FROM COMMUNITY TO CONSUMPTION

NEW AND CLASSICAL THEMES IN RURAL SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Research in Rural Sociology and Development Volume 16

Edited by
Alessandro Bonanno, Hans Bakker, Raymond Jussaume, Yoshio Kawamura and Mark Shucksmith

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RESEARCH IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

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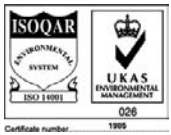

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

This edited book contains a selection of papers that were originally presented at the XII World Congress of Rural Sociology held in Goyang, South Korea, in July 2008. Contrary to the case of conference proceedings, this volume includes papers that underwent a peer review process and, therefore, possess the quality of finished research manuscripts. The idea of publishing a selection of the most significant papers read at the 2008 World Congress stems from the desire to share the wealth of research presented at the conference with interested individuals who could not attend the event. Additionally, this will be the first of a series of volumes containing the most salient works presented at world congresses and reflecting the research characterizing contemporary rural sociology. As this sociological sub-discipline evolves along with society and the rural world, it appears of paramount importance to make salient research available to the international scientific community.

Rural sociology is changing, and it is significantly different from the discipline that was the subject matter of the First World Congress of Rural Sociology held in Dijon, France, in 1964. One of the primary scientific preoccupations emerging from that conference was the documentation of the unique and separate world represented by the "rural." Contextualized in the then dominant Functionalist paradigm, the rural world was seen as lagging behind the modernizing urban society, yet it was a place featuring a number of desirable social characteristics largely absent in other contexts. This nostalgic and evolutionistic view of rurality has been replaced by a more sophisticated understanding of the rural generated by a much more diversified discipline. Although some of the traditional preoccupations remain, new themes dominate rural sociological debates. Simultaneously, new views of the rural have become the subjects of discussion and research. It is this change and the knowledge about it that this volume wishes to document in terms of both a comparison with past research and a point of reference for future investigations. The new and the traditional in rural sociology are reflected in the themes represented by the chapters included in the volume. The traditional rural sociological concerns of farming, development, rural, community, and migration are accompanied

by attention to the new topics of food consumption, natural resources, and the role of women. These themes are discussed in the four parts that constitute the volume.

The first part of the book, *Sociology of Agriculture*, contains six chapters. It opens with the contribution of Reidar Almås entitled "I have seen the future, and it works! How joint farming may solve contradictions between technological level and farm structure in Norwegian dairy production." Almås analyzes the relevance of the phenomenon of joint farming in Norwegian dairy production. Global competition, low prices, and over-production, Almås contends, engendered a crisis for dairy farmers. Often forced to work long hours and accept lower-income levels, farmers search for new coping strategies. One of these strategies is "joint farming." It involves the establishments of joint ventures among three or more farmers who share farm resources, infrastructures, and labor. The net result, Almås concludes, is that farmers enjoy an improved work environment, great security, and work less hours.

The notion of alternative strategies available to farmers is also explored by Alessandra Corrado in her chapter, "New peasantries and alternatives agro-food networks: the case of Réseau Semences Paysannes." Corrado documents the emergence of alternative production networks that address contemporary concerns over food quality, the environment, and social justice. Employing the case of the French professional association, *Réseau Semences Paysannes*, she indicates that efforts to recover traditional modes of agricultural production – a phenomenon know as *repeasantization* – led to the creation of sustainable farming practices, new forms of development and reflexivity. Farmers are now more involved in alternative agri-food networks, solidarity, and cooperation.

Alternative production and consumption are further discussed by Hitomi Nakamichi in the chapter: "The development of alternative production and consumption activities related to food safety and security and associated gender issues." Through the use of the case of Japan, Nakamichi documents the growing concern that society has toward developing safe and secure food production and consumption systems. As they are still male dominated, these are systems that could benefit from a greater participation of women.

In the subsequent chapter, Keiko Yoshino also employs the case of Japan to discuss subsistence farm production. Entitled, "The role and possibilities for subsistence production: reflecting on the experience of Japan," this chapter illustrates the decline of subsistence farming but also its importance for the strengthening of social networks, community well-being

and the sharing of knowledge. Subsistence farming, therefore, occupies a contradictory position in the current social system of agriculture in Japan. As it declines and becomes increasingly obsolete, it contributes to the intensification of social networks, therefore, providing a positive social contribution.

In the following chapter, entitled "The globalization of the poultry industry: Tyson Foods and Pilgrim's Pride in Mexico," Douglas H. Constance, Francisco Martinez, and Gilberto Aboites analyze the industrialization of the poultry industry in the United States and its development in Mexico. The growth of industrial poultry production in the United States has been based on vertical and horizontal integration based on the contract system. This system is advantageous to large agri-food corporations that have full control of the production process while shifting risks to farmers. It is a system, the authors argue, of control without liability for corporations. As Mexico's middle class grows and food consumption evolves, this system has been exported from the United States to Mexico to benefit transnational agri-food corporations.

This first part of the book is concluded by Majda Černič Istenič's chapter: "Studying fertility behavior of farm population as a contribution to understanding overall low fertility trends: the case of Slovenia." Černič Istenič's research contributes to the understanding of the low fertility rate of the Slovenian farm population. Low fertility rates are not uncommon among farmer communities in many countries, yet the reasons for such outcomes vary. In the case of Slovenia, this author argues, low fertility rates are generated by the social context in which farmers interact rather than the norms and values guiding their actions.

The second part of the book addresses the traditional themes of *Development, Rural, Community, and Migration*. The issue of rural development is discussed in the first two chapters of this section. In the first chapter of this section, Jamaree Chiengthong discusses the role of the state in contemporary programs of rural development in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Countering arguments that see the weakening of the state under globalization, this author contends that, in the Laotian case, the state has been playing a pivotal role in the creation of conditions that permit the insertion of Lao PDR into the global economy.

The themes of rural and community are addressed in the next two chapters of this part of the volume. In her chapter: "Without categories and classifications: Rural as a social expression," Loka Ashwood investigates the contemporary meaning of the "rural." Acknowledging the difficulties and ambiguities with which this term is employed in contemporary debates, she

suggests that its various uses explain rural residents' desire for actual intervention. This is a desire for intervention to change the current conditions of rural space. Josefa Salete Barbosa Cavalcanti further investigates the issue of the rural focusing on the notion of community. In her contribution, "Rural community in a globalizing world," she contends that rural community is a concept rich of meanings that emerge from a context characterized by the uncertainties that globalization brings to rural residents and the future of rural spaces. Because of these uncertainties, she argues, the concept of rural community remains highly important and represents a valuable asset for the creation of a better future. The intersection of migration and community is addressed in the chapter by Jordan, Krivokapic-Skoko, and Collins. In, "Italian immigrants and the built environment in rural Australia" the authors discuss the impact of the presence of Italian immigrants in rural Australia and document how the expression of cultural heritage through the creation of a built environment facilitated the establishment of social networks and improved inter-ethnic relations. The last chapter of this part touches on the themes of community, migration, and rural but also on aging by studying attempts to revitalize rural communities in Japan through the (partial) relocation of retirees in these areas. In their chapter "The regenerative power of older migrants? A case study of Hokkaido, Japan," Kayo Murakami, Rose Gilroy, and Jane Atterton discuss the assumptions and implications of a Japanese program designed to facilitate the relocation of retiring baby-boomers from crowded urban centers to less-developed rural areas. The rationale for this effort of rural revitalization is that affluent urban retirees would find life in rural communities more attractive and pleasant. Simultaneously, rural communities would benefit socially and economically from the influx of people and resources that this move would generate. Despite these promising assumptions, they argue, it is premature to assess the actual effect of this project. It is possible that a large influx of urban population to traditional rural areas might engender negative consequences including the loss of indigenous local identity. To enhance benefits and minimize losses, they conclude, a fully participatory management of this project is necessary.

The third part of the book, *Consumption*, tackles issues associated with this "new" theme in rural sociology. The first of the three chapters that are contained in this portion of the volume addresses the issue of farmers' markets in Japan. That farmers' markets are a desirable structure for consumers is a conclusion supported by pertinent literature. In their chapter, Tadahiro Iisaka and Fumiaki Suda, however, address the relevance of

farmers' market not only for consumers but also for farmers. They argue that these structures have been valuable for Japanese farmers in terms of various benefits that cannot be obtained from conventional production and consumption systems. Although Japanese farmers' markets are not as wide spread and popular as in other parts of the advanced world, the benefits that they bring to consumers and producers alike are increasingly recognized. Accordingly, the authors conclude, they now occupy an important place in the panorama of alternative food systems and movements. In the following chapter, Paule Moustier and Nguyen Thi Tan Loc analyze farmers–consumer relations in Vietnam. In their chapter "Direct sales suit producers and consumers' interests in Vietnam" they contend that while the direct sale of vegetables has been documented for Western countries, less attention has been paid to this process in Vietnam. In the West, they maintain, it is clear that direct sales create positive outcomes for both consumers and producers. In Vietnam, consumers view direct sales as a positive process as they can purchase products that they consider fresh. Furthermore, they see it as a condition that allows them to obtain information about the purchased products' origins and safety. For farmers it is also positive as it brings higher income. However, and due to the high administrative costs of direct sale programs, only more affluent farmers can afford to participate. Contrary to cases recorded in the West, the authors conclude, direct sales do not foster solidarity among producers and consumers as both groups focus on personal, instrumental gains. The chapter by Agustín Morales, "Participation of the state in the distribution of food to urban areas and possible implications for the Venezuelan agro food sector," concludes this part of the book. Morales documents the actions of the Venezuelan state aimed at the creation of a program for food distribution to members of that country's lower class. Propelled by oil revenue, state intervention has been characterized by subsidies to make food available to the lower strata. As demand for food increased, a new situation emerged requiring the continuous presence of state-sponsored programs. If maintained, Morales argues, this state intervention would improve food distribution and favor low-class consumers. In particular, it would serve as a stimulus for the positive rationalization of the system and the elimination of unnecessary transaction costs.

The concluding part of the volume is devoted to the emerging themes of *Natural Resources and Rural Women*. The first two chapters of this section tackle the issue of natural resources. In her chapter, "Capacity building for the environment: Forest policy and management in southeastern Europe," Sabine Weiland probes the theme of the impact that European Union and

international policies had on forest management in two Southeastern European countries: Croatia and Albania. Chosen because of their different degrees of association to the European Union and requirements to comply with directives from international political bodies, Croatia and Albania offer important insights into the evolution of the management of natural resources in the region. Despite the assumed similarities, their comparison demonstrates that there are important differences between these two nations. This situation, the author concludes, begs for a careful evaluation of broad generalizations about Eastern European countries and, more importantly, requires a careful regional analysis of each country's specificities. The issue of water management in developing countries is investigated in the chapter, "Histories and continuities of water governance in Northern Ghana" by Jennifer Hauck and Eva Youkhana. Employing the case of the Upper East Region of Ghana, the authors illustrate the consequences of the introduction of community-based practices of water management. Established as an alternative to top-down management strategies, these practices engendered results that differ from those envisioned by proponents. The authors maintain, therefore, that there is a gap between theory and practice in community-based participatory management. The reason for the existence of this gap, they conclude, rests on the social complexity of the local situation and the inadequate approach and preparation of technical personnel.

The issue of women in rural space is addressed by the last two chapters of this concluding part of the volume. In the chapter, "Gender, bodies and ethnicity in rural places: Settlement experiences of immigrant women in rural Victoria," Gayle Farnsworth studies the intersection of gender, rurality, and immigration. Adopting a constructionist feminist approach, Farnsworth illustrates the social difficulties and marginalization of an immigrant woman in rural Australia. Her narrative points to the manner in which this immigrant woman experienced her existence in a context populated by forces that fostered her social exclusion. In her conclusions, the author stresses the importance of everyday lived experiences in assessing the contemporary meaning of rural. In the second of the two chapters on women, Juri Hara-Fukuyo explores the theme of women farmers' networking in Japan. In her chapter, "Women farmers' networking in Japan: A case study of a pioneering network," she documents the evolution of the "Rural Heroines Exciting Network" a formal organization of rural women. Hara-Fukuyo underscores that the existence of this network enhanced confidence, mutual support, and a sense of identity among rural

women. She also points out that these results are exclusively confined to the sphere of the individual. At the collective level, this organization failed to engage the government and other institutions as this practice is hampered by the power of traditional social relations.

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PART I
SOCIOLOGY OF AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER 1

I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE, AND IT WORKS! HOW JOINT FARMING MAY SOLVE CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL LEVEL AND FARM STRUCTURE IN NORWEGIAN DAIRY PRODUCTION

Reidar Almås

ABSTRACT

Changing conditions for farming force farmers to search for new ways to organize agricultural production. In dairy farming, households experience long working hours, inconvenient working conditions, and low incomes. Dairy markets are beleaguered by overproduction, low prices on staple dairy products, and low return to labor and capital. This structural squeeze, which is aggravated by quick technological changes and the globalization of markets, is negotiated in various ways by dairy farmers in different agricultural regimes. A recent coping strategy for dairy farmers in Norway has been joint farming, a process whereby two, three, or even more farmers establish a joint company to merge their resources and work together. These joint farmers enjoy more leisure time, greater security in case of illness, and improved work environments. Why is joint farming so

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successful in Norway? One main explanation is the difference between agricultural regimes, which places the Norwegian dairy farmer in a privileged position when it comes to building coping capacity.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Dairy farming has for a long time undergone radical structural changes in all advanced, industrialized countries. Family farms, which were once the dominant model, have in some states of the United States, like California and Texas, given way to corporate farms, whereas family farms have increased their size dramatically in countries like Australia, The Netherlands, and Denmark (Berrevoets, 2000; Schwarzweller & Davidson, 2000). In Norway, more moderately enlarged family farms prevail (Bjørkhaug & Blekesaune, 2008). The driving forces behind this restructuring process have been a combination of government policies to enlarge farms, overproduction that causes low prices and low return to labor and capital, and technological changes. Because of global competition, world market prices on staple dairy products have been lowered to an unsustainable level for most small- and medium-sized farms. Government subsidies both in North America and in European countries have not changed this general picture of a reduced return to labor and capital (Tracy, 1989). The milk farmers of advanced capitalist countries have been forced to step upon a treadmill (Cochrane, 1958), which is moving faster and faster. To respond to these challenges, Norwegian dairy farmers have established a process of joint farming, where two, three, or even more local farmers form a joint company to merge their resources and work together. According to Norwegian Agricultural Authority, 4,300 dairy farmers are now participating in 1,890 joint farming firms, producing 30 percent of the milk in Norway.[1]

Different dairy regulatory regimes[2] have influenced this enlargement and restructuring process considerably. Whereas similar technology, knowledge support systems, and policy solutions prevailed in most OECD countries until the late 1970s (Buttel & Newby, 1980; Friedmann, 2005), deregulation and neoliberalism took different trajectories in the 1980s and 1990s (Bonanno, Busch, Friedland, Gouveia, & Mingione, 1994). In Australia and New Zealand, government intervention was pulled back through deregulation, leaving the milk industry completely exposed to world market determinants (Schwarzweller & Davidson, 2000, p. 100). According to neoliberalism, the best and most efficient farmers would prevail to the

betterment of consumers; less efficient farmers would quit the business, leaving greater market shares to more successful farmers and consequently strengthening the competitive advantage of the Australian and the New Zealand dairy industry on the world market.

In the European Union (EU), although under internal and external political pressure to reduce farm subsidies, neoliberalization has followed a different trajectory. Increasing overproduction in the milk sector from the early 1980s and onwards, as well as budget stress and obligations resulting from the Uruguay Round of GATT, forced the European Commission to introduce milk quotas and later to decouple farm subsidies from production (Ingersent & Rayner, 1999, pp. 349–350). In successive reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), a second pillar of support for rural development emerged. In the last CAP reform of 2003–2004, milk subsidies were partly turned into fixed premiums paid to farms, dependent on former dairy and landscape subsidies. The dairy quota system, however, was prolonged to the farm year 2014/2015.[3] Afterwards, milk quotas would be abolished, leaving the dairy farmer with a fixed per capita support. With the exception of France and Switzerland (Rambaud, 1985; Stræte & Almås, 2007), joint farming is not seen in dairy farming of EU or the other OECD countries. This decoupling method may be described as *the neo-regulated dairy regime*.

In Norway, neoliberalism was not pursued as far as in most other OECD countries. Norwegian agricultural policies are still regulating the sector to a substantial degree, with the annual Agricultural Agreement negotiations serving as a centerpiece (Almås, 2004). Whereas a state-regulated, protectionist modernization of agriculture was driven in the 1950s and 1960s, a greening of agricultural policies was undertaken in the 1970s, starting a reorientation toward a more sustainable agriculture (Almås, 2004, p. 349). Multifunctional agriculture and diversification into green services were stressed in policy documents and policy practice in the 1990s and after (Almås, 2002). In the dairy sector, farmers require a quota to sell milk, which is based on a three-year historical production before the quota introduction in 1983 (Almås, 2002, p. 318). Since 1996, dairy quotas may be bought or sold, although the price and quantum is regulated. Through these years, processing and marketing cooperatives owned by the farmers have been responsible for most milk and meat, which are the two most important production sectors (Almås, 2002). This Norwegian system may be described as *a classical regulated dairy regime*. Although there have been considerable structural changes in Norwegian dairy production, reducing the number of milk farms radically from 39,000 to 26,500 between 1979 and 1999, joint farms have sprung up like mushrooms during the past 12 years.

On this basis, the following questions are posed:

What kinds of farmers enter joint farming?
What motivates Norwegian dairy farmers to participate in joint farming?
Why is joint farming so successful in Norway and rarely seen under neoliberal and decoupled dairy regimes?

The first two questions are analyzed based on empirical data, whereas the third question is dealt with on a more theoretical basis in the discussion.

NORWEGIAN DAIRY FARMING AT A GLANCE

Norway is a mountainous and thinly populated country with a population of 4.7 million on 323,800 square km (14 persons per square km). Most of the countryside is sparsely populated, and animal agriculture is prevalent throughout the country. Only one million hectares or 3 percent of the total area is under agricultural cultivation, mostly around the coast or on the inland valley plains. Compared to many countries in Europe, the countryside seems "modern" and "affluent," thanks to a strong public sector and generous regional and rural policies. A long tradition of effective local government has empowered farmers and rural people. There is a strong support for agriculture in the public opinion with 68 percent reporting support for farm subsidies at the present level (Almås, 2004).

However, worsening economic conditions for farming have forced farmers to search for new ways to organize agricultural production. Dairy farmers in Norway have experienced increasing difficulties maintaining quality of life and earning a decent living. Farm relief services are generous in Norway (Almås, 2002, p. 283), but not sufficient. Farm relief workers paid by subsidies visit farms every 10th week or so, allowing dairy farmers to have a break. Another more serviceable option, which has been a widespread coping strategy recently, is joint farming. Within this model, individual ownership of the land is maintained; however, herds are merged in a commonly built cow barn. Machinery also tends to become communalized. The average membership is 2.5 members per joint farm, with 90 percent of joint farms having two or three members. This rapid growth of joint farming is completely transforming the dairy sector in Norway, prompting the analysis of why this phenomenon has evolved under the Norwegian dairy regime and not elsewhere.

In the empirical part of this chapter, I discuss who is entering joint farming and why. Furthermore, I analyze why this considerable

development toward joint dairy farming has occurred in Norway, and why it is rarely seen in neoliberal and neo-regulated dairy regimes.

JOINT FARMING IN NORWAY

The first joint farms based on classical cooperative principles were established in Sweden and Norway in the 1940s. These were not successful, mostly because members sold grass and hay to the joint farm but did not participate in the daily work (Almås, 1980, p. 69). Then, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a new beginning based on a modified cooperative model. The most innovative trait in this new model of joint farming was that member farms were more integrated into the joint enterprise (Almås, 1980, p. 77). Most members were working full time on the joint farm, and buildings and equipment became a common property over the years. The joint farm surplus was the sole or most important income source for most members. This new form of joint farming rapidly increased in the late 1970s, peaking in the early 1980s with 120 joint farms. However, this increase was quickly halted when government structural policy shifted toward favoring small- and medium-sized family farms in 1975–1976 (Almås, 2002, p. 279).

Joint farming reemerged in the mid-1990s, after the government policy toward joint farming was changed. Although some of the economies of scale were taken away by later governments, reducing some of the members' subsidies when they entered a joint farming arrangement, this policy change resulted in a quick increase in the number of joint farms, from 146 in 1995 to 529 in 2000 (Stræte & Almås, 2007, p. 187). From 2001, the Centre-Right Coalition Government at the time had a more favorable policy toward larger production units, which was seen by some dairy farmers as another policy signal to form joint operations, almost the only way to increase scale of production under a milk quota regime. The result was a dramatic increase in the number of joint farms, from 700 in 2001 to 1890 in March 2009. This quick growth was escalated even further by a new investment optimism among all Norwegian farmers from 2003 and onwards (Rye & Storstad, 2004).

CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES

Our conceptual approach to joint farming has been drawn from the "new sociology of agriculture" field (Bonanno, 1990; Bonanno et al., 1994; Buttel, Larson, & Gillespie, 1990; Buttel & McMichael, 2005;

Buttel & Newby, 1980; Friedland, Busch, Buttel, & Rudy, 1991). This new sociology of agriculture emerged as a critique of rural sociology and agricultural economics, because these traditional disciplines failed to grasp the causes and consequences of economic concentration in modern agriculture (Friedland et al., 1991). The national perspectives, which had previously dominated in studies of agriculture, were supplemented by comparative, global perspectives such as commodity chain analysis introduced by Friedland and others (Bonanno et al., 1994).

In classical Marxist theory, tension between productive forces (like technology) and the relations of production means a period of social revolution (Buttel & Newby, 1980, pp. 78–81). One important theoretical debate within the sociology of agriculture of the 1980s was the survival chances of the family farm (Buttel & Newby, 1980; Friedland et al., 1991). In the orthodox Marxist approach, coinciding with the classical liberal economists, it was claimed that the family farm would disappear because of fierce competition and economic concentration. Mann and Dickinson (1978), however, argued that the family farm was functional for the maintenance of overall capitalist production relations. Mann and Dickinson (1978) claimed that the conditions of agricultural production – with its dependence on seasons and biological processes, as well as the necessity to tie capital to commodity production for longer periods than labor was tied up – reduced profitability and henceforth discouraged corporate capital from investment in primary agricultural production. The Mann and Dickinson thesis may be suitable for Norway, as family farms have shown a strong ability to survive (Bjørkhaug, 2007). In many other advanced capitalist countries (Schwarzweller & Davidson, 2000; Tracy, 1989), however, vigorous restructuring has been taking place and corporate farming has made an inroad, especially in the United States (Bonanno et al., 1994).

One discussion within the sociology of agriculture has concerned the so-called disappearing middle: there is a tendency that the middle-sized farms disappear, whereas the smallest and biggest farms prevail. However, according to Buttel and LaRamee (1991, pp. 166–167), this dualism trend in the United States was slowed or even reversed in the 1980s. Despite contradictions in the literature, the ''bifurcation'' hypothesis has undergone little scrutiny in empirical research and seems difficult to prove. The extent to which joint farming offers insights into the bifurcation hypothesis is therefore discussed later in this chapter.

In commodity chain analysis, another important topic concerns the interrelationship of organization and economic concentration, asking questions such as '' where, in the chain of production and distribution of particular

commodities does concentration occur?'' (Friedland et al., 1991, p. 22). And furthermore, ''how shall we account for the variable organisational structures that develop in differing locations?'' This political economy of organisations, their internal and external processes and their relationships to the state, defines the theoretical field in which I place this study.

METHODS

The chapter is empirically based on two sets of data. The first was a survey that was conducted through a questionnaire posted to a representative sample of 1,677 Norwegian farmers, both ordinary farmers and joint farmers (Storstad & Flø, 2005). This large national agricultural survey is conducted every second year by the Centre for Rural Research. The second set of data was derived from a series of interviews held with one representative from each of 150 joint farms, all over Norway (Stræte & Almås, 2007). These in-depth interviews, mostly with the elected leader of the joint farm, were conducted by project staff members. In addition, a questionnaire was left behind to be filled in by the other members. A further 276 joint farmers returned these questionnaires (73 percent). These 150 joint farms were strategically sampled, and number of members, region and upstart year were the three key stratification variables. I also draw upon data from in-depth interviews that I conducted with members of 19 joint farms in 1975–1976, presented in Almås (1980), to provide historical contextual information for the present research. Observation and analysis of the Norwegian agricultural policy discourse over four decades also serves as a source of background data (Almås, 2004).

JOINT "FARMERS": WHO ARE THEY AND WHAT DO THEY WANT?

The first two questions explored who the joint farmers are, and what motivates them to merge their farming operations. Joint farmers are as diverse as farmers in general (Vik & Stræte, 2007a; Flø, 2007). Most of them are men (88 percent), but that is also the case with other farmers; just 13 percent of all dairy farmers are women. Joint farmers have slightly more agricultural education than other farmers, but their general level of highest education is the same. Joint farmers tend to be younger: the average age is

45.7 years compared to 49.7 among dairy farmers in general. Their farm size is also similar to their nonjoint farming counterparts: 55 percent of the joint farmers and 58 percent of other dairy farmers in Norway have between 10 and 25 hectares of arable land (Vik & Stræte, 2007b).

When comparing their self-identity and future visions of farming, I find that joint farmers are more closely connected to "being farmers" than other farmers in general. When asked about with whom they identify, 82 percent of joint farmers identified themselves with the farming profession, compared to 58 percent of all farmers.[4] Joint farmers also envision a brighter economic future in dairy production than farmers in general, and 63 percent recommend that their offspring take over the farm, compared to 49 percent among all farmers (Vik & Stræte, 2007a, p. 31).

On analyzing their motives to enter a joint farm, the reasons are mentioned in order of priority in Table 1.

As revealed, joint farmers expect a better social life when they join this rather demanding form of cooperation. More leisure time and more security during sickness are ranked one and two when farmers are asked to prioritize their motives to join. Leaving the farm for a long vacation abroad or going on weekend vacations with the whole family has always been a problematic feature of dairy farming due to the twice-daily milking regime. Joint farming provides greater flexibility allowing farmers to leave the property – or indeed, in covering for them when they are sick.

Improved work environment and reduced work load are related factors ranked third and fourth on the motive priority list. In general, the workload has increased among Norwegian farmers, as farm size has increased and more farmers have been forced by economic circumstances to take off-farm work (Bjørkhaug & Blekesaune, 2007). A substantial number of family farms have developed into "one-man farms," hardly a socially sustainable

Table 1. Reasons Cited for Entering a Joint Farming Arrangement, In Order of Priority.

More leisure time	66
Security in case of illness	48
Improved work environment	34
Reduced work load	26
Increased income	26
Reduced costs	22
Reduced investment risk	18
Other reasons mentioned	27

Notes: More than one answer was possible. Percent. $N = 284$.

unit in a modern society. Forty-eight percent of joint farmers have built new barns or made substantial improvements to the buildings after joining. This renewal of farm buildings may be explained by the "work environment" motive to join. Another improvement in a work environment is of course to have work mates – this is a major change from the "lonely farmer" situation, which most dairy farmers experience.

Improved income, reduced costs, and reduced investment risk represent fourth to sixth place when motives to enter joint farms are ranked. These factors may be analyzed together. The motive to reduce costs is strong among all dairy farmers, as the stagnant milk price has been lagging behind the soaring fuel and machinery prices. Technological development in dairy production has also favored larger units, whereas Norwegian dairy farms in general are small, with an average number of 18 cows per farm. For these farmers, there are two ways to overcome this cost/price squeeze on small farms: either to increase the dairy herd and consequently use more on-farm resources, which is limited by the lack of land and labor as well as the limited milk quotas for sale, or to enter a joint farm where the same economies of scale may be acquired. If the dairy farmer is scaling up production, they are obliged to invest in more buildings and machinery, thus running a greater economic risk. In entering into a joint farming arrangement, a number of people share the risk, reducing the psychological stress of the farmer.

So what are the social and economic consequences of joint farming? At the micro level, it renders possible the necessary modernization of barn buildings. In some cases, it means the introduction of new technology, such as milking robots. It also means that a dairy farmer family experiences the same social benefits as other working Norwegians: leisure time, vacation, and security during illness. Locally, it also means the preservation of dairy production in marginal communities. The pace of technological change has increased and small- and medium-sized farms may experience new economies of scale, which they would not achieve without entering joint farming. Joint farmer families have higher household incomes than other farmers and consider their economic situation to be better, both at present and in the future (Stræte, 2007, pp. 124–125). Over the years, some members may leave the joint farm, but there is no evidence that joint farming in itself will quicken this pace of leaving farming (Stræte & Almås, 2007). At the macro level, joint farming means a quicker and more robust change in dairy structure than would be the case without joint farms. The societal costs of dairy production are lowered, and subsidies are saved from the state budget.

DISCUSSION

To us, it appears a paradox that the Norwegian Government has been so reluctant in their support of joint farming. The main political arguments for the introduction of joint farming are the restructuring of a pressured sector, more efficient economies of scale and the need for the modernization of buildings and machinery (Almås, 2004, pp. 349–352). The farmers themselves cite arguments of the social benefits and a lowering of the costs and risk for new investments as important factors when considering joint enterprises. However, a transformation from self-employed farming to joint farming involves a long list of challenges. New relations of cooperation must be developed. New technologies are often introduced in production, and the reorganization of work affects the farming family.

These problems are met in different ways by different agricultural regimes. One approach may be to deregulate and let the market decide, as seen under the neoliberal dairy regime. But joint farming is not a feature of neoliberal agricultural regimes. The neoliberal vision never materialized because export markets were distorted by protection and subsidization, and many small farmers refused to "adjust" out and capitulate (Lawrence, 1996, p. 334). As farmers have embraced the neoliberal ideological agenda and governments had abdicated from agricultural policies, the dairy sector was left with almost no support and few regulatory institutions. Individualism has also prevailed in rural Australia and New Zealand (Lawrence, 1996), reducing the potential for joint ventures.

A second option may be to decouple subsidies and change milk subsidies into fixed premiums paid to farmers, dependent on past subsidies. Regardless of their present or future production, farmers are paid "production neutral" support to secure farm incomes above the very levels that would be a result of free competition. This decoupling method is used by the EU, and I have called this the neo-regulated dairy regime. Although market forces are given more freedom, there are still some strict regulations in most countries of the EU, such as production quotas between and within countries. Even still, joint farming is rarely seen under this neo-regulated agricultural regime, with the exception of France. In France, joint farming in the form of "Groupements Agricoles d'Exploitation en Commun" (GAEC) has had all-party support from the 1960s and onwards (Rambaud, 1985). However, meeting the CAP system of support per farming capita, the collective GAEC system has met regulatory obstacles in the EU. The decoupled CAP as a neo-regulated regime is so focused on the individual farmer that it is difficult to see a new opening for joint farming in countries outside France.

As we have seen from the Norwegian dairy regime, a third option is possible: organizing joint dairy farms to allow small farmers to profit from new technologies and economies of scale. This restructuring of a pressured sector started as a grassroots movement, but has hardly been embraced by farm politicians within the major parties. Both the Norwegian Farmers' Union and the Norwegian Small-Holders' Union, as well as the agricultural administration, have been reluctant to support this new trend. One challenge has been the subsidy system, which has been politically tailored to support small- and medium-sized farms since the 1970s. When those farmers engage in joint farming, the argument in administrative and political circles has been that they have turned into "big" farms and should lose most of their small farm subsidies. At the bottom line, this issue concerns who is going to lose and who is going to win. Who is going to achieve the economies of scale from cooperation? According to farmers, they should get the reward because they take the risk, while the state is claiming it back on behalf of the taxpayer.

Does the growth of joint farming mean that the family farm is outdated? I believe not, but I see a marked dualism in dairy farming, lending some support to the disappearing middle thesis. We may say that the middle-sized family farms "disappear" as such, when they enter joint farms. As a major portion of small- and middle-sized farms are run as family operations (Bjørkhaug, 2007), this, combined with the increasing number of large units due to the transformation of middle-sized dairy farms into joint farms, gives empirical evidence to the bifurcation thesis.

In contrast, however, some joint farms are just "inevitable" expansion of family farms, according to the market needs of survival. During start-up, some farmers join as "sleeping partners," while as years pass by, we see that the number of active members in joint farms may diminish. But in this study, I find no increased pace in the number of closing farms because of joint farming (Stræte & Almås, 2007). Rather, it may be argued that the inevitable structural rationalization is more humane in joint farming because most farmers may adapt to their work, land, and capital at their own choice, rather than being driven out of business. The tensions between the development of the productive forces and the relations of production are not fully solved, however, with the introduction of joint farming. At the next stage of development, even the larger joint farms may be too small to survive the competition.

Important questions for investigation in commodity chain analysis have included "who are the losers and who are the winners" and "where,

in the chain of production and distribution … does concentration occur?'' (Friedland et al., 1991, pp. 21–23). In dairy farming, those who enter a joint farm may be seen as winners, because they survive as farmers and reap some social benefits that other farmers do not have. This perspective was also touched upon by several joint farmers themselves. For example, phrases such as ''If I didn't enter this joint enterprise, I would have quit farming altogether,'' were mentioned several times. In some communities, the joint farm saved dairy farming as a local production system, because the younger generation would not have taken over individual dairy production units (Flø, 2007). Although concentration has been occurring quickly in most other agrarian sectors and sections of the food production chain, this process has now reached the primary dairy sector, regardless of three centuries of Norwegian agricultural policies favoring small- and medium-sized farms.

CONCLUSIONS

Joint farms have become quite popular in Norwegian milk production. In this chapter, I have shown that the farmers' motives are mixed, ranking social benefits as leisure time and security during illness above financial motives. Joint farming means a radical social transformation of milk production in the advanced capitalist economy of Norway. Changes in the overall property structure of agriculture have been moderate, whereas this restructuring of dairy production has happened rather quickly in the past 10 years. I see this as a coping strategy by some of the most knowledgeable and dynamic milk producers. In some rural communities, the joint farm members are the only surviving dairy farmers in a harsh economic climate. Farm organizations and the Norwegian government have been rather reluctant to embrace this radical solution. This is a paradox, because organizing joint farms means that small- and medium-sized dairy farmers may profit from new technologies and economies of scale. In that way, joint farming may solve some of the contradictions between technological level and farm structure in Norwegian dairy production. One major explanation for why this form of organization is so prevalent in Norway may lie in differences between dairy regimes. Compared to dairy farmers experiencing more deregulated and individualistic agricultural regimes, the Norwegian dairy farmer is in a privileged position when it comes to coping capacity.

NOTES

1. In what follows, *joint farming* is defined as "two or more farmers combining their resources to run a joint farm enterprise, but still owning their land privately,"
2. We define "agricultural/dairy regime" as a congruent set of policy institutions, market regulations, political discourses, and policy decisions on the agricultural/dairy sector. See also Friedmann (2005) on food regimes.
3. See http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/capexplained/cap_en.pdf.
4. Because many farmers also work off-farm, they may have another set of identities.

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CHAPTER 2

NEW PEASANTRIES AND ALTERNATIVE AGRO-FOOD NETWORKS: THE CASE OF RÉSEAU SEMENCES PAYSANNES

Alessandra Corrado

ABSTRACT

In recent years, small farmers have been coming together more and more in networks and organizations, joining forces to resist the squeeze process that they are being subjected to in a system dominated by agribusiness. In alliance often with consumers and other actors concerned with issues of quality food, the environment, and social justice, these farmers are interested in developing alternative forms of production and consumption. These farmers, who are struggling to achieve self-reproduction and the establishment of sustainable agro-food systems, appear to be mainly concerned with the control of resources. The spread of this kind of experience evokes the issue of repeasantization. *In this chapter, I use the case of the French association* Réseau Semences Paysannes *(RSP) to highlight some recent innovations in alternative agro-food models, as well as paths of research and rural development emerging within this framework.*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of networks in the rural world can be seen as a result of processes that, aside from demonstrating the limits and distortions produced by agribusiness in alliance with the regulatory treadmill, have exhibited novel strategies for conserving or establishing forms of production and consumption that are alternatives to those defined by the conventional agro-food system. In this chapter, proceeding from the assumption that these alternative forms restore or innovate upon certain elements that characterize peasant agriculture, I examine their objectives.

Small farmers, in an attempt to gain autonomy and resist the processes of expropriation, cannibalization, and standardization that threaten them, are reorganizing their way of farming by grounding it once again upon nature, developing new forms of cooperation and social relations, and seeking decommodification.

Peasant agriculture has in recent years been the subject of debate between the classical thesis of depeasantization and the newer theories of repeasantization. In the field of peasant studies, Araghi (1995) has noted a clash between those who support a disappearance theory and those who advance a permanence theory. Both groups seek to situate the historical path of the peasantry within the process of development of the broader society. The disappearance theory, articulated within Marxist thought and refined by Russian thinkers, proceeds from the conviction that capitalism will lead to the dissolution of the peasantry, with individual peasants gradually becoming salaried workers in urban areas or capitalist farmers in the countryside. The permanence theory, on the contrary, situated within the debate between Marxism and Russian populism, asserts that peasant societies do not respond to the laws of individualistic capital but obey a logic of their own, which can be seen in the survival of both the peasantry itself and its conditions for reproduction.

