and “serves to exchange every property for every other, even contradictory, property and object: it is the fraternization of impossibilities. It makes contradictions embrace” (Marx, 1978, p. 105). Incongruous commensurations (*how many berries for your jet plane?*) became increasingly possible, early theorists argued, as money “rendered everything quantifiable according to one scale of value and permitted previously unthinkable comparisons among objects, persons, and activities” (Maurer, 2006, p. 20). Christina tried explaining what it was like to receive a quantifiable dollar value for something as intangible and ineffable as what servers provide: “You are constantly being reviewed, and analyzed, and critiqued, and judged. And that final judgment is what’s left after the bill is paid. And that’s why when it’s nothing, it’s hard not to take it personally, right? Because it is a judgment of your performance, of your *character*.”

The prevailing notion was that money presented a one-way street toward Weber’s rationalization, Simmel’s colorlessness, and Marx’s alienation. Zelizer (1994, pp. 6–7) describes early theorists’ identification of money as:

The perverse magical wand that disenchanting modern life. Money turned the world . . . into an “arithmetic problem.” On purely technical grounds, monetary accounting certainly promoted impersonal rational economic markets. . . . As an objectifier “a god among commodities” money not only obliterated all subjective connections between objects and individuals, but also reduced personal relations to the “cash nexus.”

As Hart, Zelizer, Maurer, Fourcade, and Healy, and others point out, this view, the “powerful ideology of our time that money is a single,

interchangeable, absolutely impersonal instrument – the very essence of our rationalizing modern civilization” (Zelizer, 1994, p. 1), persists as the dominant meta-narrative within the social sciences. Anthropologists, too, adopted the notion that “money and the violence of its abstractions erode the sociability subtending human existence, and the very idea of society itself” (Maurer, 2006, p. 19).

Despite decrying the double-edged nature of this money-catalyzed progress, early foundational theorists tended to dismiss cultural holdovers and resistance to money’s colonization of social life as “residual atavisms” (Zelizer, 1994, p. 7), and as “sentimentalities that lose their significance completely with the growing indifference of money” (Simmel, 1978[c1907], p. 441). They saw money as a totalizing force, as its displacement of the cultural, the social, and the moral moved inexorably toward completion. A growing number of social scientists, however, question such a rigid dichotomy between these two spheres of social life, those distinguished by money exchange and those that aren’t (Fourcade & Healy, 2007).

Tipping delineates the frontier of this monetary colonization of social life. Although “we often experience markets as animated objects exercising a power over us that is devoid of human content, a force that is usually manifested in money form” (Hart, 2005, p. 167), tipping shows how, as much as money augments and subverts social relations, the cultural and social contexts within which money becomes embedded also incorporate an appropriate money’s meaning into new forms. As Mauss himself recognized, although “it appears that the whole field of industrial and commercial law is in conflict with morality Today the ancient principles are making their influence felt upon the rigours, abstractions and inhumanities of our codes” (Mauss, 1970, p. 64). The tip’s myriad idiosyncrasies, its drama, ambiguity, and comedy, are testament to how “people personalize money, bending it to their own purposes” (Hart, 2007a, p. 14). While money undoubtedly casts a long shadow, tipping reminds us that its presence is not fatalistically total. As we shall see, tip payment shows how this fraternization of impossibilities actually unfolds, and illustrates how individuals deal with the incongruities that money technically allows.

THE TWO CIRCUITS OF MODERN LIFE

The inclusion of money in an exchange changes its signification drastically (Hart, 2005, p. 165), and indeed, servers’ perceptions of “what is in the tip” are acutely sensitive to its presence. Tipping seems to form a discomforting

connection between two divergent circuits of social life in capitalist societies: the first, “the everyday, is short term, individuated and materialistic; the other, the social, is long term, collective and idealized, even spiritual” (Hart, 2005, p. 166). These circuits are often identified by the presence or absence of money coursing through them and each demand markedly different behavior. They actuate familiar and well-worn maxims stressing the fundamental duality at the heart of capitalist society, bisecting it into mutually exclusive and morally distinct spheres. Whichever specific visage this dichotomy assumes – public versus domestic, work versus home, outside versus inside, business versus pleasure, it supplies the rules, controls the flows, and governs the moral appropriateness (or inappropriateness) of a given transaction. Hart (2007a, p. 13) suggests this distinction manifests, for example, in the “attempt to separate the spheres in which paid and unpaid work predominated [where] one is ideally objective and impersonal, specialised and calculated [and] the other is subjective and personal, diffuse, based on long-term interdependence.”

Maurer (2006, p. 22) notes how, traditionally, “monetary meanings and uses were often treated in isolation from wider transactional orders.” With tipping, we see this isolation of “monetary meanings” perceptibly collapse. While Hart observes that the project of keeping both circuits separate demands and spends considerable conceptual effort, “it is difficult to keep the personal and the impersonal apart; yet our economic culture demands nothing less of us” (Hart, 2005, p. 166). This conflict is apparent in the tip. Discussions with informants revealed a discomfiting quality of tipping, where elements of social relations typically ascribed to one circuit (like money) overlap incongruously with the other. My discussions with Rob especially evoked such an avenue of interpretation:

I have people who say that they don't tip – they don't feel they need to tip – because I am already getting paid. This was from a lady who was from a small island. You know, like Galliano or something like that. And she dressed like she was sort of Earth friendly and hippieish and stuff. She probably lived on an island most of her life. She's probably not used to coming into the city or doesn't come into the city that often. She's probably not used to going out for dinner, so from her perspective, she probably . . . we'll say, and totally extrapolating on this, but we'll say she lives on this island, she's got lots of friends so she goes to her friends' houses for dinner because there probably aren't any restaurants. So for her it's this weird concept. Why *would* I pay extra?

She is so used to meals being a part of her domestic circuit that securing the personal niceties of service through a cash payment (indicating the circuit of calculative impersonality) would be not only strange but also inappropriate. I encountered this confusion and unease with the tip

frequently when serving guests from other countries where the tip is less prevalent or even actively discouraged. Seen from the outside, tipping appears to violate basic social sensibilities. Many servers struggled to describe what differentiates retail or other service industry jobs, which are largely “un-tipped,” from serving. Rob explains:

I think what's different here as opposed to, say, retail or like a coffee shop, is that with retail and the coffee shop there's a counter. There's still that separation, whereas here there isn't. I am right in a table's *aura* for lack of a better term . . . that area of personal space around you . . . there's sort of an intimacy with serving that doesn't exist at the coffee shop because you've got a counter dividing you. Whereas with the person who's serving you there's not. So there's already, sort of, this wall of like, “you are there and I am here.”

In order to disarm the incongruity of receiving perhaps uncomfortably intimate attention without such a division, Rob says, we tip. Shamir (1984, p. 66) proposes, just as Herrmann did, that the exchange of some token amount of money neutralizes the dissonant social elements of the transaction: “By choosing money as the currency of return (rather than smiles, gifts, etc.) the customers attempt to transform the social exchange into an economic exchange, thereby further reducing their obligations and defending themselves against the implications of social exchange.” In so doing, the metaphor of the market and the pretense of economic rationality are maintained. Rob struggled to describe this immaterial barrier, approximated literally and metaphorically by the coffee counter, subdividing social interaction into its two supposed halves. The coffee counter serves as a placeholder for something much more difficult to describe. It is an effective metonymy for that which is present in non-tipped professions but absent in serving: a comforting reassurance that economic and moral life do not intermingle. Although serving lacks such an impersonalizing counter, the tip, and the money it is made of, appears to provide a similar but tenuous substitute. As I pressed Rob further, he drew the following analogy:

I mean if you go over to someone's house for dinner to hang out and drink some wine . . . and there's a little bit of money . . . how can I describe it? I'm going to think of a good metaphor. It would be the same idea as this is gonna be a really strange metaphor but hopefully it helps I once had a friend who ended up becoming a callboy, and his reasoning was “well, I'm already having sex anyway, so why not get paid for it?” . . . My reasoning for *not* doing that was that adding money to it adds this element where before he was just meeting random cute people and having sexual relations, so there was this element of fun. When the money enters in, I think that element of fun sort of gets left out. Because now you have to do what the other person wants. Because there's money involved. Do you know what I mean? . . . there's this kind of . . . *divide*. You don't have that when you go over to someone's house for dinner because they're your friends.

As money spans an interaction, in the transactors' minds, its signification and meaning switch drastically. While tip payment provides a comforting veneer of market rationality and thus a means of legitimization, it also, ironically, undermines this precarious disguise by simultaneously connecting personal life, through money, to the impersonal market. Rob rather persuasively (if uneasily) compares tipping to prostitution. Although somewhat provocative, his analogy speaks to the incongruous identity of tipping. Exchanges such as these effectively expose and collapse the two ideologically configured circuits of social life, which are generally assumed to be separate, and thereby short-circuit the cold impersonality ascribed to market relations and the morality attributed to acceptably social non-market relations. Such incongruities push our collectively "heightened sense of division between an outside world where our humanity feels swamped and a precarious zone of protected personality at home" (Hart, 2007a, p. 13) to its limits. Exchanges like the tip suggest that while money increasingly permeates social relations, the idiosyncrasies of moral life are likewise transforming money in return.

Zelizer's (1994) history of the transforming uses of North American money in the late 19th and early 20th centuries found, preserved in the popular media of that period, a heated controversy surrounding the increasing popularization of tip payment. Early critics feared what tipping represented: the conflation of two mutually exclusive social spheres, the moral and the economic. There were even attempts to outlaw its practice. To its critics, the tip was something insidious, "a crass corruption of the gift, a mercenary bribe that paid for a stranger's personal service" (Zelizer, 1994, p. 94). They argued that "even when not morally corrupting," the tip was at least "socially demeaning. What sort of gift was it, after all, if it humiliated the recipient? ... Since the recipient was not indigent, tipping was, in fact, worse than charity ... a 'gross and offensive caricature of mercy ... it curses him that gives and him that takes'" (Zelizer, 1994, p. 96). Tipping was seen as symptomatic of money's increasing influence in social life: it was a symbol for the subversive force of capitalism, threatening to undermine moral behavior, commodify social relations, and join the two ideologically (and by their estimation, rightly) separated circuits of social life.

While the servers I spoke to believed this story of the commodified tip – that its payment conforms with market convention, its actual practice, as Lynn and McCall (2000) and others have demonstrated, actually defies such expectations and the tip remains beholden to various socially, culturally, and morally defined factors. Rob's mention of prostitution is especially informative. Rather than entertaining the incongruous notion that the tip is partly a payment for kindness or personal intimacy – a fraternization of

impossibilities similar to receiving, for example, a money birthday-gift from a friend or even, as Rob hinted, an unwarranted offer of money for sex – it is less troubling, and, indeed, less dissonant to simply disguise it. Thus, the ideology of the tip, itself an expression of the compelling mythology of two separate social circuits demanding very different things from us, is maintained. The tip is paradoxically both a physical manifestation and subversion of “this duality . . . the moral and practical foundation of capitalist society” (Hart, 2005, p. 166).

As money continues to traverse, permeate, and augment social interaction, we must acknowledge how the social and cultural processes that money joins likewise appropriate it to their own ends. We cannot dismissively and simplistically label money as the impersonalizing harbinger of the perfectly alienated, rationalized, and colorless capitalist society. Here, Maussian and other non-market dynamics envelope money and the commodifying market ideology that it embodies to create a unique and often deeply personal activity that is neither purely economic nor purely ritualistic, but instead both. In all its ubiquity and conspicuousness, the ordinary tip allows us to question the maintenance and tenability of an artificial dichotomy compelling us to cleave social life into two halves, a rational economically driven one and a non-economically driven social one. We must acknowledge the inherent messiness, indeterminacy, and significant overlap characterizing and confusing the interface between “economic” and “non-economic” exchange and recognize “the exaggeration and reification of the contrast between gift and commodity” (Appadurai, 1988, p. 11) for what it is.

CONCLUSION

I realize that I have offered few if any useful suggestions on how one ought to tip. Instead, my intention here is to draw attention to how tipping is conceived, to identify the value systems upon which its protocols and etiquette so precariously rest and how these beliefs filter back into the practice itself. As Shamir (1984, p. 75) notes of the tip, “neither economic, nor bureaucratic, nor primary social rules can be fully followed and yet they all apply and exert their influence.” Customers tip for diverse and often seemingly contradictory reasons: to avoid punishment, because it is just, out of guilt, to improve self-image, for good service – the list is long. Because of its disorienting hybridity, the tip defies familiar categorizations and the usual expectations of economic exchange cease to provide useful guidance. The individual, upon confronting such an anomaly, defaults to convenient

assumptions, categories, and conceptions. As such, the tip becomes a uniquely revealing window into our conceptual navigation of economic life. It becomes a prism through which an individual's underlying value system is projected.

The performance of tipping, however observationally intelligible, remains largely incoherent with respect to the traditional expectations of prevailing economic theory. The practice of tipping – by its moral signification, its obstinate defiance of the economist's constricting rationality, and the multifaceted ways in which individuals experience, actuate, and comprehend it – points to a deficit in the restrictive categories we have chosen to understand, shape, and ultimately fragment social life. The two circuits of modern life, in demanding conformity to their sometimes arcane obligations, cut a swath through capitalist society that is real in consequence yet paradoxically artificial: they are less a reflection of its essential structure and more a reification of a pervasive ideology overtop of it. The discrepancy between repeated assertions by informants intuitively connecting the tip to service quality and increasing empirical evidence pointing to just the contrary exemplifies this disjuncture between understanding and practice, and the tip appears as much rationalized as truly rational. We fetishize a peculiar interpretation of exchange, that of formalist economic canon, at the expense of "its real fundamentals and . . . the very heart of normal social life" (Mauss, 1970, p. 67). This superimposed compartmentalization, partitioning the rational, impersonal, and self-interested from the social, cultural, and moral, collapses with tipping. The tip encompasses all of these seemingly incongruous elements and collides them over American restaurant dining tables every day to the tune of \$42 billion a year.

That the tip is made of money poses a special challenge to anthropological perspectives on exchange as well. The theory of the gift economy assumes the circulation of inalienable commodities between connected transactors. Money, the most profoundly alienable and anonymous of commodities, stands in stark contrast. However, rather than rending cultural flesh from economic bone, money's presence augments but is itself also enveloped and appropriated by the social and cultural contexts within which it becomes embedded. Both servers and customers would describe the tip in vivid and artful detail, depicting highly emotional encounters that were variously comedic, dramatic, and inspirational – hardly the rationalized, colorless, and alienated affair drained of cultural meaning that its opponents initially feared. Tipping represents both a commodification of social relations and a socialization of money. It delineates the frontier of money's colonization of social life, but as tipping demonstrates, that boundary is hardly a wave of destruction, but more a story of adaptation and amalgamation.

Although money's presence or absence is certainly helpful in identifying the hazards, risks, and various moral shoals individuals must navigate in order to conform to our ideologically configured social circuits, money's near omnipresence and idiosyncratic appearance in incongruous situations at least confuses the layout of this bifurcated treasure map. The problem is more than sophomoric: where are these boundaries? Where does the personal end and the economic begin? Perhaps a more fundamental question needs to be more explicitly considered, and that is to what extent such a demanding yet phantom boundary even makes sense. For Hart (2005, p. 167), such an ideological duality "forcing individuals to divide themselves, asks too much of us." The distinct sense of discomfort many find in the practice, as in Rob's comparison of tipping to prostitution, reveals this ideological inheritance in action as it attempts to excise the social and moral from the "economic" circuit of our lives. Reacting to this ideology, Mauss (1970, p. 67) recommended: "We should return to the old and elemental. Once again, we shall discover these motives of action still remembered by many societies and classes: the joy of giving in public, the delight in generous artistic expenditure, the pleasure of hospitality in the public or private feast."

The tip, a contemporary example of this "unity of individual and society, freedom and obligation, self-interest and concern for others," presents a modest but penetrating reminder that "modern capitalism rests on an unsustainable attachment to one of these poles" (Hart, 2007b, p. 481), as it quietly and casually erodes the ideological sprawl of the market. When I asked Christina what she thought of tipping given everything she had told me already, she remarked:

Is this an ideal system? I don't know, because where does it stop? Because now I find myself tipping the barista at the coffee shop, I now wonder whether I should be tipping my dry cleaner, you know? I obviously tip my hairdresser and my cab driver but where does it stop? I have a lawyer now, do I tip my lawyer? I'm assuming I don't.

Where *does* it end? Tipping certainly does not stop with restaurants, nor does what tipping represents even end with tipping. A tip, that ubiquitous and plainly visible dollar payment, presents only one short-circuiting of this vast immaterial architecture subtending capitalist ideology and society. From charitable donation to prostitution, from governmental earmarking to birthday gifts, from garage sales to tipping, the omnipresence of money (and the rationalizing force it purportedly carries) is matched only by its omnipresent intermingling with the cultural, social, and moral substrate of human interaction.

NOTES

1. Again, I selected restaurants with fairly moderate price points, with main courses typically under \$20 (Canadian). Having worked in a decidedly upscale fine dining restaurant in the past where I myself received several unambiguous bribery tips (the only ones I have ever received), I would propose that the prevalence of the bribery tip may depend on a given restaurant's price range and intended clientele. The reluctance and unease I encountered could easily be specific to the types of restaurants I selected.

2. This strategy seems to work only for female servers. Male servers using this strategy actually received a *decrease* in tip payment (Rind & Strohmets, 1999).

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CHILDREN AS A COMMON-POOL RESOURCE: CHANGE AND THE SHRINKING KINDERGARTEN MARKET IN A JAPANESE CITY

Donald C. Wood

ABSTRACT

Japanese preschools have been the subject of extensive ethnographic investigation over the last 40 years or more. However, the market for preschools in Japan has received almost no such attention. This market is rapidly changing, for the recent sharp decrease in the number of children in the country has resulted in a growing struggle on the part of kindergartens to attract children, largely by catering to the needs of mothers, for their survival. This chapter, by considering children as a common-pool resource (CPR) for which kindergartens quietly vie with one another, examines the situation in the capital city of Akita Prefecture, and shows how mothers – and also households – have been able to benefit in terms of convenience due to competition among kindergartens for their children.

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INTRODUCTION

Much research has been conducted on Japanese preschools¹ by scholars in various fields of the social sciences over the last several decades, flourishing especially in the middle to late 1980s and through the 1990s. Socialization has been a major theme (Ben-Ari, 1997; Hendry, 1986; Lewis, 1989, 1991; Peak, 1989, 1991; Sano, 1989; Tobin, 1992). In a number of cases, Japanese preschools have been compared with preschools in the United States (Corse & Robinson, 1994; Hess, Azuma, Kashiwagi, Holloway, & Wenegrat, 1987; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). Mothers of young children in schools and care facilities have received the attention of some researchers (Allison, 2000; Fujita, 1989; Imamura, 1987; Peak, 1991; Sasagawa, 2006; White, 1987). There is also a massive body of work on Japanese women in general. Rohlen (1989, p. 3) writes that “many more women are working and working women with children want to continue in their jobs today” and asks, “What kind of childcare support system do they find?” Although this question has been answered to a great degree in terms of the overall system, whether mothers opt for kindergartens or other kinds of facilities, and the functions and operations of different institutions, it is not clear how mothers choose between different ones of the same type (kindergartens in this case) or exactly how those institutions are adjusting to meet the changing times. Indeed, very little has been reported on individual or household economic² decision-making with regard to sending children to preschools in Japan. The lack of literature on this topic is most remarkable in light of the continuing drop in the number of children in the country, and the increase in the number of wage-earning mothers.³

Current demographic trends have brought many institutions across the country increasingly into competition with one another for people.⁴ Competition between Japanese kindergartens was becoming apparent even in the 1980s, with growth in bus service, and even reports of schools offering cash incentives for parents to help boost their enrollment by recruiting other parents to bring their own children (see Boocock, 1989, p. 48) – a practice much frowned upon by most operators, and so far unheard of by me in Akita. Tobin et al. (1989, p. 209), based on the trends they saw at the time, correctly forecasted nearly 20 years ago that a number of preschools in Japan would eventually be forced to throw in the towel. Ben-Ari (2005, p. 253), noting the prediction of Tobin and his associates, has described the current situation as:

...shrinking numbers of children have led to a situation in which there is heightened competition between preschools. While this competition was at first limited to

kindergartens, today many day care centers also compete for dwindling numbers of children. Much of this competition is centered on attracting children to institutions on the basis of their distinctive characteristics.

To be sure, private organizations are springing up, and some corporations are starting their own childcare programs, in major population centers in order to accommodate mothers who work in nights or who cannot leave work early enough to pick up their children at daytime care facilities or preschools (Kosaka, 2008). Competition is a part of this process. Yet still, the actual competition occurring between preschools amidst local demographic change, and the reasoning behind user choice, remain unclear.

Bartlett, Frederick, Gulbrandsen, and Murillo (2002) point to increasing “marketization” of public education in the United States, which includes greater competition between educational institutions, and blame state “neoliberal” policies for this. While a rise in the impact of market forces on education in Japan is evident, the situation described here would not be well-served by such an analysis. Rather, it is more effectively viewed as competition over common-pool resources (CPRs) – in this case, children – that arises due to actual, perceived, or feared shortages (see Townsend & Wilson, 1987). Resources seen as belonging to the commons are typically those of the natural variety, with fisheries probably being the prime example. However, Cronk and Steadman (2002) point out that there is no logical basis for excluding non-natural resources from consideration, and they argue for greater application of the analytical tools that have been developed for the study of CPRs to other kinds of markets. The situation considered here is a good candidate for such an endeavor, especially considering that the kindergartens are in the business of providing a service which tightly connects them to their clients. All transactions between families and kindergartens, and between different kindergartens, are deeply embedded in social relations (cf. Granovetter, 1985, Polanyi, 1970, and see also Wood, 2007, pp. 9–18). Their dealings with one another are rooted in strong feelings of goodwill, which Dore (1983, p. 460) has identified as “the sentiments of friendship and the sense of diffuse personal obligation which accrue between individuals engaged in recurring contractual economic exchange” in particular reference to business dealings in Japan (see also Gudeman, 2001, pp. 27–30, on the commons with respect to community economies and market economies). Lambert (2007) shows that women in Japan have been treated differently by the state over the last six decades – their labor power being channeled more into at-home childcare at times and more toward outside employment at others,

depending on the needs of the national economy. With the pool of preschool-aged children in Japan increasingly taking on the attributes of a scarce CPR, mothers (in general, the guardians of the CPR) are currently positioned to benefit from institutional reactions to changing conditions.