If we viewed the peasantry as merely a social unit involved in a form of production based exclusively on agriculture, then obviously we would conclude that the world is undergoing depeasantization. But if instead we considered the central elements of the peasant condition, that is ''the driving logic of subsistence and the maintenance of some control over the means of production'' (Johnson, 2004, p. 56), then we would have to observe not just the peasantry's continuance – as evidence of the continuing failure of the development project – but also its resistance and its innovativeness by means of various mechanisms and strategies for responding to the needs of reproduction. This corresponds to what van der Ploeg (2008) has termed the

peasant principle, according to which the socioeconomic project of the peasantry has different manifestations but is always seeking possibilities for its reproduction notwithstanding the hegemony exercised by the agro-industrial *Empire*.

In my opinion, the increasingly frequent references to a process of *repeasantization* rely on this interpretative basis for the peasant condition. Hence, in this chapter, I use the case of peasant seed networks to explore how the repeasantization process arises. In particular, I examine how it comes about in connection with innovative dynamics of production in the rural setting as well as how it reaffirms or redefines the centrality of a new agrarian question on the global level as a critique to the neoliberal project by giving rise to a transnational peasant movement and the politicization of agricultural and food relations.

To illustrate the transformation that has taken place in the relevant terminology, I make reference to *alternative agro-food networks*. The emergence of heterogeneous networks that are alternatives to the standard industrial style agro-food system arises from the building of new relationships among various social actors (producers, consumers, and organizations) with the aim of defetishizing food and requalifying it as a common good instead of a commodity.

In the following section, I consider how new peasantries can be conceptualized as products of processes that are complex, multisector, and multiactor. In the next section, the development of peasant seed networks provides empirical evidence in support of the analytical aspects that are illustrated. In the final section, I draw certain conclusions.

CONCEPTUALIZING NEW PEASANTRIES

To a large extent, the term "repeasantization" has been used to indicate a strategy employed by rural society for coping with squeeze effects produced by the large-scale production and distribution processes and with the distortions generated by modernization and technologization within the agro-food system in the midst of a transition toward different possible scenarios.

In recent years, various authors have proposed different theories regarding processes of repeasantization, taking into consideration very different contexts and dynamics. Some studies have noted evidence of a recomposition or differentiation, through agriculture, of the incomes or the material bases for living. For example, one type of repeasantization occurs when people not previously engaged in agricultural labor enter into

small-scale farming, as in the pattern that emerged from the impact of economic crisis and reform on Cuban agriculture. The Cuban process has been characterized by a conversion in the style of farming, which has created an independent agriculture based on (1) higher prices paid to producers; (2) agro-ecological technology; (3) small farming units; and (4) organic urban agriculture (Enríquez, 2003; McKibben, 2005).

Other studies, in developing countries, give evidence of the reemergence of a more diversified agricultural economy – with rural communities also implementing other kinds of strategies such as migration (Sivini, 2000) – and of a refocusing on subsistence crops that links repeasantization to a decommodification process as well (Sesia, 2003).

Because pluri-activity, multifunctionality, forms of cooperation, direct selling, and organic production are endogenous strategies that are also spreading out all over Europe, repeasantization should be conceived of as a qualitative shift in the way agriculture is organized amid a search by social actors for agricultural sustainability and value-seeking strategies that are socially grounded. One category relevant to this argument is that of alternative agro-food networks (van der Ploeg, Long, & Banks, 2002; Renting, Marsden, & Banks, 2003; Whatmore, Stassart, & Renting, 2003). Alternative agro-food networks are a reflection of recent crises in conventional agricultural costs and prices but constitute also a strong criticism of the human/ecological divide of modern agriculture (Goodman, 1999) in that small farmers engaged in them embrace pluri-activity as well as new methods of internal management for economical, ecological, and sustainable farming, while consumers, in turn, change their food style and their approach to the market. These networks can thus be interpreted as "expressions of transitional relations within/between food regimes in which both objective and subjective forces are at play, separately and together" (McMichael, 2008, p. 73).

Hence repeasantization can be seen as a process of differentiation for endogenous rural development. If the main term of reference is peasantry, then repeasantization has to be understood as a plurality of farming styles based on the capacity for organizing agriculture not just for production but also for the reproduction of resources and of the small farmers themselves. Connecting production to local culture and people enables peasant agriculture to obtain more independence and control over both the quality of the goods produced and the labor provided to produce them. Differentiation by farmers implies innovation – to reduce commodification and incorporation into the technological political system – as well as reappropriation and readaptation of technologies to the farmers' own model

of production. As a consequence, repeasantization can be understood as an assertion of both agency and autonomy, where small farmers, conscious of the constraints that arise from the expert knowledge system and the global market in which they operate, try to organize themselves to confront these challenges and change their conditions, by reshaping local knowledge systems and local exchange systems to their own ends.

Accordingly, seeking the reproduction of the conditions necessary for their own existence, new peasantries develop through (1) the rediscovery of the centrality of *food* as a common good rather than a commodity; (2) a new *economies* generated by self-control of resources, pluri-activity, and multi-functionality; (3) a focus on the *territory*, seeking the safeguarding of natural and cultural resources, as well as the building of new ties, alliances, and forms of extra- and inter-territorial cooperation. Therefore with economy, food, and territory representing fundamental elements of a new agrarian question, peasants' strategies based on them can be summarized as sustainable paths for local development based on the organization of new forms of cooperation and a redefinition of quality.

In this chapter, I assume that the search by small farmers for greater autonomy from financial capital and for new means to supplement their income and remunerate their labor is joined with a requalification of the product of their activity, that is, *food*. The forms of cooperation and conflict that connect social actors, government bodies, and nature become the very foundation of innovations in the knowledge and regulatory systems and in models of sustainable development as well.

A NEW FOUNDATION FOR AGRO-FOOD SYSTEMS

Although it may seem paradoxical, the repeasantization process makes *seeds* fundamental in self-management of local resources and farmer autonomy. In repeasantization, agriculture is conceived of as based on the production of commodities and non-commodities using natural resources, peasant labor, and local knowledge. This model is characterized by heterogeneous environments and diversity in cultivation systems: to cope with the obstacles posed by a lack of or a reduction in inputs, farmers are forced to rely on biodiversity, viewed not merely as a multitude of plant varieties that are still undergoing evolution – and hence not *homogeneous* and *stable* as demanded by traditional regulatory criteria (Bové & Dufour, 2001) – but as a gene bank and also as a memory bank for the social and cultural features of a specific territory (Escobar, 1998).

In France, the case of *Réseau Semences Paysannes* (RSP) can serve as an example of the construction of articulated and heterogeneous social relationships that take advantage of natural, cultural, and social resources in an attempt to resist industrial agriculture, the commodification of nature and food, and the destruction of small farming.

The birth of RSP was tied up with a series of trends in French agriculture that began in the mid-1980s. The seeds issue had become inextricably entwined with the issue of peasant agriculture, the issue of agro-food sustainability and quality, and the issue of agro-biotechnology. The founders of RSP were in fact bodies antagonistic and critical toward the dominant system, such as *Confédération Paysanne* (*CP*), *Fédération Nationale d'Agriculture Biologique des Régions de France*, *Nature et Progrès* (*N&P*), *Mouvement de Culture Bio-Dynamique*, and *Coordination Nationale pour la Défense des Semences Fermières* (*CNDSF*).

In France, the attention that has been given to safeguard biodiversity and mobilizing diverse social forces is related to a specific model of agriculture, a model that after the end of the Second World War – and especially due to the setting up of the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – underwent a growth process in which there prevailed a "productivist logic of concentration, intensification and innovation and oriented particularly towards bulk commodity production" (Buller, 2004, p. 108). The spread of this model progressively threatened the survival of less-intensive small farmers, agro-biological variety, food security, and food quality.

PEASANT RESISTANCE AND THE ANTIGLOBALIZATION MOVEMENT

The *Confédération Paysanne* (CP) can be considered the driving force of initial opposition to the industrial model of agriculture. The CP was founded in 1987 as a merger of two marginal farmers' associations on the radical left composed of discontented farmers from western and southern France. The merger was carried out to increase their capacity to challenge the hegemonic and conservative farmers' association *Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles* (FNSEA).

The CP from the outset drew up a distinctive set of principles inspired by critical, anarchist, and ecological thinking: defense of small-scale, sustainable agriculture; rejection of the predatory competition prevalent in the

farming sector; and denunciation of the cultural homogenization that was sweeping in with liberal globalization. Reappropriating what had become a pejorative or backward term – *paysan* – the CP has identified and plays a key role in international peasant networks tightly integrated into the wider international antiglobalization movement, such as the *European Peasant Coordination* and *Via Campesina* (Heller, 2002).

In France, opposition to agro-biotechnology has become the centerpiece of a wider critique of modern state and global capitalism. CP's action has "(…) extended beyond a purely ecological and national frame to denounce the complicity of corporate interest and public research on an international scale," shaping a "not in anybody's back yard" (NIABY) critique of Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Seifert, 2009, p. 28).

QUALITY FOOD AND PARTICIPATORY AGRICULTURE

For a long time, France was reluctant to adopt the multifunctional and ecological role models for agriculture that emerged in the CAP reform process. At present, to respond to growing internal demand for organics, France has to import 50% of the organic products consumed each year, as just 2% of the agricultural area under cultivation is dedicated to organic farming.

In 1978, the professional organization *Fédération Nationale de l'Agriculture Biologique* (FNAB) was formed, which today represents about 60% of France's organic farmers. Nevertheless, consumer demand in France, orientated more and more toward quality agriculture, has stimulated diversified forms of production and quality assurance, an orientation that has spurred the creation of other associations with different focuses. *Nature et Progrès* (N&P), for instance, is an association that involves various stakeholders: farmers, consumers, agronomists, technicians, and even medical doctors. It operates as a participatory guarantee system with its own private organic standards and its own certification procedures (involving peer review and bringing consumers into the inspection process). Besides organic methods, N&P also takes into consideration transparency, nearness, and solidarity when issuing the *Nature et Progrès* label.

The link between food quality, peasant agriculture, and nearness is recognized even among consumers. This can be seen by the rapid spread of the *Associations pour le Mantien de l'Agriculture Paysanne* (AMAPs) since

2001, created to promote peasant agriculture as defined by the CP charter, to favor local markets, and to create ties between consumers and small farmers.

Whereas French organic farmers were beginning to oppose agro-biotechnology because of the alleged risk of contamination by GMOs and, as a result, the devaluation of organic farm products on the market, by the strategy of associating GMOs with *la malbouffe* (junk food) and translating a debate that basically revolved around technical risk into a sociocultural debate, the CP reframed GMOs as an issue of food quality intrinsically tied into productivist agriculture, cultural homogenization, and neoliberal globalization (Heller, 2002). The principal tactic employed to remain in the public eye by activists from the CP and other organizations in the *faucheurs volontaires* (voluntary reapers) network is the destruction of GMO fields. By attacking GMOs, these present-day Luddites also attack the socioeconomic order that is part and parcel of agri-biotechnology.

PEASANT EXPERTISE AND BIODIVERSITY LIBERATION

As with other alternative agro-food movements (Petrini, 2003; Escobar, 1998), in the CP worldview, nature is associated with peasant expertise (*savoir faire*) and consequently with *culture*. In this peasant outlook, what is promoted is the notion of the peasant both as producer and manager of the rural economy and also as steward of nature.

The real threat to peasant autonomy and expertise, and also to food quality and culture, is represented by the privatization of seeds. In France, mobilization around this specific issue began when new legal measures attempted to forbid peasants from saving seeds from their harvest and using them in planting. This legal maneuver was prepared by the seed companies, the principal farmers' union, and the Ministry of Agriculture, ostensibly as a short-term strategy to enforce royalty collection in preparation for the implementation of the revised version of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants by means of intellectual property rights. As a consequence of this measure, peasants have been compelled to purchase commercial seeds. In fact, in 2001, a government-sanctioned system of "mandatory voluntary contributions" was created. Farmers who pay this *seed tax* receive partial reimbursement if they bought certified seed,

but if they used farm-saved seed, they get nothing back at all. Yet 85% of the money thus collected goes directly to the seed industry, supposedly to fund research (GRAIN, 2007, p. 8). Obviously, this system creates obstacles to the production, selection, and exchange of farm seeds.

The institution of this *seed tax* has given birth to an organized resistance. The CP and a number of other organizations formed the *Coordination Nationale pour la Défense des Semences Fermières* (CNDSF). The new movement, seeing the taxing of farm-saved seeds as a real expropriation of farmers' rights, had two aims: "on the one hand, economizing about 50% by making our seeds with our harvest, and on the other, defending what is for us a fundamental freedom, that of reproducing from our harvest" (Yves Manguy in RSP and CNDSF, 2005, p. 4).

Peasant associations have begun to engage in seed-variety selection activities, for which they sometimes suffer legal sanctions. The militants of *faucheurs volontaires* have also turned into *semeurs volontaires* (voluntary sowers) or *semeurs de biodiversité* (sowers of biodiversity), planting, and promoting, the exchange of seeds that are unpatented or illegal.

THE CASE OF RÉSAU SEMENCES PAYSANNES

RSP is an association that includes farmers' unions, development organizations, and associations for biological and peasant agriculture, along with associations of seed producers, peasants, artisans, the network *Jardins de Cocagne*, and the Natural Park of Queyras.

RSP was born after the Auzeville declaration of 2003, which called for united, collective action by the different groups then engaged in peasant seed selection to affirm the inalienable bond between the peasant and the seeds. RSP was created afterwards to facilitate this collective action by means of the following goals: (1) linking up the various single actions being undertaken to consolidate dynamic conservation and the management of agricultural biodiversity in farms and gardens; (2) facilitating training and exchange regarding peasant expertise; (3) promoting technical, scientific, and legal recognition of peasant practices of seed and plant production; (4) contributing to the emergence of new schemes for seed selection, variety creation, and the distribution of adapted seeds to biological, biodynamic, and peasant farmers; and (5) informing public opinion about issues related to the production and commercialization of seeds.

Participatory Plant Breeding

Since RSP's foundation, its farmers have entered into a novel relationship with institutional research through what is defined as Participatory Plant Breeding (PPB). PPB is a relatively recent concept used to refer to a broad array of breeding methods. Most PPB projects are initiated by international institutes of research and aim to speed up the adoption of improved cultivars by small farmers in developing countries.

In some PPB research programs, farmers' participation is limited to the final steps of the process, that is, evaluating and commenting on a few nearly finished or advanced varieties just before their official release. In other cases, PPB implies participatory selection involving unfinished or stored plants, which feature a high degree of genetic variability.

In fact, one of RSP's main aims is precisely to promote a different idea of participation. "Participation is obtained by means of dialogue at every step of the process of peasant reconquest of seed autonomy, in a shared conception [inside a professional network as well as with the researcher] of fundamental principles regarding the nature of living beings" (Chable & Berthellot, 2006, p. 129).

As a result, the involvement of peasants in the selection of varieties and plants – by recognizing the value of the peasants' expertise and cooperation – has become an innovative method not just for developing plant varieties that are better adapted for peasants' specific needs but also for contributing to sustainable development and empowering farmers and rural communities (Chiffoleau & Desclaux, 2006).

The 2003 Auzeville meeting brought together peasants, artisans, researchers, biotechnicians, doctors, and consumers, with one aim being to test the use of old varieties of wheat for baking. Peasants who have decided to carry out baking on their farms (*paysans boulangers*) have become involved in variety selection too, knowing that work on old varieties can permit the recovery of plant adaptability to soils, an essential plant characteristic if chemical inputs are to be avoided.

In some cases, modern plant varieties, selected by industry for their higher productivity and higher protein rates, have proven to be unsuitable for biological production. As a consequence, organic farmers and peasant craft bakers have needed to seek out alternative varieties and have launched cooperative programs, which include the participation of the *Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique* (INRA), to obtain varieties suitable for biological agriculture.

The necessity of developing sustainable farming methods, together with the specificity of the needs of the various actors, is making more and more evident the limits of traditional knowledge systems and hence stimulating new paths of research. Thanks to the initiative of farmers' organizations and networks, in the space of just a few years, participatory breeding programs have multiplied across France and elsewhere in Europe (Bocci & Chable, 2008).

Nevertheless, farmers often have difficulty in having their role as plant selectors accepted because of the specificity of their selection methods, which are aimed at their particular needs, their way of thinking, and their environment. The farmer plant selection that is carried out by various member groups of RSP is part of a continuous process of innovation that is based on cooperation, exchange, solidarity, and trust. The definitions of *peasant selection* and *peasant varieties* that RSP has adopted have not yet met with official recognition. Instead, they still need to overcome the hurdles posed by the expert system and by the ever more stringent limitations of the governmental regulatory system – influenced by strong pressure from the seed industry – on the exchange and marketing of unregistered seed varieties.

In my opinion, peasant seed selection can be understood as a rural coproduction process – nature, human beings, and technology working together to carry out transformation and innovation in pursuit of quality. Quality enters the picture when the plants are made adaptable to the soil by means of cultivation techniques that come from the peasant himself and accord with his sensitivity. It can be said that peasant seed selection represents a kind of *parallel evolution*, that is, an evolution of the seed variety alongside an evolution of the image that the peasant has of this variety. Hence coproduction and coevolution are processes that characterize peasant agriculture in its search for autonomy. Quality care in the production process is linked to the interest in skill-oriented technologies, in which a central role is played by labor, intensive both in quantity and in quality.

Peasant Networking and New Paths for Rural Development

RSP, taking into account the importance of peasant seed selection and peasant agriculture in its efforts to create quality food, to safeguard biodiversity, and to boost local development, has developed various forms of cooperation with different associations and research organizations.

This cooperation sometimes assumes the form of programs that feature the exchange of seeds, knowledge, and experience, programs carried out not just in France but also across Europe and in other regions. In union with other national seed networks, RSP has sponsored the creation of a *Peasant Seed Coordination* in Europe, which also has the aim of supporting or strengthening lobbying action, as for example in the case of the implementation of the EU's Council Directive 98/95/EC regarding *conservation varieties*, a directive that binds the EU to examine the creation of a separate set of rules for the marketing of traditional or old varieties of plants. These national seed networks are also involved, along with research institutes, in Europe-wide projects aimed at supporting new seed policies that take into consideration the different national situations regarding conservation or peasant plant varieties.

The political implications of this emergence of new peasantries are apparent not merely in their concrete practices in favor of autonomy but also in the pressure and demands they direct at the systems of governance implemented from the local level to the transnational level.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I have highlighted some recent innovations in alternative agro-food models, as well as paths of research and rural development that have emerged within this framework. Notwithstanding theories that assert continuing depeasantization and predict an eventual extinction of the peasantry, it is evident that today there is a "qualitative process" of repeasantization that is defining new conditions for the reproduction of small-scale farming. What characterizes the *new peasantry*, aside from its affirmation of the principle of autonomous reproduction, is its participation in alternative agro-food networks and its involvement in political and ethical practices of solidarity and cooperation.

I have illustrated these features through an analysis of the case of RSP. This network can be considered an antisystemic movement (Arrighi, Hopkins, & Wallerstein, 1997) due to the strong criticism it has expressed toward the dominant agro-food system and toward the cultural, techno-scientific, and knowledge models that derive from it.

Further study, however, needs to be directed to the network's innovative features and to the transformations engendered by the practices and forms of cooperation developed by RSP in connection with other networks or other social actors. In effect, these transformations, which involve the

peasant knowledge and research system for developing agro-ecological techniques, for safeguarding biodiversity, and for guaranteeing the reproduction of small farmers, end up also being important for the safeguarding of food security and quality. Furthermore, the use of these kinds of innovations to exert influence on the system of governance at various levels represents another key tool for reaching these goals as well as for promoting endogenous development processes and territorial revitalization. As a reticular process, therefore, repeasantization seems to have important implications for both transnational and local governance.

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CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY AND ASSOCIATED GENDER ISSUES

Hitomi Nakamichi

ABSTRACT

In Japan, since an outbreak of mass food poisoning in 2000, consumer interest in food safety and security has increased, focusing on activities such as Chisan-Chishō (Local Production, Local Consumption), Slow Food, and LOHAS. Activities related to food safety and security in Japan have a strong local character, are moving toward industrialization, are not bound by tradition, and can be said to be activities in pursuit of alternative forms of consumption and development. In Japan, most supporters of Slow Food, LOHAS, and Chisan-Chishō have been women. In societies where production is important, consumption has been entrusted to women. Therefore, activities related to food safety and security are tied to social reform with women in central roles. Receiving social recognition, these activities develop business opportunities, move toward globalized

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industrialization, and, in a gendered society centered on men, become activities with men in central positions. Gender in the area of food does not allow women to take part in production and distribution and is moving to exclude women. To secure women's position in food, it is necessary to industrialize according to women's ways such as maintaining the viewpoint of living nature, mutual support, collective leadership, and networking.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing Interest in Food and the Development of Consumer Action

At the outset of the new millennium, consumer consciousness regarding "food safety and security" soared in Japan. This was a direct consequence of an outbreak of mass food poisoning from dairy products, followed by the discovery of BSE in 2001 and then in 2002 by unlawful activities and cover-ups by a leading food company. In 2003, with the aims of ensuring a safe food supply and of gaining the trust of the Japanese people regarding food, the MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) established the Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau. Subsequently, however, as further deception and cover-ups related to food products were discovered and reported, consumer interest in food safety and security increased, focusing in particular on activities such as Chisan-Chishō (Local Production, Local Consumption), Slow Food, and LOHAS.

Among activities related to food safety and security that have gained attention in recent years, this chapter considers LOHAS, Slow Food, and the organic produce and Chisan-Chishō movements that were born in Japan. These activities have spread in response to various problems caused by industrialism during the move in recent years to post-industrialism.[1] In modern society, food production and supply is globalizing as food products, and flavors are being standardized in accordance with mass production and mass consumption. In response, the above-mentioned activities act in concert with antiglobalization movements, which place great emphasis on regionality as opposed to standardized foods and flavors, and with alternative ideas of development.[2] However, as these immature niche activities receive increasing social recognition and develop as industries, they will gradually be entrusted to men rather than women. In a gendered society, women, who have borne responsibility for "food" in private life, have carried out activities related to food safety and security. The

industrialization of such activities will drive women to the periphery, with the latent possibility that daily life and "food" will be separated.[3]

This chapter shows activities such as LOHAS, Slow Food, organic food production, and Chisan-Chishō to be pursuing alternative consumption and development in the face of modernization. In Japan, the activities that bring about such social change have been carried out by women, but in a gendered society, as the activities are socialized and industrialized, their appropriation by men has quickened, particularly through recent policies. I clarify this point through a detailed examination of Chisan-Chishō activities, of which women form the core.

Goals and Current State of LOHAS and Slow Food Activities

LOHAS is an acronym for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability and is generally applied to activities aspiring to "a healthy, environmentally-concerned life." It is said that in the United States, 26% of adults (50 million people) have a deep interest in ecology and the global environment, human relations, peace, social justice, self-realization, and self-expression. Gaiam, Inc., with a market strategy targeting these people, has its origin in the sale of LOHAS goods such as household items, clothing, and clean energy products.

LOHAS has created an area in which investors and entrepreneurs can gather, as Gaiam, Inc. has joined other businesses and financial concerns with an interest in people holding such new values to form an organization of "natural businesses." In Japan, the group company Todo Press and Mitsui Bussan hold most LOHAS trademarks. *Sotokoto*, the magazine instrumental in spreading LOHAS in Japan, is published by Kirakusha, an affiliate of Todo Press.[4] LOHAS appears to have become an industrialized activity in Japan.

LOHAS can be divided into five specific categories: (1) sustainable economy, (2) healthy lifestyle, (3) alternative healthcare, (4) personal development, and (5) ecological lifestyle. From these categories, it can be seen that LOHAS aspires to a lifestyle of concern for environment and resources and for self-control. As it takes the preindustrial life of harmony with nature to be the goal of "industry," it is an activity in pursuit of alternative consumption and development.

The Slow Food movement began in 1986 and is said to oppose ways of thinking and actions represented by Fast Food (Italian Slow Food Association, 2009). The "Slow Food Manifesto" makes the following

statements: ''May suitable doses of guaranteed sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment preserve us from the contagion of the multitude who mistake frenzy for efficiency.'' ''Let us discover the flavors and savors of regional cooking.'' ''In the name of productivity, Fast Life has changed our way of being and threatens our environment and our landscapes. So Slow Food is now the only truly progressive answer'' (Slow Food International, 2009b). As this manifesto suggests, the Slow Food movement is an antiglobalization movement whose concern extends to lifestyle[5] and, given the latitude of its activities, aims to restructure the food industry, with agriculture at the center, and thus is another activity in pursuit of alternative consumption and development.

The three aims of the Slow Food organization are to (1) ''save the countless traditional grains, vegetables, fruits, animal breeds and food products that are disappearing due to the prevalence of convenience food and industrial agribusiness''; (2) ''organize fairs, markets and events locally and internationally to showcase products of excellent gastronomic quality and to offer discerning consumers the opportunity to meet producers''; and (3) ''help people rediscover the joys of eating and understand the importance of caring where their food comes from, who makes it and how it's made'' (Slow Food International, 2009a).

PRODUCTION/CONSUMPTION PARTNERSHIPS IN THE JAPANESE ORGANIC FARMING MOVEMENT AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

These movements from abroad act in the same way as the buying of local produce and purchasing cooperatively that are the foundation of the Japanese organic agriculture movement, which has developed in grassroots fashion for over 30 years in response to concerns about food safety. Through the 1970–1980s, producers and consumers built relationships of trust and formed ''producer/consumer partnerships'' in which consumers received organic produce from producers on a regular basis. ''Almost all of the people on the consumer side of these partnerships were in accord in re-evaluating a way of eating that gave priority to consumer preferences. They felt that, rather than having the soil (agriculture) adjust to the consumers' mouths (diet) … they should eat in conformity with the natural conditions of the agricultural land. They learned that if they did not support agriculture, agricultural methods would not change'' (Honjō, 2002, p. 48).

A key term used by the Japan Organic Agriculture Association (JOAA) is *shindo fuji* (the notion that the human body cannot be separated from the soil, climate, and geographical conditions and that people should eat seasonal foods harvested within a 12 kilometer radius from the place they were born and raised), in other words, local self-sufficiency and consumption of local produce (Adachi, 2003).

The JOAA was established in 1971, and the first "organic boom" began with the publication in 1974 of Ariyoshi Sawako's novel, *Fukugō osen* (Complex Contamination). The boom's main supporters were the consumers and producers of the JOAA, who were influenced by the antipollution movement (Adachi, 2003). A second "organic boom" occurred following the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986. As the demand for organic agricultural products increased, the activities of groups advocating "compatibility with business," such as specialized distributors and the Seikyō (Japan Consumer Cooperatives), which were enthusiastic about local direct purchase groups, were expanded. In 1993, the "Guidelines for Labeling of Organic Agricultural Products" of the MAFF were put into effect, the JAS (Japan Agricultural Standard) specification was created, and the third "organic boom" began (Adachi, 2003). In 1999, the decision was made to introduce an organic certification system, and the JAS law was revised in accordance with Codex Alimentarius. In 2001, the system for inspection and certification of organic foods went into effect. The increasing sense of panic among consumers regarding food caused agricultural policy to shift from a focus on production to consumption and food safety. The issue in 2002 of the "Plan for the Recovery of 'Food' and 'Agriculture'" was followed by revision of the Agricultural Chemicals Regulation Law, enactment of the Food Safety Basic Law, revision of the Food Sanitation Law, and so on.[6] Accompanying this switch to "food safety" policies, Chisan-Chishō has been promoted as a way of raising the food self-sufficiency rate.

The organic agriculture movement in Japan is advanced even in world terms and shares some ideas with Slow Food and LOHAS, but it lacks their publicity strength. It is a movement of producers, who say "Dealing with the soil is our way of living," and consumers, who say "Our way of eating is our way of living" (Adachi, 2003, p. 56). It rejects the industrialization of lifestyle, food culture, and food production represented by mass production and mass consumption and seeks alternative forms of consumption and development. However, along with the industrialization of organic food production, responsibility has shifted from single individuals to distributors and the government.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT SELF-SUFFICIENCY MOVEMENT AND CHISAN-CHISHŌ

The Agricultural Product Self-Sufficiency Movement

The starting point of Chisan-Chishō[7] can be seen in the Life Improvement movement in agricultural communities following World War II and in the agricultural product self-sufficiency movement that began around 1965.[8] Under the 1961 Basic Agricultural Law intended to "improve the welfare of farmers through improvements in the quality of daily life and rationalization of the labor of women" and through the guidance of extension workers dealing with household matters, groups of women throughout Japan independently joined to improve the quality of daily life. At first, the main target was improvement of food and diet.

The members of the Life Improvement groups were also members of the women's clubs of the Nōkyō (Japan Agricultural Cooperatives; JA), and in many instances, the Nōkyō and the extension services worked together. In Akita Prefecture, the women's club of the Nikaho Nōkyō began a well-known agricultural product self-sufficiency movement in 1970, and thus, that year is referred to as "Year 1 of self-sufficiency" (Hasumi et al., 1986). In 1985, the Nōrinchūkin Bank Research Institute conducted a survey of 42 Nōkyō prefectural cooperatives and 978 local cooperatives and found that, whereas until 1970, only 4.8% had been involved in the self-sufficiency movement, 49.1% were taking part in 1984.

The primary reason for taking part was "to achieve self-sufficient production of fresh, safe food," whereas the second was "to improve health through a balanced diet." The products focused on the self-sufficiency movement were vegetables (96%), grains (36%), animal products (22%), and fruit (19%). Self-sufficiency was also sought in areas other than food, such as fuel, fertilizer, clothing, and wood products.

According to Suzuki Hiroshi and Negishi Hisako, these sorts of self-sufficiency activities "were the first step in breaking away from a large-scale, specialized agriculture polluted by agricultural chemicals and steeped in chemical fertilizers." "It was a movement not just to become self-sufficient in food, but also to reconsider the resources of the community as a whole, including energy from water, fire, wind, etc., and to make better use of them in daily life" (Hasumi et al., 1986, p. 45).

The agricultural product self-sufficiency movement was the origin of Chisan-Chishō in rural communities. Although it appeared and spread well

before Slow Food and LOHAS, it was limited to farming communities. Moreover, because the agricultural product self-sufficiency movement was connected with the spread of nutritional education following World War II, which denied the value of the traditional diet, people were not aiming for self-sufficiency in traditional foods. Particularly in the five years from 1956, mobile kitchens visited farming communities throughout the country, ostensibly to provide nutritional guidance and to improve people's diets, but also rejecting traditional foods and encouraging change to a Western diet (as had been sought by the postwar occupation army headquarters).[9] In reality, self-sufficiency in familiar vegetables and processed foods, for which production methods (procuring of seeds, planting, etc.) were common knowledge, remained high, but overall, the vegetable self-sufficiency rate tended to decrease. In particular, traditional vegetables decreased with the change in diet, whereas self-sufficiency in vegetables considered necessary to a Western diet increased (Nakamichi, 1990, 1991).

The Current State of Chisan-Chishō

According to a 2004 survey of Chisan-Chishō conducted by the Statistics and Information Department of the MAFF, there were 2,982 permanent direct sales outlets established by municipalities (including the third sector) and Nōkyō. The average total annual sales were 74,620,000 yen, of which local agricultural products made up 63.8%, or 47,590,000 yen. Excluding local products, items produced in other parts of the prefecture accounted for 6.5%, or 4,830,000 yen, thereby bringing the total of products from within the prefecture to approximately 70%. In addition, the annual purchasing costs for farm households (incorporated), agricultural businesses other than families, and processing plants established by Nōkyō (numbering 1,686 in the survey) totaled 130,910,000 yen. Of this, the purchasing cost for local agricultural products was 104,090,000 yen, or 79.5%. Also, 76.6% of school lunch programs in public elementary and junior high schools, as well as in other jointly used kitchens, (1,636 sites), responded that they used local agricultural products regularly.

In 2001, and again in 2002, the Rural Life Research Center surveyed agricultural policy and production divisions of municipalities regarding self-sufficiency within each municipal district (Nōson Seikatsu Sōgō Kenkyū Sentā, 2003). The results showed that in Chisan-Chishō activities, women from farm households comprised 67% of participants in "processing and

development,'' 62% in ''direct sales outlets,'' and 57% in ''farming community restaurants,'' with an overall participation rate of 55%. Clearly, farm women were the leaders in Chisan-Chishō.

CASE STUDIES OF WOMEN'S CHISAN-CHISHŌ ACTIVITIES

Chisan-Chishō in a Direct Sales Market

In recent years, direct sales venues with women in pivotal roles, such as Ehime Prefecture's Tokimeki Suito Market, have achieved sales of over 500,000,000 yen per year. In 1990, as consumer interest in agricultural products increased, leaders of the women's club of the Saijō City Nōkyō led members in a lengthy study of direct sales activities, and in 1991, 60 members started a Sunday open-air ''100-yen'' market. In 1995, the Tokimeki Suito Market was opened in front of the main Nōkyō building. A steering committee was formed, comprising the 11 branch leaders of the Nōkyō women's club. By 2003, there were 765 members, and two women had been named to the Nōkyō board of directors. For the benefit of consumers concerned with food safety and security, several farm households had gained certification of their organic produce and begun selling it under organic JAS. In addition, as this is one of the major rice-growing areas in the prefecture, sale of bread made with rice flour was begun in 2004, with as much as one ton of local rice used in a month.

In the case of Suito Market, Chisan-Chishō is being carried out and managed by women, and they have gained enough power that two have become Nōkyō directors. Also, in terms of consumption of local products, it is clear from the group's production of rice flour bread that they are not bound to traditional foods but are pursuing alternative forms of distribution and consumption and working toward regional development.

Chisan-Chishō in Environmentally Conscious Animal Husbandry

Ms. Shiraishi in Saitama Prefecture began raising pigs in her garden in 1978. In 1981, she switched to a breed no longer seen in the area, the Middle Yorkshire, which grows more slowly (9–10 months to market size) but has a better flavor. Ms. Shiraishi has continued raising this pure breed, which was imported from England. In 1998, she increased her herd to 400 head. Sales

reached over 30 million yen. In 2003, her husband retired and also took up farming, and in 2005, her son left his job with a company and established a processing branch.

To protect the environment, they obtain discarded *shimeji* mushroom bedding and rice husks from nearby farms, add microorganisms, used this as bedding for the pigs, and produce fermented compost. This is sold to neighboring rice and vegetable farms. Thus, agricultural plant and animal waste are turned to fertilizer and recycled within the community. For feed, they use brewer's yeast, lactic acid bacteria, and *nattō* bacteria mixed with steamed barley and non-GM corn. No hormones are added. The pigs are allowed to range freely to keep them as close as possible to a natural state.

Ms. Shiraishi is preserving a breed and caring for the environment while at the same time practicing Chisan-Chishō. The pigs are from England and are not traditional Japanese food, but nevertheless, we can see business expansion through alternative forms of production and consumption. Moreover, as the business has grown, husband and son have been employed and further expansion is planned.

Chisan-Chishō in a Fishing Community

In traditional fishing, men catch the fish and women process and sell it. Even if fish are caught, there will be no money if they are not sold. Until fishing cooperatives began selling fish, it was women's work. Peddling fish became impossible because of health and sanitation problems, and as fishing cooperatives took over sales, women gradually disappeared from fishing. In Okinawa, however, peddling was transformed into *sashimi* (raw fish) shops, many run by women.[10] Some of these women have continued making time-consuming squid dumplings to provide local seafood for school lunches. Catching small amounts of fish that cooperatives will not accept or fish unwanted in the market bring fishermen no money, but the women's *sashimi* shops accept these and thereby play a part in Chisan-Chishō. Members of a Life Improvement group on Irabu Island, famed for its bonito, process this fish and sell it at the harbor. This has been traditional women's work on the island.

The women of Okinawa's fishing industry have always supported Chisan-Chishō, even as they have changed its form. Supporting small-scale fishermen by accepting small amounts of fish and types unwanted by the market, they too are involved in the idea of *shindo fuji*, antiglobalization, and the pursuit of alternative forms of consumption and development.

GENDER ISSUES IN THE PURSUIT OF ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF CONSUMPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Characteristics of Safety and Security Activities in Japan

We can consider the LOHAS, Slow Food, organic agriculture, and Chisan-Chishō activities all in terms of the key words "ecology, environment, and health." They are united in valuing things that have not been valued in the modern age and in reconsidering modern systems of production and consumption. Moreover, they are activities in pursuit of alternative forms of consumption and development. They differ, however, in their locality, industrialization, and tradition. Although LOHAS has spread throughout the country partly through businesses and magazines, it is centered mainly in metropolitan areas. Slow Food also is found primarily in urban areas, while the major activities in outlying areas are Chisan-Chishō. Organic agriculture has begun to spread throughout the country along with the JAS certification system. LOHAS is already giving rise to a "LOHAS industry." Its industrial strategy is aimed at a newly emerging stratum of consumers, and previously existing large corporations are taking part. Slow Food and organic agriculture are solidifying their positions as industries as well. We can also see signs of the industrialization of Chisan-Chishō in the large-scale facilities for direct sale being built in various parts of the country by Nōkyō. Slow Food aims to preserve traditional diets, but the other three are not necessarily concerned about preserving traditional ways of eating. The consciousness of "nutrition" in Japan since the postwar period, which has rejected the traditional diet, is strongly rooted.

Thus, activities related to food safety and security in Japan have a strong local nature, are moving toward industrialization, are not bound by tradition, and can be said to be activities in pursuit of alternative forms of consumption and development.

Gender as Seen in Changing Support for Safety and Security Activities

In Japan, most supporters of Slow Food, LOHAS, and Chisan-Chishō have been women. Owada Junko is well known in connection with LOHAS and Shimamura Natsu with Slow Food. Shirane Setsuko is prominent as a leader on the consumer side of the producer/consumer partnerships of the

JOAA. The women of rural communities support the actual functioning of Chisan-Chishō. In societies where production is important, consumption has been entrusted to women and children. When women have been involved in production, it has only been to assist men or to cover niches men ignore. In modern society, women have been driven to the periphery, but in postmodern society, the women's niche of Chisan-Chishō activities is being acknowledged and is attracting attention. In recent years, along with changes in policy,[11] the men of farm households are looking to Chisan-Chishō as a source of farm income, and direct sales markets in which men play central roles or that have become industrialized also have appeared. In the birthplaces of Slow Food and LOHAS, men are central, and these movements are becoming industrialized. In Japan, Slow Food and LOHAS are working together with the foreign movements and moving toward industrialization. They are to be considered labor and men's activities. As women's activities move from the periphery to the center in a male-centered society, they are converted into men's activities. Will women continue to be central in areas at which new agricultural policies are aiming, such as Chisan-Chishō, local brands, food education, and school lunch programs? Let us look at examples from Chisan-Chishō.

In the case of the Suito Market, the steering committee is controlled by the leaders of the Nōkyō women's club, and two women have been chosen to the cooperative's board of directors. The direct sales market is growing, but women still retain control of the actual right of management. The women's group is based in the Life Improvement movement, but because of a recent revision in policy, the post assigned to train supporters of the Chisan-Chishō activities has disappeared and the development of Chisan-Chishō by women is now in danger. Regarding Chisan-Chishō in the Okinawa fishing industry, the appearance of a new women's network gives hope for future growth, but along with the deterioration of the fishing cooperatives, the number of women members is decreasing, and strengthening the women's clubs will be an important issue.

It will be difficult for women to remain as the central figures in Chisan-Chishō activities. One of the best known examples of direct sales markets in Japan is Karari, a joint stock company in the town of Uchiko in Ehime Prefecture. Karari involves 410 farm households, with total sales in 2005 of 244,000,000 yen. It is the subject of many observation tours and has become one of the town's important industries. At first, women were the nucleus of the activities, but while the chairperson of the management council is a woman, most of the council members are men. The president of the company is a man formerly employed by the town office, the managers are

all men, and there is only one woman employee. The IT system, Chisan-Chishō, eco-certification, and so on were all ideas of the male employees, and decisions about the company's future course are made by men. Even in the case of Ms. Shiraishi, as the pig-raising business has grown, her husband and son have left other jobs to join the concern, further evidence that when there is a possibility of business opportunities, which is likely to lead to industrialization, men will become involved.

Gender as Seen in Safety and Security Activities and Questions for the Future

Activities related to food safety and security in Japan are tied to social reform and are pursuing alternative forms of consumption and development, with women in central roles. As the immature niche activities that carry forward social reform gain social recognition, are seen as business opportunities, and move toward industrialization, the activities themselves are globalized and, in a gendered society centered on men, become activities with men in central positions. This tendency can be seen not only in Slow Food and LOHAS but also in Chisan-Chishō. Where food is concerned, production, distribution, and consumption have become separated according to gender. Gender in the area of food does not allow women to take part in production and distribution and, as before, is moving in the direction of excluding women. A hint for overcoming this and securing women's position in food issues can surely be found in women's activities. Women need to secure a core position in the process of industrialization, and, while postmodernizing "industry" and maintaining the viewpoint of everyday life, they must aim for industrialization takes advantage of the special nature of women's groups, which is characterized by mutual support, collective leadership, and networking.

NOTES

1. For industrialism and post-industrialism, see Tachikawa (2005).
2. For alternatives to "modernization," see Nakamichi (1998).
3. For example, regarding the gourmet trends referred to as "recreational eating," see Ishidō (1988).
4. The main sources consulted regarding LOHAS were the LOHAS Club Homepage (http://www.lohasclub.org) and the homepage of Owada Junko, one of the movement's promoters (Owada, 2006; http://www.owadajunko.com).

5. Regarding antiglobalization and Slow Food, a good explanation is given in Furusawa (2003a,2003b). In Europe, particularly the United Kingdom, in addition to quantity, price, and quality, a fourth standard taken into consideration is ''food miles.'' Local food, which is low in food miles, is (1) good for the producer, (2) good for the consumer, (3) good for the local economy, and (4) good for the global environment (Adachi, 2003).

6. Events during this period are explained in detail in Taniguchi (2005).

7. The term ''Chisan-Chishō'' includes direct sales markets, direct sales corners in larger stores, school lunches, facilities providing local foods (restaurants, inns, etc.), and community gardens (Nōringyogyō Kin'yū Kōkō, 2006), and thus Chisan-Chishō is used as a general, inclusive term.

8. For a detailed example of the Rural Life Improvement Movement, see Ichida (2001), which describes the movement in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Hasumi, Suzuki, and Negishi (1986) give details of the agricultural products self-sufficiency movement. For the relationship of the self-sufficiency rate and traditional diet in rural communities, see Nakamichi (1990, 1991).

9. Suzuki (2003) contains a detailed description of the connection between mobile kitchens and the occupation army headquarters.

10. The activities of women in the Okinawa fishing industry are described in detail in Nakamichi (2005).

11. In the MAFF's *21seiki shinnōsei 2006* (New Agricultural Policies in the 21st Century 2006), Chisan-Chishō, local brands, and food education (including school lunches) are mentioned specifically (MAFF, 2007).

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CHAPTER 4

THE ROLE AND POSSIBILITIES FOR SUBSISTENCE PRODUCTION: REFLECTING ON THE EXPERIENCE IN JAPAN

Keiko Yoshino

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the meaning and expected role of subsistence production in contemporary Japan through an overview of national trends and a case study from the Ashigara region. With the expansion of the market economy, subsistence production has become marginalized in Japan. Women operated under the double burden of economic and subsistence activities, but with the increased importance of economic activities the social status of subsistence activities decreased. Nowadays, subsistence production is mainly carried out by elderly women. Owing to its decreased economic importance, food processing became ''gendered'' as a ''women's hobby'' rather than a household necessity. Resources and information are shared with neighbors, relatives, and friends, and function as an important medium for communication. Subsistence production supplies use value*, and through it, one can learn the limitation and abundance of nature, as well as the extent of our wants, which capitalism has excessively enlarged. Since individual profit is not sought, resources and information can be shared, strengthening social networks and social*

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security. Through inclusive participation of citizens regardless of occupation, sex, or age, one will rediscover the meaning of work and living together.

INTRODUCTION

Subsistence production has been a central activity for centuries. Subsistence production directly produces *use value* (Marx, 1992[1887]) and meets various everyday life needs. It has kept a diversity of products regardless the *exchange value*. Konaka (2008) categorized the value of resources into three spheres, ''source (value for the nature),'' ''subsistence'' and ''market resources,'' and he explained that the basic principle of ''subsistence'' is a ''blessing'' while that of ''market resources'' is ''scarcity.'' In subsistence production, crops well adapted to the locality are grown with low input of chemicals, and a deep understanding of the dynamics of the local ecosystem lies behind such skills. However, with the penetration of capitalism, subsistence production has decreased enormously even in less-developed regions of the world.

Adam Smith (1982[1776]) famously claimed the advantage of the division of labor and exchange in procuring the ''wealth of nations,'' whereas Marx (1857–1858, 1993) placed the ''modern bourgeois' mode of production as the most advanced form in the economic development of society. Subsistence production, as it were, has been supposed to go extinct.

Regarding the *exchange value*, the main value in a market economy, Tonoue (1986) argued that this merely demarcates the wealth moved between producers and consumers that does not necessarily enrich human life. Against the capitalists' view of separate and distinct position of market economy, Polanyi (1944) claimed that the human economy is embedded in social relationships, and he emphasizes the importance on house holding (production for one's own use) as a basic principle in addition to redistribution and reciprocity. Against the myth that the self-sufficiency oriented lifestyles of hunting and gathering societies were constantly faced with the twin dangers of hunger and famine, Sahlins (1972) revealed the affluence of their lifestyles through detailed examinations of consumption and leisure time.

With the expansion of capitalism, peasants were to be ''modernized'' to improve productivity, and in the Third World, Structural Adjustment Policy spurred the ''modernization'' (Brass, 2005; Bernstein, 1990). However, from

the 1990s, the focus of peasant studies shifted to cultural aspects such as eco-feminism, new social movements, etc. (Brass, 2005). From the eco-feminist perspective, Mies, Benholds-Thomsen, and Werlhof (1983) pointed out the nature of asymmetry of primitive accumulation within capitalism. They noted the exploitation by capitalism of women, small farmers, and colonies for the purpose of primitive accumulation, and they placed a "subsistence perspective" in opposition to capitalism. In new social movements, an alternative way of "development" is sought, and subsistence farming is also one of the important components both in Third World and industrialized countries (Smith, 2004; Williams, 2008).

From the viewpoint of sustainable resource management, the "Commons" is one of the important places for subsistence production attracting attention for its unique management system. In Japan, the "Commons" is known as *Iriai*. It allows equal access to members of the community for sustenance production though collective management system (Tabeta, 1990). It is also focused on the nature of pleasure in subsistence production, paying attention to "minor subsistence" activities, which are induced by the interaction between nature and humans (Matsui, 1998). In the context of the importance that subsistence production, this chapters investigates how ordinary rural people practice it and meanings that it embodied for them in Japan.

After briefly reviewing the transformation and the present situation of subsistence production in Japan, in the second section of the chapter I will explore the research question employing the case of the Ashigara region in the prefecture Kanagawa. In the next two sections, I will focus on the continuation and ceasing of food processing at the individual level, and efforts for its continuation. Finally, I will discuss the expected role and the possibilities for the continuation of subsistence production. I will conclude by stressing the high importance of subsistence production.

TRANSFORMATION OF SUBSISTENCE PRODUCTION IN JAPAN

In Japan, with the increase of cash income the share of subsistence production in the food supply has decreased continuously. At the national level, food self-sufficiency has fallen below 40% in 2006 (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF hereafter], 2008). The rural population was expected to provide a labor force for urban areas, and agricultural products were continuously exposed to international

competition. In 1961, the Agricultural Basic Law was enacted, and policy for the "formation of a primary production base" through "selective expansion" of production was promoted. Changes in food habits (e.g. westernization of diet, increase in eating out, and the use of processed foods) also accelerated the growth of imported foods.

At the individual farm household level, food self-sufficiency ratio is also decreasing. Although the market economy had been part of Japan long before World War II, this decline became apparent following the post-war rapid economic growth that began in 1950s. According to Farm Household Economy Survey (Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF], 1934–1996), the food self-sufficiency ratio (ratio of supply in kind) in farm households was calculated to be 68% in 1955. The rate decreased continuously dropping to below 50% in 1965, and reaching 13% in 1995. In terms of the cash amount, supply in kind increased until 1985, and taking price rise into consideration, the decrease in self-sufficiency ratio was mainly attributed to the increase in total food expense until 1985. Thereafter (in particular after 1990, a critical period of shifting toward liberalization of trade), the real supply decreased. The production of processed food also continuously decreased. With regard to Japanese traditional and representative preserves, *miso* (soybean paste) and *takuan* (dried radish pickles), the self-sufficiency ratio in farm households fell from 89% and 97%, respectively, in 1960 to 34% for both in 1995.

Even farm households came to purchase vegetables from supermarkets. Farm women reacted to this situation and provided impetus for the creation of the "self-sufficiency movement" in the 1970s (Hasumi, Negishi, & Suzuki, 1986). This was also the time when the adjustment of rice production, which had been fully supported by the government, began impacting farmers' income. The "self-sufficiency movement" was regarded as a frugal strategy to reduce household cash expenses. However, with rising health concerns on the use of agrichemicals, the need for safe foods was increasing among consumers, and chemical-free products by farm households primarily for their family use appealed to them. Thus the "self-sufficiency movement" developed in selling surplus products initiated by women farmers.

Nowadays, "farmers' markets" have grown in both number and scale. There are more than 10,000 farmers' markets in Japan (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF], 2004), and markets with annual sales of more than 100 million yen are not exceptional. *Chisan-chisho* (use local) is a recent movement attracting attention, and is expected to activate rural communities and economies. Within broad movements of *Chisan-chisho*, farmers' markets have been the leading and chief activities.

Finding a place to sell products in small amount or irregular ones, it has been noted that women and elderly farmers actively experimented in growing diverse crops, and additionally began to utilize wasted fields. However, it has also been noted that products that used to be shared among neighbors came to be sold, and that the use of agrochemicals or chemical ingredients increased corresponding with an up-scale in production. Early customers trusted the products for their *use value*, but with the expansion of markets, consumers' interest shifted to low-price: the *exchange value* (Yoshino et al., 2001). Here lies the contradiction between "subsistence production" and "sale."

Different movements, however, are also occurring among nonfarm or urban residents. A significant number of people are getting interested in producing their own food in various ways, such as kitchen gardening, weekend farming, joint cultivation, and engaging fully in agriculture. Such movements were observed earlier among elder generations after retirement, attracting the attention since of the mid-1990s (Rural Culture Association, 1998). These days, younger generations being tired of restless, materialistic, and artificial urban life are also getting interested.

RESEARCH AREA AND METHODS

The Ashigara region in Kanagawa prefecture is a suburban area approximately 80 km from Tokyo, including the seashore to the south and mountains to the north. Among 130,000 households settled in this region, farm households occupied 5% (almost identical with the national average) in 2005 (Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF], 2009). There are several farmers' markets operated by various sectors such as farmers' cooperatives, local government, and private owners. According to the hearing from agricultural extension personnel of Kanagawa prefecture, large factories were constructed here before World War II endowed with good water quality, and taking advantage of the closeness to Tokyo, farmers initiated cultivation of cash crops such as fruits. Thus people here had opportunities for cash income from the early part of the twentieth century. Being located in a suburban area, the land has significant value as real estate. Thus owners would not easily rent farm land out for cultivation even when it is fallow fearing for being limited free disposal, which resulted in the hindrance of effective utilization of the land. Food self-sufficiency ratio in farm households was calculated to be around 9% in 1995 (MAFF 1934–1996), which is below the national average. The Ashigara region

shows the typical influence of the penetration of capitalism experienced in Japan.

Four kinds of surveys were conducted as follows:

(1) A questionnaire survey on subsistence farming and food processing in farm households was administered to 218 female members[1] of the Ashigara-Seisho Farmers' Cooperative, which covers the whole Ashigara region ("Coop survey" hereafter) in June 2008. Among 213 respondents (98%), 74% were over 60 years old, and 20% were over 70 years old.
(2) Interviews were conducted with 12 women who had received awards in recognition of their food processing skills from the Cooperative ("interview" hereafter) from 2004 to 2008. All the informants were over 60 years of age, and three were from nonfarm households.
(3) Participatory observations on activities for continuation of traditional food processing skills, and hearings from people concerned were conducted since 2004.
(4) A questionnaire survey was administered to 124 nonfarm households [customers of an organic farming group, named *Ashigara Noh-no kai*, ("customers" hereafter)] in November, 2005 (100 respondents, 84%).

PRESENT STATUS OF SUBSISTENCE PRODUCTION IN ASHIGARA REGION

According to the Coop survey, 85% of respondents grew some kind of crops, and 91% processed agricultural products. Eighty three percent of respondents were the sole producer among family members. The most-produced processed foods were pickled plum (74%), and butterbur preserve (67%). *Miso* (soybean paste), and *Takuan* (dried radish pickles), the representative and traditional preserves as aforementioned, were the two least produced items (17% for *miso* and 31% for *takuan*) among 11 basic processed foods in Ashigara region. Regarding materials for processing, plum (one of the major crops in this region) was produced by 41% of respondents, radish by 64%, whereas soybean was produced by only 11% of respondents. Soybean was one of the first crops to be exposed to international competition after World War II, and its production decreased drastically.

Only 45% of respondents sold crops, and 11% sold processed food. With various off-farm income opportunities, full-time farm households are quite few, and farming for personal consumption may have remained as the main system of agricultural production here. Among customers, 37% of

respondents grew vegetables or fruit trees, and 55% processed agricultural products. Jams and juice were the most-produced items (33%), followed by pickled plum (28%).

The case of Ms. Y illustrates the typical mode of production and consumption in this region. She was born in 1932 and lives with her husband, son, daughter-in-law, and two granddaughters. Her husband and son are public employees, and Ms. Y has been the main support for farming while male members worked at weekends. On 700 m^2 of paddy fields, she grows two varieties of rice, and potatoes and broad beans consecutively. In 2007, 800 m^2 of paddy fields was returned from a tenant, and she started to grow soybeans. On 150 m^2 of upland field, she grows about 70 kinds of vegetables. Several varieties of each crop are grown according to expected usage. She gathers more than 20 kinds of seeds by herself, and some seeds and seedlings are shared among friends too. On the corners of her fields, crops of previous harvest are also growing spontaneously. For enjoyment of children, there are more than 15 kinds of fruit trees. Harvest season is year-round, and she is always busy. One crop can be harvested at different stages and used for various recipes. For example, when ginger is young and thin, it is eaten raw. Later, it is pickled, and when fully grown, it is sliced, and boiled with soy sauce as a side dish, or cooked as a sweet with sugar.

She makes no less than 40 kinds of processed foods. She endeavors to make full use of the harvest because she does not want to waste the each plant's life, and one day, she sliced skins of *yuzu* orange all day. Although she grows various crops and makes processed foods, she sells only a portion of the rice and soybean through cooperative, and *miso* at a farmers' market. Almost the entire products are consumed by the family or shared among relatives, neighbors and friends. Sometimes she shares too much to save any for her own family's use. For every meal, various handmade products are served, but her daughter-in-law never helps with the production, although her granddaughter sometimes does. Now, the granddaughter can make some of products quite well, and she feels that her daughter-in-law appreciates the skill, but she is unsure who will continue her domestic food processing once she becomes physically unable to do so.

REASONS WHY PEOPLE ARE ABANDONING OR CONTINUING FOOD PROCESSING

Presently, the main supporters for subsistence production are elderly women in the Ashigara region. According to the Coop survey, 76% of respondents

answered that they would like to pass on food processing skills to the next generation, but only 27% agreed that the younger generation would take over. This raises the question of how and on what meaning these skills will be transferred to future generations.

When there was no place to purchase, all food was necessarily processed by individual household or community. If a food required manual labor, processing involved all family members. However, to get the necessary food with minimum labor, labor-saving skills like ''rolling pickles'' were invented (a bottle containing shallots and sauce is left on the yard, and kicked by family members when passing by. Moved at intervals, pickles do not get rotten, and the sauce soaks into the pickles.). Following the period of rapid economic growth, much food processing (especially labor intensive ones) has been replaced by purchasing alternative goods or abandoned altogether.

In reality, women had strong need for an alternative. ''I was too busy''; ''I was relieved when processed foods became available at shops.'' Such women's voices show the extreme busyness of women doubly burdened with cash crop cultivation and subsistence production (actually triple burdened adding reproductive activities). With the degradation of subsistence production among family members, they could not help but to abandon them.

According to Coop survey, the main reasons for abandoning food processing (M.A.) were ''Family members do not like to eat'' (40%), ''No longer gathering at home'' (30%), ''Production of materials stopped'' (28%), ''Death of family member in charge'' (22%), ''No time to produce,'' and ''Purchased ones taste better'' (16% each). Socio-economic changes such as the availability of processed foods at shops; a general reduction in community activities performed in the individual home, in which homemade foods were expected; and the gradual passing on of skilled elders within the household, taking with them irreplaceable knowledge and skills had a large influence, and changes in the consumption patterns and taste of younger generations also influenced. Moreover, availability of own materials was affected by the expansion of cash crops cultivation, and the ''modernization'' of housing accompanied the abolishment of facilities necessary for food processing like preserving rooms, large ovens, and earthen floors (12% of respondents).

However, as to reasons why continue processing foods (M.A), ''Quality'' (flavor, safety, and nutrition) was selected most (94%), followed by ''Custom (used to make)'' (79%), ''Enjoy seasonality'' (71%), ''For family enjoyment'' (63%), and ''Personal enjoyment'' (57%). ''Necessity'' was also selected by half of the respondents (51%), but it is no longer a dominant incentive. Concerning *miso* processing, the main reason for continuing was

also "Quality" (11 respondents), followed by "Necessity" (5) among 12 respondents.

From interviews, it was understood that processing food skills were not necessarily handed over from predecessors. Five of the 10 women, who married to their present household in the 1950s or 1960s, answered that none or only a few items were processed when they married in. Many of them started processing food for their own enjoyment. Friends were important sources of information on new recipes, and by tasting friends' handmade foods at gatherings, interest aroused. Among elderly women, the custom of bringing homemade foods and exchanging them at gatherings remains strong, and they themselves enjoy it. The age of most of those who process food, typically in their 1960s and 1970s, is also significant, since they generally experienced or observed the processing of basic foods from their childhood, and thus resuming the practice at a later date may not have been so difficult.

Food processing is marked as "personal enjoyment" now by women producers, and it is noticeable that most of women work alone. Most of the informants for the interviews did this work at night alone, after finishing the entire "regular household" work, and after other family members have gone to sleep. As trivial work with no commercial value in the old days, and as a hobby these days, food processing has been consistently confined to elderly women in individual households.

NEW MOVEMENTS FOR SUBSISTENCE PRODUCTION

There are efforts to enhance the interest in food processing of local people in the Ashigara region. In this subsection, I will examine such efforts focusing on *miso* (soybean paste) processing, the primary seasoning for daily food but the self-sufficiency had decreased significantly in households.

Typical activity to encourage *miso* processing is to hold various cooking classes for local people. For example, one farmers' market holds "*miso* processing trials" every winter. Nearby residents participate, but most of the participants are women (there was only one man among 24 participants in 2008) and rather aged.[2] Another group started to teach *miso* processing to students in local primary school as an experience.

Miso processing starts from *koji*[3] fermentation, which takes about a week. Then soybean is boiled and crushed, and mixed well with fermented *koji*.

Finally, mixed *koji* and soybean is put in a container and left in the cool place for about a half year. Among the processing stages for *miso*, the fermentation of *koji* requires skill and attentive care most. It used to be said that those in charge of *koji* fermentation – usually women – could not even attend a funeral because they had to keep *koji* at certain temperature. This was one of the main reasons for abandoning *miso* processing at home. In both aforementioned activities, participants experienced only the final stage, mixing *koji* with soybean and putting it in containers.

With regard to dealing with the workload of food processing, two approaches are observed. One approach tries to lessen the workload by making use of up-to-date machines or outsourcing the most burdensome processes. For *miso* processing, *koji* fermentation used to be outsourced from early times at individual level. There is one processing group that introduced an advanced fermentation machine and a large steamer at the community center to save time and eliminate the difficult process, in order to expand *miso* producing party in the area. However, another approach makes much of each process itself. *Ashigara Noh-no kai* (*Noh-no kai* hereafter) is the voluntary group organized by newly engaged farmers and nonfarmers, which performs organic farming utilizing local resources for the environmental soundness. In *Noh-no kai*, various ways of participation in agriculture are sought and provided such as helping individuals become independent farmers if they desire to, finding land for cultivation and collective production of basic food crops such as rice, soybean, and tea. Participants of *Noh-no kai*'s activities positively enjoy production processes and rural life respecting the wisdom of nature and local knowledge.

Miso-no kai (an activity for processing handmade *miso*) is one of their main activities starting with cultivation of soybean on rented fallow field. Each participant is handed a handful of soybean seeds to be grown to seedlings at individual house. The seedlings are then brought, and transplanted collectively. Occasional weeding and harvesting are done collectively, too. Each work is logically allocated to individual or collective one to ease and even the burden of participants. As for *miso* processing, participants start from fermenting *koji*, the most burdensome part as aforementioned, with advices and helps from other experienced participants. In such collective environment, the burdensome work turns to a mutual enjoyment.

Participants vary in their age, sex, or occupation, and it is often observed that entire family members participate including small children half playing with the surrounding nature. Participants' number increases every year. Fifty group participants are recruited per year, and it is fully booked before

the deadline. Up to 2007, more than 120 groups participated in *miso-no kai*.[4] At the gathering for last stage (mixing *koji* with boiled soybean), each participant exhibits previous year's *miso* and dishes using *miso*. They taste each other's products, and exchange recipes. Such scenes remind us of the rural elderly women's tasting and exchange of information at gatherings. The difference is that at the *miso-no kai*, young men and children are also participating. The approaches of *Noh-no kai* – fully experiencing the entire processes with joy and mutual help – may attract the minds of the younger generations.

MEANING OF SUBSISTENCE PRODUCTION FOR JAPAN AND INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES TODAY

In the Ashigara region, food processing had been abandoned due to the penetration of capitalism and modernization (westernization) of lifestyle. Although there is a problem for the transfer of processing skills from the older to young women within families, new movements are emerging beyond individual family. Subsistence production by rural women in Ashigara region can be considered as the remainder of pre-capitalist activities, but it also implicates contemporary aspects such as (1) individual woman selected the activities by themselves re-evaluating its meaning by own criteria and (2) in regions, rural women's subsistence production has evolved as *Chisan-chisho* which seeks for alternative marketing system.

In contemporary Japan, the simple fact is that most citizens can live without their own supply of food stuffs, and even without cooking in urban area. Subsistence production is not indispensable, and itself has become "minor subsistence" now. Then, what meanings can subsistence production have?

Concerning the production aspect, processing food alone at night may not be acceptable to the younger generation. The function of handmade food as a tool for communication has lower importance among the younger generation who are accustomed to eating out. With the difficulty in processing food, it is doubtful whether easing this burden through outsourcing or mechanization can revitalize subsistence production if food processing remains a low priority in the lives of the younger generation. On consumption aspect, with the increasing distrust toward purchased food, the demand for reliable handmade foods is growing, and it may encourage subsistence production. For the consumers, *Chisan-chisho* is one of the

major options to meet such needs, but it entails the contradiction of the ''marketing of subsistence production,'' so long as the consumers' attitude does not change.

A fair evaluation of subsistence production is required, and there are two different approaches. One is to calculate the assumed economic contribution. For example, at the time when the ''self-sufficiency movement'' was being promoted, a particular amount was targeted to save by trying to produce an equivalent economic value in foodstuffs. Calculation of the value of unpaid work has also been one of the critical issues for feminists (Waring, 1988). Another approach is to evaluate the meaning of subsistence production itself like *miso-no kai*. They enjoy the process of production itself and also the collective activities, which attracts many nonfarmers of diverse characteristics (age, sex, marital status, occupation, and so forth).

Noh-no kai's activities can be considered as one of the new social movements. The main discussions on the new social movements are centered around ethical aspects such as resistance, social ethics, and ''coherence'' between thinking and acting (Brass, 2005; Nihei, 2006; Williams, 2008). However, what *Noh-no kai* puts importance in and is missing in major discussions is ''delight'' of interactions with nature as well as with people, which is one of the determinants of quality of life. There is indeed the sense of ''blessing'' as Konaka (2008) defined in subsistence production.

In Japan and other industrialized countries as well, most people, in particular the younger generations, do not have a chance to experience farming, or do not know where and how food is produced. Such ignorance and divergence from the reality of agricultural production lead many to consider agricultural products like industrial products, as if the production can be controlled merely by will. Attitudes of consumers seeking cheaper foods have resulted in more and more increases in imported food, which have caused further exploitation of resources overseas and endangered the environment. New indicators such as ecological footprints, food miles, and virtual water clearly demonstrate the existence and long-term consequences of these problems.

In such a time, the significance of subsistence production is increasing. It supplies the *use value*, and the production itself has direct meaning. Moreover, it can provide direct opportunities for interaction with nature, without utilizing a calculus of profitability. Through subsistence production, we can learn the limitations and abundance of nature, as well as the extents of our wants, which capitalism has enlarged to such a rapacious extent as to threaten our continued life as a species. Knowing the severity of nature promoted an appreciation of the lives of individual crops and a delight of

the harvest, and knowing their limitations, our ancestors cherished their products and developed skills to make full use of them.

Subsistence production does not seek individual profit, and thus the resources, products and information can be shared, strengthening social networks and social security. This value of reciprocity that subsistence production has should be re-evaluated as well. Through inclusive participation of people, regardless of gender, age, or they are professional farmers or not;[5] we have the potential to rediscover the meaning of work and living together as a family or in a community.

NOTES

1. Representatives of 28 branches of the Cooperative who participated in the annual meeting of the Cooperative held in May, 2008. Total membership of the cooperative is 1,233 in 2008.
2. Information from person-in-charge of the market at the town office.
3. *Koji* is made by breeding a particular kind of mould (*Aspergillus oryzae*) on steamed rice, wheat, or bean.
4. Information from the leader of *miso-no kai*.
5. Regarding real participation in subsistence production, the principle of the "Commons" needs to be applied, and wasted land needs to be open to those who would like to cultivate and are ready to undertake management.

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CHAPTER 5

THE GLOBALIZATION OF THE POULTRY INDUSTRY: TYSON FOODS AND PILGRIM'S PRIDE IN MEXICO

Douglas H. Constance, Francisco Martinez and Gilberto Aboites

ABSTRACT

The organizational structure of the modern poultry industry that developed in the US South has been advanced as the future model of agriculture and agro-industrial globalization. This ''Southern Model'' characterized by asymmetrical power relationships between the integrating firms and production growers and reliance on informal labor patterns in processing is being diffused to other countries. Research on the diffusion of this model deserves special attention from those concerned with the socio-economic implications of the globalization of the agri-food system. This chapter first provides an overview of the industrialization of the poultry industry in the United States, then documents the diffusion of this model globally and in Mexico through the activities of Tyson Foods, Inc. and Pilgrim's Pride, Inc. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the relationship between neoliberal restructuring in Mexico and the globalization of the poultry industry.

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INTRODUCTION

The organizational structure of the modern poultry industry that developed in the US South during the 1950s and 1960s has been advanced as the future model of agriculture and agro-industrial globalization (Boyd & Watts, 1997; Breimyer, 1965; Morrison, 1998; Vogeler, 1981). This "Southern Model" (Constance, 2008) characterized by asymmetrical power relationships between the integrating firms and production growers and reliance on informal labor patterns in processing is being diffused to other countries (Burch, 2005; Griffith, 1995; Heffernan, 2000; Vocke, 1991). Research on the diffusion of the Southern Model deserves special attention from those concerned with the socio-economic implications of the globalization of the agri-food system (Bonanno & Constance, 2008). This chapter first provides an overview of the industrialization of the poultry industry in the United States, then documents the diffusion of this model globally and in Mexico through the activities of Tyson Foods, Inc. and Pilgrim's Pride, Inc.

THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE POULTRY INDUSTRY

The modern poultry industry emerges in the 1920s in the northeast region of the United States known as the DelMarVa Peninsula (Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia) (Brown, 1989). Broilers, the young male chickens, were a by-product of egg production. The females were kept as laying hens while the males were eaten. Some egg producers realized more money could be made growing broilers than eggs (Williams, 1998). By 1925 some 50,000 broilers were raised in the area (Gordy, 1974). Today, broilers refer to male or female chickens raised for meat products.

As the local fishing and fresh vegetable industries declined, canneries were converted into poultry processing plants and local growers built more chicken houses. By the mid-1940s about 300,000 birds per day were processed and destined for Northeastern markets (Williams, 1998). In 1930, a New Jersey agricultural scientist commented that the broiler industry "lends itself rather easily to factory methods of production" (Gordy, 1974, p. 384).

This early broiler production system was comprised of independent breeders, hatcheries, farmers, feed dealers, slaughterhouses, truckers, and merchants who controlled the distribution networks to metropolitan

markets. Broilers were raised by independent growers who paid cash for the chicks and feed, and then sold them on the open market (Gordon, 1996). In 1935, the DelMarVA Region accounted for two-thirds of total US broiler production (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], 1967).

Several factors supported the modernization of the industry. The synthesis of vitamin D in 1926 allowed indoor confinement and the National Poultry Improvement Plan in 1933 provided research support (Gordon, 1996; Strausberg, 1995). During World War II the entire production of the DelMarVa region was under contract for federal food programs. Domestic demand was met by the emerging broiler growing areas in the US South (Bugos, 1992; Frazier, 1995; Williams, 1998). Research on nutrition, disease control, and confinement housing combined with rural electrification supported improvements in environmental control and labor productivity in confinement operations (USDA, 1967). Together, these technological innovations and government programs facilitated a continued increase in productivity.

In 1950, the broiler industry was still characterized by an independent system of farmers growing broilers and small firms providing input, processing, and marketing services. By 1960, the broiler industry was under the control of vertically integrated firms and had adopted an industrial model (Heffernan, 1984). This shift to a new organization model, a tightly coordinated commodity system (Friedland, 1984), was accompanied by a spatial concentration in the South.

After World War II the location and structure of the broiler industry shifted (Reimund, Martin, & Moore, 1981). After numerous cotton crop failures, many Southern farmers saw contract broiler production as similar to sharecropping and embraced it as a profitable supplement to their farming operations (Martin & Zerring, 1997). Underemployed farm labor, a favorable climate, less unionization, and subsidized feed prices contributed to South's advantage (Breimyer, 1965). By the early 1970s the South accounted for approximately 90% of the total broiler output; in 2002, the South still accounted for approximately 75% of broiler production (Lasley, 1983).

At the center of the Southern Model was the contract grow-out arrangement. For feed dealers, broilers were a lucrative way to add value to their feed, which they could buy at discounted prices due to government grain subsidy programs. What began as informal contracts between feed dealers and local farmers in the 1940s became formalized in the 1950s (Gordy, 1974). The formal contracts ensured a minimum return to the growers, whereas retaining the feed dealers' ownership of the birds. This

shift to formal contracts "marked the evolution from a simple credit arrangement to a tightly interlinked credit, input, and labour contract" (Boyd & Watts, 1997, p. 200).

The formal contracts were an integral component of the larger organizational structure of vertical integration. As the feed dealers continually found themselves in cost-price squeezes due to boom and bust commodity cycles, some integrated through the purchase of hatcheries and processing plants. The integrated firm became the industry norm and accounted for 90% of the production by the 1960s (Heffernan, 1984). Vertical integration forced out many smaller companies as firms such as Pillsbury and Ralston Purina dominated the industry by the 1960s (Strausberg, 1995; Striffler, 2005). Because of the volatile broiler commodity cycles, several of the large firms divest their poultry operations, which were bought up by regional firms such as Tyson Foods and Pilgrim's Pride as they developed their vertically integrated systems (Marion & Arthur, 1973).

Vertical integration supported the rationalization of the broiler industry as all aspects of production were under the control of one company. Production advancements increased the average broiler live weight while decreasing the maturation period (Watts & Kennett, 1995). As it became possible to grow larger numbers of broilers in less time, the number of farms growing more than 100,000 birds rose rapidly from 0 in 1954 to approximately 30% in 1974 to almost 100% by the mid-1990s (Reimund et al., 1981; Welsh, 1996). About 90% of production was organized on formal contracts and 10% from company-owned facilities (Welsh, 1997). With the development of mechanized processing, these efficiencies greatly reduced costs and moved broilers from a farm sideline to an agribusiness (Gordon, 1996).

The southern post-war political economy "provided the social and institutional context for the contract-based model of integration" that became the industry standard (Boyd & Watts, 1997, p. 194). The dissolution of the southern farm tenancy system, called the "southern enclosure," enhanced the supply of cheap labor (Daniels, 1981). The integrators adopted more efficient assembly line techniques (line speed and automation) in the slaughter plants that took advantage of the labor surplus, primarily women, and older children (Fite, 1984). The ideologies of dominance such as Evangelical Christianity, racism, white supremacy, and anti-union attitudes kept the workers docile and loyal to the plants. The poultry processing plant magnified "the traditional authority of men over women, whites over blacks, and primary over supplementary wage earners" (Griffith, 1995,

p. 138). Line speed increases, high turnover rates, and stagnant real wages created a "work regime of unimaginable time-discipline … and stress-related hazards and little recourse to collective bargaining" (Boyd & Watts, 1997, p. 214; Griffith, 1995).