The overall situation compels one to ask (1) what are mothers looking for in kindergartens, and how do they make decisions on where to send their children, and (2) in what ways are Japanese kindergartens changing in order to appeal to mothers and attract children? Although some recent analyses of Japanese women, and motherhood, may have been somewhat one-sided (e.g., see Allison, 2000; Cherry, 1987, pp. 75–92; Simons, 1991),⁵ there is a general consensus that Japanese mothers live in a system which requires much of them – they have been fairly hard-pressed to find fulfillment amidst many constraints (cf. Lebra, 1986, pp. 158–216) and they face many institutional barriers in their lives. This study avoids extensive discussion of this issue in favor of a more intensive exploration of the specific problem of early childcare for mothers, concentrating on kindergartens, and so an additional question is warranted: (3) Is it accurate to assume that mothers who send their children to kindergartens are locked into a period of servitude during which they must labor to live up to the kindergarten's demands? These three questions can be summed up by asking, “Do mothers (or households) serve kindergartens in Japan, or vice versa?” This chapter seeks to provide answers to this problem by considering each of the three questions posed above. Methodologically, it does so by relying mainly on data from three different kindergartens in the Hodono area of the capital city of Akita Prefecture. I selected these three preschools partly in the hope that their close proximity would help minimize the “fixed” factor of “distance from home” as a reason for mothers to choose one of them, but mainly because they are among the most resistant to the impact of market forces. Data were collected by asking mothers of children at each kindergarten to fill out standardized questionnaires that the children took home with them in November 2005, which yielded 289 completed forms. In addition, surveys of the three kindergartens, and discussions with administrators and teachers, provided helpful background and contextual information. Some telephone polling and spot-checking of other kindergartens was also conducted. Finally, the study was inspired and guided by my own experience of sending my children to a nursery school and a kindergarten in Tokyo and also to a kindergarten in Akita – one of the three included in the present study.

JAPANESE KINDERGARTENS

As mentioned above, Japanese kindergartens have already been very well documented by researchers⁶ over the last several decades, and much information about them is available in the English language, yet some basic points do deserve mention here. First, whereas nursery schools fall under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, kindergartens are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.⁷ Standard nursery schools do not usually operate busses, but they tend to open early in the mornings and they will keep children until late in the evenings (private day- and also night-care facilities also exist). Some children may attend nursery schools only on certain days of the week, or perhaps only for part of the day. Since children often spend long hours at nursery schools, they usually have set nap times. At any nursery school, there will likely be a large assortment of children of various ages, from infants to the age of six. Parents who send their children to a nursery school will not be burdened with the task of preparing lunch for them – it will rather be provided by the facility (generally ordered from a catering service).

The fee for sending a child to a nursery school is based primarily on the income of the family or household. Therefore, it costs more for a medical doctor or a lawyer to send children to such facilities than to a kindergarten. Furthermore, in principle, these institutions are intended to be relied upon by parents who are unable to care for their children during the daytime.⁸ Kindergartens, on the other hand, have considerably more operational freedom, and are run more like “schools” than are nursery schools.⁹ They tend to open around eight o’clock in the morning, and to send children home not long after lunch. It is also quite usual today for kindergartens to offer bus service. Some kindergarten busses will pause only at predecided spots along a set route, while others always stop in front of each child’s house. The latter is gradually becoming more common. Another interesting development is after-school care (*azukari-hoiku*) for children at kindergartens because (1) mothers often need it, and (2) if they do not offer the service, they may lose kids to other institutions that do. All kindergartens charge extra for this service (usually no more than 500 yen per day), as they must keep a teacher late. Catholic kindergartens tend to be the last to begin offering *azukari-hoiku*, while secular schools have been leading the way in the initiation of this and other services. Different kindergartens offer *azukari-hoiku* until different times in the evenings, but even if they do offer the service most usually do not keep children as late as nursery schools do.

When a parent places a child in a kindergarten, they generally must do so with an understanding that they will not leave the child there late into the evening on a regular basis.

Sending a child to a kindergarten is more complicated than sending a child to a nursery school.¹⁰ Depending on the institution, the child may need an entire uniform. These are store-bought so mothers do not have to make them – only wash, repair, and adjust, and often iron blouses in the colder months. Even if a kindergarten does not have a uniform, though, it will no doubt have designated satchels or backpacks and hats, and smocks. The former, of course, require no sweat on the part of the mother – only money – but the latter call for some sewing work. There will also be various other bags and pouches needed: one to hold the child's indoor shoes and one larger flat one to hold picture books, the child's handiwork, etc. These also require much shopping, planning, cutting, and sewing on the part of the mother. In addition to these items, a variety of pouches and placemats will be needed for the child's lunches. These must be laundered and ironed almost daily. A kindergartener's packed lunch (*bentō*) generally consists of a small plastic or metal lunchbox containing rice and a number of miniature items that can easily be picked up and eaten with chopsticks. These items should not fall apart easily, they should have good nutritional value and balance, and they should also exhibit variety. In most cases, a Japanese mother's basic knowledge of how to make a *bentō* is inherited from her own mother, but they also learn much from television programs, magazines, and of course from other mothers. At most kindergartens there will be special days on which all mothers are invited to visit the classroom and watch their children happily devour their *bentō*s. On these days, mothers tend to put extra effort into their morning culinary labors, and they can also learn much about other mothers' *bentō*-making activities.

The *bentō*, however, is both a famous and an infamous item, and it is loaded with meanings. Any Japanese person can recall the happiness of having their mother's homemade packed lunch when in kindergarten or on school outings during elementary school. There is also a massive *bentō* industry today – train station *bentō*s, convenience store *bentō*s, hot spring resort *bentō*s, etc. Most any grocery store sports a large section of special frozen tidbits that can be quickly and easily heated up and placed in a child's lunchbox. An increasing number of mothers today (many of them working outside the home) are relying on these products.¹¹ Allison (2000, pp. 81–103) casts the *bentō* as a hegemonic tool by which Japanese mothers have been effectively bullied by the state into struggling to achieve conformity

for themselves and their children, constantly striving to emulate the ideal *bentōs* depicted in magazines and on television. As a foreign-born mother of a non-Japanese preschooler, in Japan, such a perspective is understandable.

In reality, however, Japanese mothers are cleverer than such a narrow analytical perspective allows. Most of them, while sometimes feeling frustrated, do not actually knock themselves out over their children's lunches. They normally approach the *bentō* with pragmatism and economy – balancing the menu with their pocketbooks and calculated amounts of time and effort. Yet an increasing number of younger mothers today were raised by mothers who worked outside, and therefore do not have many memories of homemade *bentōs* – their composition, flavor, or the special feeling that comes with receiving and eating these powerful symbols of a mother's love. These younger mothers generally have a harder time when it comes to making *bentōs* for their own children, and so many of them choose kindergartens that do not require them to do so. Sometimes, however, there is a period of “*bentō* education” for inexperienced mothers, during which a kindergarten teacher must carefully communicate the meaning of the packed meals. More importantly, though, these mothers may need suggestions about easier ways to prepare a *bentō* – such as reheating and flavoring an item or two left over from the previous day's supper, modifying a store-bought frozen item, or perhaps making things in advance and freezing them for later use – so that they do not have to feel forced to make everything from scratch in the morning. This can be especially challenging in the case of younger mothers who have little communication with other mothers, due perhaps to their working outside. Dealing well with this kind of delicate situation in order to preserve the institution of the homemade *bentō* is a challenge to kindergartens that truly wish to do so (and most do). On the other hand, quite a few mothers are willing to bid the *bentō* farewell today, and in fact the special meals are rapidly disappearing from kindergartens.

Finally, it deserves mention that the entire Japanese preschool system is now facing an uncertain future. In October 2006, the government initiated a plan to effectively merge nursery schools and kindergartens, by encouraging each to prepare facilities and adjust their operations to enable themselves to function smoothly as both. Those who succeed can receive the designation “approved childcare facility” (*nintei kodomo-en*). Such a facility may accept children for all-day care even if the mother does not work outside the home, and a nursery school that achieves the designation will become free to set its own fees. The chief advantage for kindergartens appears to be the

opportunity to boost enrollment. Also in early 2006, the government announced a vague plan to eventually make kindergartens compulsory components of the larger education system, partly due to a “lack of uniform socialization among children entering primary school from kindergarten” (Yomiuri Shinbun, 2006). It is hoped that doing so will help ease the transition to elementary school, interest in which has been sparked by reports that an increasing number of children are having difficulties in this shift today (Maeda, 2006). Operators of most kindergartens, however, are leery of these propositions. They fear increased government regulation of their activities, and want to maintain kindergartens as special entities apart from nursery schools, where children may stay late from time to time but not always, and where parents (especially mothers) are still deeply involved.

AKITA CITY AND ITS KINDERGARTENS

Akita City is the capital of Akita Prefecture, located in the Tōhoku region of northern Japan. Surrounded by mountains and facing the Sea of Japan, the area that is Akita Prefecture today has always been somewhat isolated, although it now boasts two airports with service to Tokyo and other major cities (and even direct flights to Seoul from the larger airport) and a high-speed “bullet” train (*shinkansen*). Akita is known across the country as a great producer of rice and also for its cold and snowy winters, although its neighbors to the east (Iwate) and north (Aomori) actually have colder and fiercer winters. Akita Prefecture’s population hit a peak in 1950 (1,309,031) but since then has declined steadily. It rose again beginning around 1975 and hit a high mark of 1,256,745 in 1980 before dropping once more to the current level of just under 1,160,000 (Akita Prefecture, 2004, p. 14). It continues to drop today. Not only this, but the proportion of residents aged 15 years and younger is quite low. With a 2007 figure of 11.8%, Akita ranked second lowest in the country, just above Tokyo, with 11.7% (Akita Sakigake Shinpō, 2008).

On the other hand, the capital city of the prefecture, currently home to about 334,000, is growing slightly as more and more young people move in from smaller towns – a fairly typical pattern for the northeastern region (see chapters in Traphagan & Knight, 2003). Since 1901, the city has posted an annual population loss only twice – in 1960 and in 2003 (Akita City, 2004, pp. 16–17). Also typical of the rest of Japan, however, children are on the decline – on the average, a woman in Akita gave birth to only 1.13

children during the life course as of 2003, and this figure has been dropping steadily since 1998 (*ibid.*, p. 19). Comparing the total number of children enrolled in the city's 42 elementary schools in 2004 (17,754) with the figure for 1995 (21,320) reveals an overall drop of 3,566 individuals of the 6- to 12-year age group over the 10-year period (*ibid.*, p. 46). Concerning kindergartens, the same period saw an overall increase of 202 three-year-olds (from 1,145 to 1,347), but a total drop in four-year-olds of 469 (from 2,373 to 1,904) and also in five-year-olds of 523 (from 2,538 to 2,015) (*ibid.*, p. 45). The small rise in 3-year-olds reflects expansions of programs for that particular age group in one or more facilities – partly due to competition with nursery schools – and not a rise in the total number of children.

There are currently 33 kindergartens in Akita City.¹² Thirty-two of these are private and one is “national” – the kindergarten that belongs to the Akita University College of Liberal Arts (specifically the Faculty of Education). There is also an elementary school and a junior high school, and these are also owned and controlled by the university. Collectively, they are known as the Fuzoku schools.¹³ Akita City can be conveniently divided into six different areas: north, east, south, west, central, and Kawabe. This last section was a separate town until it merged with the capital in January 2005. The central area of the city sports 11 kindergartens – the largest single number. As of the 2006–2007 school year (running from April to March), there was a total of about 1,640 children enrolled in them. Most offer bus service, and *azukari-hoiku*, and require children to arrive with *bentō* in hand only once or twice a week (see Table 1).

Only two of these kindergartens do not offer bus service – Fuzoku Kindergarten and Hikari Kindergarten, which is a Baptist school. The former is constrained by its policies and budget (which are set by Akita University) and the latter has not especially needed to offer bus service because of its convenient location between the elementary and junior high schools deep inside the densely populated residential area of Izumi, and also due to its fortunate position as the sole kindergarten in that area. That the homemade *bentō* is endangered is witnessed in Table 1. Again, there has never been a cutback on the number of *bentō* days at Fuzoku Kindergarten (due to its unique situation), but this has been done to a considerable extent at the other institutions, mainly for the convenience of mothers, and also households in general. Normal operating hours are nearly the same at all of these kindergartens, although a few of them begin accepting children as early as most nursery schools do in order to accommodate households with two working parents, or perhaps only one parent, that for one reason or

Table 1. Ten Kindergartens in the Central Part of Akita City and Their Operations and Services.

Kindergarten	Bus (Y/N)	<i>Bento</i> (Y/N) (Times/Week)	Regular Hours	<i>Azukari hoiku</i> (Y/N) (Time)	Number of Children	Overall Trend in Enrollment
Fuzoku	N	Y (4)	8:30 1:30	N	125	Dropping
Seishi	Y	Y (2)	8:30 2:00	Y (until 6:00)	62	Dropping
Misono	Y	Y (1)	8:30 1:30	Y (until 6:00)	150	Dropping
Keiho	Y	Y (1)	8:00 2:00	Y (until 7:00)	161	Dropping
Akita	Y	Y (2)	7:30 2:30	Y (until 6:00)	150	Dropping
Seirei	Y	Y (2)	8:15 2:00	N	102	Dropping
Sanno	Y	N	8:00 2:00	Y (until 6:30)	430	Steady
Hikari	N	Y (2)	7:45 2:00	Y (until 6:00)	60	Dropping
Soto Asahikawa	Y	Y (1)	8:30 2:00	Y (until 6:30)	260	Steady
Wakaba	Y	N	7:30 2:00	Y (until 6:30)	126	Dropping

Source: Telephone polls and visits conducted by the author from November 2005 to March 2007. Only 10 kindergartens are included because 1 very small one asked to be excluded from this study.

another utilize a kindergarten instead of a nursery school. Once more, Fuzoku Kindergarten cannot offer *azukari-hoiku*. Only one other school, Seirei – a Catholic institution, has yet to fully jump on the bandwagon, but will help a parent by keeping a child late on a temporary basis if absolutely necessary. Most kindergartens also offer *azukari-hoiku* on Saturday mornings. The number of children in each kindergarten varies according to land area, building size, and location, but most have between 100 and 200. Eight of the 10 considered in this study have clearly seen their enrollment drop over the last 10 years (including Fuzoku – see below), while 2 report relatively steady enrollment, for which they count themselves lucky. One of these (Soto Asahikawa) seems to just be leveling off after a healthy period of year-on-year increases. This school is located on the periphery of the central area, in a subdivision where many young families have recently been buying property and building houses. It also has two large custom-made busses shaped like dogs, complete with protruding tongues on the front, to which children are attracted like metal paperclips to a magnet. Although cost is not listed in the table, parents must pay slightly over 22,000 yen per month to send a child to any one of these kindergartens, with the exception of Fuzoku Kindergarten, which charges only about half that amount.

All of these schools – especially the private ones – are competing for a limited pool of children in a limited area. They have significantly altered their policies, increased their services, and added frills like doggy busses over the years to make themselves more attractive to both parents (primarily mothers) and children. Some kindergartens in Akita, outside of the central area, have begun to allow mothers to decide for themselves which days they will send their child with a *bentō* (if any) and which days the child will eat a hot lunch served at the school. But, this competition between kindergartens is not quite the same as that which occurs between supermarkets, fast food chains, or pachinko parlors, for that matter. For one thing, the kindergartens are competing for a very limited number of children, and each has its own enrollment cap set by its administration (and of course the government), which is ultimately determined by the size of the facilities. Furthermore, even private kindergartens are connected to each other through membership in various associations. In Akita, there is a prefectural private kindergarten association (Akita-ken Shiritsu Yōchien Rengōkai) and also a citywide association (Akita-shi Shiritsu Yōchien Kyōkai) as well, to which all private institutions pay dues and belong. These organizations help disseminate information about the various schools – especially each autumn when they all gear up for recruiting season. Through membership, kindergartens share other kinds of administrative and policy information, and also keep up with one another regarding their operational trials and results, their enrollment trends, and more. There are also especially strong informal ties between some kindergartens: Fuzoku and Seishi, which are close neighbors, for example. Overall, the feeling of competition between the individual schools is not high. Rather, there is a strong sense that they must all pull together to: (1) preserve the kindergarten as a special institution separate and different from nursery schools, and (2) maintain, if not increase, their enrollment numbers amidst oppressive demographic trends. Yet, some kindergartens also run nursery schools from which they actively funnel children into themselves, and some are simply better than others at marketing themselves as well. Administrators of many smaller or Christian schools frown (if only slightly) at these activities.

HODONO AND ITS THREE KINDERGARTENS

The Hodono area of the city, which has 3 kindergartens (the 3 on which this study focuses), was home to 6,177 people (2,745 households) in 2004, slightly up from the previous year. The 2004 figure for the Izumi area, just

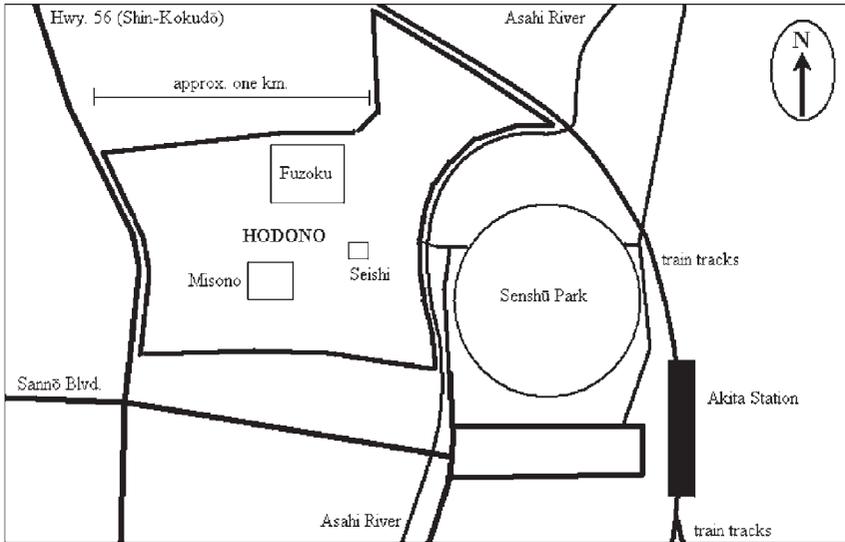


Fig. 1. The Hodono Area of Akita City and its Three Kindergartens.

north of Hodono, was 10,521 – also up from the prior year (*ibid.*, p. 26). This translates into at least 8,000 households within walking or bicycling distance, or perhaps a very short car ride, from any of the 3 schools. Hodono is an older residential part of the city, running along the Asahi River and stretching out to the north and west from beneath the high hills of Senshū Park, the location of the ruins of Kubota Castle, from where the lords of the Satake clan ruled the region during the Edo Period (Fig. 1). In Hodono lived many samurai and their families until they were swept away by the winds of change accompanying the Meiji Restoration in 1868.

Beyond Hodono, especially to the west and north, are many newly settled residential areas, including the very expansive Izumi. Hodono itself, however, appears to be somewhat squeezed in between these newer areas and the old castle site when viewed on a map. There are relatively few children in Hodono. Land values there are high, so younger couples tend to buy property elsewhere if they do buy. There are also many schools (including high schools) and businesses in the area, so the overall number of houses is relatively low, as indicated above. The three kindergartens on which this study is primarily based are not very far from one another; one can easily visit all of them in a single morning by bicycle.

Fuzoku Kindergarten

In 1911, a kindergarten was opened inside the elementary school attached to a prefectural women's school. As with the other early kindergartens of Akita (and Japan in general – see Ben-Ari, 2005) it served the upper classes. Eventually, the kindergarten received its own building. In time, these facilities moved to their current location, the women's school became Akita University, and the associated schools changed their names accordingly (Okuyama, 2002, pp. 16, 51). The main section of the kindergarten's current one-storey building dates back to 1968, meaning that the school currently has the oldest facilities of the three discussed in detail here. While the university is located elsewhere, the Fuzoku schools (junior high school, elementary school, and kindergarten) occupy a 15-acre (6 ha) expanse of land on the edge of Hodono, near a busy avenue that forms the border between it and Izumi (see Fig. 1). The kindergarten has over 1 acre to itself (see Fig. 2).

Across the country, such *fuzoku* schools do stand at the pinnacle of the preschool system, and they often screen children by way of interviews and examinations before admitting them (Tobin et al., 1989). They are some of



Fig. 2. The Gate and Main Building of Fuzoku Kindergarten in September 2008.

the kindergartens in which the most serious and devoted “education mothers” (*kyoiku-mamas*) place their children (Simons, 1991). It is commonly known in Akita that the university’s Fuzoku schools are where the children of doctors, lawyers, professors, and other highly trained professionals go. Also, it is generally thought that children coming out of Fuzoku schools are the best prepared to enter top-level high schools and universities. Instruction at Akita University’s *fuzoku* schools is fast-paced. As at all such university *fuzoku* schools across the country, education specialists in the university (including some graduate students) regularly conduct their research at the elementary and junior high school, so various experimental teaching methods are employed, and students are regularly evaluated. There are also numerous “open” class sessions, to which researchers and students at the university, or from other institutions, are invited. Therefore, many mothers of children at the schools send their children to cram schools (*juku*) in the afternoons to make sure they can keep up. Indeed, a high level of academic motivation and achievement is expected – both students and parents (especially mothers) must take education seriously.¹⁴ But one of the main reasons for the generally high level of academic achievement among the students is the fact that they are mostly from very stable households with devoted mothers and well-paid fathers – households that have the time and money to invest copious amounts of both in a child’s education and training. Indeed, the elementary school and the junior high school both require children to pass entrance exams for admission, but children who attend the former and do well are almost guaranteed admittance to the latter. Also, children coming out of the kindergarten stand a higher chance than others of getting into the elementary school. Not surprisingly, this is one of the main factors in a mother’s decision to send a child to Fuzoku Kindergarten.