Integrated broiler production also required a specialized spatial pattern that matched the land tenure system in the South. The grow-out barns needed to be near the feed mills and the processing plant (Kim & Curry, 1993). These spatial requirements combined with biological risks associated with confinement production (disease risks due to monoculture) combined with the preference for contracts (as opposed to tying up capital in company-owned facilities) required a special kind of farm structure that existed in the US South in the form of small, marginal farms in proximity (Boyd & Watts, 1997).

In the 1980s, the processing plant workforce shifted from poor Whites and Blacks to Hispanic, and some Asian, immigrants (Griffith, 1995). Hispanics increased from a small proportion of the workforce in 1988 to approximately 75% in 2005, with most of the remainder from Southeast Asia and Micronesia. The mostly male workers who migrated first often sent for their families who also got jobs in the plants. The globalization of the economy leads to the internationalization of workers in gathering places such as poultry plants where they often encounter worker safety and human rights difficulties (Human Rights Watch, 2005; Striffler, 2005).

This Southern Model of labor use "laid the social and cultural foundation on which new recruitment strategies, new labor-management relations, and other practices used with the growing immigrants have been erected" (Griffith, 1995, p. 145). This system developed in the US South around "agro-industrial districts" is the model for the low-cost production systems that are the "social basis of competitiveness in a now global industry" (Boyd & Watts, 1997, p. 207).

FROM VERTICAL INTEGRATION TO HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION

Although vertical integration rationalized the broiler industry, the crucial component of the system was the production contract as the formal link between the broiler grower and the processing firm. Most contracts stipulated that the integrating firm provided the farmer with day-old chicks,

feed, medication, and technical support and the farmer provided the grow-out buildings, labor, and utilities. Without contracts "it is doubtful the new entrants, primarily feed manufacturers and dealers, would have considered broiler production very attractive" (Reimund et al., 1981, p. 8). Although the contract system reduced some risks to the grower related to marketing, the growers were vulnerable because the company did not have to renew the contract (Heffernan, 1984; Stull & Broadway, 2004). The contracts were typically batch to batch whereas the farmers incurred long-term debt to build the grow-out barns. The contracts allowed coordination production but did not require the company to either tie up capital in land and buildings or formally employ the farmers, with associated guarantees of wages and benefits. The firms have control but avoid responsibility and liability (Constance, 2001, 2008).

The contract model of broiler production is an example of how industrial agriculture can control production practices without formal ownership. Farmers become "propertied laborers" who compromise autonomy for security (Davis, 1980) or "semi-autonomous employees" who hold title to the land but have lost decision-making control (Mooney, 1983). The high-cost and single-purpose poultry barns create a debt-dependency relationship as integrators can use the threat of contract termination to force growers to adopt new technological improvements, and thereby perpetuate the debt (Heffernan, 1984; Wilson, 1986). Contract growers are sharecroppers, more like an agricultural worker than a family farmer (Roy, 1972; Vogeler, 1981). Called "serfs on the land" (Breimyer, 1965), some growers have reported that they are the "only slaves left in the country" (Wellford, 1972). "Growers have little recourse in disputes with integrators, and stories of abuse and intimidation are commonplace" (Stull & Broadway, 2004, p. 50). Integrators have market power over contract producers (Brandow, 1969; Heffernan, 2000; Morrison, 1998).

In conjunction with vertical integration, horizontal integration in the broiler industry increased steadily through mergers and acquisitions. By the early 1980s, approximately 95% of broilers were under contract with less than 40 companies (Heffernan, 1984). Economic concentration increased from the largest 19 firms with 30% of production in 1960 to the top 8 with 30% in 1975 to the top 4 with approximately 50% of production in 1998 (Heffernan, 2000; Reimund et al., 1981). By 2003, the largest 4 firms accounted for 58% of production (*Tyson Foods, Inc.*, 2004–2005). Consolidation often resulted in regional monopolies and an oligopolistic market structure (Breimyer, 1965; Heffernan, 2000; Rogers, 1963).

GLOBALIZATION OF THE POULTRY INDUSTRY

As economic concentration increased at the national level, poultry firms were expanding operations globally (Heffernan, 2000; Heffernan & Constance, 1994). In the 1980s and 1990s US-based firms such as Tyson had operations in Mexico and Canada; ConAgra was in Puerto Rico, Portugal, Spain, and the USSR; and Cargill in Argentina, England, Brazil, and Thailand. Japanese-based firms such as Mitsui and Co., C. Itoh, Mitsubishi, Ajinomoto, and Nippon Meat Packers had operations in Malaysia, Mexico, Brazil, and Thailand. The Italian-based Ferruzzi had operations in France, The Netherlands, Taiwan, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Thailand, Yugoslavia, the United States, the USSR, Hungary, Poland, and China. By the early 1990s, the dominant agribusiness transnational corporations had created a global poultry agri-food complex that linked the most favorable areas of production to profitable consumer markets (Constance & Heffernan, 1991).

In 1988, Tyson began its international expansion in poultry with a joint-venture with Trasgo de Mexico. In 2001, it expanded into Panama and entered the Chinese market through a joint-venture with Zhucheng Da Long Enterprises, Co. Ltd. By 2003, Tyson had joint-venture poultry operations in Argentina, Brazil, China, Denmark, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Panama, Philippines, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela (*Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2005a, 2005b). According to Greg Huett, president of Tyson International, "These efforts move us quickly forward along our strategy of producing quality products for our worldwide customers from cost effective global locations" (*Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2005b, p. 2).

In 2008, Tyson enlarged its Chinese presence through a joint venture with vertically integrated Shangdong Tyson Hinchang Foods Company and Jinghai Poultry Industry Group, Inc. In 2008, Tyson entered the Indian market through a joint venture Godrej Foods and bought three Brazilian broiler companies (Macedo, Avita, and Frangobras) to supply domestic demand and exports to Asia and Europe. Brazil leads the world in chicken exports (Peer, 2008; *Tyson Foods, Inc.,* 2009; World Poultry, 2009).

In 2001, Tyson bought IBP, the world's largest beef and pork processor, for $3.2 Billion and became the largest meat-processing company in the world with operations in the United States, China, Russia, and Ireland (Hoovers, 2006; *Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2009). It employed approximately 52,000 people globally had sales of $16.9 Billion in 2000 (Reuters, 2001). In 2001, Tyson/IBP processed 42M/broilers/wk, 203K/cattle/wk, and 337K/hogs/wk

in 145 processing plants. Its poultry division included 17 feed mills, 7,000 contract poultry growers, and 41 company-owned chicken growing operations (*Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2003). CEO John Tyson commented, ''By combining the No.1 poultry company with the leader in beef and pork, we are creating a unique company that has a major global presence'' (Reuters, 2001, p. 1). The IBP/Tyson merger created a company with 30% of the beef market, 33% the chicken market, and 18% the pork market (Meat Industry, 2001). Tyson/IBP accounted for approximately 30% of the 400,000 workers in the meat and poultry processing industry (MigrationInt, 2003). In 2007, Tyson expanded its beef operations with a joint venture with Cactus Feeders and Cresud, the leading agribusiness in Argentina, that created the first vertically integrated beef operation in Argentina (Reuters, 2007; *Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2007).

TYSON IN MEXICO

In 1986, Tyson Foods formed a joint venture with Trasgo de Mexico by acquiring an 18% share of the company (*Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2009; Villarreal, Flores, & Acevedo, 1998). In 1973, Trasgo owned by the Villegas family in the state of Durango, was the largest poultry complex in Latin America. In 1984, Trasgo took advantage of government rural development programs and pioneered the system of broiler contracts in Mexico, called ''aparcerias.'' The Mexican Government development bank, FIRA, provided guaranteed loans to ejidatarios to construct grow-out facilities that were linked to private investors like Trasgo. Trasgo supplied the day old chick, feed, medicines, in addition to loans, technical, and accounting assistance, which were subsidized by FIRA. The contract grower provided the modern facilities, labor, utilities, and bedding. At the end of the flock, the value of the broilers was divided between Trasgo and the grower based on the amount of kilograms produced (Villarreal et al., 1998).

In 1989, Tyson formed the ''Citra'' joint venture with C. Itoh of Japan and Empresas Provemex (a Trasgo subsidiary) to market deboned poultry products in Japan and Asia (Smith, 1992; Tuten & Amey, 1989; Villegas, 2010). Citra processed and marketed broilers grown in Mexico for the expanding Mexican market and further-processed broiler meat imported from Tyson's facilities in the United States and destined for Asian markets at a maquiladora plant under Tyson's name (Tuten & Amey, 1989). As part of this arrangement, Tyson removed the breast meat in Arkansas for the fast

food industry and shipped the leg quarters to Mexico to be deboned by hand at much lower labor costs. The marinated meat was shipped to Asia as "yakatori sticks," a fast food item. Rafael Villegas, President of Trasgo de Mexico, explained his company's position in the transnational joint-venture. "We are in a global economy. We index our costs to the international markets (and we) have an advantage of less expensive labor. That allows us to compete against American producers in the deboned market" (Tuten & Amey, 1989, p. 32).

A partnership with a major broiler company like Trasgo presented Tyson with a low-cost, low-risk means of learning the Mexican marketplace. Food industry analysts reported that "the partnership represents a major maneuver for Tyson Foods, which can now tap the expanding Mexican poultry sector to grow its own poultry business easier and faster than in the domestic U.S. market" (Smith, 1992, p. 3). In light of the very competitive and slowing broiler market in the United States, "this situation makes a country like Mexico especially attractive, not only because of the expanding demand for chicken there, but because of Mexico's status as a link to Latin America, South America, and the Pacific Rim" (Smith, 1992, p. 26).

In 1994, Tyson acquired majority interest in Trasgo de Mexico and changed the company name to Tyson de Mexico. In 2001, it bought out 95% of the remaining interest and purchased the vertically integrated broiler assets of Nochistongo S.P.R. de R.L. In 2003, Tyson de Mexico was the largest producer of value-added chicken for both retail and foodservice in Mexico and was expanding into other areas of Latin America and Asia (*Tyson Foods, Inc*., 2005a, 2005b).

Mexico is Tyson's prototype for global expansion where 15 years after initial joint-venture investment, it is the third-largest chicken producer and largest producer of value-added products. Over the period of 1997–2008, the number of Trasgo/Tyson contract growers increased from 48 to 121 and the number of contract grow-out facilities increased from 138 to 730 with 71% of production from ejidatario aparceros and 29% by small private producers. During the same period, the number of broilers produced increased from 35.8M to 189.3M (Mirande, 2008).

Supplied by a sparkling new plant outside of Torreon, in 2004 the well-stocked supermarket Sorianas in Torreon was selling $100,000 a month in Tyson chicken to middle-class Mexicans. At a wholesale market in Torreon, shopkeepers from the nearby mountains drive down to buy gizzards and chicken wings at Tyson's local stall. At the Torreon processing plant workers stack layers of "New York dressed … fat yellow hens" and "8 inches of crushed ice" into 32 ft. containers on truck beds. When the

container is full, the trucks start the 18 h trip to Mexico City where Tyson sells the birds from the back of the trucks (Morais, 2004).

"Tyson followed its American customers south – such as WalMart, Burger King and Kentucky Fried Chicken – and doesn't shy away from taking on Industrias Bachoco, the local chicken plant" and largest poultry producer in Mexico (Morais, 2004, p. 6). In Mexico, Tyson prospers with thin overhead and fat margins. According to managing director, Jose Antonio Valdes, "Tyson de Mexico's return on invested capital is 30% higher than in the U.S. partly because the company sometimes uses older U.S. plant equipment; Mexican factory workers earn about $7,000 a year, compared with $34,000 or so for their U.S. counterparts" (Morais, 2004, p. 6).

At the other end of vertically integrated production system is contract grower Jose Antonio Flores raising broilers near Torreon. Educated in the United States, Flores borrowed money from his father to meet the 20% equity needed to secure the $220,000 loan to build the grow-out buildings. Tyson provides the chicks and feed and pays Flores a premium 42 days later if he delivers his fully grown broilers at above-average weights. Flores has been so successful that he paid back his father in the first year of operation and after four years added 16 more chicken houses to his operation (Morais, 2004).

In 2009, Tyson had sales of $26.7 B with 6,049 contract farmers and 117,000 employees at 400 facilities around the world (*Tyson Foods, Inc.*, 2009). Although Mexico is the prototype for overseas expansion, "Tyson's real future overseas lies in the companies it is quietly building in emerging nations like China. Next frontiers of expansion: rebounding Brazil, and Eastern Europe" (Morais, 2004, p. 6).

PILGRIM'S PRIDE IN MEXICO

In addition to Tyson, Pilgrim's Pride, Inc. has also been very active in Mexico. It entered the Mexican market in 1987 with the acquisition from Purina of four fully integrated broiler operations serving Mexico City. From 1987 to 1991, Pilgrims tripled the size of the Mexican operations. With sales in the US stagnant, the Mexican operations became increasingly important and grew to 20% of Pilgrim's total revenues by 1994 (*Funding Universe*, 2009).

In 1995, it expanded its Mexican operations with the purchase of five broiler companies in the State of Queretaro (*Pilgrim's Pride*, 2005b). The plants are strategically located to serve 75% of all Mexican consumers.

By 1997, Pilgrims had entered every major market in Mexico with a 19% share of the market (*Funding Universe*, 2009). Pilgrim's Pride is the second largest broiler company in Mexico and the largest in Puerto Rico (*Pilgrim's Pride*, 2005a, 2005c). With its acquisition of Goldkist in 2007, Pilgrim's Pride became the largest broiler producer in the United States and the world, and the largest in Puerto Rico (*Pilgrim's Pride*, 2007). Total sales in 2009 were $7.1 B with 41,000 employees in the United States, Mexico, and Puerto Rico (*Pilgrim's Pride*, 2010).

After economics difficulties in 2008 and 2009 due to debt burdens and the high feed costs, Pilgrim's Pride declared bankruptcy and was bought by JBS of Brazil (Chasen & Burgdorfer, 2009; Spector, Etter, & Stewart, 2009). JBS is Brazil's largest agri-food multinational company with major operations in beef, pork, and chicken (*JBS*, 2009a). Acquisitions of Swift and Co. and Armour (Argentina) in 2005, Swift and Co. (United States and Australia) in 2007, Smithfield Beef (United States), National Beef (United States), and Tasman Beef (Australia) in 2008 established JBS as the largest beef sector company in the world. In 2008, JBS had $30.3 B in sales and more than 60,000 employees worldwide (*JBS*, 2008). With the acquisition of Pilgrim's and Bertin SA (beef operations in Latin America), JBS becomes the largest multiprotein company in the world (*JBS*, 2009b).

IMF, NAFTA, AND NEOLIBERAL RESTRUCTURING

The rapid rise to dominance of Tyson and Pilgrim in Mexico was facilitated by neoliberal restructuring in Mexico (Yañez, 2007). As part of the IMF structural adjustment programs enacted after the 1984 peso crisis, the Mexican Constitution was amended to reform the ejido system to allow joint-ventures with private capital, in this case Trasgo, with funding support provided by FIRA. This action opened the door to the aparceria system of contract farming with the ejidos. As noted earlier, the dispersed land-tenure system of the US South made up of small, private holdings was a key feature of the successful development of the Southern Model. This pattern was not common in Mexico, which limited the diffusion of the poultry contract innovation. Allowing ejidatarios to contract with the emerging poultry integrators removed this roadblock to poultry industry modernization.

In 1995, NAFTA provided further stimulus to the globalization of the poultry industry in Mexico. NAFTA relaxed foreign direct investment restrictions, but more importantly, it eliminated tariffs on corn imports

(Zahniser & Coyle, 2004). As a result, corn from the US flooded into Mexico. Although the corn imports supported the growth of the vertically integrated poultry operations as part of agro-industrial development, it also impoverished many Mexican campesinos and "accelerated the stampede from the country side into the migration stream" (Ross, 2008, p. 2). Subsidized corn from the United States was dumped in Mexico as part of the neoliberal restructuring with disastrous effects (Oxfam, 2003; Weiner, 2002).

In an other example of neoliberal restructuring, after NAFTA, in 1998 FIRA was reorganized to provide increased institutional resources to support the growth of the large poultry companies, i.e. Tyson and Pilgrim (Del Angel, 2005). The changes included new financial mechanisms designed to convert producers (contract farmers) into agro-industry suppliers and guarantee profitability to the poultry corporations through enhanced flexibility along the entire poultry value chain. Part of the reorganization also involved a shift in focus away from ejidos to private farmers as the preferred pattern of contract farming. The aparceria system linked to the ejidos was a remnant of the pre-neoliberal era and was being replaced with a system much more like the Southern Model.

Bachoco is the largest poultry firm in Mexico and one of the world's 10 largest poultry producers with 2008 sales of about $1.57 B (Bachoco, 2008). Especially since the entry of Tyson and Pilgrim in the 1980s, Bachoco has followed a pattern of both vertical and horizontal integration to rationalize production and increase market share. In 2005, Bachoco (#1), Pilgrim (#2), and Tyson (#3) accounted for approximately 60% of the Mexican broiler market (Zahniser, 2005). This represents a level of economic concentration higher than in the United States.

CONCLUSIONS

The model of poultry production developed in the US South is now being diffused to other countries. Although the examples of Tyson and Pilgrim's Pride moving rapidly into dominant positions in Mexico illustrate this point, the Mexican prototype is now targeted to new frontiers in emerging markets. For example, the Thai firm Charoen Pokphand Group adopted the vertically integrated model in the 1970s and is expanding into China, Southeast Asia, and the United Kingdom (Burch, 2005). Tyson's recent expansions in Brazil, India, and China, as well as JBS' move into the US market with the acquisition of Pilgrim's Pride, provide further evidence of the globalization of the poultry industry.

To what extent the systems of contract production and poultry processing will take on the negative socio-economic characteristics found in the United States is an open question. We should not assume that the Southern Model will manifest as the poultry agro-industrial poultry system diffuses around the world. But, if Boyd and Watts (1997) are correct, then there is much work to be done by agri-food researchers in monitoring the diffusion of this innovation as part of the neoliberal restructuring (see Harvey, 2005) and the globalization of the agri-food system.

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CHAPTER 6

STUDYING FERTILITY BEHAVIOR OF FARM POPULATION AS A CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING OVERALL LOW FERTILITY TRENDS: THE CASE OF SLOVENIA

Majda Černič Istenič

ABSTRACT

The extremely low fertility of European society is today one of the most important policy and scientific topics due to its adverse effect on increasing aging of the population. Since extant research has evidenced a huge complexity of below replacement fertility, it cannot be satisfactorily explained on the basis of a single pattern. Each country can therefore contribute through specific case studies to a better overall understanding of this phenomenon. This chapter presents the results of research into the fertility behavior of farm population, the group with the highest fertility rate in Slovenia. They reveal that the fertility of farm population is not based on a higher respect for family norms and related values, as some

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critics of contemporary life patterns of the young generation might suppose. The results indicate that it is more probable that motivation for a higher number of children among the farm population derives from their social context; the specific social relations of 'gift exchange' that help to maintain the particular nature of ensuring their everyday livelihoods.

INTRODUCTION

Below replacement fertility and very low fertility in a large part of Europe are significant demographic issues that nowadays concern policy makers and social scientists. Notably, after several decades of low fertility, the European continent and most of the rest of the developed world is entering a demographic regime characterized by population decline and accelerated aging of the population. Owing to a fertility rate significantly below the reproduction level, Slovenia is one of the countries that faces these challenges. In 1980, under the socialist regime, the fertility level already dropped below replacement and the steady downward trend did not end until 2007, at a total fertility rate (TFR) of 1.38. The lowest level was reached in 2004, at 1.20 TFR. This level ranks Slovenia among the countries with the lowest level of fertility in the world (United Nations, 2008).

Statistical data for Slovenia show that, with the exception of the farm population, all social groups have fertility levels that are below reproduction (Šircelj, 2006). For generations born between 1911 and1945 data indicate that the difference between farm and nonfarm groups was decreasing. However, in the 1941–1945 cohorts, the fertility rate of social groups such as managers, professionals and artists was still only 60 percent of that of farmers. The 2002 census data provide an insight into the fertility rate of different professional groups among younger generations, born in the period 1947–1966; fertility decreased in all professional groups, but the aforementioned difference in fertility between farmers and other professional groups remained unchanged.

Apart from statistical analysis, there is no additional research on different fertility levels exhibited by farmers and other professional groups in Slovenia. The lack of attention to this particular research topic is true for other countries, as well. This chapter addresses this analytical gap. It attempts to contribute to the search for factors that are the most responsible for the aforementioned differences and it intends thus to contribute to broader scientific and public debate about the reasons for very low fertility.

SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIAL RELEVANCE OF STUDYING THE FERTILITY BEHAVIOR OF THE FARM POPULATION

Despite uniformly extremely low-fertility statistics throughout Europe, ''European demography itself is not homogeneous'' (Douglass, Nash, Erikson, & Lim, 2005, p. 17). What characterize the demographic picture of today's Europe and most developed countries are divergences of family forms and behavior rather than similarities. For instance, countries viewed as traditional, Catholic, and family-oriented inexplicably had markedly lower fertility than those that were Protestant, more secular, and had weaker family ties (Chesnais, 1996, p. 729). Further, contrary to the assumptions of classical demographic theories countries with the lowest percentage of women in the working force have lower fertility than countries with a high percentage of women working (Del Boca, 2002, p. 11). Reproductive patterns such as low age of marriage and preference for formal marriage over cohabitation, a characteristic of Eastern Europe, should promote fertility however this group of countries has the lowest fertility in the world (Sobotka, 2003). There is thus no single pattern that could lead to and adequately explain overall below replacement fertility levels: each country case can contribute to better understanding of the overall phenomenon. Moreover, shared statistics on the aggregate level mask the many differences both between and within countries (Douglass et al., 2005, p. 19).

From this point of view, it seems very pertinent to study the patterns of fertility behavior of those social groups that show a significant deviation from a country's general population. Research of farm population that shows the highest fertility in the country, a specific professional group and, at the same time, part of rural population with its distinctive life pattern, can contribute to a more comprehensive picture of general social processes. More specifically, in recent public discussions in Slovenia about the 'numerical smallness of the nation' it is stressed, especially by Catholic theologians, that the main reason for low fertility in the country is the destruction and absence of family norms and related values among the population, such as joy of life, the importance of family atmosphere and the benefit that children bring to the nation (Knežević Hočevar, 2007). This claim gives rise to a significant question. Namely, whether the relatively high fertility of the farm population is a sign of their higher respect for family norms and values than is the case among other social groups, or whether some other factors give rise to a special pattern of fertility behavior of the farm population?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Mackensen (1982), any research and explanation on fertility behavior, just as any other social behavior, should proceed from the concept of the specific structural and cultural characteristics of each society and the historical processes that shaped them. In this context, the most comprehensive theory of the farm population fertility behavior was formulated by the historical demographer, Caldwell (1982). According to his theory of fertility decline "fertility behavior, in general, in societies of every type and stage of development is rational, and fertility is low or high as a result of economic benefit to individuals, couples, or families. Whether high or low fertility is economically rational it is determined by social conditions: primarily by the direction of the intergenerational wealth flow. This flow has been from younger to older generations in all traditional societies: and it is apparently impossible for its reversal before the family is largely nucleated both emotionally and economically" (p. 152). High fertility is rational when the amount of wealth flow in terms of work, money, security, love, support, pieces of advice, and the like is greater from the younger to the older generation than the opposite. This direction of wealth flow is a feature of societies in which economic activities are mainly located within family. In the context of the 'family way of production' the decision about production, consumption, and reproduction is the privilege of older, mainly male family members and is a particular feature of the extended, three generational family. The monopoly of the older generation is enabled and maintained by family and social relations structured by age, gender, origin, and marital status. These relationships are sustained and justified by a family morality that covers a considerable part of the society's culture and is maintained by religion. Family morality stresses the importance of home, the superiority of family and its continuity over the interests of an individual.

Since 1965, considerable demographic changes have been observed in many European countries (decrease in marriages, increase in cohabitations, delay of, or renunciation of parenthood, increase in divorces, and single parent households) presumably due to a shift in value orientation that indicates a strengthening of the principle of an individual's free choice (Kaa van de, 1987). The 'post-modern demographic behavior' of contemporary reproductive cohorts more likely corresponds to the individualistic "life-style, in which it is understood that sex and marriage/union are no longer closely related, and that contraception is only interrupted to have a self-fulfilling conception" (Kaa van de, 1999, p. 31). This new pattern of behavior is apparently reflected in changes of the life course of young

generations; earlier entry into first sexual intercourse, but later achievement of economic and housing autonomy and creation of own families (Iedema, Becker, & Sanders, 1997; Cordón, 1997; Nave-Herz, 1997). It has been demonstrated for Slovenia (Černič Istenič & Kveder, 2008) that the behavior of the young urban generation shows an indicative post-modern demographic pattern. Conversely, the young generation living in rural areas, with the highest share of farm population, tends to follow the more 'traditional' pattern of previous generations.

Recently, personal networks have been receiving increasing recognition as predictors of demographic events (Bühler & Philipov, 2005). It is assumed that the perspective of social networks more suitably enables an examination of the social and economic situation of an individual or a household. To date, few studies support the relevance of networks as an explanation of recent fertility trends. Philipov, Speder, and Billari (2006) report an increasing tendency of Bulgarian and Hungarian women to have a second child when they experience supportive personal relationships. Philipov and Sholnikov (2001) document similar results for Russia. According to Bühler and Fratzcek (2004), the intention of Polish couples to have a second child increases with the size of their support networks and their involvement in supportive exchange relationships.

On the basis of the aforementioned theoretical grounds, the following hypothesis is formulated:

> Differences in fertility behavior, measured by the actual and expected number of children among farm, rural, and urban populations, are associated with their different cultural and structural characteristics. These characteristics are observed through the behavior, status, social networks, attitudes, and views of these populations.

DATA AND METHODS

The analysis is based on data from survey "Generations and Gender Relations on Slovenian Farms 2007," sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (MAFF). The purpose of the survey was to study the social context of farm families and its impact on the process of farm succession. The latter is a problem for many Slovenian farms. According to the 2000 Census of Agriculture, only 24 percent of farm holders of the 86,000 farms report having secured a farm successor (Dernulc, Ilijaš, Kutin, & Orešnik, 2002). In order to improve this situation, in 2004 MAFF introduced special agricultural subsidies modeled on European Union's directives. To accelerate the transfer of farms from

older to younger farmers, subsidies were provided to the former (over 57) to retire and to the latter (below 40) to take over the farm.

One of the hypotheses of this survey was that these types of subsidies are positively associated with intergenerational relationships of farm families and, consequently, on a future of farms that also takes into account the reproductive potential, fertility behavior of farm families. To contextualize the situation in farm families, the answers of respondents living on farms ($n = 407$) were compared with those of people who live in the countryside, but are not engaged in farming ($n = 135$), as well as with those of residents of urban areas ($n = 275$). Further, there is a distinction between farm respondents who are recipients of early retirement or young farmer subsidies ($n = 301$) and those farm respondents who do not take part in either scheme ($n = 106$).

Considering that the great majority of the population in Slovenia completes its reproductive life around the age of 40 (i.e., the age-specific fertility rate of women aged 40–44 and 45–49 is 4.6 and 0.2, respectively, whereas the general age-specific fertility rate is 38.1) (Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia, 2008), the respondents were divided into two age groups: (1) aged less than 40 and (2) aged 40 and more.

When the simultaneous impact of independent structural and cultural variables on fertility behavior was examined, an analysis of variance was carried out with a univariate general linear model (GLM).

Measures of Structural Characteristics

In order to measure the impact of factors associated with the social structure characteristics of individuals in addition to the urban/rural/farm categorization, an additional 11 variables were selected:

- Household structure: six nominal categories, covering living alone, a couple, nuclear family, one-parent household, three-generation household, and remaining forms of households.
- Marital status: five nominal categories, covering single, married, cohabitation, divorced, and widowed.
- Labour force status: eight nominal categories, covering employed, working on farm, unemployed, student, pensioner, housewife, and other.
- Respondent's education: seven ordered categories ranging from "less than primary school" to "master's or doctor's degree."
- Mother's education: the same categories as listed above.

- Way of solving housing problem: six nominal categories, covering buying, building, extension of existing home, receiving from parents, and inheritance.
- Savings: two nominal categories, covering "yes" and "no."
- Social ties: a covariate referring to the number of persons from whom the respondent expects assistance.
- Farm size: a covariate pertaining to the size in hectares (ha).
- Subsidy beneficiary: two nominal categories, covering receivers, and nonreceivers.
- Secured successor: two nominal categories, covering for "yes" and "no."

Measures of Cultural Characteristics

On the basis of principal component factor analysis of the set of originally obtained variables with a five-point scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, five new ones were constructed to measure attitudes and views relating to family life:

- Children's duty to care for parents: constructed from the following items: "Children should adjust their work to the needs of their parents," "Daughters should care more for their parents than sons," "Parents should move to their children's place of residence when they cannot care for themselves anymore" (Cronbach alpha = 0.66).
- Reconciliation of family and work: constructed from the following items: "Family and home offer the same satisfaction as employment," "If a mother is employed a child suffers," and "If a father is employed a child suffers" (Cronbach alpha = 0.65).
- Gender equality-constructed from the following items: "Husband should be older than wife," "If a woman has a higher income than her partner this impacts unfavorably on their relationship," and "Men are better politicians than women" (Cronbach alpha = 0.57).
- Partnership relations constructed from the following items: "An unmarried couple can live together," "In spite of having children, a couple who do not have proper understanding should divorce," and "Homosexual couples should have equal rights to heterosexual ones" (Cronbach alpha = 0.53).
- Life fulfillment by having children constructed from the following items: "A woman should have a child to be fulfilled" and "A man should have a child to be fulfilled" (Cronbach alpha = 0.95).

In addition, another two categorical variables were considered in this set of variables:

- Religiosity: with four ordered categories ranging from ''very important role in one's own life'' to ''very unimportant role in one's own life.''
- Attendance at religious ceremonies: with four ordered categories ranging from ''never'' to ''frequently.''

RESULTS

As the data show (Table 1) both groups of farmers, those who received and who did not receive subsidies, irrespective of their age, have the highest number of children. Their actual and expected number of children is far closer to the reproduction threshold than it is in urban respondents. Rural dwellers do not significantly deviate from any of the groups. The results also indicate that the younger generation of farmers who are subsidy beneficiaries demonstrate a higher actual and expected number of children than farmers who are not subsidy beneficiaries.

In the next stage of the analysis, the impact of the urban/rural/farm setting on the variability of the actual and expected number of children was examined by inclusion of other social and cultural characteristics of the respondents into univariate GLMs.

In terms of the variability of actual number of children, respondents from all areas aged less than 40 compose the first model, whereas respondents

Table 1. Actual and Expected Number of Children by Urban–Rural–Farm Classification and Age (Means and Standard Deviations).

	Urban Population	Rural Population	Farm Population Subsidy Beneficiaries	Farm Population Nonsubsidy Beneficiaries	*F*	Levene Statistic
>40 years	1.25	1.71	1.79	1.84	10.949***	0.145
Actual	(0.91)	(0.91)	(0.96)	(0.93)		
<40 years	0.44	0.77	1.26	0.85	14.830***	24.720***
Actual	(0.74)	(1.02)	(1.17)	(1.18)		
<40 years	2.26	2.24	2.60	2.46	2.942*	0.390
Expected	(0.89)	(0.86)	(0.87)	(0.81)		

***$p < .001$, **$p < .050$, and *$p < .100$.

aged 40 and over represent the second one. In the third and the fourth model the distinction in actual number of children among farmers aged less than 40 and aged 40 and over are analysed, respectively. Variability of expected number of children is analysed in the fifth model among all respondents aged less than 40 and in the sixth model among farmers aged less than 40. The results in Table 2 indicate that all six models are valid and significant and that selected independent variables are in relatively strong relationship with dependent variables. As the R^2 of all models show, the independent variables explain from 82 percent (model 3) to 39 percent (model 5) of the entire variability in the actual and expected number of children. However, in contrast to hypothetical expectations, the interaction of the urban/rural/farm setting when other structural and cultural characteristics are taken into consideration does not have a statistically significant relationship with either the expected or the actual number of children. This holds true for all six models.

In the case of the actual number of children, the strongest influences among the variables included in the models are household structure and marital status; those living in three generational households and married have significantly more children than respondents belonging to other categories. Additional bivariate analyses showed (the information is available from the author) that, in this regard, considerable differences exist among respondents from different settings. Large, extended, three generational households prevail among farmers receiving subsidies, whereas the nuclear family is common for the other three groups. Significant differences exist among groups in terms of one-parent households, those living alone, and those living with a partner. Urban dwellers are relatively more numerous in all these categories. Furthermore, additional bivariate analysis also showed that the percentage of those married – half of all respondents – is 14 percentage points higher among those who have received subsidies and 16 percentage points lower among urban dwellers, while the opposite is seen for single persons. This group prevails in urban areas; its smallest share is observed among farmers who have received subsidies. Additionally, the share of divorcees is considerably higher among urban and rural dwellers than among farmers. This status is quite rare among beneficiaries of subsidies. The proportion of those who have experienced their parents' divorce is also considerably higher among the urban than the farm population.

The impact of household structure and marital status on variability of actual number of children particularly holds true for younger respondents in the first model, while other variables do not show any significant impact.

Table 2. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects with GLM on the Number of Children (*F* Statistics).

	Actual Number of Children				Expected Number of Children	
	1 Model	2 Model	3 Model	4 Model	5 Model	6 Model
	<40 Years	>40 Years	<40 Years Farm Population	>40 Years Farm Population	<40 Years	<40 Years Farm Population
Corrected model	21.034***	5.087***	10.849***	2.685***	2.183***	1.585***
Intercept	39.001***	37.224***	3.204	8.182***	5.650***	61.800***
Structural characteristics						
Urban/rural/farm context	1.087	0.279			0.929	
Household structure	10.349***	14.214***	4.468**	5.542***	1.024	0.612
Marital status	101.384***	6.853***	40.557***	5.286***	0.841	0.397
Labour force status	1.920	0.447	1.586	1.758	1.056	1.478
Respondent's education	2.564	0.310	1.498	1.050	0.002	0.747
Mother's education	0.875	1.370	0.828	1.384	1.036	1.387
Way of solving household problem	1.747	1.598	0.637	1.142	2.441*	1.279
Savings	3.441	2.257	4.955*	0.543	1.850	1.271
Social ties	1.169	7.809**	0.465	2.705	0.003	0.001
Farm size			3.589	2.479		0.683
Subsidy beneficiary			0.734	0.344		4.665*
Secured successor			0.510	1.102		0.178
Cultural characteristics						
Religiosity	0.754	0.025	0.038	0.016	0.343	0.209
Attendance at religious ceremonies	1.238	1.764	0.108	0.473	1.017	0.099
Children's duty to care for parents	0.001	0.096	1.345	0.321	0.104	0.268
Reconciliation of family and work	0.091	4.449*	0.138	0.326	0.481	0.971
Gender equality	0.085	4.065*	0.960	7.257**	0.952	1.288
Partnership relations	0.315	0.348	1.003	0.087	3.853	0.486
Life fulfillment by having children	0.022	1.325	0.005	0.008	0.099	0.399
R^2	0.801	0.420	0.817	0.511	0.392	0.547
Levene statistic	0.804	0.708	0.630	1.201	0.869	1.716

***$p<.001$, **$p<.050$, and *$p<.100$.

The same picture is observed in the farm population aged less than 40, with a single exception; farmers who manage to save some of their money tend to have more children than farmers who are not able to save any. In the older generation, in addition to household structure and marital status, some other factors have an impact: social ties, attitudes toward gender equality and attitudes toward the reconciliation of family and working life, but to a lesser degree. This shows that respondents with less broadly developed social ties, more inclined to "traditional" gender roles and less in favor of the adjustment of family with professional life, have more children than respondents with the opposite characteristics. Only among the older farming population do cultural characteristics – attitudes toward gender roles – show a greater impact than marital and household structure. Only the way of solving the housing problem has an impact on the variability of the expected number of children in the fifth model. This shows that particularly those who have obtained their homes through inheritance expect to have more children at the end of their reproductive life than those who have obtained their houses/apartments primarily by purchase. Additional analysis (the information is available from the author) showed that respondents from different social settings strongly differ in terms of how they solve their housing problems. In urban areas, they have obtained their houses/apartments primarily by purchase (67 percent), whereas the majority of rural dwellers have built their own homes. A considerable share of the rural population and farmers has obtained their homes through inheritance from their parents. A single factor of importance is revealed in the farming population in the sixth model. In this case it is shown that farmers who have received a subsidy tend to have more children in the future than farmers who have not received a subsidy.

Thus, the differences in actual and expected number of children among respondents from different settings found earlier are primarily the result of variations in their household structure and marital status and much less the result of variations in other included variables. In view of such results the hypothesis can be confirmed only partly; it is evident that structural characteristics are more important factors for explaining differences in fertility behaviour than cultural ones.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The present analysis revealed that the actual number of children and motivation for a higher number of children was fairly weakly associated

with different attitudes relating to family relations. Even religiosity does not appear to be an important predictor of the number of children, as was supposed by Caldwell (1982). As other investigations have also shown (Černič Istenič, & Knežević Hočevar, 2009) it appears that farmers emphasize the duty of the younger generation to care for the older generation more strongly than other groups of population. However, considering attitudes toward gender roles, reconciliation of family and working life and the importance of children for fulfillment of men's and women's lives, farmers share fairly similar views with groups of the population living in urban and rural areas. Previous research on attitudes to gender roles and the division of care for children among couples from urban, rural, and farm populations (Černič Istenič, 2006, 2007) also corroborates these findings. It appears that the farm population share similar general views on family relationships with other social groups, probably due to similar exposure to the influence of public opinion makers (mass media, education, and legislation). However, in actual life they show different life patterns, e. g., in spite of similar availability of services in their environment farm women are considerably more engaged, in terms of the amount of time and accepting sole responsibility, in the care of their children and elderly family members than women of other occupations living in rural areas. Considering this evidence, speculation about the conditionality of the low fertility level in Slovenia on the decline of family norms and values among its population is therefore dubious.

It seems probable that the motivation for a higher number of children among the farm population derives from the social context, specific social relations based on the specific nature of providing the daily livelihood, which of course does not exclude specific norms and values. These norms and values are presumable tied strongly to particular demands of survival and maintenance of farm strata and not to maintenance of the nation as a whole. As a study on the possibilities of reproduction of farm strata in Slovenia revealed (Barbič, 1993), farm women and, particularly, farm men select and gain their partners to a very large extent only from the farming population or at least from the rural population, very rarely from the urban one. This indicates fairly weak marital mobility and isolation of the farm population; in terms of marriage they mostly rely only on the members of their own group. This phenomenon is highlighted by Heady (2007) as the major motivational force for high fertility in traditional agrarian societies. On the basis of the theory of gift exchange (adopted from previous scholars) he claims that parents have children, in part at least, for the sake of the other people in their community – to perpetuate the system of relationships – and

not only due to concerns about their own and their potential offspring's welfare. Following the idea of exchange processes, he presumes that the very low fertility in today's East and Central Europe is a result of the weakening of past social relationships, especially kinship ties of dependence, characteristic of agrarian societies, owing to the spread of new patterns of economic cooperation across the old communities' lines (which also have an impact on the widening of the marriage market) and additionally due to still deficient consolidation of these new social patterns.

The analysis presented in this chapter supports such conclusions, indicating that in the farming population, especially among beneficiaries of subsidies, old patterns of social exchange still probably exist, whereas in the rural and urban population these patterns of exchange are gaining new forms (favoring more widespread social connections and relationships, and other ways of accumulating social capital) that do not motivate a high number of children. Other studies on the fertility behavior of farmers, from different countries, also taking other methodological approaches, should further verify these particular findings and contribute to an understanding of the social grounds of low fertility.

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PART II
DEVELOPMENT, RURAL, COMMUNITY, AND MIGRATION

CHAPTER 7

STATE AND MARKET: THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT, "PEASANTIZATION," AND AGRARIAN RESTRUCTURING IN NORTHERN LAO PDR

Jamaree Chiengthong

ABSTRACT

The late incorporation of Lao PDR in the globalized age as an agricultural producer and exporter has been created through the process of "peasantization" and restructuring of agricultural upland productive area. The chapter discusses the role of the state and cross-border markets through contract farming in three villages in northern Lao PDR. Contrary to the general belief that economic globalization will result in the weakening of the state, the chapter argues that the state still has a significant role to play. Being late in the corporation into the world market, the changes that take place become very intense.

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INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s, as many socialist countries gradually opened up their economies to trade and foreign investment, words like "regionalism" and "economic cooperation" began to enter development vocabularies. With the world arranged spatially into clusters, new regional groupings began to appear, including the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), covering southern China, Myanmar, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) perceived the GMS as a single dynamic economy with shared borders that should not be an obstacle to economic development (Rigg & Wittayapak, 2009).

As the ADB believes cash crop production and market access are crucial to poverty reduction, it agreed to help finance construction of a road (route R3B) in northern Lao PDR, cutting from Boten in Luang Namtha near the Chinese border to Huai Xai in Bokeo near the Thai border. Although it is hoped that the road will provide market access for Lao farmers, in many ADB reports the road is usually referred to as an "economic corridor," a term that suggests something that connects two places, or an area through which one passes, rather than a place to stop. This has created doubts about the intentions of the road and its likely benefits to Lao farmers. Would the road really benefit the Lao farmers or would it benefit the much larger entrepreneurs in the two larger countries, China and Thailand, at opposite ends of the road?

This chapter discusses the effects this recent push for regional development has had on the landscape and rural restructuring of northern Lao PDR. It attempts to show how global capital has found, conquered, and transformed additional space, once considered remote and "undeveloped," to serve its interests; and also how the state has a crucial role in the transformation of its internal space and fill this up with "peasants" to generate production and "development."

Fieldwork was undertaken in March–April 2008 in two villages in Bo Keo Province and one village in Udomxai Province and again in April 2009 in the same two villages in Bo Keo Province. The methodology employed involved field interviews with farmers, merchants, and other residents.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section reviews the literature on the role of the market and state in agrarian transformation. The second section provides background information on Lao PDR and its development policies and trends. The third section analyzes the fieldwork

materials and the final section discusses the findings in relation to the process of agrarian change.

GLOBALIZATION AND AGRARIAN RESTRUCTURING

Capitalism involves the organization not only of forms of markets and states, but also of the structuring of space and time. In the early phase of capitalist development, the nation-state is the most appropriate state form as it is a self-contained, clearly demarcated, land boundary whereby exact bureaucratic regulation can take shape. Referring to Weber, Bonanno (2008) points to the importance of the organization of space under the nation-state system. The modern state organized the national space in formal rational terms and was instrumental in the development of bureaucracies and authority structures that further fostered the process of capitalist growth. In this respect, the historical importance of the creation of national space is both central to and linked to the establishment, organization, and control of national markets (Bonanno, 2008, p. 21). Bonanno further asserted that agricultural commodities are among the most typical examples of intervention of nation-states, as they intervened to regulate the production and prices of commodities with an array of justifications and measures (Bonanno, 2008, p. 27).

The system of state intervention entered a crisis in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Economists began to criticize the state for interfering too much in the market, causing market failures whereby markets were unable to perform most efficiently according to the law of demand and supply (Toye, 1993). This criticism of the role of the state in interfering with the market took place globally and directed at socialist central state planning as well.

Bonanno, however, argued that the crisis of the state in the globalized era is not the crisis of the state per se, but should be considered in terms of the crisis of the Fordist nation-state form, of large scale organization. The new spatial and temporal dimensions of capital mobility clash with the temporal and spatial dimensions of the Fordist nation-state (Bonanno, 2008, p. 32). Though production and its coordination and regulation are progressively removed from the sphere of nation-state and placed under the sphere of new supranational states, however, it still requires the active intervention of the nation-state to open up markets for the rapid circulation of commodities (Bonanno, 2008, p. 35). Within this new globalized agrarian transformation, ‘‘the state continues to play a central role in domestic

restructuring and negotiating a competitive global environment'' (Watts & Goodman, 1997, p. 13).

AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION IN FORMER SOCIALIST ECONOMIES

As a response to criticism of rigid state planning, former socialist countries began to adopt market liberalization and privatization in the 1980s–1990s. This adoption has resulted to changes in the agrarian structure. Especially in the former European socialist countries, a system of small farm producers who are major producers in the marketplace has emerged though many large state farms are still being maintained (Spoor, 1997a, 1997b). For example, in Russia, the household plots and *docha* gardens produced an increasing share of production though the collective farm still remained (Wehrheim, 1997). In Romania, Dumitru (1997) observed that land reform returned land to former owners and allowed many small farms to emerge which contributed greatly to social stability. Outside of Europe, such as in Vietnam after the 1986 *doimoi* (renovation) reform, a small family farming system was also a predominant system, though some may only produce a ''subsistence peasant production'' (sometimes more food deficient than subsistent) other ''small family farms'' entered into exclusively market-oriented, commercial production (Tuan, 1997).

The coexistence of large and small farms was well remarked by Kautsky when he discussed agrarian transition in the early twentieth century noting the capacity of small farms to exert the ability of self-exploitation (to use Chayanovian terminology) whereby peasants can work hard, consuming less; and also not receiving any wages whereas large capitalist farm would have to pay wages for the workers (Rigg, 2001). The existence of small farms not only serve the market's interests as well as the farmer – workers' existence themselves, but also contributed to national political stability.

THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN DEPEASANTIZATION AND PEASANTIZATION

Although theorists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries such as Marx or Polanyi focused on the role of the market in transforming the peasant economy, Frederick Buttel (1997, p. 344), however, focused on the role of the state in deterring the process of depeasantization. Discussing

the United States and other advanced industrial countries from the end of the World War II to the 1970s, he observed a predominance of "moderately large, highly capitalized, petty-capitalist, family proprietor farms." He attributed this slow movement of depeasantization to state policies, including credit and other subsidy programs, aimed at helping small farmers to survive. Only after changes in state policies in the 1980s toward a revival of neoliberal ideologies which demanded withdrawal of nationally regulated farm support programs, smaller family farms became less competitive.

Wilkinson (1997, p. 38) draws attention to the complexity of forms of production when he noted a scenario in the southern states of Brazil in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The states encouraged the settlement of European migrants, first forming a peasant economy that later evolved into a family farm economy. He suggested that "a flourishing peasant economy" can expand "in articulation with merchant capital, which provided access to markets" and can then be transformed into the modern family farm while the trading capital evolved into agro-industry.

Though paying attention to the various policy and theoretical arguments pertaining to the survival and viability of diversified family farms, Wilkinson did not attempt to defend the family farm in terms of principles of justice or equity as the populist approach usually does. He was more interested in trying to understand, as Long (1997) remarked, "the processes by which a plurality of social institutions and modes of coordination, based for example on market, state, and communal forms of regulation, sustain and transform a heterogeneous 'regional' assemblage of modes of economic organization, in which the diversified family farm is embedded and by which it acquires its livelihood dynamics." Wilkinson (1997) cautioned for a careful examination of the types and characteristics of the modern small family farms, as it is an 'elastic category' that can include everything from peasant subsistence to technology-driven monoculture. He also noted the importance of modern agro-industrial production which linked to small family farm production on the basis of "contract quasi-integration" (p. 39).

PEASANTIZATION, TERRITORIALIZATION, AND RETERRITORIALIZATION: THE STATE IN LATE CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT

Similar to Wilkinson's observation of state's encouragement of peasant economy in Brazil in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this

author's own fieldwork in Thailand described the process of land clearing by farmers in the forested areas at the beginning of the twentieth century as ''peasantization.'' The terminology, however, does not intend to essentialize the peasants, but employed to emphasize the newness of the settlement (Pitackwong, 1996, pp. 55–60), and to emphasize the incorporation of theses peasants as producers for the expanding market economy under the state's development schemes and ideology (Pitackwong, 1996, pp. 76–83). Hirsch's (1990) study of a westernmost province in Thailand documented a similar process where he observed how villagers cleared land for commercial production of corn and tapioca, under encouragement by the state through state-supported development schemes.

Although this author's fieldwork in Thailand focused attention in the expansion of the market, Ganjanapan and Kaosa-ard (1992) focused attention on the forests as a contested space. Doing fieldwork in northern Thailand in the 1980s, they noted the role of the state in first encouraging land expansion of peasants into the forests but then later to restrict and to declare forests as reserved area to comply with rising global environmentalists' concerns over shrinking forest space.

The concept territorialization is used by Vandergeest and Peluso (1995) to draw attention to the role of the state in organizing internal space as a resource control strategy. Following Sack's definition (1986), they define territorialization as ''the attempt by an individual or group to affect, to influence or control people, phenomena, and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area'' (Vandergeest & Peluso, 1995, pp. 387–388). Buch-Hansen (2003, p. 324) elaborated the concept further when he argued that territorialization of rural Thailand and management of local natural resources is a contested space between local, national, and global institutions. Though on the one hand the state may want to conserve its forest area, on the other hand it has to promote exports of agricultural products. As a response to the global demand for animal feed, beginning in the 1960s and accelerated in the 1970s–1980s, the state encouraged production of agricultural commodities such as cassava and corn. Even the peripheral areas were incorporated under the production for export market, and forests had been transformed into cultivated areas, resulting in dramatic change in the landscape, even in the hilly areas (Buch-Hansen, 2003, p. 328). Hence, ''reterritorialization'' can take place when new economic activities are either prescribed or contested in place of the old activities in the same space.

SYNTHESIZING THE LITERATURE

From the literatures reviewed, we can see the importance of the state in organizing its internal space, and also to settle people in that space to create productivity. This is achieved under the name of national development.

LAO DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE: TERRITORIALIZATION AND NATION BUILDING

Lao PDR has a population of approximately 5.7 million and an area of 230,000 ha. Population density is only approximately 23 persons per square kilometer. GDP is approximately 370 US dollars per person and the economic growth rate is 2.1% per year (Pholsena & Banomyong, 2006, p. 71).

After the World War II, Laos gained independence from France, but the political leaders in the north formed the *naew lao hak xat* movement which later becoming the *Pathet Lao* government adopting a socialist ideology, fought a long-running civil war for control of the country from its stronghold in the northern provinces of Pongsali, Xam Nuah, and Luang Namtha. Ethnic minorities living in the highlands were recruited to take sides in the fighting. Some were relocated to strategic positions. Others, like the lowland Tai Lue in Muang Sing District in Luang Namtha, fled to the border areas to escape the fighting (see appendix for map of Lao PDR).

In 1976, the Pathet Lao defeated the Vientiane government and took control of the country, creating the Lao People's Democratic Republic, a territorialized communist state. The new government began an earnest attempt to restructure the country's productive capacity. A cooperative system of peasant producers was introduced. Villages were relocated close to each other for security reasons as well as to better provide schooling, healthcare, and other forms of development. Permanent agriculture was encouraged to replace swidden agriculture. Eradication of opium production among the highlanders was declared a development target, as well as the eradication of poverty (Evrad & Goudineau, 2004). Post-1976, the state was the principal actor in development. The borders with capitalist market economy, Thailand were closed, whereas the borders with communist China and Vietnam remained open (except for brief Chinese-Lao 1977-1983 border closure due to political clashes).

In 1989, however, the Lao PDR government announced the policy of *Jintanakan mai*, a new economic development policy willing to accept

broader foreign investment. The borders with Thailand were opened. The ADB began to play a greater role in the development of basic infrastructure in Lao PDR. The cooperative system was abolished. In the mid-1990s, government introduced a policy that allowed farmers to claim ownership of their cultivated land though the process of measurement and granting of land certificates but in most localities, this has yet to happen (see e.g., Moizo, 2008).

Another interesting characteristic of Lao PDR is its ethnic diversity. Detailed categorization yields up to 800 different ethnic groups; broader categorization based on language differentials yields 47 groups (Evans, 1999, p. 167; Kossikov, 2000). As a result, ethnic unification has been one of the development priorities to create national unity; the ethnic groups in Lao PDR are officially described with the emphasis on being Lao, as highland, upland, and lowland Lao – or *Lao Sung*, *Lao Toeng*, and *Lao Lum*.

Apart from ethnic unification, the development discourse in Lao PDR continues to emphasize permanent cultivation. In 1999, an estimated 280,000 households throughout the country were still engaged in swidden cultivation when the government set a target to convert 160,000 of these households to permanent agriculture by 2010 (Azimi et al., 2001). The eradication of opium cultivation by the year 2005 was a critical component of this strategy, particularly in northern Lao PDR where highland ethnic villagers were engaged in shifting cultivation of opium.

Poverty eradication remains an important target. According to an ADB report (2002), approximately 30% of the population of Lao PDR was living below the poverty line, defined as having cash income less than 142,500 kip (around 16 US dollars) per person per month. The incidence of poverty in the northern provinces, particularly Luang Namtha, was higher than the national average. The same report mentioned insufficient rice production in the north. Rain-fed cultivation of rice yielded 1.5 tons/ha in the northern highlands whereas the average for the lowlands was approximately 2 tons/ha.

OPIUM SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM: RETERRITORIALIZATION AND CONTRACT FARMING

As part of its development assistance to Lao PDR, the Chinese government has supported an opium substitution program aimed at converting more than 4,500 ha of opium fields to other crops. Route 17, connecting a

small town (Muang Sing) in northern Lao PDR with a small border town (Muang Mang) in China, was improved. With improved access, Chinese merchants began to enter Lao PDR and engaged in commercial contract farming. Lyttleton et al. (2005) noted the widespread watermelon production in lowland Muang Sing area where Chinese farmers/merchants rented land from Lao farmers after the rice harvest to grow watermelons. The Chinese provided the seeds, know-how, and fertilizers as well as contracted Lao farmers to cultivate the land. After the harvest, the watermelons were exported to China. Yayoi Fujita, Thongmanivong, and Vongvisouk (2006) mentioned the relocation process in Muang Sing where they noted that many villages were regrouped along the road to facilitate a process of commercial production under contract farming with exporting Chinese firms.

More significant than watermelons is the increasingly widespread cultivation of rubber. Although rubber has been grown in southern China for over 50 years, growing Chinese demand easily outstrips supply. Lao farmers, learning from their relatives across the border about the opportunity for cash income from rubber, began to plant trees in the 1990s. Later, the Yunnan Provincial Government of China signed a contract with the Luang Namtha Provincial Government of Lao PDR (and Bokeo and Udomxai Provinces) to cultivate rubber as part of the opium substitution program. In 2004, private Chinese companies were also encouraged to invest in rubber cultivation in Lao PDR as part of this opium substitution program. The three Lao provincial governments agreed that they would not grant large tracts of land under concession but would maintain small farmers' land ownership, with the companies having to contract with the farmers. In the typical arrangement, the farmer provides the land and labor while the company provides seedlings, technology, and market access with the farmer receiving 70% of the cash sales and the company 30%. However, in practice, as the company has to hire labor (sometimes the landowners themselves) these shares were usually renegotiated with the company receiving 40–45%. Land usage in Luang Namtha, Bokeo, and Udomxai has begun to shift toward permanent rubber tree cultivation.

With rubber trees requiring 5–7 years after cultivation before first harvesting, short-lived commercial crops, such as tapioca and sugarcane, were also introduced to farmers as a part of the opium substitution program. Unlike watermelons, which are grown in the rice fields after the rice harvest, tapioca and sugarcane can be grown in the upland areas. Most of the crops grown are under contract farming with Chinese companies and exported to China (Dai, 2007; Shi, 2008).

Although territorialization in combination with peasantization had taken place since the internal war period, and later in the forest conservation and opium production replacement process, the open up of the market has reterritorialized space for commercial production.

THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE COUNTRYSIDE UNDER CONTRACT FARMING

Corn production near the Thai border town of Chiengkhong provides another evidence of the increasing commercialization and market access of northern Lao farmers. In anticipation of the future bridge across the Mekong connecting the new R3B road to Thailand, two silos for drying corn had been strategically located on the Thai side. During fieldwork in March–April 2008, corn from the dry season harvest in Lao PDR could be seen being ferried across the river to these silos. Favorable corn prices in 2007–2008 had led Thai and Lao farmers on both sides of the Mekong to enthusiastically produce corn for animal feed. (For a discussion of expansion of corn production in poor, upland areas in Thailand, see Rakyutidharm, 2009).

Ban Ponsavang and Ban Dan Villages in Bokeo Province, Lao PDR

Ban Ponsavang and Ban Dan are adjacent villages in Bokeo Province, 20 km south of the small town of Huai Xai; situated on a road that runs along the Mekong River. They are large lowland, or *Lao Lum*, peasant villages. Ban Dan village was settled 100 years ago. However, during the fighting in the 1960s–1970s, many villagers fled to Thailand, only to be replaced by those fleeing fighting elsewhere. As the migrants grew, they cleared additional land and settled another village nearby, which is now Ban Ponsavang. This process of peasantization was supported by the local government in Bokeo province, as they wanted the peasants to stop at the Lao side rather than crossing over to Thailand.

After liberation in 1975, the government established a cooperative system only to abolish it 2 years later after peasants in the two villages petitioned that it was neither beneficial to the peasants nor to productivity (see discussion on cooperatives in other regions in Evans, 1990). With the closure of the Thai border after liberation, peasants in the villages had difficulty obtaining necessities, such as salt and clothes. They had to travel long distances to towns bordering Myanmar (Muang Mom) or China (Luang

Namtha). Agricultural production was subsistence and peasant-based. When plans to reopen the border with Thailand were initiated in 1987, the peasants began to obtain forest products to trade with Thailand. When they discovered Thai merchants offered very low prices for their products, they formed themselves into a traders' association to bargain as a group with the Thai merchants.

When the border did reopen, those Lao peasants from the village with relatives in Thailand began crossing the border to visit. As the relatives were often small family farmers also, the Lao peasants began to learn about corn, a crop that was in good demand in the Thai market. Lao peasants began to devote land to corn production. Starting around 2000, with the rise in prices, peasants began to clear additional land and/or convert existing upland lands for corn production in earnest, keeping the lowland paddy fields for subsistence rice production. Though we may say that the expansion of the cultivation area in this period is a response to the market, the local government has played a part in the expansion by acknowledging ownership of the land. From interviews with farmers in 2009, it is found that those who clear land in this period can report ownership to the village headman, and later can apply for land certificates. Some farmers however reported that they did not clear land from the dense forests but only used the land that had been left vacant by the saw mills. As production of corn was expanding additional labor was needed and from the year 2000 there had been an encouragement from the local government for the poor *Lao Toeng* (upland *Khamu* ethnic peasants) to settle in a nearby satellite village called *Ban Ponxai*. The peasantized *Khamu* had obtained some upland plots and engaged in rice production, as well as selling their labor to the *Lao Lum* farmers.

A local farmer stated in 2008 that at least 3,000 ha of upland area, a substantial amount, in the two villages had been devoted to corn production. The field appears interconnected as a large single piece. Instead of fences, only sparsely planted trees demarcated individual holdings. These smallholders group their labor together to form a production team under a leader who supervises the utilization of labor. A group usually consists of between 30–50 householders. This organization is not the same as the cooperatives that were attempted in the socialist period. It is more a kind of traditional peasant exchange of labor often seen during the peak periods of demand for agricultural labor – planting and harvesting. Dai (2007) also observed similar activities of Lao farmers in Muang Sing in Luang Namtha Province during the tapioca harvest. There, however, a Chinese company with farming contracts to grow the tapioca organized the exchange.

In the first period of corn production, the team leaders who organize labor for production got the chance to come into contact with merchants who buy corn. Most sales are made to the merchants who advanced them the seeds and other factors of production under contract farming. As production develops the head of the production teams become the sub-buyers of the corn before reselling to the merchants and can make a profit. The profit was later turned into investment of large tractors to provide land preparation service to their team members. Rental charges are deducted from the sales of the produce. This is the latest development, and it produces an effect of double binding the farmers with the team leaders and the merchants. Though a head of a production team said that they are not strictly bound to sell to the merchants who advance them the seeds, usually, however, as learned from an interview with a Lao merchant in 2009, farmers do not want to break the connections they have established.

Most corn seeds used in Ban Ponsavang are the 888 variety produced by the CP company, Thailand's largest agribusiness. CP does not engage in contract farming inside Lao PDR like some of its Chinese counterparts are doing to the north. However, some smaller Thai merchants are engaged in contract farming in Lao PDR. The corn drying silos on the outskirts of Chiengkhong belong to some entrepreneurs who distribute and export agricultural products. They will distribute the dried corn to a number of animal feed businesses, including CP.

Muang Hun District, Udomxai Province, Lao PDR

Muang Hun is a small district 90 km from the town of Udomxai in Udomxai Province. In late April 2008, fieldwork was conducted in Ban Sri Bunhoeng, a new cluster of 11 villages grouped together under a new administrative unit, covering a productive upland area of about 3,000 ha, all devoted to corn. This is similar to what was found in Ban Ponsavang. Farmers were preparing land and beginning to grow rainy season corn. Under the land reform policy, small farmers owned the cornfields, with 1–2 ha each. Again, there was no fence to mark land ownership. As tractors are used to plough the land, constructing a fence would obstruct the operation of the tractors. Villages were relocated to both sides of the road that runs from Muang Hun to Pak Beng on the Mekong River. Some of those relocated to form the new administrative unit were of Hmong ethnic origin from the highland, or *Lao Sung*.

With the majority of agricultural production in the area devoted to corn, a Lao and a Thai merchant collaborated in establishing a silo for drying

corn. The silo cost approximately 400 million kip (approximately 47,000 US dollars). The rainy season crop is usually exported to Thailand by boat along the Mekong River to the port of Chiengkhong. The exported corn is usually sold whole, i.e., without being dried or taken off the ear. The Thai buyers then remove and dry the kernels and sell the cores to a small power plant nearby for fuel. Corn that is dried by the silo in Ban Sri Bunhoeng is usually exported to Vietnam instead of Thailand. There are also some Vietnamese buyers operating in the area. They distribute Vietnamese produced corn seeds called LVN to farmers. Some of the LVN seeds from Vietnam, as well as the 888 seeds from Thailand, can be bought from the market in Udomxai or small shops in Muang Hun. As demonstrated in the case of Muang Hun, the process of "peasantization," the expansion of merchant capital that turn them into "small farmers" producing for sales, and the process of globalization of competing external capital from larger neighboring countries are operating nearly simultaneously to take advantage of small cheap peasant labor and the land abundant resources of the Lao PDR.

STATE AND MARKET: AGRARIAN RESTRUCTURING AS 'DEVELOPMENT'

Although territorialization and peasantization had taken place since the internal war period, this has even become more intense with the open up of the market where the state has become active in reterritorializing the upland forested area for commercial production. Similar to Muang Sing, Ban Sri Bunhoeng in Muang Hun has also had its villages created along the roadside, and a new productive landscape created. The *Lao Sung* swiddeners who are relocated into the area are being turned into lowland peasants. Even in Ban Ponsavang and Ban Dan, where lowland cultivation already existed before the larger-scale, upland cultivation of corn, the intensity of commercial production of corn and its vast unfenced field is new. The vast landscape of cornfield ploughed with tractors cannot symbolize anything but large-scale capitalist production replacing traditional hoe and traditional plough agriculture while still utilizing small scale farmers' labor.

The state policy of national integration, or "laoization" of upland and highland cultivators into lowland peasants, or *lao lum*, has taken shape. Many newly restructure of agricultural areas and villages are composed of more than one ethnic group. In the Muang Sing area, the *Lao Sung,* or

Akha, intermingled with the lowland Tai Lue. In Ban Sri Bunhoeng in Muang Hun, the *Lao Toeng,* or Khamu, intermingled with the *Lao Sung* of Hmong ethnic origin. In conversations, people referred to other ethnicities as either *Lao Toeng* or *Lao Sung,* with the emphasis on being "*Lao*."

Despite the adoption of the open-market, neoliberalist policy, however, the Lao government has been sensitive to the issue of foreigners taking advantage of their resources and has tried to establish a nationalistic policy to guard against foreign control of its economy. For example, all foreign investments must have Lao citizens as co-investors. In contract farming, whether in rubber or other field crops, the national as well as provincial governments have tried to ensure that either the foreign companies or their contracts are registered. This is true especially in Luang Namtha. In Bokeo, Chinese rubber companies registered in Lao PDR, but in the case of field crops like corn, the trade across the border with Thailand is still unregulated. Lao traders, however, organized themselves into association of corn exporters to bargain for a better price.

CONCLUSIONS

Globalization of the capitalist market is usually thought of as the borderless flows of goods, capital, and labor. Despite the fact that the description is true, it does not mean a minimal role for the state or the insignificance of national borders. The "national" space still needs to be maintained to serve the various actors' economic interests. The internal landscape, however, has to be transformed to facilitate large-scale productive activities to serve global market. The national ideology of unification and a drive for progress are the main engines within this national and regional politics of development.

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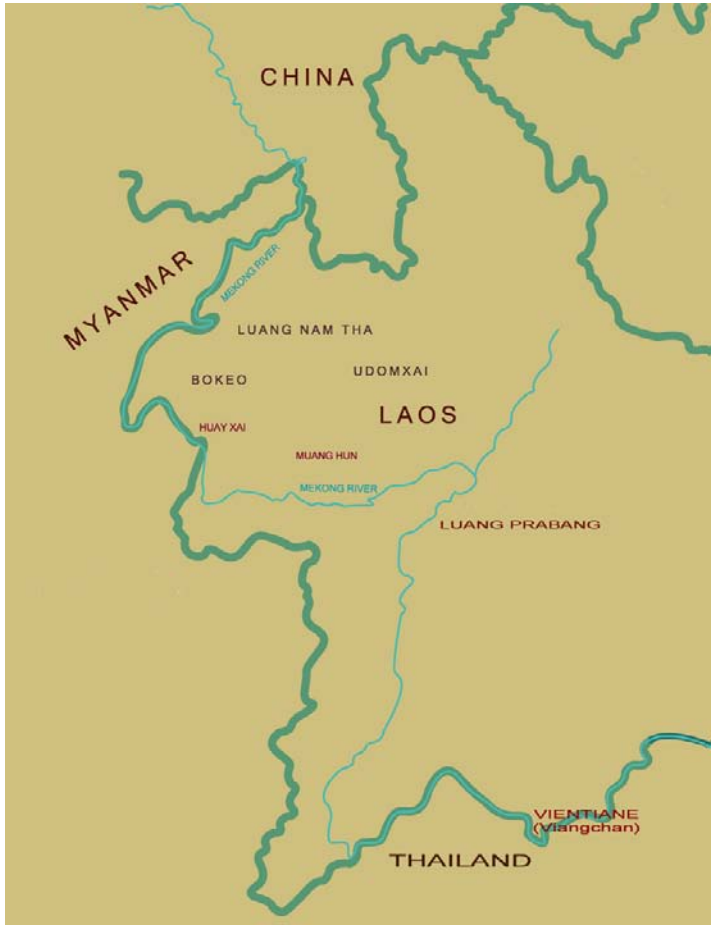
APPENDIX


CHINA
MYANMAR
MEKONG RIVER
LUANG NAM THA
BOKEO
UDOMXAI
LAOS
HUAY XAI
MUANG HUN
MEKONG RIVER
LUANG PRABANG
VIENTIANE
(Viangchan)
THAILAND

CHAPTER 8

WITHOUT CATEGORIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS: "RURAL" AS A SOCIAL EXPRESSION

Loka Ashwood

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores social representative groups as a medium to study "rural" meaning in Ireland. In research terms, the concept of "rurality" is increasingly debated, its existence questioned, and approaches to establish conceptual and methodological boundaries continuously challenged. By studying the language of social representative group leaders, it is argued in this chapter that the "rural" can be fluidly explored through its expression. Through a theme-based deconstruction of interviews with group leaders, I explore the expression of loss in Irish dialogue and its implication on "rural" meaning.

INTRODUCTION

Social classifications are increasingly challenged in an age where time and space boundaries are permeated by technological advances. "Rural" as a social category is particularly vulnerable to these changes because of the term's orientation with place and time-held traditions. In an attempt to move

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away from such classifications of the ''rural'' and toward a more fluid approach to the term, I use social representative groups in Ireland that actively invoke ''rural'' language to explore the meanings and uses of ''rural.'' Because of these groups'' status as social representative groups, this research takes their viewpoints as popularly accepted representations of ''rural'' meaning. I begin this chapter by reviewing theoretical foundations of social categorization and its effect on ''rural'' classifications. Launching from the complexities of these ''rural'' categorizations and attempts at creating boundaries, I review the varied uses of ''rural'' in the recent Irish past. In my section, Methodological Issues, I detail my use of social groups to explore current ''rural'' expressions in Ireland, which I follow with my methodology of group selection. I then review the results of my analysis, and for purposes of this chapter, I only focus on one of the emerging themes in detail – the expression of loss. In Ireland, loss is different than the sentiments of ''rural'' expressed in the past century. The varied dialogues of the ''rural'' in the Irish past and the disagreement over whether a claimed loss of the ''rural'' is a myth or reality (Newby, 1977) highlights the tentative state of ''rural'' as a concept without clear boundaries, which must be interpreted in the context of time. It is through the combination of theoretical challenges, past differentiations, and current usage of the term that ''rural'' is argued in this chapter to be a *social expression*, with common meanings in constantly evolving forms that challenge categorization.

Embedded in the exploration of social differences and cultural boundaries is the assumption that the characteristic divisions of land and the history of the people living within it are inherent in culture. Culture, tradition, and knowledge in effect are linked to the differentiations and habits embedded in the repetition of time. Giddens (1984) defines social differentiations through time and space and until recently these time and space differentiations were generally accepted in the social sciences as a given mean of separation to define societies. A rise of the ''informal, global, networked'' society (Castells, 2000, p. 10) and increased ''diverse mobilities'' in a ''placeless'' world (Urry, 2000, pp. 191, 219) are challenging the use of spatially defined terms. Differences, boundaries, and place feed categorizations of societies, and can be used for blank and stark division. Particularly with use of ''rural'' as a descriptive term imbedded in space and time division, increased technological connection poses challenges to the conception and potential extinction, assuming the former existence, of the term ''rural.'' Woods (2006, p. 590) writes that the ''rural'' is defined by ''geographic stability'' and ''rootedness to place, by a belonging to land and locality by an understanding of spatial boundaries …'' leaving ''rural'' areas particularly prone to conflict with

"transient populations," whose mobility threatens this identity. By defining place through Marc Augé's (1995) terms as "relational, historical and concerned with identity" (p. 77), the "rural" becomes a term particularly vulnerable to the crippling of space and time.

The challenge of creating criteria for what classifies or determines "rural" has led to a variety of critiques of the term and suggestions as to potential methods that could define it as a category of analysis. In order to identify or find the "rural," Halfacree (1993) writes that the physical environment does not determine physical behavior, but rather that the locality defines the "rural" and that the "rural" is symbolic. Little (1999, p. 438) writes that, "A greater sensitivity toward the complexity and fluidity of 'rural' otherness requires that we focus more directly on the meaning and construction of identity in a 'rural' context." It is argued that the cultural turn in "rural" studies finally gives freedom to study masculinity and femininity in the "rural" setting (Little & Leyshon, 2003, p. 258). In a critique of the increased popularity of an abstract approach to the "rural," Cloke (2006) writes that the use of the "idea rural" is too unstructured, whereas Bell (2007) uses it as one of the two categorizations, writing that an "idea rural," "is to engage the possibility that it is too late for the rural, for it is already gone, and maybe never even existed" (p. 411). Bell's second category is more traditionally agricultural and is titled material production. This stark classification, Bell (2007, p. 409) writes, attempts to create "boundaries in the boundless", although he overall concludes that the only appropriate approach to the "rural" is one with plural meanings. The plethora of approaches used to define "rural" or clarify the use of the word magnifies the impossibility of confining the conception in a fenced arena.

Ireland has been chosen as the location in which to probe the conceptualization of "rural" boundaries and study the use of "rural." The country's extreme economic change, increased development, recent implementation of technologies, and relative lack of industrialization pre-European Union membership in 1973 makes it a particularly relevant and unique example. Referring again to Augé's definition of place as, "relational, historical and concerned with identity," Ireland's long-litany of struggles over land control and ownership are central in understanding the historical importance of place in the country and the linguistic adhesion to "rural" in the past and present. Using observable and measurable means to define the "rural" has been less prevalent in Irish literature, particularly in the 1990s, and more typical in British work. Such literature in Ireland is primarily confined to Cawley (1980, 1991), Duffy (1987), and most recently Mahon (2007), who writes that in Ireland the "rural" is becoming increasingly

complex, with "seemingly contrasting and contradictory meanings of this term" (p. 355). In comparison to current attempts to measure the "rural," descriptive use of the term in Ireland has changed substantially since the early 1900s. In the 1930s, "rural" Ireland was framed as a picturesque sustainable ideal by Arensberg and Kimball (1940), based on the conception that the "rural" was determined spatially and through community, although the theoretical basis of the work was later discredited. In striking contrast, community group Muintir na Tire was founded in 1940 to combat poverty, describing "rural" Ireland as a "drab, dull and lifeless place" (Tierney, 2004, p. 7). In the 1950s and 1960s, newfound fears that "rural" communities were dying dominated discourse (Healy, 1968). With EU membership in 1973, the theme of modernization of Ireland primarily dominated "rural" discussion into the 1980s. The 1990s marked an increased sense of "crisis" (Varley, Boylan, & Cuddy, 1991) and a defense of "rural" Ireland against claims that it was an "irrelevant backwater" (Curtin, Haase, & Tovey, 1996). In the modern decade, Ireland is referred to as increasingly complex (McDonagh, 2001), and as having overcome its "rural" roots, "to take its rightful place as an equal among the nations of the world" (Coulter, 2003, p. 15). In 2007, Ireland was the second wealthiest country in the EU based on Gross Domestic Product. These rapid changes in Ireland from a peasant-based culture to a technologically driven, industrial economy are reflected through very different "rural" dialogues, echoing a transformation away from time–space differentiations and toward interconnection and mobility.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Regardless of what the "rural" can be or is identified with, any sort of classification or boundary for "rural" is immediately thronged with impossibilities. Taking the concept of "boundaries" and going further, attempts at defining the "rural" dissect the object(s) of study in order to create classifications, a nearly unfeasible quest in a recognized age of networks (Castells, 2000, 2004) and mobilities (Urry, 2000). These attempts at categorization disregard the use of "rural" as a *social expression* rather than a *structure*. By instead beginning with expressions of the "rural" at the lay level – the insiders' perspective versus that of the outsiders (Jones, 1995; Long, 2003) – the "rural" in its modern linguistic use can be probed within the context of fundamental social changes driven by mobility.