However, Fuzoku Kindergarten is not a place where children are enthusiastically primed for climbing the academic ladder with formal lessons. They are not even expressly required to learn to read by the kindergarten, although most mothers will try to teach them to do so in order to prepare them for entrance to the elementary school (a necessary endeavor). Rather, emphasis is on socialization – cooperation, respect for others, and mutual understanding – exactly what is stressed at all kindergartens. Furthermore, Fuzoku Kindergarten – despite its position at the doorway of the sole education escalator in Akita – is probably the area’s most “pure” kindergarten: the most ideal, old-type school, which the majority of mothers today attended when they were small, from which they were picked up every day by their own mothers, and when few households

had more than one car, if at all. As can be seen from Table 1, there is no bus. Parents (generally mothers) must walk, bicycle, or drive to school with their children, and also pick them up. They must also prepare a *bentō* 4 days a week – something which no other kindergarten would dare demand for fear of losing children and being forced to lay off teachers. Children may arrive no earlier than 8:30 and must leave by 1:30, without exception – there is no *azukari-hoiku*. Effectively, the kindergarten is maintained as a relatively small and “pure” institution by its policies of not bending to accommodate mothers who might feel that the lunch schedule, the lack of a bus, or the impossibility of picking up their child late 1 day, is too much of a burden. Also, it is prevented from competing against other area kindergartens by any other means than its low cost and the high potential to funnel children into the prestigious elementary school with which it is affiliated.

The kindergarten’s strict policies are not set by the on-site staff of the facility, but by the college of education at the university, and ultimately by the Ministry of Education. The principal of the kindergarten (a 3-year term) is always a professor of the college of education, while the assistant principal actually handles the day-to-day administrative affairs. As of March 2007, there were 125 children. Five- and 6-year-olds numbered 56 and were divided in 2 classes, while 4- and 5-year-olds numbered 49 and were also divided in 2 classes. There were 20 children in the youngest class of 3- and 4-year-olds. Since this youngest class was added in 1974, it has been the kindergarten’s policy to limit the number of children in it to 20, and to have only the 1 class. Adding another class of children this age would require adding a room to the facility, and doing both of these could only be done if the kindergarten operation committee in the college of education decided to do so, acquired a budget from the university, and also received permission from the Ministry of Education. It is highly unlikely that even the first of these would occur, however, especially in light of current demographic trends.

All kindergartens hold “interviews” with each prospective enrollee and at least one parent or legal guardian (usually the mother) before admitting them. Interviews conducted by Fuzoku Kindergarten are more serious. While the child is meeting with the vice-principal, the principal talks with the mother. He must make sure she understands the school’s policies and will be both willing and able to stick with them. There are always more 3-year-olds whose mothers hope to place them in the kindergarten than 20, so every year a draw is held to decide the lucky 20. Although the lowest class is capped at 20, as many as 35 can be in each of the four higher classes. This means that there is a much greater chance of a child getting into the kindergarten at the age of four than at the age of three. In fact, if 20 children move up 1 year

from the youngest class, there is still space for 50 more, and the chance of getting in will basically be 100% if 50 or fewer mothers want to go for it – a risk that has been shrinking every year. Therefore, a mother who loses in the lottery has the option of waiting one more year. She can either place her child in a different kindergarten or simply keep the child at home 12 more months. In the past, many mothers did in fact take this second option, but today it is practically unheard of – mothers will almost always take the first. However, what generally happens is, after spending 1 year at another kindergarten, and adjusting to it, the child either refuses to switch or the mother loses interest in doing so. After all, both will probably have made friends through the chosen kindergarten by that time. The number of mothers who actually do take their children out of one school or other private care facility and place them in Fuzoku at the age of four has dropped considerably over the last 10–15 years. Therefore, while the number of 3- and 4-year-olds in the kindergarten has remained steady, the number of older children has decreased. This phenomenon appears to be the result of both the overall drop in the number of children and also a decline in the relative value of the (perceived) benefits of switching schools, possibly also weighed against the burden of having to make a *bentō* 4 days each week and having no bus or *azukari-hoiku*. However, there is one major risk associated with actually enrolling a child in Fuzoku Kindergarten – the child may fail to enter the elementary school (for admittance is not guaranteed). If this happens, the child must go to a regular elementary school and will therefore be separated from friends made at the kindergarten, as will the mother. Furthermore, the child will suffer a shock and possibly a crisis in self-confidence, and the mother will have to bear much guilt over the outcome and also suffer the indignation of being seen as having failed to properly prepare her child.¹⁵

Although there were about 130 children attending the school in late 2005, I was told to prepare 125 questionnaires for the mothers because it was only necessary to fill out one form per household. The kindergarten staff sent a form, enclosed in an envelope with a letter, home with almost every child in late November. The children carried the completed questionnaires back to the kindergarten with them during the following weeks, and when I went back to pick up my box there were 116 of them inside.

Seishi Kindergarten

Seishi Kindergarten is an Episcopal institution located in the old heart of Hodono (see Fig. 1). Along with Akita Kindergarten, also a Christian

school, it began accepting children in 1905, although at the time it was known as Hodono Kindergarten and it was at a different spot than today (Okuyama, 2002, p. 15). These were the first two kindergartens in the city. At the time, although there was some opposition to the appearance of these Christian institutions amidst the rising nationalism of the late Meiji years, these two kindergartens were utilized mainly by the upper classes – for the monthly fee of 80 sen (eight-tenths of 1 yen) which was roughly equal to a carpenter’s pay over the same time period, and few people then saw any need to send the children of the lower classes to a kindergarten (*ibid.*). Seishi Kindergarten adopted its current name and location in 1932. The preschool’s chapel, which is somewhat of a local landmark, also dates from this year.

Seishi Kindergarten only occupies an area of about 1.5 acres (0.5 ha). The part of Hodono in which it is located is generally tight, and the street that it fronts is fairly narrow, but parents and school personnel can park their cars in a lot across the street. As of late 2005, the structure housing the kindergarten consisted of a large but aging main building with much playing space within and a stage for holding events, and hallways leading off to the classrooms (see Fig. 3).

The main building actually dated from 1932. Although unimpressive from the outside, this structure was an architectural marvel on the interior, with heavy, sculpted wood trim, an ornate ceiling, and a rather fine curved stage, all hand carved. Overall, though, the facilities were not nearly as clean and tidy in their appearance as are those of Fuzoku Kindergarten. All of this has changed, however. At the end of February 2007, the school’s new building was ready for use. Filling the space that once served as the playground, the bright and airy structure was designed for convenience, safety, and the preservation of the kindergarten’s history – the ceiling and the stage of the original building have been skillfully incorporated within it.

Seishi’s general operations are similar to those of any other kindergarten in Japan. Being a Christian school, the children are taught about biblical stories and the life of Christ, but not in a dogmatic manner. Most parents are not Episcopalian, or even Christian. There is also a Christmas play, and celebration of Easter as well. These are quite enjoyable for children as well as parents, and Christmas pageants must be captured on video (usually by “video-papa” fathers). As can be seen from Table 1, Seishi does offer bussing – its one large van, painted with frolicking, brightly colored cartoon-like children, follows set courses three times every morning and afternoon. Some children living outside of Hodono ride it. Mothers are required to send *bentōs* with their children 2 days each week, while lunch is prepared in the kindergarten’s kitchen by extra hired staff on the other 2 days. The school accepts children as early as 8:30 in



Fig. 3. The Grounds, Main Building, and Attached Chapel of Seishi Kindergarten in the Autumn of 2005. The Kindergarten's Bus is Visible at the Far Left, Partially Obscured by a Small Car.

the morning if parents drop them off, and sends most of them home by around 2:00. An average of about 12 children stay each day for *azukari-hoiku*, and mothers may pick them up as late as six o'clock. The charge is 500 yen per day, but mothers may instead pay a flat monthly fee of 8,000 yen if they need the service often. Children do not wear uniforms, but they must have a special bag and also smocks and other bags and pouches made by their mothers. As of March 2007, there were 62 children at the school, divided into 4 classes: 3 years (3 children), 3-4 years (16), 4-5 years (23), and 5-6 years (20). However, the number was about 75 when my questionnaire forms were sent home with them in late 2005, so a drop is evident. I prepared 70 questionnaire forms, and in the end exactly 50 forms came back to me.

Misono Kindergarten

A Catholic sisterhood established a nursery and orphanage, Misono-en in the city in 1920, and this facility moved in 1927 to its current location on the

west side of Hodono (Kunieda, 1994, p. 70) (see Fig. 1). The sisterhood opened a training school for caretakers in 1940, which had developed into a girls' high school by 1952, and 5 years after that a training facility for kindergarten teachers was established (currently Misono Kindergarten). The high school grew steadily and was recognized as a 2-year junior college for women by the national government in 1966. Misono Kindergarten is therefore a *fuzoku* kindergarten because it is affiliated with Misono Gakuen Junior College, which still today specializes in training its students to become preschool teachers or caretakers. The kindergarten is adjacent to the junior college, and the students regularly fulfill their student teaching requirements at the kindergarten, which is fun for the children. Many of them also write their graduation research papers on data obtained at the kindergarten through participation and observation, evaluations of children's activities or performance, or from parents via questionnaire, so the mothers are quite accustomed to filling out forms. Also on the same grounds as the kindergarten and the junior college is the nursery, where infants and other children who are not yet old enough to enter the kindergarten are cared for. Being a nursery, and therefore under the oversight of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, the facility is operated under completely different guidelines than the kindergarten and is effectively a separate entity. The orphanage is still in existence, and is also now separate from the nursery. It is currently home to about 60 children, ranging from toddlers to high school seniors, and it stands close to the kindergarten, to which its charges aged 3–6 go every day. Finally, there is a fairly large church and also a convent, where the sisters who administer all of these facilities live. The entire complex is owned and operated by the sisterhood, which has its home base in Kanagawa Prefecture, and which operates facilities like Akita's Misono complex in 28 spots around the country. The principals of the schools and the head of the orphanage are all sisters of the order, and they wear black robes and habits, but the teachers at the junior college and kindergarten are not required to be Catholic.

The Misono complex occupies a total land area of about 4 acres (1.5 ha), but the children of Misono Kindergarten do not have quite as large a yard to play in as the children of Fuzoku Kindergarten have. However, the building itself is more than big enough for the number of children currently there (it once housed 300 but today only about 150). It is a spacious two-storey structure with plenty of extra rooms for the children to play in (see Fig. 4).

The school does have bus service – its two busses (much larger than the one owned by Seishi Kindergarten) cover a wide range of territory in their



Fig. 4. The Misono Kindergarten Building in December 2005.

two runs each morning and afternoon, but due to a gradual decrease in enrollment over the last 10 years the school decided to sell its largest bus in 2005 and replace it with a smaller, more efficient one, making the two roughly equal in size today. Misono Kindergarten only requires children to bring *bentō* 1 day a week, although until April 2006 they had to bring one twice each week. Lunch is made and delivered by an outside caterer on non-*bentō* days. As with any other kindergarten, children are divided into 3 basic grades: 3- and 4-year-olds (3 classes, 48 children), 4- and 5-year-olds (2 classes, 55 children), and 5- and 6-year-olds (2 classes, 38 children). There is also an extra “class” for 2- and 3-year-olds (*tsubomi-gumi*) which – also until April 2006 – was originally only for children who had passed their third birthday. At the start of the 2006–2007 school year there were no children in the class, but by the end of the school year (March 2007) there were nine children in the class. Increasing calls for reducing the number of *bentō* days each week from different mothers led to discussions between them and the nuns who administer the kindergarten during 2005 and the decision was made to switch from 2 such days per week to 1 by the time

I had questionnaires distributed to all mothers at the end of that year. The decision to allow 2-year-olds into the youngest class had also been made as well, so I was able to solicit mothers' opinions about both of these changes, and these are discussed in greater detail below. The school's operational hours are essentially the same as those of Fuzoku and Seishi Kindergartens, but *azukari-hoiku* is available every day until 6:00, as the previous time of 5:30 proved to be too early for many mothers. About 30–40 children stay late every day.

Although the sisters who run Misono Kindergarten are somewhat more concerned about imparting the children with Christian teachings than are the operators of Seishi Kindergarten, one cannot accuse them of being dogmatic, either. Many parents like this aspect of the kindergarten, yet in sending my children there for over 4 years I never once heard of any of the families actually being Catholic and attending mass in the chapel. As typical of Catholic schools, the children do wear uniforms. These consist of dark-blue skirts with suspenders for girls and short pants for boys, and white blouses in winter and white short-sleeved shirts in the warmer months for all. The children also have dark-blue sweaters for wintertime, when they also wear tights and don their dark-blue felt bowler hats (in warmer months they wear light-blue cotton hats). They also have blue backpacks and blouses, and assorted carrying bags and pouches are made by the mothers, as described above. Also, as a Catholic institution, there is an annual Christmas play (which fathers must catch on video) in addition to a variety of other special events, excursions, and even an overnight trip for the oldest kids – something that began in 2005 because the number of children had finally fallen to a number that could be taken easily by bus and accompanied by a limited number of teachers. There were about 150 children at Misono at the end of 2005, so I was advised to prepare 140 questionnaire forms to be sent home with them. I received 123 completed forms in the end.

RESULTS

The questionnaire forms distributed to mothers of children at Fuzoku and Seishi kindergartens were identical, and contained only 10 questions that could be answered quickly by writing down a number or selecting a response from among a number of possibilities.¹⁶ However, since my own children attended Misono Kindergarten it was easy for me to ask mothers of children there to give responses to several more questions.¹⁷ I did this in order to obtain more information on the importance of *azukari-hoiku* and how they

felt about two major changes that the kindergarten was preparing to initiate, starting the following April: (1) accepting children before their third birthday, and (2) requiring mothers to make *bentōs* only once each week instead of twice. This section presents the questionnaire data that proved the most useful in addressing the questions at hand.

The average number of adults per household hovers between 2.1 and 2.4 for the 3 kindergartens, and the average number of children is about 2 across the board. Although parents of children at Seishi Kindergarten seem to have had slightly more children, they were far less likely to have a grandparent living with them, as shown in Table 2.

Only 15% of children attending Fuzoku Kindergarten lived in Hodono compared to 20% of Misono's children and about 24% of Seishi's. Indeed, Fuzoku mothers' responses on means of transportation and travel time between home and kindergarten indicate that 60% of them took their children to the kindergarten by car daily, and that about one-half of those mothers were driving at least 30 min round-trip. About 15 of them reported travel time of 40 min or more. Because the other two schools offer bus service, living some distance away poses little problem.

As Fig. 5 indicates, very few mothers who send their children to Fuzoku Kindergarten work outside the home, with about 15% committing themselves to regular work, and only 5% laboring full-time. These mothers are all relying heavily on someone else to help with their children – generally their mother-in-law if not their own mother. A slightly greater proportion of mothers with children at Seishi Kindergarten work full-time, but a much greater proportion work part-time, and only just over 20% are committed to regular work. In contrast, a considerable proportion of mothers who send a child to Misono work outside for wages, with over 30% of them having regular full-time or part-time jobs (about 15% each). Data on the occupation of the primary wage earner of each household proved complex, and were difficult to present graphically. Hence, I do not address it here, but suffice it to say that it did verify that there were about 20% more primary

Table 2. Demographic Composition of Households in the Study Selection, by Kindergarten.

	Fuzoku	Seishi	Misono
Average number of adults	2.3	2.2	2.4
Average number of children	2.0	2.1	2.0
Percentage living with at least one grandparent	16%	8%	20%

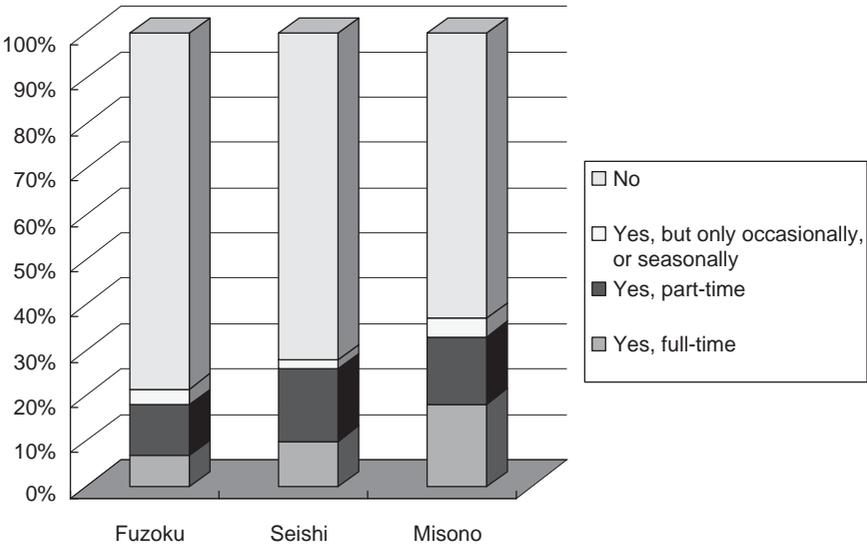


Fig. 5. Mothers' Responses to the Question, "Do You Work for Wages Outside the Home?" Note: Percentages Arranged by Kindergarten.

wage earners (basically fathers) in the "doctor, lawyer, or other licensed professional" and "teacher, college, or university instructor, etc." (read: university professor) categories in the Fuzoku group than in the samples of either of the other kindergarten households.

Given the high proportion of mothers with outside jobs sending their children to Misono, it is not surprising that reliance on *azukari-hoiku* is very high there, with 54% of mothers indicating that the service is very necessary, and most others feeling that it was almost as necessary. Fewer than 3% would appear to not mind if the service were canceled. While Misono and Seishi both offer *azukari-hoiku*, Fuzoku does not. Therefore, it can be assumed that mothers sending a child there would probably need to rely on someone else from time to time. The data in Fig. 6 show the proportion of mothers at each kindergarten who are relying on relatives or friends to help them take care of their child or children, supports this assumption.

Also, knowing that there are more mothers who work outside the home in the Misono group, it is not surprising that a greater proportion of them (nearly 10%) claimed to rely on someone else "very much." However, the proportion of Misono mothers who indicated that they receive such

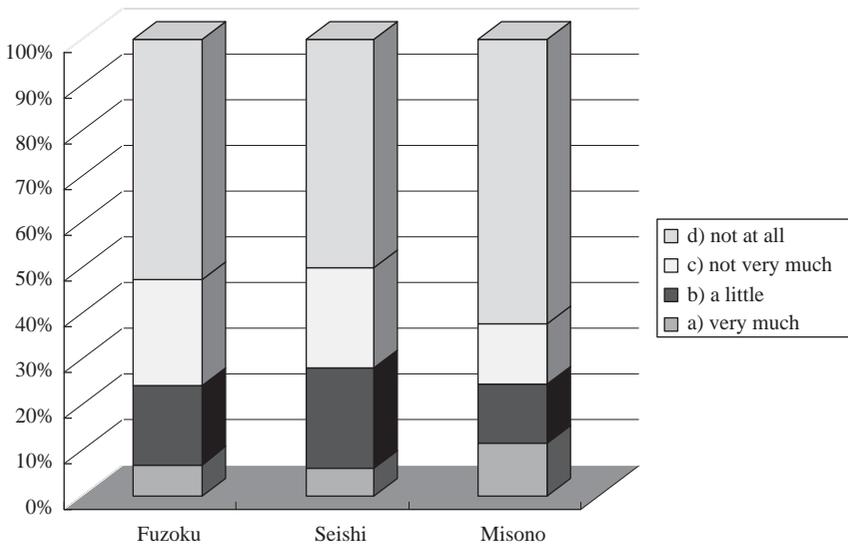


Fig. 6. Mothers' Responses to the Question, "How Much Do You Rely on a Relative or a Friend to Help Take Care of Your Child Each Week?" Note: Percentages Arranged by Kindergarten.

assistance "not at all" is also much larger than that for either of the other kindergartens. Probably these mothers are utilizing the school's *azukari-hoiku* service instead. It is, after all, often easier to simply pay the school outright than to be indebted to others and have to think about repaying the favor later. Besides, children generally enjoy staying at the kindergarten after most others leave and playing with friends. Finally, it is interesting to note that the percentage outcome for Fuzoku and Seishi on this question were almost identical.

Sending children to take lessons after school can be seen in two ways – if the lessons take place near home it might be easier for the mother for the child to leave for a while, but greater distance can mean more inconvenience. When there are two or three children at home, coordination becomes difficult. The type of lesson can make a difference as well, and another factor is a child's desire to go. Investigating lesson type was beyond the scope of this study, but mothers were asked how many total lesson days their child (or children) had each week, from Monday to Friday (see Fig. 7). A high number of lesson days per week does not mean as much when there are two or three children in a household as is does when there is only one, of

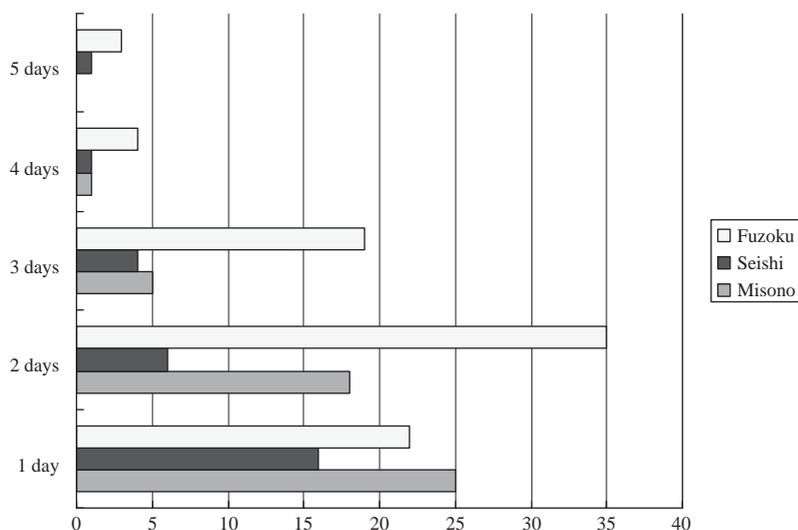


Fig. 7. Mothers’ Responses to the Question, “How Many Days Each Week (Monday Friday) Does Your Child Have Lessons?” *Note:* Arranged by Number of Days Per Week Number of Lesson Days for One Child.

course. And in some cases lessons might occur at home. But regardless of the number of children at home, a high number of lessons per week mean greater coordination and expenditures of time and effort on the part of the mother, and also greater financial cost as well. Many families simply will not, or cannot, pay for some kinds of lessons. Lessons that most parents eschew include ballet and violin, mainly because of all the extra costs involved and the intensity of the necessary inputs.

Since Fig. 7 represents total numbers and not percentages, the responses for “1 day” are very close for all three schools. At “2 days” and “3 days” the responses are completely different. Clearly, mothers (and households) of children at Fuzoku are very heavily devoted to their children’s education and development. The response pattern peaks at “2 days” but nearly 20 mothers are managing lessons 3 days a week and a very small number are even doing so 4 and 5 days. This translates not only into a fair amount of work for the mother but also into considerable monetary expense.

Finally, here, mothers were asked to choose up to three reasons for selecting each kindergarten. They were given a list of 19 specific reasons, and an “other” category, from which to choose (see Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Mothers' Responses to the Question, "Why Did You Choose This Kindergarten?" Note: Each Mother was Asked to Select Up to Three Reasons.

The two top choices of mothers with children at Fuzoku Kindergarten were the "kindergarten's philosophy on childcare" and "I thought it would be good for my child's future," with "low cost" and "distance from home" nearly tying for third place. It also seems that some mothers were attracted by the facilities (probably the large courtyard). Notably, more than 15

indicated that their husband's desire for the child to enter the kindergarten had been an important factor (regardless of which nearly all of the associated work no doubt falls upon the mother). This factor is still fairly small in the overall decision-making picture, but the Fuzoku bar for this response in the graph extends far beyond that for either of the other kindergartens. For Fuzoku mothers, write-in answers under "other" were usually that the child's older brother or sister was already a student in Fuzoku Elementary School. As for mothers of children at Seishi Kindergarten, distance from home was most important, along with the school's philosophy on childcare and the mother's first impression coming in after that. One-fifth (10) of these mothers selected the availability of after-school care, and nearly as many chose bus service. Misono mothers cited "distance from home" far more than did mothers of children at Fuzoku. It is by far the most important factor. After this, four factors – bussing, uniforms, philosophy on childcare, and first impression – came in fairly high. Interestingly, the mother having attended the kindergarten herself and the school's reputation appear as significant, although small, factors. The availability of after-school care is not much stronger a factor than it was for Seishi mothers, but proportionally it is much smaller, since the sample size is much larger. It is worthwhile to consider here the reasons that do not appear as important factors at all. That a friend of the mother sends a child to the kindergarten does not appear to be particularly important, and neither does the religious instruction offered at Seishi and Misono Kindergartens. What is most surprising is that some factors which might be expected to be important do not appear to be so at all. For example, both Seishi and Misono offer music lessons at their schools, inviting professional teachers who work for companies such as Yamaha and Kawai, but these generated no responses, and neither did the number of *bentō*/hot lunch days per week.

Misono Kindergarten: Change and Mother's Opinions

Mothers of children at Misono were asked to give their opinions about the kindergarten's decision to allow children under the age of three to enter the class for 3-year-olds (*tsubomi-gumi*), and also the change from 2 *bentō* days per week to only 1 – both to be initiated from the following April. This elucidated a variety of responses to both questions. Overall, mothers were very indifferent to the first problem, with 53% expressing no opinion or being undecided, 30% approving, and about 17% opposing. Those who agreed with the plan gave few reasons, but some suggested that children

might benefit from being among other kids at an earlier age, and there was an opinion that it might also be good for a child whose elder sibling attended the kindergarten. Mothers in disagreement with the plan, on the other hand, were by far more likely to take the time to write down their reasons on the questionnaire forms. Six expressed concern about teachers' attention being diverted from other children by little ones in need of more careful monitoring and greater assistance – especially regarding diapers – and four others felt worried about the kindergarten becoming too much like a nursery school, with some suggesting that children under three simply be placed in such a facility instead. Four other mothers argued that children under three ought to be with their parents or other family members and not in a care facility unless absolutely necessary.

Mothers' opinions of the change in their children's lunch arrangements were even more striking, with 40% claiming to have no opinion or to be uncertain of how they felt, and while 48% approved, a mere 12% were opposed. Reasons for approval were scant. Most were variations of the suggestion that eating standardized lunches along with everyone else might help some children learn to eat foods they do not like much. However, this was already occurring at the kindergarten twice each week, so it does not appear to lend any real support to an argument against the *bentō*. Somewhere in between complete approval and strong opposition lie comments such as: "I think a *bentō* is better, but times have changed so nothing can be done," "It must be convenient for mothers, but twice a week is better," and "I just hope the kindergarten doesn't quit having *bentō* days altogether." The following comment penned by a mother of one with a full-time job is very telling:

Since there are so many cases of both parents working outside, I think (having to make a *bento* only one day a week) will help (mothers) a lot. However, looking back at my own experience in kindergarten, I really was happy about having my mother's homemade *bento*. Considering that time to spend together is limited, it shouldn't really be such a burden to make a *bento* more often. But, the decision was made based on the opinions of many, and if that's how everyone thinks then I don't really have a problem with it.

The very small proportion of mothers who claimed opposition to the drop in the number of *bentō* days each week were by far the most likely to offer lengthy and strong statements. A number mentioned the enjoyment of eating *bentōs* made by their own mothers as children, and pointed out that mothers can know exactly what their children are eating and not eating if they take a *bentō* from home and bring the box back in the afternoon. Some argued that since their child would not need a *bentō* much at all after

entering elementary school, it would be better to make their lunch for them as often as possible while in kindergarten. Several mothers expressed concern over the food that their children were being served by the kindergarten, calling for its improvement if the number of *bentō* days were to be decreased. The following detailed comment, written by an unemployed mother of three, well reflects the feeling of her like-minded peers:

Making a *bento* really is tough, but if I look carefully I can see that my child's attitude is different on *bento* days. It's not just because of joy at finding only favorite items inside as a mother it's just so fulfilling to hear "I really want to have Mommy's *bento* (rather than the alternative)." If we only think about the convenience of mothers, then I think that children will be a little bit sad. There are a lot of households that can't handle having to send a child with a *bento* these days because the mother is busy working outside, or for some other reason, but I feel that perhaps all the mothers (and the kindergarten) could have discussed the situation more thoroughly and carefully before making a decision. There are a lot of merits to eating hot lunches served at school, such as learning to eat foods the children don't like much, but in my opinion it's best for three, four, and five year olds to have fun lunchtimes (with their mothers' homemade *bentos*).

A full-time housewife and mother of two, opposed to the change, saw the *bentō* issue as but one small part of a much greater social problem. She lamented the change, and offered an impassioned plea for the preservation of the homemade packed lunch tradition. More than a few parents I know in Akita would agree with her statement:

This kindergarten has been maintaining its own very high preschool education standards for many years now, and I think it's fine to just keep going. There's no reason to stoop to fit the surrounding environment. I think the quality of parents [mainly mothers?] has really dropped over the years. For example, so many parents can't even do basic things like express gratitude, offer proper greetings, or simply apologize politely things they are supposed to teach their children. More and more people these days just blame everyone else for everything.

In other words, this mother wanted Misono Kindergarten to remain as high above these kinds of ongoing social problems as possible and not to bend for the convenience of mothers who just do not want to bother making *bentōs*.

Finally, questionnaire responses on mothers' employment and feelings about this last problem were cross-checked in order to determine whether there was any connection between working part-time or full-time and being willing or eager to become free of having to prepare a *bentō* twice each week. I included mothers who work only occasionally or seasonally with completely unemployed mothers since such work cannot be considered to

have the kind of impact on their lives that commitment to regular part-time or full-time jobs entails, thereby sorting them into two groups: mothers who do not work outside or do so only from time to time, and mothers who work part-time or full-time. Surprisingly, exactly 42% of mothers in each group were in agreement with the change from 2 *bentō* days to 1. Beyond that, mothers with regular jobs were more likely to be undecided (57%) and other mothers were more likely to be opposed. Of the total number of mothers against the change (14), only 2 had a regular job.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Kindergartens in Akita increasingly find themselves affected by the powerful force of scarcity in a resource (children) essential to their survival. They have therefore made many adjustments. Key in this ongoing effort is the growing necessity to cater to the needs of mothers. Kindergartens have added and improved bus service, decreased – if not eliminated – the number of times mothers must prepare a *bentō* each week, initiated and extended after-school care, and still see their enrollment drop. However, most of them want to preserve the kindergarten as a special institution. This includes maintaining the *bentō* tradition at least to a degree and remaining primarily for children aged three to six, and also resisting the pressure to become all-day care centers (like nursery schools). Rather than compete fiercely for a very limited number of children in a limited area, they attempt to work together to raise their numbers. As mentioned above, the private kindergartens are connected through membership in various organizations. Lying outside of this is Fuzoku (operated by Akita University). But, instead of competing with its neighbors, it keeps its enrollment low and helps to link the schools to one another by holding periodic lectures and workshops, to which teachers and administrators of other kindergartens in the city are invited. The assistant principal also often visits private kindergartens when they host workshops or demonstrations. In addition, Fuzoku maintains ties with its neighbors.¹⁸ The kindergartens of Akita City are engaged in a quiet struggle, simultaneously competing and cooperating in a market that is deeply embedded in social relations (cf. Granovetter, 1985; Polanyi, 1970). They are well aware of the importance of cherishing and protecting their very limited economic “base” – comprised of their larger surrounding community (see Gudeman, 2001, 2005).

Given the data presented above, answers to the three questions posed at the beginning of this chapter can now be offered, beginning with: (1) what

are mothers looking for in kindergartens, and how do they make decisions about where to send their children? This can be answered by drawing up brief profiles of the mothers and households who enrolled their children in each kindergarten. Mothers who chose Fuzoku tended to not work outside the home but were generally very busy with their children. Their homes were often far from the school, and quite a few spent much time traveling between. Their husbands were far more likely to be licensed professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.), and they generally had economically stable households. Their children were fairly to very busy with afternoon lessons, and mothers were probably very involved in this aspect of their education. These mothers selected Fuzoku Kindergarten for all the expected reasons: they liked the general philosophy on childcare (which includes high maternal involvement), they believed it would benefit their children in the future (to help them enter the affiliated elementary school), and their husbands thought it would be best. Of course, the low cost and distance from home appeared as strong factors – even though many mothers traveled far to the kindergarten, quite a few lived very near, which negated the lack of bussing as a drawback. In a nutshell, these mothers were able and willing to give a great amount of themselves to send their children to the school for both immediate and perceived future payoffs. Some may simply have felt good about doing so much, while others were probably counting on delayed gratification – academic, social, and probably also economic. Mothers who selected Seishi Kindergarten tended to live fairly close. A fair number worked outside but not so very many. The households were slightly less likely to have a grandparent present. In most cases the mothers only had to keep track of one lesson each week. They mainly selected the kindergarten for its proximity to home but first impressions and the school's general philosophy were important as well. The fact that it provides children with a basic Christian education did not seem to be a very important factor, but 10 of 50 mothers did indicate that having *azukari-hoiku* was valuable. Since first impressions seemed to be important, the school might succeed in boosting its enrollment with its new building. Misono results were similar. The families were more likely than those sending a child to Fuzoku, but slightly less likely than those who chose Seishi, to live in Hodono. But, there were far more mothers with regular jobs, sending their children to Misono, and they were relying heavily on *azukari-hoiku* to manage.¹⁹ Generally speaking, the majority seem to have felt that the option of picking up a child late was more than merely convenient. The data indicate that relatively few Misono moms relied on others, but that more of those who did rely on others did so very heavily. Misono mothers may have been somewhat busier

ferrying children to after-school lessons than Seishi mothers, but they did not generally seem to be busier than their Fuzoku counterparts. Finally, mothers selected Misono Kindergarten because it was close to home, because it has cute uniforms and good bus service, and because of the school's philosophy and first impressions. Some also felt good about the kindergarten's reputation, and some also attended the kindergarten themselves. In the end, it is very interesting to note that having *azukari-hoiku*, music lessons, or a low number of *bentō* days did not appear to matter much at all for mothers of children at Seishi or Misono. Rather, it was more the fundamental qualities of the schools that attracted mothers.

This leads to addressing the question (2): In what ways are Japanese kindergartens changing in order to appeal to mothers and attract children? This study has shown that kindergartens in Akita are offering an increasing number of services that are mainly designed for the convenience of mothers. These conveniences have become so commonplace that they are almost taken for granted. This is probably why they were not identified as important reasons to choose kindergartens by mothers. Yet mothers are clearly benefiting from the new policies and services. Moreover, in many cases changes have been initiated in response to the requests of mothers – something that would not have happened without recent and dramatic demographic changes, primarily the drop in the number of children. Not all mothers want to be free from tasks such as making *bentōs*, but the majority either truly does, or simply do not mind. It is also interesting to note that mothers with regular jobs outside the home were no more likely to support a decrease in the number of *bentō* days at Misono than other mothers, meaning that the demise of the kindergartener's homemade lunch is not necessarily directly due to an increase in the number of working mothers. Whether or not mothers' homemade lunches are truly better for children or essential for expressing motherly love is beyond the scope of this study, but the *bentō* has become a casualty of a battle in which mothers, on the whole, appear to be emerging as the winners.

It is now possible to consider the question (3): Is it accurate to assume that mothers who send their children to kindergartens are locked into a period of servitude during which they must labor to live up to the kindergarten's demands? Based on the evidence at hand, the answer to this question must clearly be no. At least in the city of Akita, only mothers who choose Fuzoku Kindergarten may be said to be in such a situation, yet the chance to start a child on his or her way up the only education escalator in the area (or perhaps very close proximity or the opportunity to express love and care through making a *bentō* 4 days a week) makes it worth the

effort, at least in their minds.²⁰ Do mothers (or households) serve kindergartens in Japan, or vice versa? Data from Akita City indicate that today, it is more the latter than the former. Mothers control the resource of children, and kindergartens need this to survive, and they will sacrifice their ideals to obtain this resource. Perhaps this statement comes across as overly economic determinist. Of course, a child does not merely represent money to kindergartens, and they are not concerned with satisfying investors by turning profits. They simply want to survive and continue doing what they believe is best for children, for it is a sad thing for all involved when a kindergarten has to shut down. Nobody wants to be the one to lock the door for the last time.

Since the appearance of Garret Hardin's famous essay (1968) on the futility of seeking only technological solutions to the problem of dwindling CPRs, two basic types of practical solutions have arisen in the literature (cf. Ostrom, 1987). The first is actually a choice between two different institutional arrangements: privatization of the resource (granting exclusive rights of a specific part of the CPR to each individual or institution dependent on it), or regulation of the resource by an outside authority. The second is the establishment of a cooperative regulatory system on the part of the involved parties. Whether a choice can be made between these kinds of solutions, and what choice is made and how, is a central problem of rational choice theory: a point made by Acheson (2002, pp. 145–149) in comparing two cases of CPR utilization on the New England coast – one successful and one unsuccessful. If preschool-aged children in Japan are viewed as a CPR, which kindergartens need in order to survive, one of these solutions should at some point appear. In the case described in this chapter, the state has not taken steps to “privatize” the resource by making kindergarten attendance mandatory, mapping out areas of the city with only one kindergarten in each, and decreeing that all children living within each area go to the kindergarten in that area – as is the case with public elementary and junior high schools in Japan. However, mandatory kindergarten attendance may be on the horizon, and the state has in fact begun to “privatize” by increasing the impact of general market forces on preschools by encouraging the spread of *nintei kodomo-en*. As for the other institutional solution, the national government does, of course, regulate the number of children a kindergarten can accept, and it also generally forbids nursery schools from accepting children whose mothers are at home. Last, cooperative organizations (prefecture-level and city-level) formed by private kindergartens – albeit prior to the decline in children – are helping to serve the function of the latter type of basic practical solution above. The institutional solutions,

to be sure, are being pursued not for the sake of kindergartens, but they are tailored partially for preserving and increasing the CPR – the pool of children in the country. New policies are designed to encourage mothers to remain in the labor force and also (hopefully) to make it easier for them to bear more children. Amidst this sea of change, kindergartens have bonded together for survival while resisting pressures to make too many radical changes – changes that the state actually wants. So far, the institutional solutions are proving to be more powerful than any other. The “kindergarten” as it has been known for many decades is losing out to these forces. Mothers are already benefiting greatly from their increased power as the caretakers of the children that kindergartens need to survive, and they are now poised to benefit even more from the institutional solution of merging nursery school and kindergarten functions, thereby increasing the level of competition over the care of their children. Yet a fair number of mothers, along with the operators of many kindergartens, feel that something important is being lost as mothers in general gain freedom.

Finally, can the findings of this study be extended across all of Japan? The situation in places such as Tokyo or Osaka is quite different. There, parents may select from among any number of pricy private kindergartens that promise to funnel children into prestigious schools. Whether in the fast track or not, however, all private kindergartens in such places are far more expensive than any kindergarten in Akita. There are still some low-cost public kindergartens here and there, but these are disappearing rapidly, as local governments are eager to trim their budgets. In smaller major cities the situation may be less complex, but still rather different from that in Akita City. Yet there are still many cities and regions across the country similar enough to Akita to deserve comparison. But it should also be noted that Akita City is not exactly representative of Akita Prefecture as a whole in terms of kindergarten survival. While most of the institutions covered in this chapter cannot breathe easily, they are getting by, and there is hope. In many smaller cities and towns kindergartens are truly imperiled, and many have already vanished. Soon, endangered preschools may be able to ensure their survival by becoming *nintei kodomo-en*, and then kindergartens that resist change will have to compete with increasing numbers of facilities that can keep a child all day even if a mother is at home. Lambert (2007, p. 28) concludes in her recent article on family policy by stating: “Electoral competition and economic recovery will put additional pressure on policy-makers to introduce still more mother-friendly family policies.” Mothers, indeed, seem to be poised to benefit from policies such as that which has encouraged the merging of kindergarten and nursery school operations in

single facilities. Considering this development along with the recent privatization of the national universities, the application of free-market principles to education in Japan can only be expected to increase. Therefore, more research on this is warranted. More intensive qualitative research on the motivations and business operations of kindergartens, and also of the decision-making processes of mothers and households – beyond the scope of the present study – is also warranted. Last, although this chapter largely overlooked the roles of fathers, the number of single and stay-at-home fathers in Japan is slowly rising, which calls for a closer look at their relations with institutions and other parents within the market for childcare.

NOTES

1. Here I use the term “nursery school” for the Japanese words *hoikuen* and *hoikusho*. “Kindergarten” is synonymous for *yōchien*. Finally, “preschool” refers to all of these.

2. I take economics to mean “processes and institutions involved in the production, distribution/exchange, and consumption of goods and services” (Dannhaeuser & Werner, 2002, p. 1). In other words, how do Japanese mothers weigh costs in factors such as time, effort, general frustration, and perceived future benefit in making choices between different kindergartens?

3. That the former, at least, is seen as serious problem was witnessed in the appointment of a Minister of State (Kuniko Inoguchi) to deal with the situation by Prime Minister Abe during his tenure. Frustration over the lagging birthrate (which hit a low of 1.25 in 2005) compelled the Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare (Hakuo Yanagisawa) to publicly declare in January, 2007, that Japanese women were merely idle “birthing machines” who needed to get busy making more babies, for which much scorn was subsequently heaped upon him by women and opposition political parties.

4. For example, businesses compete for new hires at sparsely attended job fairs, universities compete for new students among a shrinking pool of high school seniors, and kindergartens compete for children as their numbers dwindle. See Ogawa, Retherford, and Matsukura (2006) for details on national demographic trends.

5. But see Tamanoi (1990) for balance on this topic.

6. See especially Boocock (1989), and also Ben Ari (2005).

7. See Lambert (2007) for background on this situation.

8. For example, when my wife and I lived in Tokyo (Setagaya) we wanted to place our three year old daughter in a nearby public nursery school for a while just prior to the birth of our second daughter, but we had to go through the relevant city office, which firmly turned down our request because my wife was not employed. Eventually I discovered a nursery school inside the grounds of Tokyo University, where I was a Ph.D. student. It was just an old wooden house located near the back gate of the campus at Komaba. The nursery was actually a public entity under the auspices of the Meguro City (Ward) government, but the property belonged to the

university, which lent it out at a low rate – a convenient arrangement for both the operators of the nursery school and the university. There were no more than 40 children, and the staff was happy to take my daughter two days a week since I was a student at the university. My daughter attended this nursery school for about one year, until she was finally able to enter the public kindergarten near our apartment. Eventually, the operators of the facility broke away from the Meguro government, formed an NPO to support the nursery school, and constructed a new building in another spot on the university campus.

9. Boocock (1989, p. 61) reports that in the 1980s an estimated 98% of kindergartens in Japan actively taught reading and arithmetic (although not in line with official government guidelines). Although this might be the case in the hypercompetitive environment of Tokyo, it certainly does not apply to the situation in Akita – none that I have investigated engage in the practice.

10. See Allison (2000, pp. 105–122) and Peak (1991, pp. 57–62) for detailed explanations.

11. But the *bentō* is, of course, a cultural construction. In Korea, for example, consumers generally prefer a hot meal, complete with soup, to a cold or room temperature *bentō* – regardless of inputs of money or effort, or of artistic or sentimental value (Shimamura, 2005). It has also been reported that many Chinese mothers in Japan find it difficult to adjust to making *bentō*s for their children in kindergarten partly due to the mothers' cultural preference for (and far greater familiarity with) hot dishes that are not very suitable for Japanese *bentō*s (Yanagawa & Sakane, 2006).