This research uses social representative groups in Ireland that actively use "rural" language to explore meanings and uses of the "rural". By studying

"rural" expression through lay discourse via group representation, this research particularly challenges notions of a "symbolic rural" (Halfacree, 1993), where some aspects of the "rural" are argued not to actually exist (Newby, 1977), but to be a projection and imaginative force driven by those who utilize or in some cases exploit "rural" mythical perceptions (Hopkins, 1998). Although being careful not to undermine the importance of these approaches to understand emerging perceptions of "rural," they can mistakenly be used to de-legitimize "rural" at the lay level and problems expressed through "rural" discourse. Through groups, the "rural" can be studied as a malleable social description that is dependent on lay perception, particularly the people in Ireland who prescribe to the projected "rural" language of these groups and appoint leaders as their vocal representatives. The use of social representative groups is a step toward removing the projections of the researcher onto the subject. Since the groups studied in this chapter express "rural" in their group formation and in continuing issues, the term is not being isolated and given meaning and agency, but is emerging from social representation and lay discourse.

Representative groups have been used as a method to explore social change and a reflection of the general associations of society. In America, Putnam (1995) connects the decline of social representative groups to low levels of civic engagement and the failure of government. He writes that civic groups reflect the moral and intellectual associations of the country (p. 65). Using groups to study larger trends, in Great Britain, Hay (2004) writes that the overall decline of civic engagement reflects the disenchantment of the country. In the context of specifically studying the "rural," Woods (1997, 2003) uses groups to document an increase in revolts and demonstrations in "rural" areas. Continuing to use representative groups to study social change, but countering Hay (2004) and Putnam's (1995) themes of decline, Boonstra (2006) argues that social representative groups are arising in nontraditional forms that represent increasingly diverse communities. In their study of "rural" Illinois cooperatives, Foreman and Whetten (2002) relate members' identities in organizations to social identities at large and individual's beliefs. Thus groups socially formed to represent the needs of a larger constituency by virtue are socially representative. Taking this concept further, social representation theory (Moscovici, 2000) argues that people make representations to reflect their reality and these representations are shared by a mass of people. People's representations, therefore, reflect reality just as representations of the "rural" reflect reality. Literature further contests that the meaning of words are not of themselves definite, but are socially constructed (Berger & Luckman, 1966). Applying Berger and Luckman's theorization to the

"rural," its meaning becomes socially constructed and created by those who employ the word "rural." The representative groups I selected for study and their leaders that I interview are thus representational of "rural" meaning in two ways: Through the direct dialogue of group leaders who socially construct the "rural" by employing the word, and also by being representatives of the groups that are representational by nature.

METHODOLOGY

All groups selected were voluntary in nature at their formation. The primary criteria for the selection of groups was that they used "rural" as a central topic in their reasons for founding and the issues central to their purpose. The groups selected span nearly a decade of founding from 1911 to 2002:

1. The Irish Countrywomens Association (ICA), founded in 1911 under the name The United Irishwomen, was originally formed to address the "Problem of Rural Life" (Plunkett, Pilkington, & Russell, 1911, p. 2). The group has been in existence for nearly a century. Current membership is 15,000.
2. The Irish Farmers' Association (IFA), originally founded in 1955 under the name the National Farmers' Association, was formed by 2,300 farmers to address economic problems (Anderson, 1974, p. 65). The IFA recently developed a new partner, the IFA Countryside (IFAC), although the group is still a part of the overarching IFA. The IFAC is "for all with an affinity for the countryside. This includes anyone who grew up on a farm and those who use the countryside for fishing, shooting, walking, and other country pursuits as well as all involved in field sports such as hurling and football. It helps to build links between farmers and those removed from the land, ensuring that it does not become a question of 'them and us'" (IFA Countryside, 2008). Current overall membership is 80,000.
3. The Keep Ireland Open (KIO) association was formed in 1993 by farmers to keep commonage, primarily in mountains and bogs used commonly in "rural" areas open in wake of efforts to fence it off. The mission statement of the organization has evolved to, "An environmental organization devoted to the maintenance of traditional access to our common heritage of mountain, lake and river" (KIO, 2007, p. 2). Current membership is estimated at 450, with associated membership through 10 other organizations of about 4,500 members.

4. The Irish Rural Dwellers Association (IRDA) was formed in 2002 to reduce the ability of planners to control and prevent the building of homes in "rural" Ireland. IRDA's goal is, "To unite all rural dwellers and people of goodwill toward rural Ireland and in the context of peaceful, multicultural co-existence in the common cause of ensuring, by legal and constitutional means, the growth and maintenance of a vibrant, populated countryside in the traditional Irish forms of baile fearann or dispersed village, sraid bhaile or street village and the clachan or nucleated (clustered village)" (Connolly, 2006, p. 2). Current membership is 1,600.

I conducted interviews with group leaders from each of the four organizations in January and February 2008, ranging between 1 and 4 hours in length. The leaders I interviewed are as follows: The Honorary National Secretary for the ICA, the Chairman of the IFA Countryside, the IFA Regional Representative, the KIO Connaught Secretary, and the IRDA President. My interviews of group leaders were loosely structured, following with qualitative methodological research arguing that interviews provide more freedom for the interviewee in their responses (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The interviews were central to understanding the language and culture of the groups. Although the primary intention of the group leader interviews was to remain as unstructured as possible, there was particular information I needed to gather. Thus I asked group leaders what their primary group orientation or issues were, how the group had changed, how the group represented the "rural," and if the group was in conflict with any other organizations. Because interviews require a constant "rapport" with the interviewee (Kitchin & Tate, 2000, p. 215), depending on the group leader that I was interviewing, there were sometimes fewer questions prompted in some interviews than in others.

I adopted themes as the method to absorb, dissect, and digest the lengthy interviews with social representative group leaders in an effort to thematically identify "rural" meaning in Ireland. "Theme discovery" is used as a commonly accepted qualitative methodology as part of the "interpretivist tradition" (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 86). In Opler's (1946) work, still strongly drawn on today (Ryan & Bernard, 2000), he writes that, "It is probable that much of what we have loosely called 'structure' in culture is essentially the interrelation and balance of themes" (p. 202). Particularly Opler (1946) argues that themes are a culmination of expressions. I adopt the term expression throughout this chapter in the data analysis. It is through interviews that I identify themes and consequently develop the expression of "rural" meaning.

My group leader interview analysis focused on identifying themes through a "labor-intensive, line-by-line analyses that, so far, only humans can do" (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 85). The scrutiny techniques that I employed to find themes were observational and did not employ coding or manipulating techniques. In the process of transcribing and on analysis after transcription, I employed the observational techniques of repetition (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 89), and similarities and differences (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 91). The themes that I identified ranged from those particularly relating to each of the groups and more general themes that were shared by all four of the organizations. For the purposes of this chapter, I discuss the theme of loss, which was a shared theme between the four groups that related to an overarching "rural" expression of loss and pride.

EXPRESSION OF LOSS

Loss was expressed by all group leaders interviewed, from the most recently founded IRDA to the oldest organization, the ICA. Recently created groups were founded to protect what they felt was being lost in the "rural," and representatives of the older groups spoke of challenges and changes that had brought loss to the group and communities. Representatives lament change and express their respective quests to maintain the "rural," whereas stressing the interconnection between "rural" and Ireland. When group leaders spoke of their organizations and their "rural" members, it was with a sense of justification of purpose and central importance for restoration and most acutely, future *survival*, whether it be survival of the group itself, a continuation of heritage, the survival of a particular Irish "rural" settlement pattern, or saving a proclaimed Irish social structure.

The IRDA takes a stance against planning regulations that the group argues are preventing the survival of the townlands, a scattered community of homes and the lowest-level officially defined geographical unit of land in Ireland. The group's reasoning is that by overcoming planners, communities can have the freedom of development, townlands can be reinvigorated, and the "rural" in Ireland can survive. The dialog becomes one of the heritage and saving what is being lost:

> One of the saddest most heart-breaking factors of rural life that I'm familiar with is it is actually dying. Centuries, and in the case of Ireland, thousands of years of culture, of tradition, is disappearing. It can never be replaced. In Ireland it is particularly sad because we have such a long tradition of culture, such a long long tradition. And it is in our literature, this rural. Our music is, our language was. (Connolly, 2008)

This general sense of losing what is Irish and "rural" is targeted by the IRDA through planning, whereas the KIO, although also trying to preserve the countryside, takes a protective stance. Trying to prevent what they call a loss of the old Irish countryside, the KIO association is orientated around saving green tracks and old paths becoming restricted to the general public because they are on private property. The goal of the KIO is embedded in an overall theme of sustaining the Irish heritage of freedom and roaming that they view as under attack. To prevent this loss, action must be taken, thus the reason for the formation of the group and the orientation of its future goals.

> Our lovely network of tracks and paths, they'll be lost to future generations unless we protect them now. They're pearls of great price and they should be kept. They were green roads, another word for the old roads where they walked in the old days of persecution. They'd track across the hills to where they had a flat stone, and they'd have mass in the hidden valleys. (Murphy, 2008)

For both the IRDA and the KIO, the individual group themes are embedded in a larger context of loss and saving what is disappearing. This expression of fear and need to protect what they deem as theirs from outsiders is part of the theme of loss. "Rural" becomes the expression of this loss.

The same theme of "rural" loss and survival is recurrent in the language of longer established groups and in the groups' structural reorientations to address changing constituencies. Despite their efforts to make these changes, a major theme in the dialogue of both the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) and the ICA was that change was made to keep numbers up, whereas the overall loss of the "rural" was irreparable. Owing to the "terminal" decline of agriculture, the IFA has created a new branch of their organization, the IFA Countryside, to try to target nonfarming populations living in the countryside (Wilkinson, 2008). In doing so, the group is working on counteracting the loss of "rural" populations by advocating government intervention.

> We're talking about rural decline. It's very evident. The non-viability of the local community. They lose the post office. They lose the pub. The countryside is becoming a difficult place to live without services, and yet they must be maintained. (Wilkinson, 2008)

The original goals of the ICA were to address the, "higher standard of material comfort and physical wellbeing in the country home, a more advanced agricultural economy, and a social existence a little more in harmony with the intellect and temperament of our people" (Plunkett et al., 1911, p. 2). In December 2007, the organization held a national meeting in Dublin to discuss its decline and the need to implement further changes to modernize the organization. The gains for Irish women through ICA are equated now with loss: An organizational loss and an unclear path for the

future, with dwindling membership and an aging constituency. Three options were presented to voting delegates, one of which was ending the organization in recognition that it had "served its purpose" (Dennison, 2008). The members overwhelmingly voted for reinvigoration and not to end the organization.

The expression of a "lost rural" is argued by some not to actually exist and is classified as an "idealized notion" of the "rural" (Crow & Allan, 1994; Newby, 1977, 1979). Newby (1977), who is still prominently drawn on today, looks at "rural" loss as a faith that he relates to the "ultimate rural idyll – the Garden of Eden" (p. 19). In stark contrast to his conclusion that "rural" loss is a belief or a faith in something that has disappeared and the language employed to express that belief is part of the myth, my research methodology employs language to understand what the "rural" is, and thus the language of loss is a integral part of "rural" meaning in the Irish dialogue. The "rural" is its social expression, and in Ireland, the expression of the "rural" is loss.

CONCLUSION

The intertwinement of 'rural' and 'loss' in group dialogue marks a change in the expression of "rural" in Ireland, a message popularly accepted by the groups' supporters. Regardless of categories of current meanings for the "rural," past interpretation, statistical adoption, or "rural" oriented policy, the messages these groups are relaying revolve around a "rural" need for immediate intervention. The object of study becomes less how to categorize a term used to express a need, or what the "rural" is – an impossible task considering the variety of meanings conveyed through the term – but how the word is used as a social expression. Instead of focusing on the problem of defining the "rural," by reinvigorating the focus on how the word is used in different places at different times and allowing it to run a course free from category, and by effect time or space, the expression becomes the most important point of study. From this comparatively structure free perspective, the utilization of "rural" as a mean, rather than an end, allows the freedom to understand what is so emotive, prone to conflict (Woods, 2003), and explosive within these groups, communities, or places that label themselves with "rural."

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CHAPTER 9

RURAL COMMUNITY IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

Josefa Salete Barbosa Cavalcanti

ABSTRACT

The community can be considered as an empirical category of thought and hope. This is how various understandings of real, imagined, invented, local, and global communities are created. Sociological studies give meaning to this heuristic category and its historical representations and its values centered around a world of proximity, primordial loyalties, solidarity, face-to-face communication, production, reproduction, knowledge, and environmental preservation. Community equally expresses the existence of a territory where populations reproduce; a place for a convivial exchange among generations, traditions, and respect to cultural heritages and ethnic boundaries. The rural community is seen as the guardian of present and past histories of groups identified by struggles for subsistence, resistance, and celebration of memories from ancestors. Community provides the foundation for sociability and sustainability. In the context of a fluxional, risky, and individualized society, community members are becoming more vulnerable as their pleas for solidarity and safety are unheard. Although the rural community described here has been an object of speculation and violence that affect our world, the concept of community is still desired. Accordingly, its relevance is renewed for a prosperous rural future in a globalizing world.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on understanding the problems that affect the contemporary world, a world generally characterized by differences and inequalities in access to commodities, spaces, and territories, as well as serious environmental problems and weak ties, which make considerable parts of the population more vulnerable. As Murmis (2003, p. 74) points out, "this is the search for bridges in the level of subjects and their groups has also been followed by the search for connections between old and new organizations" because the globalization that would tend to promote homogenization, considering those mechanisms used to standardize technical procedures for construction and control of goods, has actually been accentuating heterogeneities and raising new barriers that prevent the circulation and promotion of groups that are more exposed to capital chains and historical derooting processes. Such aspects cause community members to fight incessantly for inclusion. To Appadurai (1998, p. 10), "Globalization has reduced the distance between elites, shifted key relations between producers and consumers, broken many links between labor and daily life, obscured the lines between temporary locals and imaginary national attachments."

In today's world, the various social divisions and barriers imposed to living in society make the problem of belonging an asset in the struggles of daily life. The notion of community, as stated by Bauman (2003), becomes an aspect of sociability and safety, given the human consequences of globalization. This is why as Appadurai (1998, p. 39) suggests, "even state agencies and governments, are trying to monopolize the moral resources of community." Identity movements constitute an aspect of this fight, aiming to reduce the barriers among those who easily circulate in the fields of globalization (Bonanno, 2007) and those who are constantly trying to find a place in the world to overcome the limits for a future with more inclusion. To bring the topic of rural communities into focus, more than an academic activity is needed as a positive strategy to face the future.

RURAL COMMUNITY AS A CONSTRUCT: PERSISTENCE AND CHALLENGES

Rural community is one of the most critical topics in Sociology since the golden era of the Chicago School. This school made its contributions attempting to understand changes in a world which moved from the rural

area toward the city – a place of specialization, agglomeration, diversity, and urbanity. All this is in contrast to a world molded by principles and values that privilege proximity, cooperation, and collective commitment, according to practices built on daily solidarity and reciprocity in the boundaries of rurality. Practices most prized by small-sized communities, such as low population density and close bonds among individuals and domestic groups, made up the basis of an ideal type that contrasted with the new model of an urban world.

The cities that made it dynamic were seen as opposed to another ideal type of folk or rural life, and according to Sjoberg (1965) was never empirically revealed as such. The notion of that world "is the idea of community." Here again, community can be understood as abstract, highly mediated, and universal; however, as concrete, immediate and particular, as an ideal type, community and the rural world usually used as synonyms are situated in contrast to the urban, the city. In the new context, these communities would constitute the place for a provision of assets, such as goods and labor commodities, desirable and necessary for a good development of industries, cities and capitals. In that sense, the city becomes *the place*.

The essence of urban life is organization, specialization, and industrialization, contrasted to the essence of rural life; of close contact with nature; of the interdependence defined by work according to seasonal variations; and of basic requirements of subsistence and preferential uses of land, agricultural techniques, and particular ties. Thus, the model that contained a predictable dissolution of peasantry and consequently of peasant communities revealed itself as little effective in the long run. As stated by Goodman and Redclift (1981), this transformation and its consequences were postponed for an indefinite period, bringing those peasants to a situation of threatened permanence as also suggested by Garcia (1990).

Such a finding fed new demands and appeals for public policies, so that at last the communities and their populations would be recognized and legitimized and finally included as objects of public policies (Bonanno, 1987). Peasant movements that marked the 20th century raised an alert about the permanence of spaces, communities, social categories, and areas of production and knowledge, based traditionally on the uses of land and agriculture. These *rural spaces* were characterized by particular ways of using social-economical-environmental practices and were redefined, because of the reconceptualization of a world of qualities (Cavalcanti, 2006).

The rural quality attribute of the communities that is maintained according to a particular lifestyle has contributed to the reconfiguration of territories formed by counties. In the case of Brazil, these territories did

not exceed 20,000 inhabitants, as stated by Wanderley (2000). Such territories are characterized by close ties with agricultural practices and particular relationships with a culture defined by values inherent to peasant communities and are constituted in the core of rural life.

Conversely, advances in the consumer society and new contexts of production organization are generating a desire, an ideal of community and rurality under new pretenses and meaning in the fields of food production and an offer of amenities to urban populations.

RURAL COMMUNITY TERRITORIES OF TRADITIONS AND MEMORIES

Rural communities are reinvented as the guardians of the *natural resources* of earth, water, forests, and fauna, besides their traditional roles as farmers and maintainers of the community (Meillassoux, 1981, 1997). Rural communities that would be a place to shelter youngsters and the elderly in situations of risk or due to the fragile relationship between consumers and workers (Chayanov, 1985) continue to be required to answer to the demands of social, demographic, and environmental balance, according to practices recognized by peasant societies.

However, in spite of those aspects, rural communities were previously challenged by capitalism, under the expectation that upon the elimination of the symbolic framework that involved the ideal of communities, the main institutions of capitalism would deal with workers who were free from the ties of tradition and community duty.

As Bauman (2003, p. 33) stated (based on Marx and Engels), modern capitalism, in its efforts to transform all institutions that are concrete, would include "the self-sustained and self-reproductive" communities to make way for others forged according to the new factories' disciplines and routines. There was the expectation of a dissolution or disappearance of these communities and the feelings gathered in their populations and lifestyles, governed by the loyalties and respect to local customs and traditions. According to Bauman (2003, p. 34), "a rigorous disciplinary regimen, closely supervised, filled in the opening caused by the disappearance of natural understanding and consent, which formerly regulated the course of human life." However, these loyalties, attributed to the past, did not lose their symbolic power in the present.

Recently, the recovery, or as Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983) put it, the reinvention of the tradition of proximity, good practices and memory,

brought about another quality to the newly defined or reorganized territories following the appeals of a designation of origin for the new commodities that circulate in the markets and in the peoples' communal. It is through linkages between new capitals – symbolic, social, and economical – that such territories and rural communities have been gaining popularity now (Bourdieu, 1974). Primitive farmers and peasants developed strategies that promoted the protection of their territorial limits and the dissemination of practices valued by the group. The demarcation of territories according to such practices constitutes rights, although disputable, in view of the continuous advances of different types of capital.

In Brazil, these practices of delimitation and recognition of territories and communities that give life to these traditions are part of the new diversity map drawn up by the communities, according to ethnic development strategies that promoted rural communities made of black people as well as traditional and native communities recognized by agents of development and multiculturalism. Those previously nonacknowledged communities were included in the new flows of globalization. As spaces of leisure, environmental protection, conservation, acknowledgment, and control of biodiversity, these ideal communities are included among the new constructs of those who dream of a world of freedom, prosperity, and recognition.

These ideal communities refrain from being spaces of backwardness, and poverty constitute spaces of dynamicity and leisure in which new emerging social classes circulate. Furthermore, moved by recognition processes and the rights of traditional populations, united by ethnic contours of generation and reinterpretation of gender relationships (Wortmann, 1992), these communities are a target for new interpretations being studied in the field of family and youth studies also (Bokemeier, 1997). Equally, new lifestyles and the appeals of consumer society transform the new spaces of rural communities and their inhabitants. Thus, the recent globalization phase seems to signal to the various facets of rurality. Marsden, Murdoch, Low, Munton, and Flynn (1993, pp. 185–191) define such processes as leading to the existence of a *differentiating countryside*: *preserved*, *contested*, *paternalistic*, and *clientelist*.

The green conscience, the threats to biodiversity or to the planet's thermic regulation, and the increase in retirees who experience the benefits of a retirement fully guaranteed pension (Veiga, 2004) are promoting a new movement of populations from cities to fields, although exploitation and clientelist ties acknowledged by literature equally persist or are redefined. Referring to how these ties highlight factions of Brazilian peasantry and the peasants' restricted access to land, Forman (1975, p. 71) affirms "that controlled access to land requires Brazilian peasants to seek ties with people

who are more advantageously placed within the stratification system.'' For Meillassoux (1981, p. 3), ''the agricultural domestic community is an integrated form of social organization which has existed since the Neolithic period and upon which still depends an important part of the labor power necessary to the development of capitalism.''

BRAZILIAN TERRITORIES OF DIVERSITY

The agricultural development model adopted in Brazil during its colonization was based on slavery and monoculture and left few opportunities for subsistence crops and formation of rural communities. The sugar plantations and later cotton production and extensive cattle-raising determined the nondemocratic uses of national territory. The authoritarian model of slave control, which extended to the rural workers who succeeded them, reveals how the practices of integrating small farmers and the freedmen to the land were antidemocratic as Andrade (1973) suggests.

These limits, however, did not impede the formation of localities and small farms or communities, studied by Queiroz (1973) and Candido (1982) in the South of Brazil and by Wagley (1964) in the Amazon. These contributions are valuable; they reveal agricultural practices of sociability, mutual aid, and cultural patrimony that guaranteed the persistence of these communities through time. Other studies regarding the integration of immigrants of Japanese, Italian, and German origins also reveal how new communities were formed, supported by colonization projects aimed at ensuring coffee farms and other cultivations.

The cultural diversity and traditions celebrated in the globalization context reveal possibilities for processes of inclusion and the strengthening of the communities in which ethnic dimensions must be considered, proved by the specific case of fruticulture in the San Francisco Valley in the Brazilian Northeast. After 100 years of Japanese immigration in Brazil, these traditions continue to be highlighted in an environment where Northeastern and Italian immigrants are also included as elements of the prosperity encountered in certain spaces and territories of fruticulture exportation in the Northeastern Brazil (Cavalcanti, 1999; 2008; Pires, 2004).

In a discussion of community labels or concepts, analyzed by Caron and Sabourin (2003:147), ''Nowadays, the term community was retaken by community action programs and projects that supported family farmers by the Brazilian government.'' Many forms of cooperation arise, from mutual help practices to proximity networks, unions, syndicates, producer

associations, revealing a diversity of organizations that complement each other to build an organized action, delegate responsibilities, and organize producers in face of external demands.

Equally, there is a notion of community present in a fluid manner, as a democratic value of a new organized citizen movement in Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (Scherer-Warren & Ferreira, 2002, pp. 253–254). This agenda expresses the ideals of solidarity, and the material objective – the land – is not enough. Attaining these goals may require fights for social rights and the formation of *people*.

Lima and Wilkinson (2002, p. 30) also used the expression *organized territories* when analyzing scientific and technological support programs for the settlements of agrarian reform and family agriculture as promoters of the quality for competitive reinsertion of family agriculture in Brazil. As stated by Fialho (2006, p. 46),

> the fight for the acknowledgement of territories of so-called traditional rural populations by the national government, according to ethnic dimensions that mark the recent territories of diversities, such as indigenous, black rural communities, extrativistas (extract and gather groups) ribeirinhos (those who get their provisions from river borders), among others, have brought into surface the complexity and heterogeneity of a population that is generally categorized as rural.

Regarding black populations, Acevedo and Castro (1997, pp. 374–398, 1998) examine how black rural communities, based on over two centuries of occupation, distinguish themselves from traditional ones in Amazonian territories, moved by "the common need to conquer territories that enable these groups to be safeguarded from threats and build new ways of permanent social organization," this peasant group is integrated in a weave of sociocultural relationships based on history, the memory of the *quilombo* (a hiding place of runaway slaves), "incorporated in the present as a social project of remaining in the conquered lands."

THE RURAL COMMUNITY IN A FLUXIONAL, RISKY, AND INDIVIDUALIZED SOCIETY

Rural communities are generally said to be different from what Anderson established as imagined communities, although Anderson (1991) himself came to consider, "Actually, all the communities bigger than the primordial settlements where there was a face to face contact (and maybe even these) are imagined."

Given the limits of this research, the indication of these movements of construction and renewal of communities are processes only occurring in territories delimited by history, memory, and knowledge that make it possible to explain the permanent formation processes of imagined and real communities, capable of facing the challenges of our time.

However, the impact of capital on rural areas was a continuous dissolution of these communities. This caused problems for capital's developmental goals that were despised by the local workers. In addition, the industries were not committed to the community; their strong concentration was on production businesses, not on people.

The imposition of this production model, more and more, was attentive to productivity and strong worker control that caused constraints in the daily lives of the people, and therefore, the industries became a target of controversy. Thus, the multiple forms of resistance that emerged on the grounds of the factories or in agri-industrial fields signaled the feebleness of the model (Scott, 1979).

The challenges and conflicts that developed in this area of power were significant for unveiling the limits of a system that developed without concern for the future of the workers. As Shanin (1987) states, the deliberate dissolution of peasantry and the little attention given by the academy to the *demarches* of so-called peasant communities removed these societies from the sight and context of public policies and the state. The overexploitation of the workforce and the imposition of rent requirements (Wolf, 1970) on family farms, as well as the types of control over workers, expose the perverse face of the new routine imposed by the capital and the conditions of this social question. As Murmis (2003, p. 74) points out [my translation from the Spanish text],

> To handle the social question today requires the search for ways that enable a confluence between the problems from different social layers and a variety of institutions. Knowing the diversity, the fragile ties and the strong bonds can help us to incorporate the demands and focused projects, the universal components our nations need.

In a globalization context, the origin of commodities is questioned, as are the workers who along with the commodities make up the new social actor subjected to outside control. The strict limits on demands and lack of expectation of reliance in a risky society caused a narrowing of the relationship between producers and consumers, as well as increasing control over workers (Giddens, 1991). In his analyses regarding the flows that make up the network society, Manuel Castells (1996) draws attention to the way technological innovations contributed to great changes in the production of

commodities and services that develop under the coordination of commodity chains that controlled building and circulation processes. Equally, for Lash and Urry (1994), the movements generated by the capital promote the circulation of commodities and workers who leave their communities and become integrated in the wheels of globalization. Many communities stay out of this apparently global dynamic. Alongside new regional hierarchies, there are vast territories that tend to become more and more excluded from the large dynamics that feed the growth of global economy.

Conversely, when analyzing new patterns of farming and rural livelihood emerging in Latin America in the 21st century, Long and Roberts (2005, p. 77) call attention to the large impact of the expansion in the production of soy in Brazil, in the areas of implementation, and indirectly through the expulsion of existing rural population and expose the frailty of these new rural spaces; "even those extracting a living from agriculture maintain houses in town and more basic shelter in the rural hinterland." The same is also observed in the fruticulture region in the San Francisco Valley (Cavalcanti, Mota, & Silva, 2002).

However, this apparent exclusion of rural communities from these large capital movements is contested. Empirical evidence regarding the status of these communities in the process of building new sustainability and rurality models are challenging the new North/South relationships. Analysis of the different processes of new ruralities and urbanization aspects promoted by the expansion of cultivations that affect the rural livelihoods of the involved populations should be undertaken.

The implementation of environmentally healthy practices and the provision of spaces and natural amenities, "sources of energy and biodiversity," promote a super valorization or reinvention of these communities (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 316) as promoters of quality of life and a healthier environment.

RURAL COMMUNITY MEANINGS AND RELEVANCE FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

The differences and inequalities that expand with the globalization process, accentuated in their aspects of culture, gender, ethnicity, nation, religion, generation and the context of labor through specializations, qualifications and restricted access to labor markets, technology and knowledge must be considered (Long, 1996, p. 37). It is essential to inquire about the impact of these conditions in the course of subjects and communities they are bound to,

in specific conjunctures and historical contexts, which is an economy of signs and spaces (Lash & Urry, 1994; Silva, 1999; Sigaud, 1992) in which the mobility and the permanent itinerancy of the subjects are registered.

The social movements that emerged in the three past decades of the 20th century (Scherer-Warren, 1984) set the ground for contending how unsustainable the adopted development models were and still are. The green movements and those of fighting for the land and other natural resources signaled critical issues related to the use of the environment, water, and labor. There were significant changes in how to live and guarantee the subsistence and survival in contemporary societies. Changes that took place contributed to the generation of more unsustainable forms of development because of a conception of the world without recognizing the transitory character of the available resources and the need to discuss the choices made (Braun & Castree, 1998; Sen & Foster, 1997). For thousands of years and especially in the past centuries, predatory ways of penetrating the globe's natural layers were accentuated to attend to the demands of a privileged part of the population.

The consequences of these actions for other groups were not questioned, and they ended up losing control of their own subsistence. Thus, particular ways of conceiving the world and managing its resources lead to the destruction of communities, cultures, local knowledge, practices of territory demarcation, and the acknowledgment of sociability spaces of diverse populations. The numerous social movements that were organized in the last decades of the 20th century to contest the abuses on populations and the environment were anchored on proposals that were polarized between *save nature* and *manage nature* in this mine field of ambiguities.

In these movements, barriers to the use of resources and knowledge were contested, considering the dominating structures of power. Exercising citizenship is a battlefield between those who control the commodities and the landless, the roofless, and the justice-less people. At this point, it is necessary to point to the role of community for the governance of natural resources. The governance in this field requires various partnerships, as those that bring together state activities and communities, or in Lawrence (2005, p. 149) word, when "state activities are supplemented by a network of self organized actors" or self-governing communities, and are considered the core of sustainable development and democratic life.

More and more, it is recognized that globalization, when trying to homogenize the forms of consumption, means of communication, and circulation of exotic foods to make them known in different parts of the world at an unprecedented speed and standardization, makes the

limitations to some and excess to others more visible (Friedland, 1994). Evidence suggests that a great part of the world's population works to ensure the quality of these commodities, according to compatible standards and images of the lifestyles that are structured under the labels of quality of life (Featherstone, 1991) and facilities for the flow that enable transportation to previously *unimagined communities*. Territories are constructed according to a process of invention of traditions and community memories, including community historical representations, as aggregated values to the services and other goods produced to consumers.

CONCLUSIONS

The analytic effort herein carried out also makes apparent the possibilities and forms of resistance to the barriers imposed by those who hold the power. It is also necessary to realize how powerful these transversal alliances are among those inspired by the desires and needs for the permanence of rural communities and others that are reconstructed through identity processes and who fight for inclusion in new labor worlds, for the acknowledgment of rights, territories, and cultures.

The imagined communities and the *real* material ones that resist continuous exclusion that come about in the daily lives of men, women, elderly, youngsters, and children in our times reveal processes of identification that emerge, because the hard part of the world of factories and work became meaningless for many who were excluded and strayed from the present, as Meillassoux (1997) would convey. Thus, it is possible to state that rural communities, in their new and old acceptations, transformed and updated, are continuously strengthened in their virtuous effects in spite of the capital's continuous threats and advances. Hope remains that meaningful institutions should be constituted for a prosperous future, with equity, acknowledgment of rights, and the triumph over hardships, for this is how we are inspired.

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CHAPTER 10

ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN RURAL AUSTRALIA

Kirrily Jordan, Branka Krivokapic-Skoko and Jock Collins

ABSTRACT

Non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants have transformed Australian rural landscape through the construction of public and private spaces expressing their cultural heritage. These sites can also significantly impact the dynamics of social cohesion and intercultural relations in multicultural rural communities. This chapter links heritage and multiculturalism in rural settings and explores the potential role of the sites built by rural ethnic minorities in facilitating intra- and intergroup social networks. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part briefly explores the literature on immigration and heritage, place, belonging and social cohesion, and the relationship between social capital and the built environment. The second part outlines preliminary empirical findings from Griffith in New South Wales. Using the concepts of intercultural dialogue and bonding and bridging social capital, the chapter explores the role of the places built by Italian immigrants in facilitating social networks and improved relations within and between Griffith's ethnic communities.

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INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, issues of ethnicity and diversity have tended to be more associated with urban settings. There are some recent indicators of shifts among scholars and policy makers in terms of recognizing multiculturalism, ethnicity, social cohesion, and intercultural exchange within the rural environment. Ethnic diversity in rural areas has been signposted by a considerable debate examining relations between the concepts of "otherness," marginalization, ethnic landscape, and rurality (Holloway, 2007; Neal, 2002; Williams, 2007; Ray & Reed, 2005; Knowles, 2008; Garland & Chakraborti, 2007).

There has been a strong focus on the role of rurality as a signifier of an exclusive and white national identity. For instance, Agyeman and Spooner (1997) addressed the nature of racism in the context of the English countryside and referred to a series of reports of the 1990s which found an extensive amount of racial violence, harassment and a resistance to the arrival of incomers into rural communities. Similarly, Holloway (2007), Neal (2002), Williams (2007), Ray and Reed (2005), Knowles (2008), and Garland and Chakraborti (2007) investigated the experience of other ethnic groups within the English countryside, highlighting the problems with increasing ethnic diversity in the predominantly white populations. They all pointed to the need to look beyond the idyllic and static representations of the rural environment and combine this romanticized notion with the reality of ethnic exclusivity.

There has been comparatively little research on immigration, ethnic diversity and rurality in Australia, or on the relationship between immigrants and place in these settings. We argue that the contemporary research on rural ethnic landscape should be broadened to discuss the impact of different ethnic groups on the built environment of rural townships. The immigrants settling down in rural areas have transformed the rural landscapes through the construction of public and private spaces expressing their cultural heritage. These sites can significantly impact the dynamics of social cohesion and intercultural relations in multicultural rural communities. This chapter links the built environment and immigration in rural Australia and explores the potential role of the sites built by rural ethnic minorities in facilitating intra- and intergroup social networks. The built environment may be seen as a "form of expression." It is a "mode of communication through which people express to others something about themselves, their values, aspirations, needs and desires" (Lalich, 2003, p. 41). Viewing the built environment as a manuscript of social and cultural

processes, the Australian built landscape is a rich source of information about major demographic, cultural, and political change. However, until recently the places built by non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants in Australia have remained largely overlooked in studies of the built environment, particularly in rural areas.

This chapter first outlines the literature on the immigration, place, belonging, and social cohesion, and the relationship between social capital and the built environment. The chapter then outlines some preliminary empirical findings from applying these concepts to the sites built by Italian immigrants to Griffith, a regional city in south-western National Trust of Australia (NSW). Griffith is an outstanding example of a regional town characterized by a high degree of cultural diversity. Based on preliminary fieldwork involving a small pilot survey carried out in August 2006 and in-depth interviews completed in January 2007, the chapter investigates the significance of the recently built Italian Museum and Cultural Centre to Italian immigrants to Griffith and their descendants, as well as the role of the Museum in intercultural relations. It also explores the social significance of Griffith's four Italian club houses.

IMMIGRATION AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Winikoff (1992) has argued that "the material evidence of ethnic minority settlement is rarely celebrated" in Australia and that there is "an obvious bias in favour of British influence" in research on the Australian built environment (Lalich, 2003, p. 3). This lack of attention has been partially redressed in recent years with a growing literature on "cultural landscapes" recognizing the places built by non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants (Armstrong, 1997, 2002). This literature has explored the ways in which landscapes can be read as "texts," based on the "proposition that places/landscapes are physical representations of public history awaiting interpretation" (Armstrong, 2002, p. 206).

A major theme within this literature is the sense of place individuals and communities create through enacting their cultural traditions in the spaces they inhabit (Armstrong, 2002; Babacan, 2005). Hage (1997) has described this as part of a process of "home building" which may involve changes to the physical landscape as well as changes to the social landscape through language, food and cultural practices in an attempt to build a comfortable and familiar space in which immigrants feel they can belong.