12. There are more than 40 nursery schools in the city.

13. *Fuzoku* means “attached” or “affiliated”. There are also other *fuzoku* preschools in Akita – some of which are included in this study – but to avoid confusion I use the term “Fuzoku Kindergarten,” as short for Akita University College of Education and Liberal Arts Attached Kindergarten. In Akita, when a person refers to “the *fuzoku* schools,” they are generally referring to these particular *fuzoku* schools, for they are the most notable and most widely recognized.

14. And they do take education seriously. When I taught parent child English lessons in the city a number of years ago there were a few Fuzoku Elementary mothers who brought their boys to the lessons. None could rival them in their (expressed) level of dedication and concern over the formal education of their offspring.

15. I know someone who attended the Fuzoku schools as a child and yet failed to enter Akita High School later, as had been expected of him. This might become a reason for parents to avoid Fuzoku Kindergarten – after becoming a parent, he insisted that none of his own children be sent to the schools.

16. Questions were as follows: (1a) How many adults live in your household? (1b) How many children live in your household? (1c) Do any grandparents live with you? (2a) What is your employment situation? (full time, part time, seasonal, etc., unemployed) (2b) What is the occupation of the primary wage earner in your household? (3) Do you live in Hodono? (4) How far is the kindergarten from your home? (About ___ minutes by ____.) (5) Why did you choose this kindergarten? (6) How much do you rely on a relative or friend to help you take care of your child from Monday to Friday each week? (7) Did you consider a nursery school before

deciding on this kindergarten? (8) Did you consider another kindergarten before deciding on this kindergarten? (9) How many total lesson days does your child (or, do your children) have each week, Monday to Friday? (10) Is your child (are your children) taking lessons on weekends?

17. In addition, mothers of children at Misono Kindergarten were asked: (11) Will you have a child at the kindergarten next year? (12) How necessary for you is *azukari hoiku*? (13) How do you feel about children being allowed to enter the kindergarten before their third birthday? (14) From next year children will only need to bring a *bentō* from home one day each week. How do you feel about that? Finally, they were also invited to write any opinions they might have had about the situations mentioned in questions 13 and 14.

18. When the playground of Seishi Kindergarten was temporarily rendered unusable by the construction of the new building, its children were invited to play in Fuzoku's vast yard.

19. Even nonworking moms find it very convenient to leave a child late when, for example, they have to attend a PTA meeting for an older child.

20. Some of them may be doing something that their husbands (or parents in law) wanted them to do, and therefore not actually be completely "free" in their decision making, but such mothers should be very few in number, if there are in fact any.

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“I BOUGHT THIS AT EASTERN MARKET”: VENDING, VALUE, AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN AN URBAN STREET MARKET

Robert J. Shepherd

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the selling practices of street vendors at a popular weekend market in Washington, DC. I discuss the role of social and moral norms in vendors' behavior toward one another, customers, and their work. Vendor success in this marketplace over the long term is influenced not only by their products and sales skills, but also by their understanding and acceptance of an ethical framework partly shaped by stories they tell about each other. As such, this study illustrates the embedded nature of sellers in marketplaces, as opposed to theoretical notions of how abstract individuals are supposed to act in a decontextualized "market." Furthermore, stories that arise from encounters between vendors and customers add value to the products people buy. Objects in this marketplace, then, gain value not only through the interaction of supply and demand, but also through buyer and seller interaction, which provides a narrative base for future communication.

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Celebrants of global trade, communication, and other forms of interaction assert not just the inevitability of “globalization” but also the moral worth of abstract markets (cf. Friedmann, 2000). Yet, as many observers have noted, these counter-claims are themselves cultural, as they assume that all people seek to maximize individual gains, efficiency can be used to explain economic choices, and market equilibrium is a universal principle (Fine, 1999, p. 15). In other words, a particular *type* of market and a specific *type* of market actor are taken as universally given and agreed upon by all. Yet this conception of markets is, as Karl Polanyi argued, a “conception of the world, not the world itself” (quoted in Carrier, 1997, p. 27, emphasis added).

In contrast to this theoretical notion of behavior in an abstract market, my focus in this chapter is on how people behave in an actual marketplace, that is, a specific site where buyers and sellers meet to engage in exchange acts. Focusing on what Plattner (1983) calls “real” marketplaces is important precisely because these sites are empirical examples of the competitive markets of neoclassical economic theory (Plattner, 1982, p. 852). A clear division between the theoretical space of “The Market” and the actual realities of marketplaces is thus necessary. Such marketplaces are not just physical places but also social processes, the scenes of performance and play as well as economic exchange (cf. Kapchan, 1993, pp. 308–309; de la Pradelle, 1995, pp. 365–368). As such, they illustrate how economic exchange, as Polanyi (1957) asserted, is embedded within the broader realm of social practice.

My field site is a major weekend flea market and crafts fair in Washington, DC, where vendors, some of whom make their objects and others of whom engage in retail sales, deal primarily in, broadly speaking, culture. My focus is not on the question of whether the buying and selling of cultural objects changes their aesthetic value but on how normative behavior roles, both real and ideal, regulate how vendors sell their objects. In other words, I am interested in how (cultural) norms, perceptions, and values regulate and guide how artisan vendors sell (cultural) material objects. In this marketplace, a “commodity-limiting ethos”¹ among sellers regulates behavior in relation to customers, market administrators, and other sellers. What counts as proper vendor behavior is shaped by the stories vendors tell about each other. At the same time, the stories that arise from vendor and customer interactions function as one aspect of value added to the objects customers buy.

MARKETS AS PLACES

While marketplaces have been an object of analysis for economic anthropologists dating back to Malinowski, these studies have usually been

located in the space of the discipline's normative subjects, native Others (cf. Rutz & Orlove, 1989; Coote & Shelton, 1992; Brenner, 1998; Pinney & Thomas, 2001; Little, 2002; Seligmann, 2004). As Michele de la Pradelle notes, actual marketplaces have generally been ignored in societies in which the ideology of an abstract "market" dominates (1995, p. 360). Anthropological and sociological studies of marketplaces and market spaces in North America and Western Europe usually have focused on informal exchange places such as sidewalk vending and garage sales. For example, in his study of second-hand print media hawkers, Mitchell Dunier explores how the informal order of long-term street vending spaces invariably is disrupted by bureaucratic attempts to impose a rationalized uniform order, partly because informal selling "looks disordered" (1999, p. 234). Gretchen Herrmann (1997, 2003, 2004) suggests that both sellers and buyers at garage sales are motivated by more than economic incentives in transactions: sellers sell for a variety of reasons besides money, ranging from housecleaning to relocation, socializing, and curiosity, while buyers may seek objects with a history, not simply for utility or because of a good price. Paul Stoller (1996, 2002) has written extensively on the West African street vendors of upper Manhattan. In his work, Stoller points to the paradoxes of the production and consumption of cultural objects such as wood carvings and textiles, tracing both trade and production linkages between relatives at home and migrants in New York and new linkages between Korean and Chinese immigrant textile producers in New Jersey, West African vendors in New York City, and African-American consumers seeking objects portraying African culture (1996, p. 778). Frank Fanselow (1990) has examined how buyers measure quality in micro-level marketplaces when they lack information, while Frenzen and Davis (1990) and Kelly (2003) have explored how buyers cultivate social ties with artisan vendors. Stewart Plattner's work on a Midwest art market (1996) is also extremely useful, though this is not a study of a marketplace but rather a general market for fine art outside of key market-defining cities.

Beyond Robert Maisel's groundbreaking article on weekend marketplaces (1974), there has been little research on vendor relationships in such markets. Maisel described what he called the "sociability myth" of weekend marketplaces such as flea markets, rejecting a vendor portrayal of market action as social as well as economic, where "economic action is seen as incidental to social pleasantry" (p. 502). Based on fieldwork at a San Francisco bay area market in 1972, he argued this view described not so much how vendors acted but rather what vendors "think the flea market is about" while providing a means of rationalizing mundane work and often low sales (p. 503). He concluded that, beyond this vendor claim of a social

basis to vending, “anticipation of a good day – that is, high profits – is the main source of their ambition and labor” (*ibid.*).

In contrast, Michele de la Pradelle (1995) asserts that the public space of such marketplaces is profoundly social and performative, allowing vendors and customers to engage in a game of “equality of chances” in which all participants can play at being temporarily equal (1995, p. 364–365). Local markets thus serve as a type of social space that is different than work or home space, or for that matter much commercial space, where class, gender, ethnic, and racial hierarchies shape social relationships (*ibid.*).

Banks (2006) explicitly rejects the view that sellers in cultural markets thrive by adapting an instrumental rationalist approach that has no room for moral or ethical considerations. Instead, he argues they succeed by being “self-consciously engaged in forms of practice that contain ideas about what is ‘good’ (and therefore ‘bad’), exhibit moral ways of acting towards others and negotiate the balance between holding instrumental and non-instrumental values” (p. 456). His fieldwork examines how self-identified politically progressive small business entrepreneurs in Manchester balanced market decision making with their own moral and political values through community activities such as free services for arts and cultural festivals and volunteering at local schools. As such, it does not directly speak to Maisel’s claim that weekend street vendors either deceive their questioners or themselves when they assert that they engage in selling for reasons that transcend profit maximization.

THE SITE

The Eastern Market complex consists of a long, rectangular building divided into South, North, and Central Halls situated in Washington’s Capitol Hill neighborhood, two blocks from Pennsylvania Avenue. The South Hall, which houses permanent food merchants, was constructed in 1874. The North Hall, site of a non-profit art gallery, and the Central Hall, used for storage, opened in 1908. By 1929, the North Hall was no longer used for vending because of a lack of demand. Over the next three decades the number of vendors operating in the South Hall gradually declined, until by 1960 only one tenant remained, while the North Hall for much of the 20th century served as a storage facility for city highway equipment until it was leased rent free to a community arts group in 1975. In the late 1970s, the directors of this group organized a Sunday flea market on the sidewalks around the complex. As the flea market attracted more vendors and

customers, farmers who sold at the market on Saturday mornings began selling on Sundays as well. In 1992, South Hall merchants also began selling on Sunday.

Eastern Market functions as both public space serving utilitarian needs and public spectacle to tour and experience. After years of conflict over zoning laws and the lack of public oversight, city tourism officials now promote Eastern Market as a major destination, guidebooks portray it as a part of the “authentic” (in contrast to the *touristic*) Washington, and local residents speak of it as the “heart” of Capitol Hill (cf. Waldron, 2005, p. 28).

Visitors to the neighborhood encounter a large sign entitled “Meet You at the Market,” which announces that Eastern Market is stop 16 on the “Barracks Row Heritage Trail,” a self-guided tour of Capitol Hill. It is a place, this sign explains, where visitors can be “charmed by the vendors’ century-old traditions and fruit free of plastic wrappings” (Levey, Williams, & Rollins, 2004). Major guidebooks for Washington, DC, emphasize the market’s community role as a place where local residents congregate and hence not a place filled with tourists, thus making it a more attractive tourist destination. William Whitman, author of the aptly named *Off the Beaten Path: Washington, DC*, describes the Market as crucial to Capitol Hill community identity, writing that it is “the epicenter of Capitol Hill social and cultural life” (2005, p. 47), while the *Lonely Planet City Guide* places “delightful Eastern market in the heart of the Capitol Hill community” and names it as one of the five places in Washington discerning travelers should visit (Vorhees 2004, p. 5 and 64). These guidebooks also emphasize the spectacle quality of the market. For the authors of Fodor’s *Washington, DC*, “the weekend flea market presents nostalgia by the crateful, and vendors are willing to negotiate” (Fodor’s, 2004, p. 56), while the author of *Washington, DC for Dummies* describes the market as a “riot of activity on weekends” where “chefs join locals” and “scores upon scores of farmers, grocers, artists, craftsmen, and vendors peddle their wares” (Price, 2005, p. 235).

In sum, Eastern Market is promoted by city officials and guidebook writers as a tourist destination because it is not supposedly a tourist destination (e.g., a place filled with tourists). It is marked as different from a tourist destination because it has history, it is a destination for “locals,” and it is “colorful” and chaotic in a spectacle fashion.

At once a flea market, farmers market, arts and crafts fair, and upscale gourmet center, Eastern Market sits squarely at the crossroad of formal and informal, economic and “festival” marketplaces (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989, p. 16). The market has 13 permanent merchants who sell fish, meats, flowers, sandwiches, baked goods, and cheeses, and on average 10

farmers who sell a range of produce depending on the season. But the vast majority of the approximately 100 vendors sell objects that range from “high culture” (original artwork), to “folk culture” (glassware, porcelain, and handmade bags), to a range of cultural imports (silk scarves from China and India, silver jewelry from Southeast Asia and Mexico, coral jewelry and beads from China, and Turkish rugs, among others).

In this study, I focus on this large group of what I term “tangible cultural” vendors, for several reasons. First, while Eastern Market is nominally a farmer’s market, there are seldom more than 10 farmers at the market on Sundays. Second, the South Hall merchants who sell fish, meats, cheese, prepared foods, and baked goods are not actually vendors but instead small shopkeepers, who rent permanent stalls from the city government. Finally, I am interested in how objects usually classified as crafts, art, or culture are sold, not on how fish or meat merchants interact with their customers.² My focus is thus different from that of Michele de la Pradelle, who has examined the social aspects of a weekly food market in Southern France (1995).

METHODS

I became interested in Eastern Market when my partner, Fithri Diah, began to vend Javanese textiles on occasional Sundays. My initial foray into the market was as Fithri’s helper. I would set up her tables in the morning, watch her goods when she took a break, and load our car at the end of the day. I even made a few sales. As I became friends with other vendors and market personnel, I became interested in understanding how this market space functioned as a largely informal social community within a public space. To this end, I talked with, worked with and observed more than 100 Sunday vendors over the course of 3 years. I interviewed 27 vendors and four staff members in depth. These interviews took place on weekdays, when vendors were not selling, or early on weekend mornings, after vendors had set up their tables. Each interview was tape-recorded. After transcribing each interview, I followed up with specific questions generated through these interviews.

In terms of gender, 16 of my interviewees were men and 15 were women. Fourteen of thirty one classified themselves as “white,” nine as “black,” six as “Asian,” one as “Hispanic,” and one as “mixed.” The majority of the vendors I interviewed were jewelry sellers or artisans (37%, or 10 of 27), followed by artists, which includes painters and photographers (22%, or 6

of 27) and textile vendors (15%, or 4 of 27). The others sold handbags (2), toys, apple products, imported carpets, framed newspaper stories, and used furniture.

On a typical Sunday, approximately 70–100 vendors set up tables and tents, depending on the weather and season. In winter months, this number drops below 50, while in summer months and from late November through the Christmas holidays, vendors often exceed available spaces. Sample survey data from a recent Market Day festival in May 2008 illustrates the diversity of vendors in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and products (Table 1).

As these figures show, a majority of vendors are women (58.6%), yet racially the vending pool is extremely balanced between white (44%) and black (42.6%) participants, a significant finding in a city as racially divided spatially as Washington, DC. However, these figures also reveal that what is sold at Eastern Market intersects with race and gender. For example, jewelry vendors, the largest group of vendors (31, or 39.7%), are overwhelmingly female (22, or 71%), while artists (13) are primarily male

Table 1. Total Market Day Vendors ($N = 78$) on May 4, 2008.

By race: White, 33; Black, 32; Asian, 12^a; Hispanic, 1
By gender: Men, 31; Women, 44; Couples, 3
By race and gender^b: WM, 13; WW, 20; BM, 14; BW, 18; AM, 4; AW, 5; AC, 3; HW, 1
By nationality: White American (33), Black American (29), Chinese (7), Indian (3), Mongolian (1), Thai (1), Colombian (1), Trinidadian (1), Surinamese (1), Ethiopian (1)
By product

Artwork: WM (6), BM (3), WW (1), BW (2), AM (1) Total = 13
 Photography: WM (1), BM (1), AM (1) Total = 3
 Jewelry: WM (4), BM (2), WW (14), BW (5), HW (1), AW (2), AM (1), CC (2) Total = 31
 Clothing: BM (2), BW (3) Total = 5
 Bags: WW (2), BW (2), AW (2), AM (1) Total = 7
 Soap/oils: BW (4), BM (1) Total = 5
 Textiles: WW (1), AW (2) Total = 3
 Porcelain: WM (1), BM (2), BW (1) Total = 4
 Tiles: WW (1), BM (1) Total = 2
 Other: WM (1), BM (2), BW (1), WW (1) Total = 5^c

^aThe category “Asian” includes seven Chinese vendors (four individuals, three couples), two Indian women, one Indian man, one Mongolian man, and one Thai woman.

^bWM, white men; WW, white women; BM, black men; BW, black women; AM, Asian men; AW, Asian women; AC, Asian couples (all Chinese); HW, Hispanic women.

^cIncluded in this group are vendors selling hats (WW), sunglasses (WW) flip flops (WM), used books (BM), and used furniture (BM).

(10, or 76.9%). Ready-made clothing vendors are all African-American (5), as are soap and oil vendors (5).

STORYTELLING AND NORM SETTING

Generalized, abstract space becomes a grounded place when it is attached to memories, what Michel de Certeau referred to as “fragmentary and inward-turning histories” (1984, p. 108). These fragments, in the form of stories and storytelling, shape both behavior and social practice in public spaces, in the process giving coherence to these spaces as contextualized places. At Eastern Market, these stories take many forms, ranging from the personal and informal to the official and bureaucratic. At the personal level, tales about market characters, vendors, and occasionally customers both shape and guide social relationships among vendors while also communicating desirable and undesirable behavioral traits.

In a study of changing sexual practices in Shanghai, James Farrer has suggested that storytelling in the form of gossip is a crucial medium through which community norms and social practices are delineated and communicated (2002, p. 75). As he points out, far from being exclusive to women, gossip is a tactic used by both male and female community members, of all social classes and ethnicities, for very particular reasons:

Although gossip tends to support conventional moral codes, its humor dulls its harsh judgments, and gossipers' wide exposure to different stories makes them more realistic about human nature, even if not overtly tolerant ... gossip allows participants to understand their own situation in a comparative context and gain empathy for the predicaments of others, through which they can begin to revise their moral views. (Farrer, 2002, p. 75)

Vendor gossip and stories at Eastern Market are context and character-driven and told among and between individuals who either personally know or know *of* the people portrayed. Like all such stories, perfect accuracy is not necessarily the goal of the storyteller, because “getting the facts right” might not be the point of a story. Instead, what often is the intent is to give context to assumptions and norms that inform and guide actors toward proper actions and attitudes toward customers, market authorities, and, most importantly, each other.

However, the role of storytelling as a means of influencing behavior requires a relatively stable vending community. As this weekend flea market has become more popular over the past decade, it has attracted more

vendors. Some of these newcomers, either unaware of or unconcerned with normative assumptions among vendors, merchants, and farmers about how vendors should act toward customers and other vendors, focus exclusively on making money and not on cultivating social bonds. In doing so they are perceived by more established vendors as a threat to a socially thick market order rooted in a general perception of this marketplace as a place that is more than a market. In other words, long-established vendors do not view this market as simply a public space where sellers compete against each other in the business of catching buyers. From their perspective, Eastern Market “works” as a marketplace not because of a rational meta-plan, nor because it encourages competition among vendors for utility-maximizing consumers, but because it stimulates a social web of recognition and relationships among vendors, not simply between consumers and vendors.

The role that trust plays in purchase decisions is recognized by many vendors at Eastern Market. When vendors violate this implicit bond of trust, they become the subject of complaints, gossip, and stories among other vendors. But using talk to guide vendor behavior only is effective within a community of vendors who define themselves as a community. In other words, storytelling and gossiping *among* vendors about *other* vendors are effective tools for guiding marketplace behavior only to the extent that people care whether others are telling stories about them. When they either do not care or do not understand that they should care, tensions emerge among vendors.

While Farrer emphasizes the empathetic aspects of gossip, gossip also serves to guide community members to particular forms of behavior through criticism as much as through empathy. In the context of Eastern Market, not only does what vendors sell become a matter of discussion through storytelling, but also how they go about this practice (the emphasis they place on the performative act of selling) and the role money plays in their reasons for being at the market. Contrary to Maisel’s claim (1974) that vendors may talk about sociability yet actually focus on profits, many of my informants insisted that they vended for reasons that transcended material gain. Indeed, as I will show, they asserted that successful vendors were successful because they understood how to vend (in terms of sociability with other vendors, customers, and market staff). What resulted was a clash between those for whom vending was about more than maximizing sales and those who rejected this approach. In other words, being *too* competitive and focused on making money caused a breakdown in community relations among vendors.

THE ETHICS OF THE SALES ACT

Vendors who saw this marketplace as a part of their lives that extended beyond market transactions were the most vehement about not reducing their activities to a utility maximizing process in which sellers attempted to extract maximum value from buyers while buyers sought to maximize the utility of their purchases. Not only did these vendors criticize those who were, according to Mark (a painter), “just out to make a buck,” but they also tended to focus most of their criticism on those vendors who had already been at the market for a certain amount of time and thus should have learned the unwritten rules that regulated vendor–customer relations. Given that these vendors continued to focus on maximizing sales at the expense of community despite their success, Mark viewed their behavior as part of their “nature,” implying that they would or even could not accept the moral economy of exchange he viewed as the norm at the market:

The people that are tied to the market and feel the roots, and they call it a family, we have an obligation and we feel very strongly about building trust and making the customers appreciate what is there and keep coming back. But you have a big contingency out there that is just out to make a buck, and out to scam people whatever way they can. These are the ones who, after they’ve been there for awhile, are able to say, I’m part of this market, but they still have to do this lying . . . it’s so offensive that they need to do that . . . they don’t need to do that, it’s just in their nature. And they’re the ones who are often the loudest when somebody encroaches on their space. They always have the problems with other vendors.