Some of the places built by non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants in Australia have become iconic sites or landscapes in their own right. Perhaps the most obvious of the places built by immigrant minorities are the grand places of worship, such as the Auburn Gallipoli Mosque in Sydney's West, or the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple in Woolgoolga on the north coast of NSW. But immigrant minorities have also built less immediately striking facilities including cultural centers, social clubs, schools, and aged care facilities. Together, these sites can be understood as "multicultural monuments" (Dunn, 1999) – records of Australia's cultural diversity in its built environment.

Immigrant minorities have also had a dramatic influence on Australia's commercial spaces. In some instances, the businesses established by immigrants have become iconic places in the local landscape. As Collins (2003) has described, in the mid-twentieth century the Greek milk bar and Chinese restaurant became key symbols of immigrant diversity in almost every Australian suburb and country town. Indeed, he suggests that in this way ethnic entrepreneurs have been the "vanguard of cultural diversity" in this country, pushing forward into Anglo-Celtic Australia at the front lines (Collins, 2003, p. 10).

Increasingly, the iconic places built by immigrant minorities are being seen as assets by local authorities (Collins & Kunz, 2005). For example, individual sites and "ethnic precincts" – such as Chinatowns, Spanish Quarters, and Little Italy's (Anderson, 1990; Kinkead, 1993) – may be promoted as tourist attractions, with the "culture industries" such as tourism and the arts seen as the new engine of economic growth in global cities (Zukin, 1995) as well as rural areas (Noussia, 2003). In this context, Helzer (2001) has moved beyond seeing the ethnic landscape as a simple indicator of the persistence of identity among group members. In exploring the emergence of a "Cal-Ital" landscape in northern California's wine industry she outlines how efforts to introduce consumers to Italian wines have led to reinvention, "cultural packaging" and marketing of Italian heritage.

One useful way of understanding the role of place in interethnic relations is through the concept of social capital. The usefulness of the concept of social capital to a study of social cohesion is most obvious in the notions of "bonding" and "bridging" social capital, where bonding social capital is understood as strong ties within a group and bridging social capital is understood as weaker ties between groups (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Onyx & Bullen, 2000; Putnam, 2000). Characteristics of bonding social capital include trust and networks of reciprocity within the group, whereas characteristics of bridging social capital include trust of strangers (Putnam, 2000) and tolerance of difference (Onyx & Bullen, 2000).

The benefits of strong "bonding" social capital have been much debated. Putnam (2000), for example, has noted that while networks and norms are usually good for those within the network, they can have negative effects on those outside. He suggests that while bonding social capital creates "strong in-group loyalty," it "may also create strong out-group antagonism" (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). That is, close communal ties may hinder interaction between groups. However, Onyx and Bullen (2000) argue that while strong bonding within communities may be associated with exclusivity and intolerance of others, this is not necessarily the case. In research conducted in several Australian communities, they found a "small but positive" relationship between strong connections within communities and tolerance of diversity (Onyx & Bullen, 2000, p. 38). Hence, they argue that it is possible to have both strong bonding capital and bridging between communities, although "we cannot … expect it to follow" (Onyx & Bullen, 2000, p. 38). Leonard and Onyx (2004) argue further that strong bonds within communities may actually facilitate stronger bonds between groups, with society being a "mesh" of bonded communities with some strong ties between them. Interestingly, Onyx and Bullen (2000) suggest that while rural communities are likely to have strong bonding social capital, they are less likely than urban areas to have significant bridging social capital, so that minority groups in rural areas are less likely to receive support.

Studies of the relationship between social capital and the built environment have explored the social impacts of neighbourhood design (Leyden, 2003) and urban and regional museums (Burton & Griffin, 2006). As Burton and Griffin (2006) note, in positing a link between buildings and social capital a further conceptual point must be clarified. That is, unless the previous stock of social capital is known, it cannot be assumed that the current stock was entirely created by the presence of the building. Hence, rather than measuring the stock of social capital, a more productive approach is to examine how the "programs, policies, and activities" associated with the building lead to increases or decreases in social capital (Burton & Griffin, 2006, p. 4).

ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: GRIFFITH, NEW SOUTH WALES

Griffith, a small rural town of around 24,000 people, is located in the Riverina region south-west of NSW. It is one of the largest wine and vegetable production areas in Australia. It has a long history of multiculturalism, with

the Wiradjuri, the Indigenous owners of the land, joined by Anglo-Celtic immigrants in the early nineteenth century and southern European immigrants (particularly Italians) since the early 1900s. The first Italian immigrants to Griffith were mainly Trevisani from the Veneto region of northern Italy. Subsequent immigrants came from many other regions of Italy: before World War II they were mostly from the northern provinces, especially from the north-east of Veneto and Friuli (Piazza, 2005; Huber, 1981). Following World War II a new wave of Italian immigrants arrived, this time mostly from the southern regions, particularly Calabria and Sicilia (Piazza, 2005, p. 10, 19). Those from the south eventually came to outnumber those from the north (Kabaila, 2005, p. 53). Other Italian immigrants came from Abruzzo, Toscana, Piemonte, Marche, and Campagna (Piazza, 2005, p. 10, 19). Recent estimates put the proportion of the population in Griffith with Italian ancestry at up to 60 per cent of the total population (Sims, 2004) and some "Italian" families are now into their fifth generation in Australia (Kabaila, 2005).

The influence of Italian immigrants on Griffith's built environment is evident in, among other things, the Italian Coro and Yoogali clubs, the Italian Museum and Cultural Centre, the Scalabrini retirement village and the Our Lady of Pompeii and Sacred Heart Catholic Churches. In addition, many of the town's public buildings were built by Italian immigrants and their descendants. Although the evidence is subtle, several Italian immigrants have also expressed their heritage through "ethnic nostalgia" in their homes (Kabaila, 2005, p. 127). For example, several of the homes in Griffith have adopted Italian elements such as elaborate metalwork fences or arched verandas. On the outskirts of town, the Italian influence on some farming houses is also apparent, incorporating Italian-style columns or statues of lions, the latter a symbol of Venice.

Construction of the Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre was completed in 2003. A 2005 study of local history recommended the Museum be listed on local and state heritage registers for its "high significance to the Italian community" (Kabaila, 2005). The museum traces the history of Italian immigrants to Griffith and the surrounding region. Photographs and artifacts point to the central role of Italian immigrants in the economic and cultural development of the town. They are a clear illustration that Italian immigrants and their descendants not only belong to Griffith but were an integral part of its growth.

The design of the building was deliberately inclusive. It is intended to reflect both Griffith's Italian heritage and Australian rurality, with the front of the building consisting of Italian columns and arches with a *torre*, or bell

Fig. 1. The Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre.

tower, that is reminiscent of building designs in Italian villages (Kabaila, 2005, p. 151). The back of the building with its corrugated iron roof represents a common rural Australian shed (Fig. 1). One of the members of the original museum committee, a middle-aged man with Italian heritage, here called Lorenzo, described the significance of the design:

> This was meant to mould the two communities together, the Anglo-Saxon and the Italian … the building had the arches and the tiled roof at the entrance as a portico, and that's typically Italian, and then the rest of the building is in zinc alum iron, which is styled like a shearing shed, like an early Riverina shearing shed, so that the two came together … Rather than build a typically Italian building we just wanted to show the community that we wanted, we weren't being divisive, and here it is, a building that it achieved, that the two cultures could meet and live together. (Interview G2)

A major event that occurs in the grounds adjacent to the museum is the annual *Festa Delle Salsicce* (Salami Festival), organized by the Italian Museum Committee. The festival is a fundraiser for the museum and was originally conceived as a way to showcase the museum to the public. The festival was first held in 2003 and has grown steadily, in 2008 attracting

around 600 people including locals of both Italian and Anglo-Celtic heritage, as well as visitors from other states (Pattison, 2008).

The relationship of the museum to social cohesion among Italians and Italian Australians in Griffith is complex. According to Joe, an elderly Italian immigrant who is on the current museum committee, one aim of the museum is to remind young Italian Australians about their cultural backgrounds and the heritage of Griffith's Italian pioneers (Interview G5, not his real name). The museum's visitor book shows that the site has certainly been visited by these younger generations, particularly those attending with school groups. As well as being important for a sense of identity and belonging for first generation immigrants, places built in their new environment can also be central to the transmission of culture to future generations. This has important implications for cultural continuity and the intergenerational sustainability of minority cultures in multicultural environments.

When the original idea of the museum was proposed, there was widespread enthusiasm from within Griffith's Italian-origin community. For example, many Italian groups – including regional associations (such as the Abruzzo, Calabrian group, Trevisani, Veronesi, Vicentini, and Fogolar Furlan), armed forces groups (such as the Alpini and Marinai D'Italia) and sports and social groups (such as local *bocce* clubs, the Italian Sports Club and the Italian Republic Day Committee) – generously donated funds (Piazza, 2005, p. 53). But the museum has also aroused tension and division within the Italian-origin community. For example, there is some perception that the museum is largely a celebration of northern Italian heritage. This highlights a longstanding tension between northern and southern Italian immigrants to this area. As current committee member Angelo explains, the broader Italian community in Griffith:

> thought that there was an overbearance of northerners in the committee, or not only on the committee, but also what was going to be displayed … So that alienated the groups from the south, who thought 'this is a northern thing'. And I don't think that's waned yet, I think that's still there. They feel that the committee, that it's mainly the northerners that want to … establish it and therefore put their ideas which is a bit of a shame. (Interview G7, not his real name)

In addition, with the museum's curator deciding on a minimalist display, a large number of items donated to the museum by the local community have been retained in storage. Many people have consequently been upset that their cherished belongings have not been included in the museum's public display.

The *Festa Delle Salsicce* adds yet another layer of complexity to the impact of the museum on relations within the Italian-origin community. For example, the festival involves traditional Italian music, dancing and food, with food and wine for the day donated by local businesses and an Italian-style lunch cooked by local women. These processes can be seen as part of community-building through shared traditions as well as an operationalizing of informal networks in organizing and preparing for the day. In this way, it can be seen that the museum has played a role in developing social networks among some Italians and Italian-Australians, whereas at the same time decisions over the museum's display have played into existing tensions and arguably undermined trust among other members of the community.

The Italian Museum and Cultural Centre also impacts the relations between ethnic groups in Griffith. Visitors include locals from Anglo-Celtic, Italian, and Pacific Islander backgrounds, as well as diverse groups from local primary schools. The *Festa Delle Salsicce* provides opportunities for participatory intercultural exchange. A scoping survey of those at the festival asked people if they thought that the festival was meaningful, and, if so, why. Many said it was an opportunity to catch up with old friends and spend time with other long-time residents, with one respondent commenting that "We're all local people, part and parcel of our community" (Interview G5). A number of people also commented on the mixing of cultures. For example, one respondent argued that:

> [It's meaningful] because it's all the different nationalities … it's nice and harmonious, there's no hate … For integration it's really great". (Interview G8)

Another suggested that:

> [It's meaningful because it's] seeing the heritage of the past, Italian heritage, and there's other people who get involved too. It's very pleasant to see that – everybody amalgamates. (Interview G3)

The opportunity provided by the *Festa Delle Salsicce* to strengthen and develop informal networks between the Anglo-Celtic and Italian-origin communities suggests that the festival, and hence the museum, can have an important role in interethnic dialogue.

Although the Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre is a relatively new building, Griffith has been home to a number of "Italian" club houses for a much longer period. Although these were originally established by Griffith's Italian immigrants, today they are recognized much more as public recreational clubs. There are four Italian club houses in Griffith and surrounds. The first to be built was the Italo-Australian Club, established in

1937 at the Coronation Hall. The club was forced to close during World War II, and when it re-opened after the war it became the Coronation Club. Today it exists as the Coro Club. In 1946, both the Yoogali and Yoogali Catholic Clubs were opened, followed by the Hanwood Catholic Club in 1955.

The clubs have been key places where Griffith's Italian immigrants have forged their sense of belonging. In particular, they have been used to maintain cultural traditions such as *bocce* and Italian card games while also speaking Italian dialects. This allowed Griffith's Italian immigrants to create a space to feel at home and secure in their new environment. For example, Joe, the elderly Italian immigrant referred to earlier, suggests that without these clubs, he would not have stayed in Australia:

> There was a dance there [at the Coronation Hall] on a Saturday night and that's how we met, yes, even that was something that was lovely to newcomer. If it wasn't those for those places there, I would not stay here in Australia, no, I would go back to Italy. Otherwise live here like animals, you know, you got nothing. So, we started to build things … and started to build up here a good community until we felt … it was good to live here. (Interview G5)

As Armstrong (1994) has argued, such sites are important parts of the inheritance of contemporary society and facilitate a way of life or continuing cultural practices. They can play a valuable role in transmitting culture, educating the public, and facilitating social and cultural exchange. The clubs Italian immigrants built in Griffith can be regarded as an adaptation of a traditional *osteria* and simultaneously as media for partial integration (Huber, 1981, p. 56). These processes can be seen as part of immigrant adaptation to a new Australian landscape where ethnic groups who build their own community facilities demonstrate that they have "roots in transferred cultures" as well as being firmly embedded in the local context and social space (Lalich, 2003, p. 11).

Our fieldwork also suggested that the four Italian clubs were built, at least in part, as a response to the exclusion Italian immigrants felt from mainstream society. Tony, an elderly Italian immigrant who arrived in Griffith as a young man, stated explicitly that:

> The reason why the Italian clubs were first initiated was that we were not allowed to join the Ex-Servicemen's Club, or what was then the Jondaryan Club. I was barred from entering the Ex-Servicemen's Club after a football game. I was playing football for Griffith, and all the team went in after the game and I was stopped at the door. So I then took on board the Italian clubs and patronized them. (Interview G1, not his real name)

It can be argued that the establishment of the Italian clubs was, therefore, a way of claiming citizenship through the social use of space. Like the Italian

Museum and Cultural Centre, Griffith's Italian clubs tell a complex story about place and social cohesion in an ethnically mixed rural city. A number of the clubs have had a historic association with Italians from a particular region. For example, when the Yoogali Catholic Club was opened, it specifically excluded southern Italians. Today, the membership is more mixed, but the members who are Italian migrants are still predominantly from the north. In contrast, the Yoogali Club, located immediately next door to the Yoogali Catholic Club, is today seen as a predominantly southern Italian club. The Hanwood Catholic Club has taken a different trajectory. Tony, the elderly immigrant introduced earlier, suggests that the club was instrumental in building relations between northern and southern Italians, as well as aiding integration with the non-Italian club members:

> The Hanwood Club was in trouble and it looked like closing down … There was disenchantment with the board of directors or committee at the time … [there were] Italian factions from different regions of Italy. At the time the different factions wouldn't fratonise. (Interview G1)

Although being flavored with intra-ethnic tensions and competition, the Italian clubs have made a point of being open to non-Italians. Today, members of the clubs are of diverse ethnic backgrounds, from Anglo-Celtic to Pacific Islanders. For these reasons, the clubs are no longer popularly known as being "Italian." The mixed membership of the clubs has provided a forum for members to meet and socialize with people from other cultures, as well as helping the Italian immigrants to make connections beyond the Italian community.

CONCLUSIONS

The buildings examined in this chapter are just a few of the sites through which the Griffith region's non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants and their descendants have enacted and expressed their belonging to place. The relationship between the immigrant impact on the built environment and social cohesion warrants careful consideration. The concepts of bonding and bridging social capital are useful avenues with which to explore this relationship. The research presented here highlights the broad issues. The Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre may have facilitated some cultural exchange between younger and older generations in the Italian community and has formed part of the town's social infrastructure, providing physical infrastructure and social services as well as a place for

social encounter. However, it has also re-inflamed old intra-ethnic tensions. Although some of the Italian clubs have at times been associated with one or another regional group, they have also opened possibilities for intra-ethnic dialogue and the development of social capital within Griffith's diverse Italian community.

The study also draws attention to the potential of built sites to generate interaction and exchange between cultural groups. The Italian museum serves an educational purpose for visitors from all cultural backgrounds. Through the *Festa Delle Salsicce*, it is also a site that enables the engagement of people from non-Italian backgrounds in an active experience of Italian food, culture and traditions, and a space of substantial intercultural exchange between Italian and Anglo-Celtic Australians. By opening their doors to non-Italians at a time when Anglo-Celtic clubs denied Italians membership, the Italian clubs have also provided space for the development of bridging social capital in an ethnically diverse rural setting.

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CHAPTER 11

THE REGENERATIVE POWER OF OLDER MIGRANTS? A CASE STUDY OF HOKKAIDO, JAPAN

Kayo Murakami, Rose Gilroy and Jane Atterton

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores how the retiring Japanese "baby boomer" generation is rethinking the role of later life and potentially provides a new future for depopulated areas in rural Japan. Drawing on a case study of the Hokkaido prefecture, the chapter highlights three points. First, the baby boomer generation in Japan has very different ideas about the meaning of later life, and the spatial implications of these may present opportunities for regeneration. Secondly, hard-pressed rural local authorities are looking to exploit these opportunities to build a new socioeconomic base from the needs and aspirations of older people. Third, the chapter questions what kind of rural futures might be built.

INTRODUCTION

While the aging of the population is a global issue felt in the developed and developing world (Harper, 2006), the ratio of older to not old in Japan coupled with the rapidity of its shift from a young to an old society

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has led to its position as the first ''hyper aging society'' (see Coulmas, 2007 for a detailed and thoughtful analysis). However, and perhaps uniquely among developed countries, the political and cultural ethos of Japan has made it unwilling or unable to balance this trend by encouraging large-scale immigration of economically active foreign-born people (Sorensen, 2006).

Japan is not only a super aging society but also a super urbanized one with almost 80 percent of Japanese living in cities[1] whose richer education and employment opportunities continue to draw younger people away from the rural areas leading to further depopulation and an increase in the average age in their areas of origin. Both the key trends of aging and urbanization have happened within the lifespan of the *dankai*[2] (post-war baby boomers born in 1947–1949) giving this group a particularly prominent role as shapers of cultural and social change. Having been part of the urban shift in their earlier years in the 1970s and 1980s, the *dankai* generation now coming to retirement is reconsidering the possibility of life in the countryside and thus is providing a possible new future for rural places. This chapter considers the potential for rural areas to regenerate through capturing wealthy footloose older people. It begins by considering the characteristics of these ''new'' older people and the reasons why rural living appeals to many of them. How is Japan preparing itself for this new phenomenon and can the failing economic base of rural areas be transformed by their choices? Through a case study of Hokkaido, we explore how one rural prefecture is hoping to cash in on the baby boomers through multi-habitation.

WHAT IS NEW ABOUT OLD AGE?

Over the past decade, new narratives of older people have emerged, such as ''third age'' and the ''new old'' (Huber & Skidmore, 2003; Campbell, 2003), influenced by the development of more pluralized and diverse forms of old age (Phillipson, 1998). In particular, baby boomers born in the aftermath of World War II are expected to revolutionize later life (Huber & Skidmore, 2003), bringing to it consumer habits built in an era of unprecedented affluence and libertarian ideas that, at each stage of their life, have created social change (Lowe & Speakman, 2006).

These concepts of the baby boomer generation have been built largely by western observers but are they also applicable to the *dankai*? Like their western counterparts, Japanese baby boomers are the first generation to experience old age *en masse*. Like their peers, they were the protest

generation and formed local citizens' movements. Coming into the labor market in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were the engine of the new Japanese economy combining an aspiration to lifetime employment with company loyalty (Coulmas, 2007).

Like their western peers, they are wealthier than their parent's generation. It is anticipated that the savings of the *dankai* (what is termed "silver" money) amounts to an estimated $1,100–1,300 billion or 8–9 percent of the total individual savings and financial assets in Japan (Japan Center for Economic Research, 2006). Research in the United Kingdom and the United States reveals that older people traditionally spend much less than younger people possibly because their appetite for consumption is sated or because they lack the financial competence to buy. However, there is a suggestion that this pattern may be changing with the baby boomer generation continuing their love affair with spending (Gilleard & Higgs, 2000) and increasingly likely to use their resources for their own benefit rather than pass them on as inheritance (Lowe & Speakman, 2006). Manufacturers and service providers clearly anticipate a growth in luxury products and services as well as new markets around health and care services, specialist housing, leisure, lifelong learning, assistive technologies, and mobility devices. Such a consumer boom is predicated upon the image of older person as spender not saver, which runs contrary to evidence from a recent Japanese survey that revealed that older people are already nervous that their personal wealth and state pension may not maintain their accustomed standard of living (Cabinet Office of Japan, 2005). This anxiety may be the cause of the 80 percent of the *dankai* who say they hope to continue to work after retirement; however, statistics reveal that there is generally a greater appetite for work among older Japanese. Statistics for 2002, for example, show that before the "retirement" of the *dankai*, the labor force participation rate for Japanese men aged 65 and over was 31.1 percent and 13.2 percent for women. This compares to participation rates for British older men and women at 7.8 percent and 9.3 percent and for older Americans at 17.8 percent and 9.9 percent respectively (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, 2004; Coulmas, 2007).

A very different way to consider labor market participation is to reflect on the professed desire for personal development ("*ikigai*," literally, a search for the meaning of life), which is also cited as motivation for continued work. This may suggest that the desire to work among older Japanese may be a catalyst for work opportunities that concentrate on social engagement and personal development rather than moneymaking. It also points to greater creativity in strategic economic thinking, for what Huber and Skidmore

(2003, p. 13) call "the harness[ing of] elderpreneurship by creating new models of economic participation that allow older people to use their skills and assets." It is useful to reflect on the concept of *kanreki* which celebrates that on reaching 60 years of age, a person enters into a second childhood having completed the life cycle marked out by the Chinese zodiac. In a society where 1 million people have already reached 90 years or more and centenarians number 33,000 (*Japan Times*, 2007), an obvious question is what is old about reaching 60 – should the boundaries of old age be pushed back to start perhaps at 70 or later? Or does reaching 60 have new resonance – is it an opportunity to begin a new life with different goals? This new phenomenon of mass aging calls into question the dominant work-based model of life that saw people preparing for work, working and retiring with no real function. A new model is needed that allows education and employment to be entered and re-entered over time perhaps with new goals and motivations. Greater prosperity and mobility of older people also bring new temporal and spatial implications to the concept of multiple life courses. To prepare for this challenge, in April 2007, the Japanese Cabinet Office launched a major study on "multiple life courses."

SPATIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DANKAI CHOICES

The dankai are above all an urban group with half of the 7 million cohort living in the three major metropolitan areas of Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. However, according to the City Regions Report 2006 (Japan Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, 2006), 40 percent are willing to change living places when they retire. Key questions are where are they going, what are the impacts on the host areas, and how might spatial planning respond?

As most Japanese house construction is in wood, there is a general expectation that property needs to be replaced after 30 years. For some urban older people, the choice is to relocate to city center areas from the suburbs fueling the present building boom in high-rise apartment blocks with caretakers and CCTV cameras. Others are making greater step changes by moving to small towns in the rural regions as well as less densely populated rural settlements in coastal and mountainous areas. Some have links with these areas through birthplaces where their old parents still live. For those without a local connection, relocation is frustrated by the system

of landownership, community, family, and social patterns that make many absent owners unwilling to sell or let houses in rural villages.

If the city presents greater opportunities for cultural and consumption activities, the countryside offers a chance to get in touch with nature and return to some quintessential Japan. But why choose one when both are possible? The idea of "multi-habitation" (*koryu-kyoju*) – retaining the first home in the metropolitan areas while owning or renting a second home in the more remote rural areas – is based on an expectation of an increasing number of retirees with time and money who will choose to live both urban and rural lifestyles at different times. Highly developed transport networks mean that travel between two homes is realistic, and a surplus of housing (and consequent decline in land and house prices) in rural areas provides a rich choice of both dwelling type and location. This multi-habitation could be dismissed as fueling British style holiday home ownership with its associations of minimal social and economic engagement in the rural community and negative impacts on local services for year-round dwellers. Clearly some of this may well occur, but it is hoped that that by owning properties, newcomers will become engaged in local community activities and will contribute to the local rural economy, through buying locally grown produce and locally made goods, thus stimulating local production and labor markets.

Multi-habitation not only provides a "have it all" solution to the choice generation but may represent a compromise between husband and wife who through the working years build very different lives. The Japanese *sarariman* works long hours, socializes in bars and restaurants with his male colleagues after work, and returns home late at night. On retirement, men are faced with limited or no social networks in their community and may now be looking for opportunities to engage with other people. This has fueled the rapid growth of retirement associations by big corporations that now exist throughout Japan (Coulmas, 2007) and give rise to, potentially, a new work force for the burgeoning voluntary sector. Women of this generation were more likely to give up work after childbirth and consequently built neighborhood social and support networks. On retirement, they are faced with the "wet-fallen-leaves husbands" (Yonemura, 1994) who stay at home all day and follow their wives everywhere. The idea of multi-habitation could be a compromise solution that fulfills needs for both husband and wife and also balances the need of the squeeze generation to care for their (possibly) frail parents living in the rural areas and to provide support for their own children juggling full-time work and child care in the city. There

remains a challenge for rural areas to understand the needs of urban older women and build a strategy that will attract them as willing, rather than grudging, migrants.

PROMOTING "MULTI-HABITATION" AS A SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The concept of "multi-habitation" has three components: "long-term holiday," "themed tourism," and the "promotion of permanent residency." The first component has a long history in rural areas that have been promoting rural landscapes to holiday makers. Using subsidies from Central Government, many rural local municipalities have built publicly owned hotels and cottages with "*onsen*" (hot springs), to which has been added welfare and educational facilities for the local communities. Other activities, ranging from traditional cookery schools to guided hiking, have also been added to encourage holiday makers to stay longer. This type of holiday merges into "themed tourism," which needs more institutionalized arrangement in the form of branding areas, continuity, and consistency in selected activities and local community participation. Another strand of this is recruiting migrants into first-time farming through activities ranging from farm stays for visitors to training for would-be farmers.

Attracting new permanent residents is the cherished aim of many depopulated areas, but a weak infrastructure to support land and property sales has frustrated this. To overcome this, the local municipalities have begun to act as conduits for information exchange between rural sellers and urban buyers. Several local municipalities have launched "*akiya* (vacant house) banks," internet websites that provide regularly updated information on houses available for sale or rent. The "Rural Living Guide: Promotion of Multi-Habitation,"[3] launched by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication and maintained by the Research Committee for Depopulated Areas, is a web-based resource to provide various kinds of information that promotes "multi-habitation." Navigating through the site options labeled "a short break" right through to "permanent residency," users can find updated useful information provided by the prefectures and local municipalities about different rural communities and the activities that are available as well as contact details. The main drivers for promotion of "multi-habitation" in the regions are the prefectural governments. Some prefectures have set up organizations to

run the programs, including marketing, monitoring, and providing websites. Hokkaido, as befits the most depopulated area, has emerged as a leader in the field.

HOKKAIDO'S PROMOTION OF IMMIGRATION: A PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Hokkaido is the northernmost of Japan's four main islands. Its population of 5.6 million according to the 2005 Census is concentrated in urban areas with one-third living in the capital city Sapporo and many more employed there. Only one-fifth of the total population lives in scattered rural areas, which make up four-fifths of the island's land area. All Hokkaido settlements, except Sapporo, have suffered depopulation, which has contributed to the island's marked aging profile. More than 21 percent of all Hokkaido residents are aged 65 or older compared to just over 18 percent in 2000. The city area with the highest percentage of older people nationally is found in Hokkaido (Yubari-shi at 39.7 percent, Statistics Bureau, 2005) while nearly a quarter of those who live in rural Hokkaido are now over 65.

Building on the strength of its consistent high rating among all Japanese as one of the best areas in Japan to visit, Hokkaido launched its permanent residency programs in 2005 (Ohyama, 2007). An initial web-based questionnaire survey was carried out in 2004 targeting 10,000 baby boomers living in the Tokyo metropolitan area. The results showed that 80 percent of the respondents had an interest in living in Hokkaido either temporarily or permanently and 70 percent of these preferred villages/towns over city living. The survey report estimated that the economic multiplier effect would bring Hokkaido up to ¥570 billion ($5.7 billion), if 1,000 retiree couples per year moved there during 2007–2009 and spent the rest of lives in Hokkaido. While the same in-migrants would cost ¥120 billion in extra social security provision, clearly there are economic gains.

The Hokkaido prefectural government budgeted ¥49.6 million ($496,000) for a two-year program, which was carried out intensively during 2005–2006 at national, prefectural, and local levels. Emphasizing public–private partnership, the program had three main components: marketing, a one-stop information bureau, and local municipalities' involvement. Two organizations were set up to drive this initiative: the first one is a business consortium[4] with 11 partners including major transport (train, ferry, and aviation) corporations, travel agencies, and media corporations; the second is

a local municipality consortium,[5] through which member local municipalities benefit from the support of the Hokkaido prefectural government to promote the "permanent residency" program. By October 2006, this had engaged 64 local municipalities.

The first component, the marketing strategy, provides surveys, advertising, and long-stay holiday packages and is led by the business consortium. They have launched a campaign using mass media (magazines, newspapers and TV, as well as mailing lists) and seminars and forums as a showcase of Hokkaido's programs.[6] Each of the partner corporations has also launched its own website to promote its services and products. The information bureau ("Hokkaido Concierge"[7]), started in the summer of 2006 provides the pivotal role of a one-stop information center for those who want to visit or live in Hokkaido and mediates between in-migrants and local municipalities. The web site is linked to 94 local municipalities that have their own sites for the promotion of permanent residency. Local municipalities engaged in the program are encouraged to offer substantial support and useful information to in-migrants.

A "testing period" or taster program has now been initiated by a consortium of sponsoring companies and local municipalities. Travel agencies offer "long–stay" holiday packages, which allow urban retirees to explore potential housing, local facilities (local shops, hospitals, as well as tourist places), and community activities. The package includes accommodation in flats and houses, rather than hotels and guest houses associated with usual tourist trips, discount transportation fees (supported by a passenger ferry company), and a chance to meet local people such as council officers and local community representatives, which is organized by recipient local municipalities. After the first phase of Hokkaido's programs (2004 to the first half of 2006), the program experienced an increasing number of requests from baby boomers living across Japan.

Nearly 100 local municipalities out of a possible 180 in Hokkaido have expressed a willingness to join the prefectural government's initiative. The ethics of using public money on this type of program is arguable although to date evaluations of the first phase reveal that it has benefitted the local economy through new businesses set up in "taster" package tours. The Hokkaido prefectural government feels that "ideally the 'concierge business' should be undertaken by the private sector alone and that this is already possible" (senior officer, Hokkaido prefectural government). However, it is likely that even should a "Hokkaido Concierge service" be led by the private sector, public sector backing would ensure greater security and peace of mind for its end users.

Recent figures (Hokkaido Iju Sokushin Kyogikaki, 2008) reveal a modest level of success. At least 273 people in 123 families have moved to Hokkaido as permanent residents since the program was launched in 2006. This represents the number who contacted the prefecture and the local municipalities for information and subsequently made use of the testing period before making their urban to rural relocation. Clearly there may be others who have relocated as part of their own long-term strategy to return to their birthplaces.

THE IMPACTS OF MULTI-HABITATION ON RURAL HOKKAIDO

To date, Hokkaido has concentrated on bringing in older people, seeing their wealth cascading through the local economy in terms of promoting house building and spending on consumer goods and services. Ironically, the biggest constraint on promoting "multi-habitation" has been the lack of appropriate housing stock in the areas to which in-migrants want to move. Hokkaido prefectural government believes that this is a problem that only the private sector can tackle because there is no public money designated for this purpose. Some rural local municipalities however are taking a lead in promoting new housing developments in depopulated rural villages, hoping that the expectation of incomers will be seen as creating worthwhile business opportunities for land and housing developers. This movement is partly encouraged by one of the Central Government's development initiatives: "Excellent Countryside Housing" launched in 1998. This development model aimed firstly to promote immigration to depopulated rural areas and to make the best use of rural land, and secondly, to prevent disorderly development (avoiding a repetition of urban sprawl) in rural areas.

The results however are questionable. Yuni town, one of the rural municipalities in Hokkaido, took up this challenge with an emphasis on greater community involvement through the introduction of a "construction cooperative mechanism," in which potential buyers engaged in the process of land allocation, area layout, public space management alongside the local municipality, and local people. The 28 new houses that resulted attracted higher interest than expected and new residents were keen to be neighborly – at least with each other. The lack of any local contracts means, however, that new incomers are not always using local builders, and the latitude of the local authority in allowing scattered development has resulted in a landscape of dwellings that have little connections with the town. Ultimately

this may deter newcomers from settling in Yuni as it begins to look less like the rural idyll of the mind or memory.

Give the expressed desire to work in some capacity, local municipalities need to find effective ways of harnessing the energies of incomers. Hobby farming has been promoted but this is unlikely to appeal to everyone. Greater opportunities for part-time work and in the voluntary and non-profit sector are important and emerging features of Japanese society that may be more attractive to some older people. Driven in part by demographic change as well as the political and social trends to "smaller government," the Japanese government is beginning to see that this new sector might deliver services previously provided by the public sector (Osborne, 2003). For older people, this may mean an increase of work opportunities some of which may be about delivering services to their own cohort and their older frailer neighbors, which also creates opportunities for integration. A nationwide network JOIN (Japan Organisation for Internal Migration)[8] representing major corporations and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across Japan now provide information to their employees who wish to enjoy the best of urban and rural life after retirement. It is now seen as a crucial responsibility for both the employers and the former employees to explore better ways in which retired people's abundant time (and money) could add to the national economy not only as consumers but also as people with skills and knowledge to contribute to revitalizing impoverished rural economies and communities.

Field work in Hokkaido suggests a high level of skepticism among local people about the potential for retired in-migrants to establish businesses. An interviewee claimed that "it is simply because retirement in-migrants who have enough pension are not keen on making money." The continuing trend of in-migration pushes up levels of housing demand, but new business start-ups in estate agency and construction companies have not been seen in most of areas. This is partly because existing businesses are well connected making it hard for new comers to enter the network. Exclusion from these networks means a lower chance of success. In the agricultural sector, land-use regulations and the complex farmer registration process makes it difficult for non-farmers to enter the sector. In terms of business start-ups, information and communication technologies (ICT) businesses may be footloose, but the perception is that a rural destination is not necessarily the best place for starting up. However, there is increasing number of part-time job opportunities and volunteer activates in social welfare sector, which may satisfy those in-migrants who would like to be engaged socially and economically.

These comments heard on the ground are understandable in the current context. It is believed that the public sector is still responsible for people's

social welfare; the scale of local business activities is rather small and thus the capacity to invest in a new market is lower than that in large urban areas, even if there are relatively high growth expectations. Older people themselves have not fully grasped the possibility that what they require can modify the functioning of the social welfare system that might reflect the scale of volunteer activities in the social welfare field in Japan.

In-migrants, baby boomers in particular, are concerned about health care in later life and local municipalities need to consider this factor seriously. Will investment attract newcomers and how can small municipalities with low taxation bases invest in high-quality facilities? Will newcomers attract investment in health care facilities or do rural areas need new models for delivering services? Some private elder care service companies are already building condominiums in urban areas with integrated care services that can be used by older residents and existing local residents. Hokkaido prefectural government believes that these business models could apply to rural areas with few care facilities, where increasing numbers of in-migrants could stimulate an increased demand and supply and Date city, a small town that attracts many retirees from other areas in Hokkaido, has already developed new style condominiums. The residents are highly satisfied with the service provided, and a strong sense of community has emerged in these new collective living arrangements that deliver greater community interaction and opportunities for social networking. Nevertheless, this is an option only for better-off older people. For local older people, high-rise buildings and unfamiliar interior design that are popular in urban areas can appear "uncomfortable" or even "unsafe."

The concept of multi-habitation is also tied up with rural local identities. For example, "rural" is equated with disadvantage in relation to the "urban," and new in-migrants would change the status of rural Hokkaido. In-migrants from urban areas may seek a "rural idyll" in the places to which they move, but they still want a high standard of local facilities. What Hokkaido aims to do in the longer term is to create a nationwide movement that will question the existing subordinate role of rural areas and promote a rationale for supporting the new rural economy.

The Hokkaido initiatives have prompted the Central Government to set up a task force to promote "multi-habitation," and a package of deregulation and tax credits is being debated. The ideas include many regulatory changes in a number of fields including agriculture, tourism, and consumer taxes. Most far reaching are changes in

- public transport: to allow individuals to operate small-scale public transport within designated rural areas, and parcel delivering services;

- medical care: to relax the current regulations about the minimum number of doctors or nurses to allow the opening of small clinics in the rural areas;
- agriculture: to lower the minimum size allowable for farms and to allow non-registered farmers to sell produce from their gardens; and
- housing: to allow temporary residents to apply for public sector housing. The proposed new tax regime includes the re-structuring of residential tax paid on first and second homes so that those who are seasonal residents pay less.