This view was widely shared by other vendors who identified, like Mark, as being part of the market. Just as there were prescribed ways of how *not* to sell, vendors who identified with the market asserted that there were proper ways to sell. These included a willingness to help customers, be friendly with both other vendors and customers, and most importantly, allow products to sell themselves. For example, Tony, a very successful vendor of his own photographs of iconic Washington sites, sold his products by paradoxically not talking about his work:

I try not to be a pressure seller . . . I usually try to talk about everything but the pictures . . . usually we just talk about life in DC, which is kind of interesting for me. There are people who come back like once a month, just to see if I have something new, or to bring in their friends, or they will see something and finally come back.

From this perspective, selling “culture,” whether the products of one’s own creation or those of another, was not a pressing issue. Instead, *how* a

vendor went about this act of selling was generally viewed as an indicator of their identification with the market and even their moral worth. Mona, originally from Trinidad and a long-time vendor of baby clothes, said she tried to “help” people make choices rather than push things on people. She said that while she certainly wanted to make sales, “I’d rather sell you something you want.” While this distrust of pushy salespersons and a desire not to be identified as such was particularly common among artists, it included retail vendors as well.

A commodity-limiting ethos³ circulated among self-identified long-term vendors. This group, numbering approximately 30–40 on an average Sunday, was an eclectic lot. Some had been vending from the start of the market in 1978 or shortly thereafter, while others had recently gained a permanent space after 4 or 5 years. They included both men and women, American-born and foreign, and white and African-American vendors. While an element of nostalgia probably influenced their views, they generally voiced sentiments similar to those of Mark. They certainly desired to make money, but they also identified with the market as a space that did not simply serve as a site for the competitive game of exchange. A middle-aged Chinese-American woman who was a community college instructor explained what kept her coming back to the market to sell small leather goods:

Are all vendors out to make money? Not really, making money is just one goal. For people who don’t have other jobs, that’s the only goal. For people who want to make extra pocket money, the goals are little different. Some people have an office job, and maybe think they don’t have enough interaction with real people. This is a way to talk to people and also to get some exercise This is a way to meet people.

This sociability aspect of vending was echoed by Doris, an African-American woman who was one of the original vendors, having started in 1978. She sold buttons, had a loyal group of customers, but seldom made a great deal of money. Yet she continued to attend the market for reasons that were just as practical as profit maximization:

Sunday is the one day just for me, and it’s not all about money . . . for the knowledge I’ve gained, for the people I’ve met, I wouldn’t change this for money. In fact, about two years ago, I remember I once made three dollars, and I gave that three dollars away. And I went home so happy I thought something was wrong.

Christina, a young woman from Prague, had recently finished a college degree in economics at a local university and sold wooden toys she imported from a friend back home. Even with her training in how the market was

supposed to work, she explained that she approached competition in a different way than theory dictated:

I get along with everyone. I don't think competition is that bad in this market ... I'm usually next to Mia, she sells toys, too. Is it strange? No, we just work with it ... we're just not competitive, I guess. Sometimes we help each other. If somebody doesn't find something from me, I recommend them to her ... it's no big deal.

HOW NOT TO SELL: THE HARD SELL

How vendors went about selling their wares was a key aspect of how they understood their place within the market and how they classified other vendors. Some, like Hongming, a Chinese immigrant who sold women's handbags, took the view that pleasing customers was important, not because of any social relationship with them as people but because this would theoretically lead to more sales. Others, particularly self-identified artists, preferred to let their products sell themselves. Relatively few other than produce vendors engaged in a performative hard sell. This could range from strategic deception of customers, to self-promotion, aggressive bargaining, and lying. In engaging in such sales tactics, vendors marked themselves as different and invited gossip. This criticism was often driven by an assumption that those who tried to actively sell their goods were selling, in effect, low-quality things, as Ric, who sold hand-woven imported carpets, told me:

I would like to be part of a market that has none of that [hard selling]. Eastern Market used to have more taste than other markets but that's slowly changing and they're letting in more junk. I mean, there are people selling "Scarface" Al Pacino tee shirts, you know? I'd like to see all that stuff go away, it hurts my business. It comes down to the quality of art.

Ric's dislike of what he considered low-status products was affirmed by Francis, an artist who drew a clear connection between the quality of what a vendor sold and the tactics used to sell:

I'm not selling junk ... if you're selling junk you almost have to do it [hard sell] ... if you're selling nice stuff you want to present an image that says this is nice stuff. A lot of times it can be very visual ... if I see someone's table that's arranged all symmetrical and everything plays off each other you can tell it is nice stuff. But if it's all over the place, if say the tablecloth is hitched up in the middle, or half draped ... I try to have a good presentation, because it's a very subliminal thing.

One of the vendors Francis mentioned was Brian, who had been selling beads in the market for more than 5 years. While financially successful, he had strained relationships with many other vendors. In his view, this was because of market competition and nothing more:

Let's say I make a necklace, right? Some bastard over there copies me. So what do I do? I'm forced to step it up a notch. There's nothing else I can do. So as much as I hate those bastards for copying me they actually are a positive force because they cause me to make innovations. But this doesn't mean I'm going out to dinner with the cocksucker motherfucker who copies me. But at the same time they are pushing me. So it's a perfect contradiction yin yang type thing.

What he viewed as a “ying yang type thing” was viewed by others as duplicity. Emma, a jewelry vendor who had a space near Brian, defined him not as an artisan but as a “bead stringer.” Of Brian, she said, “he'll do anything for a sale. All he does is talk and talk, always talking about money and how much he's making.” Vendor criticisms of the public sales techniques used by Brian contrast sharply with the behavior of produce sellers. Much like the vendors portrayed by de la Pradelle in a weekly food market in Southern France, the handful of fresh produce sellers at Eastern Market called out prices, spoke of quality, joked with customers, and made sales a public event (1995, pp. 366–367).

However, doing literally “anything” to close a non-food sale was seen among established and regular vendors such as Emma not as an admirable skill but as a morally dubious practice. Ed stated quite flatly about such vendors, “They'll lie. They will lie to anybody to make a sale.” He described watching as Adis, an Ethiopian man who sold silver jewelry and crosses, tried to convince a potential customer to make a purchase:

He had a woman who wanted to buy this big piece. She was just trying to decide, you know? And she said, “Okay, will you be here next weekend?” He says, “No. I won't be here ever again.” He knows he will be, but he lies to her to make that sale that day. I take great offense at that.

Taking offense at using duplicity to make a sale could be dismissed as jealousy, since Ed also sold jewelry. One could argue that in a competitive marketplace envy and gossip will inevitably occur, given that a fixed pool of vendors compete with each other for a limited pool of consumer dollars. This could lead to a situation in which more successful entrepreneurs are targets of envy and gossip from less successful sales people.

This is a view partially accepted by Jerry, who sold glassware. He spoke of wanting to “get his share” of the consumer dollars present on any given Sunday and replied in answer to a rhetorical question that a tomato seller

was potentially taking dollars away from him. Yet he also described April, a young African-American woman who sold her own paintings (and thus with whom he did not directly compete) as a “shameless self-promoter” who used dubious sales techniques (including a never-ending “50% off your first purchase, today only” hook) to draw customers. “She’s very nice,” he said, “but I just don’t like her work. She sells a lot of stuff, but she’s so high-pressure. I don’t begrudge her money, not at all, I just don’t happen to like how she sells.” While one could argue that Jerry reacted this way because April was taking potential consumer dollars away from him with her sales, he insisted that his dislike was based on sales tactics and not her sales success. He was, for example, a good friend of Tony, a successful photographer who, despite theoretically taking consumer dollars away from other vendors, did so in what was viewed as a morally satisfactory way, without aggressive sales techniques.

Some vendors also directed their anger at foreign vendors whom they assumed concentrated on making as much money as possible, by selling most anything. “It all comes from their sister’s factory or their cousin’s factory, you know?” one white vendor said. “Whether it’s true we’ll never know.” Mona cited Indians and Chinese as the main culprits, and criticized in particular their competitive approach:

Indian people come in here and they see you selling shawls, or whatever, they go and they get it, and they start selling it. And what they do, they undercut you. So if you’re selling it for thirty dollars, they’re going to sell it for like ten or fifteen dollars . . . same thing with the Chinese. See, what they do is, before they come in here they come around and see what you are selling. And they see you making money, and they go, and they get it. They get stuff in abundance, so you can’t compete with them.

Some conflicts and misunderstandings among vendors were rooted in language and cultural miscommunication that overlapped with racial and ethnic assumptions. Mrs. Chen, from China, was typical, believing that William and Banks, the two African-American men who assigned spaces to vendors, gave priority to African-Americans, many of whom she believed were “homeless.” According to Banks, African vendors looked down on black Americans like him for not living up to their expectations of them:

The only problem I got with the foreigners is the Africans. I have no problem with anybody else, but when the Africans come in here, for some strange reason, they think they’re better than us. I guess why they think that is because when they’re in Africa they hear about America, you understand? When they come over here and see how we, uh . . . mingle with the white folks so to speak, they don’t think we are supposed to act like this . . . I mean, this is different, it’s a different setting, when they get here and see how we act, people who was born and raised in the United States, to them we aren’t supposed to

act like this They think they're better than us because they know how to deal with white people. You can see it; I'll go and talk to them about something and I'll get all this static. The man go talk to them, and it's, "Okay, yes Sir." You see what I'm saying? It's like, we're brothers, but I'm out of line. I don't get it.

These stories of racial and ethnic conflict are perhaps predictable in a market with the linguistic, ethnic, racial, and gender diversity among vendors that Eastern Market has. Yet this underlying tension was not just rooted in race and ethnicity, it was also connected to the reasons why people were at the market. Vendors (of whatever ethnicity, race, and gender) who focused on making as much money as possible and ignored the social aspects of the vending community were viewed with suspicion and dislike by other vendors who insisted that a moral economy of behavior was a crucial aspect of the exchange process among vendors and customers. It is for this reason that Brian's aggressive sales techniques and boasting, April's aggressive discounting, and Adis's claim that he would never be at the market again were viewed as transgressions of this moral logic. That Brian was a white man, April an African-American woman, and Adis an African man, while no doubt recognized, did not change this perception. As one vendor said, "These guys are frauds and they're fooling the public and bringing a bad name for everybody."

BARGAINING AND RECIPROCITY

One view of bargaining, associated with both Karl Polanyi and Marshall Sahlins, portrays it as antagonistic and anti-social (Khuri, 1968, p. 698). This perspective contrasts the competitive clash of economic interests associated with bargaining to gift-giving and reciprocal exchange, which serve as a means to construct social ties. Yet, as Khuri notes, reciprocity is also a competitive process. By recognizing the social aspects of bargaining, one can avoid the dangers of reducing exchange acts to a binary division between impersonal, thin economic interests and personal, thick social ties (de la Pradelle, 1995, p. 361).

Bargaining appears to require a largely impersonal marketplace, one in which buyers and sellers have limited social ties (Khuri, 1968, p. 700). Yet the absence of strong kin or other ties that might limit bargaining does not mean the presence of a marketplace of competitive strangers meeting to engage in antagonistic bouts of rational calculation and utility maximization. In some situations, such as in fresh produce, fish and meat markets, bargaining functions as largely a "simulacrum," a type of game that enables

communication among strangers. Speaking with or to another may not signify any “real” relationship; the speech act itself constructs a performative link between buyer and seller, customer and vendor. Indeed, “the words are an end in themselves” in many cases (de la Pradelle, 1995, p. 368). This is because supply and demand has already effectively set benchmark prices for these products. Given this, “pseudo-bargaining” serves not to undermine social relationships between buyers and sellers but to build these ties (pp. 364–365).

However, bargaining in other types of marketplaces serves a crucial function, constructing value in situations in which market prices are not clear for either buyers or sellers (Khuri, 1968, p. 704). While some retail price information certainly exists even in used goods markets, as noted by Gregson and Crewe (1997) in their study of second-hand goods markets in the United Kingdom, clear market price information usually does not. This theoretically is the case for most products found at Eastern Market. Market forces set prices of produce and other food products, depending on season, availability, and other factors. Consequently, almost no bargaining is found among farmers and South Hall merchants.⁴ For other products, however, market prices are not so clear-cut. For example, how to determine the value of an oil painting, a photograph of the Capitol, or a pashmina scarf? This is a dilemma for both customers and vendors.

As Plattner (1996, p. 15) explains, a price paradox exists in situations in which potential consumers lack sufficient expertise and information to judge the value of objects. Given this lack of information, price becomes a method for customers to measure quality, which means that lowering prices can potentially harm and not help vendor sales. Market artists responded to this paradox by offering copies of their work at prevailing market rates and then using the sale of these prints to support the price of originals. For example, Simon tied his print prices to what the market would support, which he estimated to be somewhere between \$35 and \$100. He initially priced his original work at \$1,000, but accepted \$800. After 3 years of vending, he was able to charge \$1,500 for his originals, not because his skill as an artist had increased or because his customers’ expertise had necessarily improved, but because he had placed more copies of these originals into circulation. The copying and selling of his own work (as laser images of his original drawings) made these originals more original and hence more valuable in the economic realm.

Bernier (2004) and Plattner (1982, 1983) show how customers in urban marketplaces such as flea markets use social ties as a tool when engaging in exchange activities in which they lack price information. Not knowing what

is and is not old or whether an object is what a vendor claims it to be, buyers may cultivate ties with particular vendors, trusting that they will not be cheated. The level of intimacy between vendor and buyer is of course open to debate. Moreover, Eastern Market is filled with literal strangers, since many visitors, particularly during the summer months, are tourists.

Given these limits, bargaining in these cases appears quite logical in the absence of price and value information. But in order to bargain, both buyers and sellers must understand the normative rules that guide this process. Bargaining over large and costly objects such as houses, cars, boats, and land is common in the United States, yet bargaining for clothes, food, and cultural objects is not (Herrmann, 2003, p. 238). This is in part because bargaining as a process undermines fixed prices, which in turn clashes with a normative American perception of market fairness (*ibid.*, p. 239). If I get a better price than you for the same object, this for many Americans is “unfair.”

In a marketplace such as Eastern Market, some form of bargaining would appear to be the norm. Yet many vendors claimed to be quite willing to forego a potential sale if customers bargained too much, as seen in how Nakhon, a jewelry seller from Thailand, described his sales technique:

I hate too much bargaining. I mean, I don't try my hardest, you know, just to make them buy. If they like, they buy, if they not, it's okay. I have my pride too, because I make jewelry, I think . . . well, I have my pride, I don't really go down this much, I don't really care if you pay me this much, if you are being rude, for me, it's better not to sell to those people.

The role and importance of bargaining at Eastern Market was both highly contextual and extremely ambiguous. To begin with, customers were often confused about what they could bargain for and even how to bargain. Just as with participants in garage sales, flea market visitors learn the process of bargaining through practice (see also Herrmann, 2003, p. 245). Common were vendor complaints about customers asking the price of an object and then walking away, unaware that the vendor expected the customer to discuss this price. Many vendors recognized that they needed to educate these potential customers about their products – not through a hard sales technique (which might drive some customers away and draw the ire of other vendors), but through the provision of information, as another jeweler explained, “Sometimes if my price is a high price they just walk away so I have to explain to them, okay, what this is made from, so they start to say, okay, but I can't pay that much, can you discount it a little bit?” This vendor sold jewelry imported from Southeast Asia and had to deal with

customers who assumed that much of the jewelry sold at the market was, in the words of one neighborhood critic, “K-Mart jewelry.” This vendor actually agreed with this description, but blamed this situation on a lack of consumer knowledge, saying, “Sometimes I get a little bit upset and angry because people can’t tell the difference between a stone like turquoise or glass, or plastic, you know, imitation . . . not everybody knows jewelry.”

His was a common complaint of vendors who identified themselves as “real” artisan jewelers as opposed to jewelry assemblers. The issue in this case was not about the angst of placing into the calculative sphere of the marketplace one’s own creative work but instead of how to make observers aware of the artistic quality of this work in order for them to accept a high price, as opposed to costume jewelry that could be bought at a slightly cheaper price at a table a few feet away. This quite explicit awareness of the business of selling art led to a range of opinions on the role that bargaining played in this process. Depending on the context and who was asked, vendors viewed bargaining as a shrewd business tactic, a morally dubious practice driven by greed, an indicator of low-quality goods, or a tactic used to deceive customers. Yet almost every vendor I spoke with engaged in some form of bargaining some of the time.

For vendors such as Ric, who sold Turkish textiles, bargaining was both a sign of unethical vending and of customer superficiality:

The hard sell guys, the guys who sell crap, they’re always willing to consider a bargain. Some guy will sell something for \$30, he’ll tell a customer, “I paid \$15, but I can give it to you for \$20.” They’ll buy it and then he’ll be, “Hey, they paid too much for that” I don’t like lying to customers.

However, Ric blamed bargaining on customers and suggested a connection between hard selling techniques and customer demands for cheap prices: “People in general love crap. Especially in America, people love shit. Everybody wants a deal. There’s the real jewelry, and then there’s the plastic beads, just like there’s Louis Vuitton and then a million knock-offs.” Ed, a jeweler artisan who has vended at the market for over a decade, viewed bargaining as an implicit cheapening of his work:

I kind of take it personally. If someone selects a couple of pieces, I’ll always give them a discount, they don’t have to ask. But if someone comes to my table and starts to bargain with me, “so what’s your lowest price on this?” I’ll say, “That’s the price. I make these pieces, I try to price them fairly, that’s what I sell them for all the time.” So the people that ask I tend not to [give a discount], the people that don’t ask I’ll always give them a discount . . . my feeling is, if they think this is a bargain market and they want to bargain, go to the woman beside me who buys all this jewelry in Chinatown in

New York that's made in China, and she buys it for a dollar and sells it for ten, go bargain with her.

Anna, a jeweler, suggested a more complex relationship: although hard sellers "preyed on people" they also attracted a certain type of customer, those who actively wanted to bargain and therefore opened themselves up to being preyed upon.⁵ She said she did not enjoy dealing with such customers who like to be "sold to" and connected this to a discourse of fairness and equity, stating, "I'd rather sell something at what I think is a fair price to everybody instead of sizing you up." Emma, who designed her own jewelry, simultaneously questioned the ethics of a customer who would bargain with an artist and excused this because of a lack of reflection on the part of these same customers, before asserting that most such customers actually have money and just do not want to spend it:

It's hard to make a living as an artist so bargaining with an artist is kind of . . . but I also think that people who are not artists and who are doing it [asking for a discount], they are not necessarily thinking about that. You know what I mean? I mean, we're not in Bolivia. It [bargaining] somehow devalues it [the object]. If I think they really want it and they just really can't afford it, well . . . but generally, I find that people who ask for bargains are people who seem to have money and they think because we are in an open market that they should that they can bargain, and I think they do it without thinking.

Not all vendors who criticized bargaining actually rejected all forms of bargaining. One example was Nathan. Like Ed, he distinguished between what might be called "fixed bargaining" and situational or contextual bargaining, which for him meant giving a uniform discount to all buyers: "I'll give people a deal, like they buy two pieces and get 10% off. I have no problem with this. But I give the same deal to everyone. What I don't like is bargaining – it's manipulative." Other vendors said they often discounted an item a dollar or two when customers tried to bargain; as Nahkon rationalized, "if it makes them feel better I say okay." Similarly, some vendors who made their own art said they gave bargains to people but only based on "feelings" and, absent these feelings, reject any attempt by customers for a discount, as recounted by Emma:

If I get a good feeling for someone and they're buying more than one piece, then sometimes I'll throw in a bonus or some kind of discount, but if somebody asks me for a bargain I can tell you, 95% of the time I say no. Sometimes I get a good feeling from someone and I can tell, but sometimes I feel that people are like, "so will you go lower?" Like they are just testing you, and it's like, no. Are you going to bargain for your gas? No. Are you going to bargain for your toilet paper? No.

SELLING YOURSELF, SELLING YOUR ART

One Sunday afternoon I watched as a middle-aged man from Salt Lake City in town for meetings purchased a print of a DC cityscape from Mark, a painter. Before leaving, the man asked Mark to pose with him and the print while a friend took their photograph. This digital capturing of the artist, the place, and the purchased art object posed with the purchaser is on the one hand a form of consumer tourism. Yet on the other hand, this was also an *experiential* act, in which the purchase of art as commodity became more than merely a market transaction: it became memory, one that tells a story, as noted by Mark: “What they buy . . . is the quality, the uniqueness, the history of it, all that, but it also carries a story. ‘I got this at Eastern Market from this guy selling there, he told me a story about these coins’ – it all carries much more emotional baggage.”

The story Mark talks of is literally a form of the souvenir, a remembering act. The digital image that results – of artist, artwork, and art consumer – serves a mimetic function, visually capturing both the commodification of the work and the uniqueness of the creative act. Jack, a painter, said this happened to him often; as he described it, “You get me and my painting . . . well, a print of my painting, and my customer in a picture . . . it’s kind of weird. But pretty cool, too, you know?”

As already noted, I encountered little concern among these vendors about the transformation of their creative work into market products. However, when questions of ownership arose, artists responded very differently. Tony, a photographer at the Market, related a story of selling a customer a print image of another vendor’s ceramic ware, a handmade salt-and-pepper shaker set:

She [the customer] told me now she was going to buy the salt and pepper shakers because she saw the picture. I thought it was cool. But she [the artist] came to me later that day and she was really upset that I would try to make a profit off of her art work and was upset that I didn’t get her permission and blah blah blah. So I made her a free copy and never made that one again.

In this case, a visual copy of the original object induced a customer to buy the original by framing and defining this *as* original, illustrating once again how the perceived uniqueness of an object paradoxically depends on copies of it. This did not stop the artist in question from objecting on the grounds that this photographer sought to profit from her artwork – despite the fact that she in turn profited. Her complaints were motivated less by Kantian

distinctions between the purity of art (meaning it must be protected from the market) than by proprietary interests (who should profit from this art).

Besides a concern about the copying of one's creative work by other vendors, the return of artwork to this marketplace as a second-hand commodity could cause immense stress for some artists. For example, Richard, a middle-aged African-American, sold used furniture and knick-knacks he bought at estate sales. One morning, Adam, a visual artist, was told by another vendor that one of his pieces was on display among Richards' furniture. Richard had gotten this piece at an estate sale and had no idea it had been made by a vendor in the market. Adam asked him to sell this back to him. Richard agreed, but at his asking price – \$60 – which was half of what Adam was selling similar pieces for. Adam asked for a lower price, but Richard refused. When I asked Richard about this, he was visibly frustrated:

How am I supposed to know who does what? Look around the market. He sells glass, he sells paintings, she's got pictures. I do not know what stuff comes from here, I can't know everything. I wouldn't want to belittle nobody's merchandise, but I can say this what he offered me was pennies compared to what he sold this for. Let's get one thing straight: That was mine. I bought it. It didn't belong to him.

For Adam, this was a question of art. This piece was his art, and he therefore believed he had a monopoly right to this if it returned to the market as a commodity. For Richard, this was not a question of art, but a property issue. He had bought this piece and was intent on selling it for a profit. Why should he sell it to someone at a low price who would then immediately sell it at a higher price? In explaining this to me, he evoked property rights, while Adam appealed to an artistic sensibility that, from the perspective of Richard, made no sense.

Interestingly, Tony, a photographer, also experienced his work returning to the market as a used commodity. However, he responded very differently than Adam. Instead of viewing this return of his work to the marketplace as a threat, he took this encounter as a way of marking one copy of his work as unique and therefore worth removing from the exchange process as art:

I thought it was cool. I mean, my stuff is cheaper and its not original art, it's prints. He [Richard] had one of the Abraham Lincoln one [the Lincoln Memorial] ... I don't know where he got it, a garage sale or pulled it out of the garbage. But it was framed. It was from 2001, too, the first year I did it. So I bought it off him. He gave me a deal. I went right to him and said like, "Hey, I'll buy that. That's beautiful. I'll buy that for sure." And I think because he knew it was mine, he wasn't going to try to, you know, rip me off. I gave him 25 bucks for it. What's funny is I walked it back to the stand and I didn't have any that day. I normally sell them for 65 and everybody wanted it. But I didn't sell

it. No, I kept it. In fact, I've always meant to keep one and so, that's the one I kept. Like, keep one for my own collection, I guess . . . so, since I sold it already, and then it came back to me, that one's hanging on my wall at home. And I won't sell it.

This piece of art, having been transformed by Tony into a commodity through its sale, became unique for him when it returned to the market as a consumption object for re-sale. Yet how then did this used object that returned as a second-hand piece of junk (“maybe he pulled it out of the garbage”) become for Tony a marked piece of art? In this case, value for Tony was connected to memory. Instead of reacting with anger or angst when an object he valued aesthetically was given diminished economic value by another vendor (the reaction of Adam), Tony defined this particular piece of his work through its value as a story. This, I suggest, is how many of the objects sold at Eastern Market, whether earrings, necklaces, prints, paintings, or photographs, come to hold value for consumers. When people bought objects at this market, they purchased more than tangible objects; they also purchased a story. This narrative could be the past of an object or the experience of the purchase act itself. Whether grounded in the past or the present, in the experiences of others or oneself, the social life of “the thing” marked objects as special and hence valuable (Gregson & Crewe, 1997, p. 251; see also de Neve, Luetchford, & Pratt, 2008, p. 8).

From an economic perspective, buyers gain utility from the exchange act itself, not simply from the object purchased. At one extreme, completely alienable utility is limited to goods whose value is rooted solely in their composition, such as a gallon of gas. At the other extreme, pure inalienable utility is limited to goods whose value is social and not material, such as a greeting card (Frenzen & Davis, 1990, p. 2). The goods sold at Eastern Market, like the vast majority of goods sold in any market, fall between these two extremes. However, what makes an object such as a photograph, a scarf, a handbag, or a pair of earrings sold at this market different is the experiential utility these objects provide.

In Tony's case, one of his own prints became unique because it gained a past, while in the example involving Mark cited above, a customer “added value” to his purchase act by posing for a photograph with the artist in the market. For some customers, “getting a bargain” (i.e., the social act of negotiating a price) marked an object and served as its narrative opening (Herrmann, 2003, pp. 248–249). “She started at forty but settled for thirty” one customer told me, referring to a vendor who sold handmade silver earrings. Of course, some vendors recognized this customer desire to play the “game” of bargaining (de la Pradelle, 1995) and subsequently priced their goods with this in mind.

Some customers also bought a performative act (Gregson & Crewe, 1997, p. 254). Nakhon (a Thai immigrant) managed to protect his market share among jewelry vendors by effectively playing the role of what a Thai man might look like in an updated orientalist fantasy. With his should-length hair, tattoos, silver rings, and Bob Marley t-shirt, he could have been from Jamaica, Bali, or any other contemporary tropical outpost of tourism (in reality he was a house painter who lived in suburban Maryland with his wife and three children). This did not, however, prevent his American customers at the market from buying from him because he was “their” Thai jewelry guy. As Marjorie Kelly illustrates in her description of a t-shirt market in Honolulu, the uniqueness (and hence value) of an otherwise mundane object is often directly connected to its producer. As in the case of Nakhon, objects can gain value not just through their materials, design, or quality, but also through the “lifestyle” of a vendor (Kelly, 2003, p. 242).

CONCLUSION

I have examined how vendors shaped the values and techniques employed in the vending space of Eastern Market. Values, styles, and attitudes about how to properly go about doing business in this market were not imposed through a series of formal regulatory mechanisms and rules, but instead emerged out of an ongoing narrative shaped through conversation, storytelling, and gossip, both about self and others. However, as this marketplace has succeeded as a market, it has attracted not just more customers but also more vendors. These newcomers have created tensions within the vending community precisely because they are newcomers. As with all informal mechanisms of social order, storytelling and gossip lose their aura when sufficient numbers of vendors either do not care what others say about them or do not understand the social norms and assumptions that regulate this public space. Thus, disagreements among vendors over how they sell their products are rooted not only in the logic of market competition but also in a clash of values over what constitutes proper social behavior among vendors and between vendors and customers. Vendors who identified with this market also identified with what they saw as an ethos of behavior *in* this market, one that did not rest on distinguishing between the monetary world of economic action and the aesthetic world of creativity and contemplation, but rather between those who sold in the “right” way – itself a form of aesthetic performance – and those who were perceived to sell for only the sake of financial gain.

Unlike Maisel (1974), I see no reason to question vendor claims of a community ethos that supplements (but does not supplant) profit motives for selling in this market. This ethical framework guides behavior between vendors as well as with customers, defining how one should and should not sell. This does not mean that these vendors do not seek to make a profit; it simply means that how one does so matters. Like customers, vendors bring social norms with them to the market. Far from existing outside of human relationships that guide behavior toward each other, marketplaces are “nested” in larger social, ethical, and moral processes (Varman & Costa, 2008, p. 145).

Following from this, I turned to the question of value. Objects sold in this market become desirable and hence valuable for a range of reasons. The act of acquiring an object adds value in many cases, while second-hand objects provide value in the form of past histories. As Malinowski showed in his analysis of the *kula* ring, value for objects may often be embedded in their history as much as in their tangibility (de Neve et al., 2008, p. 9). When objects become tied to narratives, they complicate any division of utility into binary categories of “acquisition” and “exchange” (Frenzen & Davis, 1990, p. 3). A photo on a wall, a necklace worn to work, or a painting of a Washington cityscape have value and thus utility not simply because they please, or were a good buy: these objects, through the narratives they carry, create conversational openings. It is for this reason that the market experience itself often is the primary object of consumption, and why “I got this at Eastern Market” serves as an opening to how many stories begin.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for providing this phrase.
2. In April 2007, an electrical fire severely damaged the South Hall and displaced these permanent merchants. City officials quickly allocated funding for a \$1.2 million temporary hall to house these merchants across the street in the parking lot of a middle school. This temporary hall opened in July 2007 and will remain opened until repairs are completed on the South Hall, currently estimated to be in early 2009.
3. I would like to again express my thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this phrase.
4. The only exception I have observed is during summer months when produce vendors reduce prices near the end of the day for perishables such as greens, tomatoes, fresh corn, and peaches. In this case, customers will occasionally attempt to bargain.
5. In her research on garage sales Herrmann refers to such customers as bargainers “for sport” and suggests mainly men engage in this practice, a finding I cannot confirm (see Herrmann, 2004, p. 68).

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SOCIAL CAPITAL AS AN INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATION AND FORMATION OF WOMEN-DOMINANT ROSCAs

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ABSTRACT

The literature on Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), commonly known as tandas in Mexico, indicates a higher participation of women but generally fails to detect the reasons thereof. This chapter partially bridges the gap by considering the role of social capital in these organizations. The findings of this study show that socioeconomic factors, the gender of the member majority, and acceptance levels in the group influence the higher participation of women. However, access to formal credit markets does not influence this behavior. Moreover, trust in women-based groups and the benefits obtained from membership further contribute to higher participation of women. The participation of men in ROSCAs seems to be related to motivational factors that are different from those for women. For women, social capital is especially relevant for gender-based group formation.

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SOCIAL NORMS, TRUST, AND COOPERATION

Social norms, customs, and habits provide shared patterns of behavior and facilitate the prediction of actions in situations with multiple possible outcomes (Koford & Miller, 1991). Social norms reduce transaction costs associated with behavior, and individuals can avoid implementing formal contracts to ensure the compliance of agreements. Individual behavior will follow patterns of expected norms when such norms are internalized or when their violation could result in sanctions from other members of the community (Axelrod, 1986; Azar, 2004; Henrich, 2006; McElreath, Boyd, & Richerson, 2003; Gülerk, Irlenbusch, & Rockenbach, 2006; Richerson, Boyd, & Henrich, 2002).

The manner in which interactions between individuals evolve into long-lasting social relations, although these interactions do not necessarily become a part of the social structure, constitutes an important factor in the development of human capital: the social capital (Coleman, 1994). If culture can be considered as a combination of habits, customs, and traditions (among others) shared by a group, then we could argue that social capital has its roots in culture (Fukuyama, 1996, 1999). In this way, social capital is based on the trust that is shared by the interacting individuals and offers members of a social group the power to achieve objectives that would be more costly through other means (Olson, 1971; Portes, 2000).

Even though the same objective is achieved through cooperation between individuals, it should not be confused with trust between individuals. Cooperation is a consequence of trust between the individuals involved in the relationship and not a cause; absence of cooperation could be the result of other factors such as insufficient information and not necessarily due to lack of trust. This does not mean that trust itself is risk free. Trust among individuals can reduce uncertainty because community cohesion improves when deep-rooted values are accompanied with similar economic conditions (Miztal, 1996).

Social capital can also be considered as a public good because the contributor cannot receive all the benefits of his/her actions. This is because, intrinsically, social capital involves forgoing to some extent one's personal capital by sharing it with others involved (Coleman, 1994). From this perspective, social capital is threatened by the *free-rider* problem (Iannaccone, 1992, 1998; Miztal, 1996), which nevertheless can be avoided by sinking costs. Mukherjee (1991) observes that the aggregation of individuals is not random: groups are formed by balancing subjective and objective criteria. On the one hand is the desire to join the group, while on the other hand are

the circumstances related to the surrounding environment that makes individuals join the group. In this way, persons who constitute the group and cooperate voluntarily have to strike a balance between individual and environmental factors based on survival, security, and prosperity among other goals.

Individuals can derive benefits from cooperation that can lead to a stable equilibrium in the long run because of the prospects of net profits from repeated interactions with the knowledge that such benefits will cease in case of fraud or by not respecting the agreement (Gürerk et al., 2006). In this case, the mix of rationality and commitment, based on social norms and mutual trust, guides and contributes in achieving cooperative behavior (Elster, 1989). That is why social capital can manifest itself through cooperative behavior designed to obtain resources (Flores & Rello, 2001). Accordingly, economic analysis should not be devoid of sociocultural factors (Biggart, 2001; Lomnitz, 1975; Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983).

While the concept of social capital has been extensively used by sociologists and economists, anthropologists have been wary of using it. Critics of the concept argue that social capital cloaks the heterogeneity in societies and in fact confounds the concept of capital itself (see Wood, 2007). Like any other concept, social capital does have its limitations. As Smart (1993, p. 389) points out, the way in which Bourdieu extended the use of the term *capital* to include social capital is “beset by ambiguity and a danger of collapse into economic reductionism.” However, distancing oneself from the concept of social capital is akin to throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Schneider (2006) rightly suggests that the concept should be used within the limits of its scope. In this chapter, we consider the application of social capital to Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), taking social capital to be the outcome of horizontal networks based on norms and trust between group members (specifically, members of a particular ROSCA). Thus, social capital becomes the property of the group rather than of individuals. (For a greater discussion of social capital, see Schuller, 2001 and Schuller, Baron, & Field, 2001).

We use a probit model analysis to evaluate the factors that explain participation of individuals in a ROSCA according to gender. Subsequently, we consider whether there is a tendency toward gender-based grouping in ROSCAs and identify the factors associated with this outcome. The statistical information for this study was collected using a random sample of 400 households in the municipality of San Andrés Cholula, Puebla (Mexico). The respondents were ROSCA members in the last three years prior to the survey or at the time the survey was conducted.

ROSCAs

The existence of ROSCAs can be traced back to documents from the 13th century. Ardener (1964) draws attention to several bibliographical sources that indicate the presence and origins of this system in most parts of the world. Low (1995) came to similar conclusions about the origins and diffusion of ROSCAs. Several anthropologists have also documented the use of ROSCAs in developing countries (see, e.g., Geertz, 1962; Milgram, 2001; Monaghan, 1996). While Ardener (1964) referred to rotating credit associations, later Bouman (1977) introduced the term Rotating Savings and Credit Association, or its acronym ROSCA, recognizing that the source of funds – savings – was rotating too. The organized but intrinsically informal setting according to which these associations operate constantly present the element of gathering of savings as the source of funds, but credit granting and the characteristic of rotation do not necessarily exist here (Rutherford, 2000; Seibel, 1989 cited in Aryeetey, 1995).

A ROSCA, commonly known as *tanda* in Mexico (regional variants of the term include *pirámide*, *quiniela*, *vaquita*, and *cundina*), is a group of individuals who come together with the objective of promptly saving a predefined amount at preestablished frequencies. The sum of the money contributed by all members (called the pool or pot) is assigned to one of the members through a random draw or auction (Besley, Coate, & Loury, 1993). The allocation or turn of receiving the pool in some cases is determined through consensus or negotiation (Bouman, 1977), age, or other criteria (Kovsted & Lyk-Jensen, 1999).

Once a member receives the accumulated amount, s/he is not eligible until everyone else in the group had his/her turn. In this case, the ones who have received the pool in the past are obligated to contribute with the established amount on the dates decided. Rutherford (2000) argues that in a group of N persons, the ROSCA is a “saving-down” system for the first person selected to receive the pool; for the last one, it is a “saving-up” system; and for the remaining $N-2$ members, the ROSCA is a “saving-through” system. So, the first recipient’s function is basically that of a debtor for the next $N-1$ members, and the last member in the cycle takes on the role of the lender for the first $N-1$ members (Berensmann et al., 2002). The first person in the cycle receives the savings of the other group members as a loan at 0% rate of interest, while the last person in the cycle gives a zero interest credit to all other members (Bouman, 1977). However, in comparative terms, s/he would not be worse off than if s/he saved the money individually albeit at zero interest.

According to how money is assigned, randomly or through an auction, the literature analyzes which of the two types is more efficient. If the members have similar preferences, there would be no incentive to bid, and a random assignment would be preferred over an auction. If members have heterogeneous preferences, an auction system would not necessarily give the best result (Besley et al., 1993; Besley, Coate, & Loury, 1994).

ROSCAs have a low percentage of opportunists because, on the one hand, there is careful selection of members (Lwoga et al., 1999) and, on the other hand, a loan is not conceived as a debt but rather as a social obligation (Ardener & Burman, 1995; Aryeetey, 1995). After having received the pool, the lack of formal regulation could be an incentive to discontinue cooperative behavior, and a member could default on his/her commitment. In such cases, the administrator (who is often the organizer) of the ROSCA usually covers the defaulter (Lamberte & Bunda, 1988). In some cases, because of the risk of defaulters, the administrator receives an extra payment (Fernando, 1986). When the organizer is not a participant in the ROSCA, s/he may receive remuneration for his/her services from the members (Rutherford, 2000). In spite of the role that trust plays in the establishment of the ROSCA and in the introduction of new members into the group, Vogel and Burkett (1986) point out that those members who enjoy lower trust are the last ones to get their turn in the ROSCA cycle. This reduces the uncertainty associated with the possible opportunistic behavior of a new member and allows for the assessment and establishment of bonds of trust over time through the accumulation of information to form coherent expectations about future behavior (Orbach, 1979 cited in Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983).

The ROSCA referred to above is commonly understood to be a system of gathering money. However, there is evidence that in some cases money is combined with durable goods (Calomiris & Rajaraman, 1998; Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983). In other cases, money is substituted for merchandise (Burman & Lembete, 1995; Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983) or for gold or other international currency (Khatib-Chahidi, 1995).

PARTICIPANTS AND PARTICIPATION

The number of participants in a ROSCA varies, with the most common range between 10 and 20, although there have been cases when the number of participants has exceeded 100 (Rutherford, 1997). Organizational characteristics and the strength of ties between the members are probably

important determinants of group size. As group size increases, ties between members tend to weaken (Robison & Siles, 1998). A small number of members in a group allow for more opportunities to know fellow group members, which in turn promotes confidence among members (Bouman, 1977). The duration of the ROSCA depends on its purpose and individual payment amount, which in turn is related to the socioeconomic level of the participants (Khatib-Chahidi, 1995; Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983).

Previous research reveals that the majority of participants in ROSCAs are women (Anderson & Baland, 2002; Ardener & Burman, 1995; Lwoga et al., 1999; Tsai, 1998; Verhoef, 2001), although there are some exceptions (Rutherford, 1997). According to Lwoga et al. (1999), the low acceptance of male members in such groups is because of low confidence in males. This is because, generally, men's ROSCAs turn out to be failures because of lack of confidence in other members and lack of commitment to the ROSCAs (Berenbach & Guzmán, 1994; Nelson, 1995). Furthermore, Burman and Lembete (1995) argue that female-dominant ROSCAs may exclude men because of the belief that (1) men find it difficult to work with women and to follow rules imposed by them, (2) women prefer grouping together with other women because they share a common level of understanding, and (3) inclusion of some men might create a hostile environment within the group.

Burman and Lembete (1995) point out that one reason to participate in a ROSCA, notwithstanding its monetary costs – lost interest or real savings reduction due to inflation – is the social role of the group (Khatib-Chahidi, 1995) and the benefits of being part of it. The lack of formal financial markets can also be an incentive to join a ROSCA (Mansell Carstens, 1995).

In their Kenyan study, Anderson and Baland (2002) found that married women who were employed and had a steady income were more likely to participate in a ROSCA and that there was an inverse “U” relation between the economic importance of the woman in the household (measured by the extent of contribution of the woman's income to the household income) and her participation in the ROSCA. In a follow-up study in Kenya, Anderson, Baland, and Moene (2003) discovered that the most trusty individuals belonged to ROSCAs that offered greater flexibility in terms of the possibility to change their turn in case of an emergency, with respect to the quantity of written norms, and complexity of the organization.

Ambec and Treich (2003) developed a model in which ROSCAs are used to discipline the savings and also to reduce social pressures related to sharing the amount received from the ROSCA, or to extend financial help to kin and friends. Kane (2001) points out that women's participation in *tontines* – the name used for ROSCAs in French-speaking African

countries – is related to a high social valuation of benefits linked to social aid and support networks in case of need, besides financial aspects.

Irrespective of whether women work in or outside their homes, or in the formal or the informal sector, they know that their economic contribution is the key to the development of their family and community (Vonderlack & Schreiner, 2001). An analysis of women's participation in the informal sector, especially in ROSCAs, will help us understand sociological factors related to social capital and gender relationship in low-income environments.

METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS

Spanning over two decades, the study by Vélez-Ibáñez (1983) is the closest analysis of *tandas* in Mexico and probably the most profound, including cultural anthropological insights into this resource mobilization system. Despite Kane's (2001) descriptive analysis, Anderson and Baland (2002) argue that although the high participation of women in ROSCAs is a prominent finding in various studies, this has not been adequately investigated. Consequently, there is still much that needs to be explored and understood in terms of reasons as to why the participation of women in ROSCAs is higher than that of men. The factor of gender in ROSCA participation, since in most cases the participants are women, cannot be treated as a random outcome. According to Tsai (2000, p. 160), women would be more likely to organize ROSCAs because "they possess a greater stock of interpersonal trust or stronger sense of community than men in China." We conducted our probit model analysis in search of answers to some of these unanswered questions related to gender and ROSCAs. Our questionnaire had three sections – socioeconomic characteristics, use of the *tanda*, and characteristics of social capital – spread over a total of 35 closed-ended binomial and multinomial questions. The questions were based on the questionnaire for *Características Socioeconómicas de los Hogares* (Household Socioeconomic Information Survey) and on the existing literature on ROSCAs and the role of women in ROSCAs. The survey was conducted during June and July of 2006.

According to the descriptive statistics, the average number of participants in a *tanda* was between 10 and 11 for men and 12 and 13 for women. Like women, many men reported that most members in their groups were of the same sex. Men indicated that, in general, there were 6 men, 4 women, and 0.5 couples. Women reported that on an average their group had 8 women, 4 men, and 0.5 couples.

PROBIT MODEL NO. 1

In order to analyze the variables associated with actual participation in a ROSCA by gender, we used a probit model where the dependent variable took the value of 1 if the participant was a woman and 0 if the participant was a man.

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Prob (women are actually participating} = 1|X) \\ & = f(\beta_1 \text{ married}_i + \beta_2 \text{ none_or_primary}_i + \beta_3 \text{ secondary}_i + \beta_4 \text{ high}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_5 \text{ informalwork}_i + \beta_6 \text{ manbringsmore}_i + \beta_7 \text{ m_income_2}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_8 \text{ m_income2_4}_i + \beta_9 \text{ m_income5_6}_i + \beta_{10} \text{ m_income7_10}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_{11} \text{ bankcards}_i + \beta_{12} \text{ womenmajority}_i + \beta_{13} \text{ menmajority}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_{14} \text{ experience}_i + \beta_{15} \text{ veryflexible}_i + \beta_{16} \text{ justorganizer}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_{17} \text{ membertrust}_i + \beta_{18} \text{ trustinorganizer}_i + \beta_{19} \text{ womanorganizer}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_{20} \text{ manorganizer}_i + \beta_{21} \text{ support}_i + \beta_{22} \text{ relationship}_i + \beta_{23} \text{ twtm}_i \\ & \quad + \beta_{24} \text{ acceptance}_i) + \varepsilon_i \end{aligned}$$

In accordance with the three sections of the survey previously mentioned, we included three groups of variables in the model.

VARIABLES RELATED TO THE SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The dichotomous variable *married* takes the value 1 for a married person and 0 for any other. Based on previous studies (e.g. Vélez-Ibáñez, 1983), we expected that for married women, the opportunity to independently handle resources would be an incentive to belong to a ROSCA. In contrast, under this perspective, married men would be less inclined to participate in ROSCAs because handling the household budget already provides them with greater flexibility.

The level of schooling, considering higher education as a reference (i.e., having at least a university degree), is included in the model through three dichotomous variables. First, *none_or_primary* takes a value of 1 if the person does not have any formal schooling (9 observations – 3 men and 6 women – out of 400 were detected) or has only primary schooling, and 0 for any other level (secondary, high school or equivalent, or a university degree). Second, the variable *secondary* takes a value of 1 if the person has secondary school

education and 0 if otherwise. Finally, *high* is a variable that takes the value 1 if the person completed high school or its equivalent and 0 in any other case. We expected that women who have low levels of education would have a higher probability of belonging to a ROSCA. This would be associated with their lack of access to formal credit markets because of lower income stability due to their low levels of education. On the other hand, men having higher levels of education would be employed in the formal sector which would provide greater income stability. In this case, considering that income stability is an important element for continuing participation in ROSCAs, higher participation of men should be related to greater levels of education. Because of the previous interpretation and given the definition of the dependent variable, we anticipated that lower levels of education would be related positively to participation and should reverse as the education level increases.

Informalwork is a categorical variable that takes the value 1 when a person is employed in the informal labor market, not having a stable job, running an informal business, or working in the rural sector without benefits, and 0 if the person is employed in the formal labor market (either public or private sector) or running a formal business. We expected this variable to be positively associated with the dependent variable since, according to Vélez-Ibáñez (1983), men tend to participate in ROSCAs known as occupational rotating credit associations in the workplace. This association also indicates that women should participate when employed in the informal sector, a situation related more to their generally vulnerable circumstances.

Manbringsmore is a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 if the person contributing more to the household income is a man and 0 if it is a woman. According to the literature (e.g. *ibid.*), a positive relationship for women would indicate their need to participate with the purpose of being able to handle economic resources independently. The rank order of the individual's monthly income is also included through a set of dichotomous variables. *M_income_2* takes a value of 1 when a person has a monthly income lower than 2,400 MXP (2 minimum wages or less), and 0 for other income groups (the approximate exchange rate between the Mexican peso (MXP) and the US dollar (USD) in June–July 2006 was 11.20 MXP = 1 USD). *M_income2_4* takes a value of 1 if the person's monthly income is between 2,400 and 4,800 MXP (between 2 and 4 minimum wages), and 0 for any other rank. *M_income5_6* takes a value of 1 if the person's monthly income is between 4,800 and 7,200 MXP (between 5 and 6 minimum wages), and 0 in other cases. *M_income7_10* takes a value of 1 if the person's monthly income is between 7,200 and 12,000 MXP (7–10 minimum wages), and 0 for any other rank. The base category (the referring category when all

m_income dummy variables are 0) refers to those people whose monthly personal income is greater than 12,000 MXP (more than 10 minimum wages). We expected that with rising income levels, the participation of women would increase due to greater availability of finances. For men, an inverse behavior was expected since greater income would be related to a greater availability of resources and savings, in which case they would rely less on informal financial markets because of more opportunities to use the formal financial sector.

The access to formal financial markets is considered in the model through the dichotomous variable *bankcards*, which takes a value of 1 if the person possesses at least one credit or debit card (or both) and 0 if they have none. Since women tend to be excluded from formal credit markets in Latin America (Zúñiga Eaglehurst, 2004), a negative association between having some type of bank card and participation of women in ROSCAs was expected.

VARIABLES RELATED TO PARTICIPATING IN THE *TANDA*

The dichotomous variable *womenmajority* takes on the value 1 if most of the participants in the *tanda* where the individual is participating are women, and 0 in other cases. For women, we expect that this variable is positively associated with their participation. When most of the participants are men, *menmajority* takes a value of 1, and 0 otherwise. In this case, we expect a negative association with the participation of women and a positive correlation with male involvement. *Experience* measures the number of times that the person has participated in *tandas* in the past. The expected relation with women participants is positive since women tend to participate more frequently. The variable *veryflexible* takes a value of 1 if it is almost always possible to change turns in the *tanda*, and 0 when it is seldom or never possible. This is a feature that could be appreciated in case of financial need. However, we could not determine the expected sign of the variable because a person may avoid very flexible *tandas* due to the social implications associated with refusing to delay one's turn.

VARIABLES RELATED TO SOCIAL CAPITAL

Justorganizer is a dichotomous variable taking a value of 1 if the person just needs to know the organizer to order to decide on participating in the *tanda*,

and 0 if otherwise. Since this feature, although important for members, is not related to a definite gender, we expected the variable to be insignificant.

Memberstrust is an ordinal variable that takes integer values between 0 (the individual absolutely does not trust the members of the *tanda*) and 10 (the individual trusts totally). We expected a positive association between *memberstrust* and female participation since women would be basing their participation mainly on the confidence among members. Even though confidence is also an essential element in the decision to participate in the case of men, the sign of this variable was expected to be positive, mainly due to the effect of women participants who would possibly predominate.

Trustinorganizer takes integer values between 0 (the individual absolutely does not trust the organizer of the *tanda*) and 10 (the individual trusts totally). *Womanorganizer* takes a value of 1 if the organizer of the *tanda* is a woman, and 0 if it is a man or a couple, and *manorganizer* takes the value 1 if the organizer of the *tanda* is a man, and 0 if it is a woman or a couple. When the members belong to the same gender as that of the organizer, in case of necessity, it is more probable that the organizer might show a greater availability; that is, for women's participation, a positive association with the variable *womanorganizer* and a negative association for *manorganizer* were expected. If the gender of the organizer is correlated with the decision to participate, then the variables *womanorganizer* and *manorganizer* would have to be significant, whereas *trustinorganizer* should not.

Support takes a value of 1 if the person would participate, just driven by the motivation to support the organizer or some other participant, and 0 if s/he would not participate. Because women tend to create bonds of trust inside social networks, we expected that the variable would present a positive association with women participation.

Relationship takes a value of 1 if the person meets other participants in the *tanda* to arrange other activities such as sharing personal circumstances or joy, and 0 in case the relations are limited strictly to those related with the ROSCA. Considering that the *tandas* are carried out in different environments (mainly workplaces for men and friends' homes for women), we expected that this variable would not be significant.

Twtm is the ratio between the measure of the trust that the person has in general in women and the measure of the trust that the person has in general in men. The trust in men and women are measured on a scale from 1 (minimum trust) to 10 (maximum trust). We expected that this variable would present a positive association with the participation of women because greater trust in women should foster increased participation in a group of highly trusted people. On the contrary, higher trust toward men would be

related with a lower *twtm* value that would in turn be associated (with a positive coefficient) with a lower probability for the dependent variable of taking value 1 and which would imply a higher probability of value 0.

Acceptance is an ordinal variable that takes values between 0 (it is absolutely not important to feel accepted in the *tanda*) and 10 (it is extremely important to feel accepted). The expected association of this variable with the participation of women was positive since it should serve as an incentive to integrate them into the group.

RESULTS OF PROBIT MODEL NO. 1

According to the results (see Table 1), when the person is married and when a man (in general, the husband) contributes more to the household income, women tend to participate less in a *tanda*. This might be associated with greater financial stability in the household economy and in terms of familial relations. A monthly income of less than 2,400 MXP is associated with a greater probability of women's participation. However, ranks of higher income (from 2 to 4 and from 7 to 10 minimum wages) are associated with a lower level of participation. For men, not being married is associated positively with participation in a *tanda*. Also, when men's incomes are higher (*manbringsmore* = 1), unlike women, their participation can be justified because they contribute more to the households in terms of income. Having access to formal financial markets is not a significant variable for the participation decision, and neither is the educational level. The results do not allow discerning the relation between gender and formal financial markets, although the sign of the coefficient is as expected.

Women tend to participate more if the majority of the members in the *tanda* are also women. According to the literature cited earlier, this grouping would be associated with reasons of group identification and solidarity. The probability of a person's participation in a *tanda* is higher when s/he considers that belonging to the *tanda* is related to greater social acceptance. This behavior is probably related to the benefits of being a member of a group where mutual aid networks are developed. In addition, when most of the participants in a *tanda* are women, men reduce their participation. It is relevant that although the corresponding variable in our model is not significant, women actually participate less when the majority of the participants belong to the opposite sex.

For women, although having participated in the past increases the probability of present participation, knowing only the organizer of the *tanda*

Table 1. Results of Probit Model No. 1.

Dependent Variable = 1: Women are Actually Participating in ROSCA	dF/dx (Robust Standard Error)
Married	0.162*** 0.063
None_or_primary	0.062 0.042
Secondary	0.042 0.055
High	0.040 0.056
Informalwork	0.083 0.078
Manbringsmore	0.105** 0.045
M_income_2	0.224*** 0.073
M_income2_4	0.265*** 0.175
M_income5_6	0.014 0.048
M_income7_10	0.656*** 0.193
Bankcards	0.016 0.055
Womenmajority	0.216*** 0.080
Menmajority	0.100 0.098
Experience	0.010** 0.006
Veryflexible	0.031 0.042
Justorganizer	0.197*** 0.081
Memberstrust	0.003 0.013
Trustinorganizer	0.034 0.026
Womanorganizer	0.074 0.026
Manorganizer	0.363*** 0.214
Support	0.079 0.068
Relationship	0.005

Table 1. (Continued)

Dependent Variable = 1: Women are Actually Participating in ROSCA	dF/dx (Robust Standard Error)
	0.040
Twtm	0.001
	0.006
Acceptance	0.014**
	0.008
Observed probability: 0.703	
Predicted probability: 0.941 (at \bar{x})	
Log pseudo likelihood: 34.554	
Pseudo R^2 : 0.656	
Observations: 165	
Wald $\chi^2(24)$: 84.42	
Probability $> \chi^2$: 0.000	

*** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

is not reason enough to participate. Although the organizer is responsible for the *tanda* and has to be proactive when it comes to asking members for their contributions, the participation decision cannot be solely a function of the relationship with the organizer. Additionally, a male organizer is associated with a lower participation of women in the *tanda*. The survey's results show that women consider men to be more prone to failing in their obligations and that women also tend to trust men less in general. If the organizer is a woman, this should be associated with a greater participation of women. However, this variable is not significant. Once again, the results show that gender elements are important factors related to participation in ROSCAs. For men, knowing only the organizer is associated with a greater probability of participation. A similar effect is detected when the organizer is also a man. This, combined with the previous results, would put women in a context where they would participate for reasons substantially different from those of men who do not necessarily aim at group identification.

We asked the gender of the majority who said that they belonged to a *tanda* in the past three years. Both men and women mentioned that women were in the majority. Nevertheless, they did it in very different proportions: men in 43.33%, and women in 71.03%, of all cases. Furthermore, men indicated that in 25% of the cases, there was male majority while women reported that male majority occurred only in 5.61% of the cases.

PROBIT MODEL NO. 2

In order to identify those factors that explain why women participate in *tandas* comprising predominantly women and, similarly, why men participate in *tandas* with male majority, we devised another probit model. In this model, the dependent variable (aggregation by gender) takes value 1 if a woman participates in a *tanda* with female majority and 0 if a man participates in a *tanda* with male majority.

We expected that if women seek identification and solidarity among the other members of their own sex in the *tanda*, then they would have a strong incentive to integrate into groups.

Prob (woman participates in a ROSCA with women's majority = 1|X)

$$\begin{aligned}
 = & f(\beta_1 \text{ married}_i + \beta_2 \text{ womanbringsmore}_i + \beta_3 \text{ experience}_i \\
 & + \beta_4 \text{ womanorganizer}_i + \beta_5 \text{ manorganizer}_i + \beta_6 \text{ support}_i \\
 & + \beta_7 \text{ relationship}_i + \beta_8 \text{ manfulfill}_i + \beta_9 \text{ womanfulfill}_i + \beta_{10} \text{ selfsufficient}_i \\
 & + \beta_{11} \text{ onlyforwomen}_i + \beta_{12} \text{ twtm}_i + \beta_{13} \text{ addicted}_i + \beta_{14} \text{ givesall}_i \\
 & + \beta_{15} \text{ acceptance}_i + \beta_{16} \text{ popularity}_i) + \varepsilon_i
 \end{aligned}$$

We now describe the variables that are included in the model mentioned above and that have not yet been described.

Womanbringsmore is a dichotomous variable that takes value 1 if the person who contributes more income to the household is a woman and 0 if it is a man. In this case, we expect a positive relation between the gender of the person and the type of group in which s/he would be likely to participate.

Manfulfill is an ordinal variable that measures the perception of the individual concerning the responsibility of men in the *tanda*. It takes integer values between 0 (the men in the *tanda* fail continuously in their payments) and 10 (the men always fulfill their payment obligations). We expect a negative relation with the dependent variable since there should be a greater incentive to participate in a group whose members are more responsible.

Womanfulfill is an ordinal variable that measures the perception of the individual concerning the responsibility of women in the *tanda*. It takes integer values between 0 (the women in the *tanda* fail continuously in their payments) and 10 (the women always fulfill their payment obligations). In this case, a positive relation is expected based on the definition of the dependent variable for the same reasons mentioned for *manfulfill*.

Selfsufficient is an ordinal variable that takes integer values between 0 (participating in the *tanda* is not absolutely important to feel self-sufficient)

and 10 (it is extremely important). According to the environment in which the study was carried out, we consider that the variable can show a positive association because, for a woman, belonging to a ROSCA could provide some feeling of economic independence.

Onlyforwomen is a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 if the person considers that the turns are an exclusive women's activity, and 0 if s/he does not believe so. Individuals of this belief should be eager to participate in groups of women who agree with this opinion.

Addicted is a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 if the individual or his/her spouse has some addiction, and 0 if otherwise. The problems related to addiction could push the individual to join groups to find support and/or solidarity, or simply for receiving guidance or as an emotional escape valve. In the municipality of San Andrés Cholula, men tend to have these kinds of problems (alcoholism in particular); due to this, we expected a positive association for women (searching for support).

Givesall is a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 if the couple devotes all the income to the household, and 0 otherwise. In the municipality, it is relatively common for individuals (mainly males) to provide financial support to different households, so this variable attempts to measure the presence or absence of this situation. When a couple covers only the financial necessities related with the household, the woman should not have to group with others as much. If this is the case, a negative association should be seen. Although living in more than one household is informally tolerated, this does not entail any respect from other men, especially when religious values are strongly rooted in and shared by the community. Because of this, engaging in proper behavior (a monogamous familiar relationship) would not prevent a man from participating in homogeneous gender groups for fear of being judged for his conduct.

Popularity is an ordinal variable that takes integer values between 0 (it is not absolutely important to feel popular) and 10 (it is extremely important). Considering the circles of interaction to which a person belongs, an individual could have interest in being affiliated with groups of his/her same (or different) sex based on a desire to be popular. The inclusion of this variable in the model has exploratory aims; thus the degree and type of association is uncertain.

RESULTS OF PROBIT MODEL NO. 2

According to estimation results (see Table 2), a woman tends to participate in *tandas* with female majority when the individual is not

Table 2. Results of Probit Model No. 2.

Dependent Variable = 1: Gender Aggregation (Women)	dF/dx (Robust Standard Error)
Married	0.027** 0.027
Womanbringsmore	0.031*** 0.030
Experience	0.001 0.002
Womanorganizer	0.000 0.028
Manorganizer	0.048 0.084
Support	0.008 0.012
Relationship	0.016* 0.018
Manfulfill	0.001 0.002
Womanfulfill	0.005* 0.007
Selfsufficient	0.003** 0.003
Onlyforwomen	0.025** 0.025
Twtm	0.035** 0.025
Addicted	0.012 0.018
Givesall	0.124*** 0.081
Acceptance	0.003* 0.003
Popularity	0.007*** 0.007
Observed probability: 0.798	
Predicted probability: 0.988 (at \bar{x})	
Log pseudo likelihood: 43.045	
Pseudo R^2 : 0.506	
Observations: 173	
Wald $\chi^2(16)$: 59.250	
Probability $> \chi^2$: 0.000	

*** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

married and is contributing more to the household income. Being married could imply a tendency to spend less time with friends and to share more time with the partner, and/or to fulfill the obligations of a being a mother. In addition, contributing the greater portion of the income to the household might characterize a situation where the male might be absent. This could be indicative of an independent woman, in terms of both finances and personality, which would make us think about women who are free to coexist and to participate in the social groups with which they feel identified. This interpretation is confirmed, considering that a woman with a perception of greater self-sufficiency is more likely to participate in *tandas* with women in the majority.

On the other hand, unmarried individuals who do not have relations with the members of the *tanda* are those who tend to participate where male majority occurs. The profile would correspond to people less interested in cultivating relations with other members, people who do not look for popularity, and people who do not feel motivated by a need for self-sufficiency to belong to the association. This would make us think not only about individuals who participate even though they would not be interested in solidarity ties but also, considering the other variables in the model, about those who are uninterested in any kinds of commitment. However, trust continues as an associated element for gender aggregation. If the individual would show more trust in men, his/her participation in a *tanda* with male majority would increase.

The probability that a woman will participate in a *tanda* with female majority increases in cases where the woman maintains friendly relations with her *tanda* companions beyond the purpose of the *tanda*. When carrying out activities that are not related with the aims of the association that improve coexistence with other participants, the construction of strong ties is favored. These ties can imply that the individuals will perform their duties in a responsible manner and on time. For the people in this sample, assuming that women perform their duties, the probability of a woman participating in female-majority *tandas* increases. The probability of a woman participating in a female-majority *tanda* also increases when the relative trust in women with respect to men increases. This is reasonable considering that individuals seek to establish relations with people whom they trust.

Descriptive statistics say that both males and females trust women more than men. It deserves to be emphasized that women trust men less than men trust other men (see Table 3). This could be a reason why men indicate a

Table 3. Trust between and among Participants According to Gender.

Do You Trust In	Men's Answers			Women's Answers		
	Observations	Mean	Standard error	Observations	Mean	Standard error
Men	171	6.304094	2.525385	229	5.742358	2.72722
Women	171	7.192982	2.367217	229	7.615721	2.11115

Note: Field results, whole sample, 400 observations.

greater percentage of *tandas* with male majority as compared to that reported by women (25% versus 5.61%).

As we expected ex-ante, the belief that *tandas* are an exclusive activity of women is positively related with the probability of a woman participating in a *tanda* with female majority. In this case, the woman will have an incentive to participate in homogenous groups (in groups with female majority) – being aware that rules to be followed are established by them. On the other hand, for men, we observed that this belief is negatively related to their participation in a *tanda* with male majority. When men share this belief they could be considering that a *tanda* is not their natural environment, even when it predominantly comprises men.

When a couple contributes all the income to the household's necessities, the probability that the woman will participate in a *tanda* with female majority decreases. Also, when household economic insecurity decreases, familial commitment is increased. Thus, women can find support and solidarity within their household that they would otherwise seek in *tandas*.

As expected, the importance of being accepted and identified in the social group that comprises the *tanda* increases the probability that a woman will participate. However, the feeling of popularity that is perceived when participating in a *tanda* is associated with a smaller probability that a woman is participating in a saving and credit association formed predominantly by women. We suggest the following interpretation: an individual interested in popularity should have a friendly personality, which contradicts the idea of participation solely with people of the same sex.

The sex of the organizer is not related to the aggregation decision. It ought to be emphasized that when a man is considered to be fulfilling his obligations, a woman would not be as motivated to join a female-dominated *tanda*. This justifies the negative association in spite of not being significant. Finally, when considering women fulfilling their obligations, there is a positive relation with women's participation in female-majority *tandas*.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we found evidence that gender-related factors are relevant for understanding why people decide to be part of a ROSCA and in which ROSCA they participate. According to the results, the participation decision is influenced by elements associated with social benefits. Additionally, the decision to participate need not be linked to access to formal credit markets but rather to the association's gender composition.

We detected the tendency among both sexes to group with people of the same sex. This phenomenon has already been established in the literature in case of women and to a lesser extent in case of men. Women would avoid participating in ROSCAs with men because they would not find any advantage if they did participate. These advantages can be briefly summarized as social acceptance and support (factors that augment social capital) that they would get from people who comprise the ROSCA.

With respect to participation according to the gender aggregation, socio-economic factors – represented by variables such as marital status and whether the couple destines all the income to the family – may fit into an environment in which the woman does not have the need to look for support that can be found among the association members. When the situation becomes more difficult, for example, when the woman is responsible for the household's economy, a greater probability of participating with other women is observed.

When the individual expresses greater trust in women than in men, one observes a greater probability for women participating in female-dominated ROSCAs. Also, the importance of feeling accepted, the belief that ROSCAs are exclusively for women, the perceptions of self-sufficiency and independence through participation, and the perception that women fulfill their obligations are associated with an increase in the probability that a woman will participate in ROSCAs with a majority of women. Corroborating previous studies (e.g., Tsai, 2000), it must be pointed out that factors related to the formation of social capital confirm that women are more conscious of fulfilling their obligations and are more responsible as compared to men. In this study, we found an important endorsement to this conclusion from both men as well as women.

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