CONCLUSIONS

"Multi-habitation" can be seen as an economic development strategy, both at local and at national levels. In the context of overall rural aging and depopulation, the Hokkaido partnerships have an optimistic view of newcomers arriving, however old they are and however long they plan to stay in the rural communities.

Hokkaido's initiative started with promoting longer term holidays, which was strongly driven by tourism-related businesses, and it is leading the way in viewing the *dankai* generation as active consumers whose needs can be met in ways that are profitable. "Multi-habitation" can be seen as a spring board for bringing about overall improvements for everyone, not just the old, living in Hokkaido. To achieve this, approaches could be more inclusive so that these active retirees with knowledge and skills can have the potential to raise the profile of older people in both their new and existing communities. The current "testing period" schemes might help. During short stays in temporary accommodation, mutual learning opportunities can occur through various locally organized events and communication between urban participants and local communities. It is important for rural communities to seek ways of enhancing the capacity of local areas to steer these larger scale processes and actions to their benefit through positive use of the varied resources that urban incomers bring with them (Lowe, Murdoch, & Ward, 1995). This is the notion of neo-endogenous development. Through this, new socioeconomically productive and positive rural values can be framed.

It is too early to evaluate the impacts of multi-habitation on the quality of life of communities. The result might be a highly mobilized consumer society, which maintains some economic stability but at the expense of losing indigenous local identities and increased environmental damage caused by unsustainable transport modes. More positively, if this strategy is

pursued, it could also help reduce some of the socioeconomic, political, and knowledge gaps between urban and rural areas and encourage older people to pursue their aspirations in later life thereby contributing to the regeneration of Japan's rural areas. What is important now is to realize that in-migration to rural areas could improve the quality of living environments for older in-migrants and long-term residents, but only if it is managed carefully and with the full informed participation of all involved.

NOTES

1. "Urban" refers to administrative boundaries of "*Shi*" (City).
2. "*Dankai*literally means "massive group." The term was coined by the novelist Taichi Sakaiya in his 1976 book "Dankai no sedai" (dankai generation), Bungeisyunju.
3. http://kouryu-kyoju.net/index.php. Retrieved on September 29, 2008.
4. Sundemitai Hokkaido Suishin Kaigi (Promotion Committee for Hokkaido Living), http://www.kurasube.com/krsb_top.php. Retrieved on September 29, 2008).
5. Hokkaido Ijyu Sokushin Kyogikai (Hokkaido In-migration Promotion Committee), http://www.dankai-iju.jp/iju_top.html.Retrieved on September 29, 2008.
6. "Hokkaido In-migration Forum" in Tokyo (on October, 2005, 528 participants); "Hokkaido Life Seminars" (September 2006, Nagoya; October 2006, Tokyo); "Hokkaido Life Fairs" (November, 2006 Osaka, Tokyo); and Open days at a department store in Tokyo (April–May 2006, 769 inquires; September 2006).
7. http://www.hokkaido-concierge.com/. Retrieved on September 29, 2008.
8. http://www.iju-join.jp/. Retrieved on September 29, 2008.

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PART III
CONSUMPTION

CHAPTER 12

MAKING DEVICE FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS: A CASE STUDY OF JAPANESE FARMERS' MARKETS

Tadahiro Iizaka and Fumiaki Suda

ABSTRACT

Farmers' markets in Japan have different characteristics from those in Europe and America. Although the amount of each farmer's sales profit is small, Japanese farmers' markets have proved to be beneficial for Japanese farmers by providing them with nonmonetary benefits that cannot otherwise be gained from the modern large-scale farm products circulation. It also functions as the place of the rehabilitation of certain foods and products "forgotten" in modern circulation, and cases with old fashioned "grapes" and "eggplants" are those examples. Point of Sale (POS) systems, which were thought the symbol of modernized circulation, however, have been suggested to function as the device for communicating with farmers and consumers. Because the studies of Japanese farmers' markets are approved to the origin of various logics, the researchers were not able to establish the united theory. However, it should be noted that Japanese farmers' markets have established a firm position in the local food chain and will continue to function as a valuable channel for supporting sustainable agriculture.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate Japanese farmers' markets as "compromising devices" (Boltanski & Thevenot, 1991) for sustainable agricultural system by articulating plural logics of justification (market, civic, and domestic). These devices are also "qualification devices" (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2003) in defining the products as authentic and thus embedding them in the local market.

The conception and construction of these devices are crucial in the intense competition between big supermarkets and farmers' markets under an immaterial accumulation regime. Under this regime, it is essential to incorporate various values (such as environmental, civic, or domestic, and market) and use authenticity in marketing.

While the study from such aspects are still on the way in Japan, Suda (2008) discussed the theoretical investigation that aimed at building in "market-mediation-device" by introducing Latour (1994), Callon (2006), and Cohoy (2002). Under the deterioration of a rapid economic environment in recent years, the frame of a new economic theory is being sought in Japan.

On the contrary, the present condition of the Japanese agriculture is described as follows. Compared to France (130%), the United States (119%), Germany (91%), and the United Kingdom (74%), Japan's food self-sufficiency ratio, on a calorie basis, is significantly low (39%), ranking 27th among the 30 member states of the OECD.

The Japanese government has aimed to raise its food-sufficiency ratio, but it has been difficult. One of the biggest reasons for this is that Japanese farms are generally smaller than those in other developed countries. Japan has only 5 million ha of farmland (in comparison, Australia has 447 million ha), and the mean area per farm is only 1.8 ha. More than half (57%) of key agricultural workers are 65 years old or older.

Despite these structural constraints, the Japanese government has launched several programs to enhance the self-sufficiency ratio. Thus, the "Shokuiku [food education] Basic Law" took effect in July 2005, and the Shokuiku Basic Program was enacted in March 2006. In elementary schools, teachers explain to students where their food comes from at lunch time and take them to neighborhood farms.

These activities are expected to improve the food self-sufficiency ratio, preserve traditional dietary culture, and promote good health. As part of this program, a national movement of "Chisan Chisho [local consumption of locally produced agricultural products]" has been initiated (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, 2007).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAPANESE FARMERS' MARKETS

Here, we describe the "social life" or "biography" of products sold at farmers' markets. Farmers have always sold their goods, either directly to consumers or through farmers' markets and bazaars.

However, after the Meiji era in Japan, these bazaars were replaced by the large-scale distributors of agricultural products. Several traditional bazaars still remain as sightseeing spots for tourists (Fig. 1).

In the 1980s, as a result of the surplus production of rice, the Japanese government urged farmers to replace rice with other crops or vegetables. Many large vegetable-growing districts had already been established during the golden age of Japanese capitalism in the 1970s.

Many small farmers, however, were disadvantageous because their farms were unsuited to standardized vegetable production in terms of quantity, appearance, and shapes that they produced. Hence, they were excluded from the mainstream distribution channels. Agricultural cooperatives bought products from farmers and sold them to wholesalers.

Several groups of farmers' wives, supported by prefectural extension services, grew vegetables for their own home consumption. These groups and small farms had easy access to farmers' markets, which were not rigorous in their standardization of products. Thus, in addition to products

Fig. 1. A Traditional Japanese Bazaar.

for their home consumption, farmers' wives began to sell these vegetables at farmers' markets. In recent years, because of competition with imported food products in supermarkets, many large-scale specialized farmers have also begun to sell their products at farmers' market.

For older farmers, farmers' wives, and newcomers, farmers' markets are relatively easy place to enter, because farmers who sell their products there do not need large amounts of land, expensive machinery, or many workers. These farms produce many kinds of products, but in small quantities.

The quality of these products, however, varies. Farmers' markets collect products and sell them to ensure a supply of agricultural products throughout the year. Generally, these farmers produce many kinds of vegetables, rice, flowers, and homemade foods.

Farmers' markets also favor diversification of products. According to recent governmental statistics (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, 2007), there are almost 12,000 farmers' markets in Japan, but products sold at farmers' markets account only a 10% share in the distribution of all agricultural products. This share, however, has increased to 30–40% in some regions; hence, the Japanese farmers' market is no longer marginal.

Japanese farmers' markets have three characteristics: (1) it is open almost every day; (2) it offers joint selling on commission (several farmers are in charge of selling products on behalf of other farmers); and (3) it is generally supported by a (quasi-)public sector. Japanese farmers' markets are open an average of 280 days a year, and over 70% of farmers' markets are open for more than 300 days.

Seventy percent of consumers who shop at farmers' markets live within the region where the markets are located, and the remaining 30% are commuters or tourists. In mountain areas, half of the consumers are tourists. Farmers' markets in these areas sell regional products (such as wild mushrooms and processed foods).

In the suburbs and lowlands, there are larger farmers' markets, and 800,000 consumers visited at least one farmers' market in 2006. These consumers are price-conscious and sensitive to the freshness of vegetables. In these areas, there is intense competition between farmers' markets and supermarkets. Moreover, 64% of all farmers' market sales and 70% of all vegetables sold originate in the region where the farmers' market is located.

Futamura (2007) described history of farmers' markets in the United States, in which the first major change in farmers' markets occurred in the late 1970s (Brown, 2001, 2002). He traced the emergence of food localism after the restructuring tobacco production in the state of Kentucky.

Hinrichs (2000) described the farmers' market as one of two forms of alternative direct marketing (the other was CSA or consumer supported agriculture).

Kirman (2004, 2006) proposed that the farmers' market was an alternative distribution system by referring to Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Holloway and Kneafsey (2000) wrote that the farmers' market was a cognitive place for "nostalgia" for the "Golden Age" in the United Kingdom. In this chapter, however, we demonstrate that it has not been the case in Japan. Sakurai (2006) surveyed studies in Japan and stressed the necessity of unifying the market-oriented and community-oriented arguments about the "locally produced-locally consumed" movement.

FARMERS' MARKET FOR FARMERS: A CASE STUDY IN OKAYAMA PREFECTURE

In this chapter, we investigate the behavior of farmers at a farmers' market by describing a typical farmers' market in one of Japan's mountainous regions.

Okayama Prefecture is located in central-western Japan. We examined "Michi-no-Eki (Roadside Station) Kamogawa-Enjoh" that was located in the center of Okayama Prefecture. It takes 30 minutes to get there from Okayama City (capital of prefecture) by car.

This farmers' market is open every day except Wednesday, and their annual total sales are 100 million yen. Its main products are vegetables, fruits, and processed foods. Two hundred farmers belong to the Michi-no-Eki Kamogawa-Enjoh Farmers' Market (hereafter Kamogawa-Enjoh Market). We sent questionnaires to 72 farmers who were members of Kamogawa-Enjoh Market in August 1998.

The questions asked about their income, production items, and the advantages of shipment to Kamogawa-Enjoh Market compared to the wholesale market (days that farmers sell their products at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market are shown in Fig. 2).

This Kamogawa-Enjoh Market is open every day, but many farmers attended fewer than 100 days per year. Each farmer's sales at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market are shown in Fig. 3. Fewer than half of farmers earned less than 1 million yen, including sales at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market.

For many farmers, farmers' market is not their main source of income. Still, it is an important second or third source of income for elderly or small farmers who find it difficult to ship their products to wholesale markets.

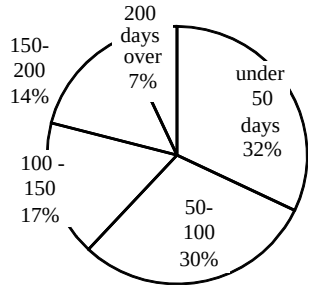

Fig. 2. Shipping days to the Farmers' Market.

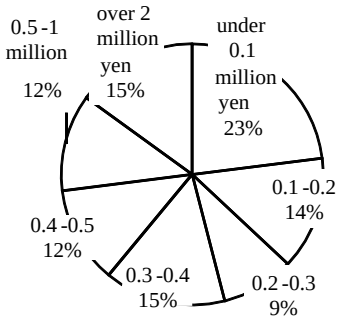

Fig. 3. Annual Sales in the Farmers' Market.

Many farmers sell their surplus goods at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market, and their main income comes from off-farm work. Farmers who sell vegetables ship an average of 13 items. They have several criteria for shipping their products to Kamogawa-Enjoh Market (Table 1): products must be cultivated or grown in the local area; products must be not grown by neighboring farmers; and shipment of products should include as many varieties of vegetables as possible.

We find that, at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market, products that have not been evaluated by modern distribution chains are desired by consumers. In addition, traditional local products are highly valued by consumers. The production and sale of these products at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market maintain the diversity of local products and promote sustainable development.

Table 1. Notes in the Case of Shipping.

	(%)
Traditional products and kinds of lists that were adopted in the area	43.1
Rare lists of products that were not grown by other farmers	33.3
Shipping as many types of vegetables as possible	30.6
Do not use chemicals	26.4
Getting eager to sell processed food	25.0
Adjusting time to ship products before/after	25.0
Other	6.9

$n = 72$.

Table 2. Merits of Shipping Farmers' Market.

	(%)
Free from standard and quantity	70.8
Possible to be set price by oneself	66.7
Easy to join for women and elderly people	63.9
Possible to sell surplus products	54.2
Interaction with farmers deepened	47.2
Possible to hear direct voices from consumers	43.1
Possible to sell processed foods by oneself	25.0
Easy to know the fact everyday	20.8
Possible to use fallow field	9.7
Make profits more than wholesale market shipping	4.2
Other	4.2

$n = 72$.

Our question asked farmers about the advantages of shipping to Kamogawa-Enjoh Market over wholesale shipping. Some responses from farmers are given in Table 2: ''reducing burden of standardization and minimum quantity requirement'' (when using wholesale shipping, farmers must adjust to standard of products and meet the minimum amount of shipping); ''availability to set price by themselves''; ''frequent communication between farmers''; and ''direct transfer of consumers' voices to farmers.''

In a word, farmers appreciate farmers' market for the following reasons: (1) each farmer can decide the amounts to be shipped and their price; (2) nonprofessional farmers have access to the farmers' market; and (3) direct interaction can be ensured between consumers and farmers.

FARMERS' MARKETS FOR CONSUMERS

We interviewed 500 customers at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market in September 1998. We asked what they had bought, the purpose and frequency of their visits, the amount of their purchase, and the advantage of shopping at farmers' market over the supermarket.

Approximately 17.7% of customers lived within 20 km from Kamogawa-Enjoh Market. However, 60% lived within 20–40 km, most of which lived in an hour away in Okayama City. As for the purposes of coming to Kamogawa-Enjoh Market, 34% came for Kamogawa-Enjoh Market itself, but 39.6% of the customers stopped there on their way to sightseeing.

The average spending per customer was 2,058 yen, which is higher than average purchase (about 1,500 yen) at the Japanese farmers' market (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, 2007). More than half of customers had visited this market for the "first time" or "several times per year." About 15%, however, was "repeaters" who visited more than once a week. Additionally, when we asked the advantages that they find in products at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market, more than half replied, "freshness of the products" and "price" (Table 3).

As our research has shown, customers at Kamogawa-Enjoh Market are price-conscious. However, we also found many types of customers at other farmers' markets, and some of them are particular about the authenticity and come from far cities to buy these authentic products (Iizaka, 1999).

Table 3. Merits of Enjoh-Farmers' Market for Consumers.

	(%)
Freshness of the products	57
Saving the commodity price	54
Availability of toilets	45
Parking lot is large	37
Atmosphere of the Farmers' Market is peaceful	36
Local products can be purchased	33
Food tastes good	29
Availability of talking with the farmers	28
Commodities are safe	22
Stock of commodities is satisfactory	13
Rare products can be purchased	13
Other	4

$n = 500$.

Point of Sales (Barcode System) as a Compromising Device

Japanese farmers' markets are characterized by joint selling on commission. In a case like this, it is difficult to keep accounts after the market closes every evening. Larger farmers' markets have therefore introduced Point of Sales (POS, barcode system) like supermarkets. It has long been thought that the cost of introducing POS must be prohibitive and that the system must have been difficult for older farmers to learn. Thus, we examined a PC-POS (Fig. 4) operated by a home computer and introduced it at a farmers' market in Sera County, Hiroshima Prefecture.

One hundred farmers over 60 years old belonged to this farmers' market and sold more than 70 kinds of fruits, vegetables, and homemade foods. After its introduction, sales doubled or tripled because farmers could send fresh products to the market all day long. Farmers received sales data every several hours by mobile telephone, and they could supply their products just in time. Before introducing POS, farmers had to write checking papers for every shipment, but after its introduction, they only had to care about shipping products; therefore, their workload was significantly reduced. They also spent less time on recordkeeping. Every participant was satisfied with the use of POS. Moreover, because POS reduced the number of mistakes at cash register, customers were also satisfied with shorter waiting in line and

Fig. 4. PC-POS (Barcode System).

were able to have a conversation with the farmers. It was easier to tell consumers about their products by introducing POS.

POS, therefore, made just-in-time shipping possible and ensured the freshness of the products. It was also the device that promoted communication with farmers and consumers. These conversations between customers and farmers helped farmers to discover what their consumers want to eat and what kind of crops farmers should grow. These conversations are very informative (Iizaka, 2007). Many consumers want to learn as much as they can from farmers about where and how the products were grown and how to prepare and serve them. This information is difficult to get from modern supermarkets.

As noted above, the consignment sales method has been adopted in Japanese farmers' markets. In the individual face-to-face selling method adopted in farmers' markets in Europe and the United States, farmers can see the responses of clients and communicate with them. In the Japanese style, however, as long as farmers do not sell their products in a face-to-face manner, farmers cannot get access to these responses. Therefore, farmers have to come to see how their own products and competitors sell. This distinguishes Japanese farmers' markets from European or American farmers' markets.

Farmers' Markets as Qualification Devices

Kirman (2004) explained that farmers' markets in the United Kingdom are a reaction to the increasing distance customers perceive from the decreasing number of knowledgeable venders and to the increasing amounts of processed food, the raw materials of which come from other regions or even other countries.

However, at several farmers' markets in Japan, traditional vegetables and fruits unsuited for long-distance shipment have been rediscovered by older farmers. For example, at another farmers' market near Kamogawa-Enjoh Market, local varieties of grapes too fragile for long-distance shipment have gained considerable popularity. As a result, farmers now sell them not only at the market but also over the Internet.

In Baba-Nasu (Fig. 5), a local variety of traditional eggplant, which had been largely neglected by the large-scale distribution system, gained popularity among older consumers near Osaka City. In Osaka Prefecture's Sen-shu region, another eggplant called Mizu-Nasu has been grown since the seventeenth century. According to research conducted by the Osaka

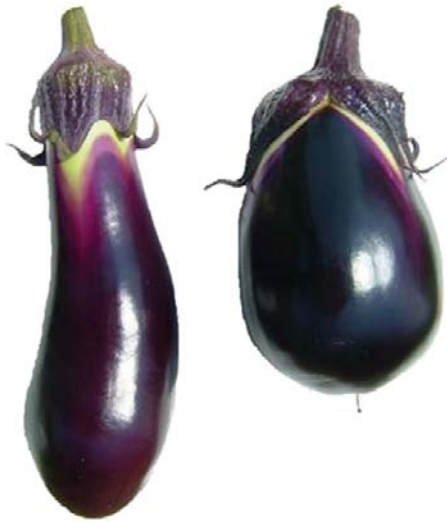

Fig. 5. Baba-Nasu (Left) and Mizu-Nasu (Right, Eggplants).

Prefectural Agricultural Center in 1952, there were once more than 20 varieties of Mizu-Nasu in that region.

These local varieties disappeared because of competition with modern varieties that were better suited to mass production and long-distance distribution. In recent years, however, these local varieties have made a comeback of sorts and are now sold at farmers' markets from June to September.

Similarly, in a region following the monoculture of spinach, a fungus destroyed the ecosystem supporting spinach production; eventually, in this region, other crops and vegetables began to be grown for sale in farmers' markets. Several farmers' markets have their own certification systems for their organic foods. Farmers' markets can therefore be considered as devices for alternative and sustainable agricultural systems.

As the result of dealings by the provided-price, provided-time, and provided-amount to which farm products were steady all over the year, Japanese agricultural product marketing set its sights on large-scale circulation. Cultivation has tended toward mono-cultivation and mass production.

While the approaches mentioned above have a relatively insignificant economic effect, the possibility certainly exists for an environmentally harmonized agricultural industry or the restructuring of the rural lifestyle.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section, we examine the farmers' market in terms of developing compromising or qualification devices.

In recent years, there has been intense competition between farmers' markets and big supermarkets. It can be said that in the wake of food adulteration issues, most supermarkets are sensitive to the safety and freshness of their products; therefore, they prefer to grow vegetables in their own farms.

Farmers' markets and supermarkets compete for farmers in their neighborhood who are able to supply vegetables. Supermarkets are eager to build a reputation for selling safe and fresh produce; thus, they employ marketing practices such as establishing themselves in proximity to the farmers and selling authentic produce.

Customers who frequent farmers' markets are interested in both inexpensive and fresh products; in this sense, farmers' markets can be considered as "compromising devices" for market logics and other logics of justifications (domestic, civic; Boltanski & Thevenot, 1991). In this competition with supermarkets, POS systems make it possible for farmers' markets to supply fresh vegetables.

In a post-Fordist immaterial accumulation regime, economic agents create differences by incorporating values. Farmers' markets are devices for making products authentic due to the presence of farmers and the collection of local varieties and traditional products.

Farmers' markets function as coordination devices among farmers who are in competition and cooperation. In planning year-round cultivation, farmers coordinate their activities with each other, exchanging knowledge about growing vegetables or processing foods. The older generation of farmers helps the younger generation grow local varieties of vegetables.

Consumers also reveal their preferences for these traditional varieties or novel vegetables (e.g., herbs like basil or lavender). Thus, farmers' markets promote bottom-up innovation. At farmers' markets, consumers are able to obtain information on the provenance of the products, neighboring tourist sites, and local recipes. Farmers' markets develop sustainable agricultural systems by safeguarding cultivated biodiversity.

It can be seen that a local variety of grapes has been reevaluated by consumers at one particular farmers' market. Similarly, small-scale farmers have revitalized land that was exhausted by the spinach monoculture by growing many varieties of vegetables. There have also been revivals of local

varieties of vegetables such as the Baba-Nasu eggplant. Thus, Japanese farmers' markets are compromising the domestic logic and sustainability logic, civic (local development).

Citing Holloway and Kneafsey (2000), Sakurai (2006) claims that farmers' markets have some affinity with conservatism, nationalism, or nostalgia. This is not the case with Japanese farmers' markets. However, we agree with Sakurai's (2006) argument that farmers' markets have lately been reevaluated as a means of developing local food chains and as being central to the ''locally produced-locally consumed'' movement that has recently gained popularity in Japan.

Farmers' markets define consumers as lovers of the rural lifestyle and classify the products sold therein as ''authentic.'' In addition, several farmers' markets organize and train younger farmers and newcomers who can provide standardized products for the wholesale market. In this sense, farmers' markets function as qualification devices for channeling their products into the local distribution networks or industrial mass production and long-distance distribution systems depending on the farmers' competencies.

Thus, the Japanese farmers' markets combine multiple logics. Several farmers' markets in rural areas have moved to urban areas or even into supermarkets in response to customers' demands. Several other markets are bases of rural tourism. In a mountainous region in Kyoto, 700,000 tourists annually visit the hamlet in which a farmers' market is situated, and the farmers there provide traditional products for tourists.

Buttel (2006) discussed the path to achieving sustainable agriculture in the ''*Handbook of Rural Studies*'' (2006), quoting American cases, while doing it about ''sustainability of agriculture,'' there was the room for the argument and explained ''localization'' (foodshed strategies) in a beginning of the road. Farmers' market includes not only the agricultural production but also the sustainability of rural and, about the sustainability of agriculture, gives some opportunities to reconsider and to rebuild current agro-food systems in not only Europe and America but also Japan (maybe Asia and Africa).

There is not as strong a connection between farmers and consumers in Japanese farmers' markets as there is in the United Kingdom or the United States. Nonetheless, Japanese farmers' markets have ceased to exist on the fringes and are now seen as loci of the alternative agro-food movement, having developed the capability to compete with large-scale agricultural companies.

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CHAPTER 13

DIRECT SALES SUIT PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS' INTERESTS IN VIETNAM

Paule Moustier and Thi Tan Loc Nguyen

ABSTRACT

Direct farmer–consumer relationships have been mostly described in the Western world. They are reviewed as efficient forms of resistance to global distribution chains, in particular as regards farmer incomes, consumer trust in product safety, and solidarity between farmers and consumers. Research was carried out in Vietnam to measure the importance of this type of sales in the vegetable sector and how farmers and consumers perceive it relative to other forms of supply. Consumer surveys and focus groups were conducted as well as inventories of vegetable retail point of sales and a case study of a farmer group based on in-depth interviews with group leaders. Consumers buying directly from farmers desire product freshness and the ability to receive specific information relative to product origin and safety. Farmers value direct retail sales because it enables higher incomes. Yet, only the wealthiest farmers have access to this type of sales as it requires renting their own outlet shops or market stalls. Direct farmer to consumer sales in Vietnam may be viewed as a first step toward an interpersonal food distribution system providing an alternative to faceless mass chain-market distribution.

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INTRODUCTION

Vietnam is a country praised for its quick agricultural development, with a growth rate of 4 percent per year since the agrarian and economic reforms of 1988 and 1989 (Dao, Vu, & Le, 2003). Yet, farmers typically complain of market instability, reflected by price variations and lack of regular buyers (Mai, Ali, Hoang, & To, 2004). At the same time, consumers express their dissatisfaction relative to the quality of the food they purchase (Figuié, Bricas, Vu, & Nguyen, 2004).

In some developed countries, direct sales to consumers are perceived by farmer groups as the key for a more secure and profitable access to the marketplace as well as reassuring consumers about the quality of food. In this chapter, we investigate if there are similar benefits to direct farmer–consumer linkages in other contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Direct sales from farmers to consumers take various forms in terms of location and method of transaction, including farmers' markets, home-to-home delivery, and at-farm purchases (Cadilhon, 2007). Community-supported agriculture (CSA) emerged in the mid-1960s, approximately at the same time in Japan and Germany, mostly in reaction to food industry scandals (Roos, Terragni, & Torjusen, 2007). In CSA, consumers agree to prepay a certain amount of money to the producers, or to invest in the production system directly, in exchange for receiving fresh produce at their door or at a designated delivery station during the harvest season.

The benefits of direct sales have especially been analyzed in developed countries. First, direct sales bring economic benefits to both farmers and consumers. As the usual market intermediaries are bypassed, and high-quality products become recognized by the end-user (a point developed further in this section), farmers can benefit from increased resale prices (Marsden, Banks, & Bristow, 2000; Hinrichs, 2000).

Direct sales reduce marketing risks for both sides: risks for farmers not to find buyers, and risks for customers not to find the suppliers they are looking for. These risks are especially important in the case of perishable products. Consumers may also expect quality characteristics that are difficult to visibly observe, such as nonuse of pesticides and cleanliness during processing and packaging. The building of regular, personal

relationships, based on the seller's reputation and buyers' trust, can be termed as a "domestic convention," enabling consumers to feel more reassured (Eymard-Duvernay, 1989). The farmer–producer relationship is an opportunity to exchange knowledge on production methods, which fulfills consumers' needs for reassurance, as producers are perceived as the most competent persons to give this information. Reciprocally, direct farmer–consumer exchanges enable farmers to have a better appreciation of consumers' demands (Prigent-Simonin & Hérault-Fournier, 2005).

Another dimension of quality that is valued by consumers is freshness. This is an advantage of farmers' direct sales relative to more long-distance trade (Hinrichs, 2000).

Direct sales have also been described as a way to develop the solidarity between farmers and consumers. Numerous advocates of "alternative distribution food chains" claim that citizens should be able to access local neighborhood small-scale retail points – if possible, run directly by farmers – rather than mass-scale, monopolistic, and production-centered distribution that disconnects agricultural output from its natural conditions of production (Morgan, Marsden, & Murdoch, 2006; Friedmann, 1994). Kirwan (2004) refers to social connectivity, reciprocity, and trust as dominant drivers of British consumers buying from farmers' markets. "Forums where producers and consumers can come together to solidify bonds of community" (Lyson, 2000, p. 44) define civic agriculture, where producers are not only responding to wants expressed by consumers but also sharing the sense of inhabiting the same place with resulting joint opportunities as well as constraints and responsibilities (DeLind, 2002). According to Hinrichs (2000), it is not necessarily easy to disaggregate the market interests gained by farmers and consumers through direct transactions, from more social and civic interests, as all are embedded.

In developing countries, the prevalence and benefits of direct sales are much less analyzed than in the developed world. However, relational proximity is described as a common feature of food transactions, but mostly between farmers and traders rather than between farmers and consumers (see Lyon, 2000; Cadilhon, Fearne, Phan, Moustier, & Poole, 2006).

In this chapter, we would like to determine if the benefits found for direct sales in developed countries also apply to Vietnam. These potential benefits relate to decrease of risks of losses and increased added value for farmers, freshness and trust in quality for consumers, and solidarity between consumers and farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The chapter combines different sources of information gathered by our research group at the consumption, marketing, and production stages. Data on the number and locations of vegetable shops was gathered from the Department of Trade, plus direct inventories in the city districts. Then phone interviews were carried out to determine whether farmers managed the shop and to get other summary information on the status of shop property. This data was then cross-checked with an inventory of safe vegetable groups who had been interviewed regarding the nature of output marketing. To estimate the percentage of produce sold by the vegetable shops surveyed, compared to the total amount of vegetables sold in Hanoi, we used the results of a survey conducted by our research group in 2006 on vegetable retail distribution (Moustier et al., 2006).

Various consumer surveys have been conducted to assess the preferred supply mode for consumers and on what wins their trust as far as product quality is concerned. Four focus groups were conducted in 2004 with 10 consumers in each (Figuié et al., 2004), and in 2006, we conducted a meeting and detailed interviews with the chairperson along with three members of the Women's Consumer Club. Then a case study was conducted on a vegetable group selling through shops, that is, Dang Xa Cooperative in Gia Lam district. The case study involved in-depth interviews with the leaders of the Cooperative in May 2007 and June 2008 and also quick interviews in June 2008 of 32 consumers buying from one of the two Cooperative's stalls.

RESULTS

Limited but Increasing Importance of Farmer Direct Sales

Short marketing chains are typical for vegetables produced in peri-urban areas. In Hanoi, more than 40 percent of all wholesale market sellers are also producers; this percentage goes up to 100 percent for water convolvulus. This is partly explained by the small scale of production and low final prices, making it attractive for producers to spend some hours in transportation to get as much of the final price as possible (Moustier, Vagneron, & Bui Thi Thai, 2004). For traditionally produced vegetables, the product is rarely sold retail directly by farmers, who rather sell through collectors, wholesalers, and retailers. Direct sales are more commonly observed for vegetables labeled as "safe vegetables."

In 1995, public interest in the safety of vegetables led the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture to implement an ambitious program called "safe vegetables." In 2001, it covered an agricultural area measuring a total of 2,250 hectares (equivalent to 30 percent of the vegetable production area of Hanoi municipality). The program educated farmers in the reasonable use of fertilizer and pesticides, as well as the use of water from wells and nonpolluted rivers. It was conducted in tandem with training actions on Integrated Pest Management by various international organizations, including ADDA (Agricultural Development Denmark Asia). Certificates of safe vegetable production were awarded by the Department of Science and Technology to the cooperatives involved in the program (replaced in 2006 by the Plant Protection Department). Furthermore, a network of "safe vegetable" stores was established for the distribution of vegetables produced by these cooperatives. There is no strict corollary between the production of vegetables according to "safe" protocols and the marketing of vegetables labeled as "safe," because a considerable volume of "safe vegetables" is sold in ordinary chains without any labeling or pricing difference.

In 2002, 10 market stalls and 12 shops were listed based on official statistics from the Department of Trade (recording only outlets with a certificate), 9 of them belonging to joint stock companies (former state companies), and 13 (60 percent) to private actors, including five managed by farmer cooperatives. In 2004, after the survey of retailing outlets in two selected districts, a total of 24 shops were estimated, plus 126 market stalls, both formal and informal. Out of a total of 232 tons of vegetables distributed per day, safe vegetable outlets would account for 14 tons, that is, 6 percent of the total. Eighty percent of vegetables labeled as safe are sold through shops or stalls, the rest in supermarkets.

In 2008, we listed 54 safe vegetable stalls or shops (more than twice the number as six years before). Out of these, 38, that is, 70 percent, are rented by safe vegetable cooperatives (while the percentage was only 20 percent in 2002 out of a total of 22 safe vegetable retailing outlets). We can estimate the share of direct sales as 60 percent of total safe vegetable sales, representing around 130 tons of vegetables per day (45,000 tons per year) while it is less than 10 per cent for conventional vegetables.

Consumers Value Direct Sales

A recent survey, conducted in 2005 on 800 consumers (500 in Hanoi and 300 in Haiphong) shows that 75 percent of consumers are extremely concerned

with the safety of food and 88 percent get information about food safety through the media (Luu et al., 2005). There is no significant difference in concerns for food safety shown by consumers of varying education or income. For 57 percent of consumers, problems of safety mostly relate to the presence of chemical residues in or on food. Food safety is of primary importance in vegetables, fruit, and meat, together with the freshness of these products. The most important strategy that gives consumers a guarantee about food safety is to purchase foodstuffs from traders they know.

In the focus groups conducted in 2004, consumers made a high number of associations between vegetable safety and sales people they knew, or purchases from a specific shop or supermarket (Figuié et al., 2004). Thus, the point of sale also has an impact on consumer trust. A survey of 707 consumers in 2006 showed that the perceived "safeness" of vegetables increased depending on the location from which consumers purchased their vegetables. The least "safe" was a spontaneous purchase at an unknown market. Trust in "safeness" increased beginning with official markets, safe vegetable stalls and shops, and finally, supermarkets (Mayer, 2007).

In her thesis on consumer access to vegetables in Hanoi, Meg Hiesinger (2006, p. 7) quotes the reason given by her neighbor to take her to a particular market to buy food: "Because this is where farmers come to sell directly." Also, consumers classified as poor in Quynh Mai district were found to prefer buying from street vendors in the morning because they are generally farmers who sell fresh produce at a low price and who can give assurance regarding the safety of produce (Figuié, Bricas, Vu, & Nguyen, 2006).

All the interviewed consumers buying from Dang Xa stalls are regular ones, and nine of them (20 percent) come every day. All mention safety as the reason for going to these places. Other reasons include freshness (21 percent), acquaintance and trust (13 percent), and reasonable price (21 percent). Vegetable safety refers to chemical residues for 70 percent of the respondents. The purchasers feel reassured regarding vegetable safety because of information displayed at the shop, including the certificate and the place of production and information given by the sellers (26 percent), because of trust in the sellers, which is strengthened due to the fact that they are farmers (26 percent), and no health problems were experienced after consuming the purchased vegetables (44 percent). When asked if they have contacts with Dang Xa farmers outside of the retailing locations, all the respondents, except two, say they do not because the area is too far away or they are too busy.

Meetings with the Women's Consumer Club confirmed the importance of dealing with traders one is familiar with and purchasing product at fixed sale

locations. These factors help build a feeling of reassurance about food safety, along with being able to confirm the origin of the vegetables. It is most reassuring if the origin is the place of production as stated by the management of the retailing outlet.

In summary, this section shows that freshness, affordable price, and trust in quality are key advantages valued by consumers buying directly from farmers, which is in line with what is found in the literature for western countries. However, the sense of solidarity and social proximity are not stated as key determinants for a reason to purchase from farmers. Indeed, contact between farmers and consumers is limited to the point of sale.

Farmers Value Direct Sales

We develop below the example of the Dang Xa Cooperative to present farmer strategies and incentives as regards direct retail sales.

In 2003, the Farmer Association of Dang Xa commune, with the help of the Hanoi Plant Protection Department, established three selling outlets for safe vegetables. Ngoc Lam and Duc Hoa shops sell an average of 90 tons per year, whereas May 10 sells 180 tons. This accounts for approximately 20 percent of the production of the association, the rest being sold to canteens or through collectors. Each shop is run by two farmers (wife–husband for Ngoc Lam and May 10), who sell what they produce and also what they buy from their neighbors. On the basis of the available vegetables and demand from various canteens, purchasing plans are developed, that is, vegetables will be purchased from the local farming households the evening before, according to appropriate vegetable type and quantity for delivery the next day, according to the results of the past day.

These three selling locations received assistance from the Department of Plant Protection of Hanoi, that is, VND 100,000/selling location/month over six months (i.e., 37 USD). Such support is aimed to assist these households during the early stage of the operation when limited buyers are found. It is limited, that is, equal to 12 percent of the capital required from each of the couples by the market management, that is, VND 5 million (310 USD) to have a retail selling outlet.

Currently, the farmers involved earn approximately VND 30 million/year (1,875 USD), or 80,000 VND/day (5 USD), whereas the daily salary of an agricultural worker is 30,000 VND (2 USD). The main advantages mentioned by the head of the cooperative relate to the increase in the number of customers and increase in prices. Customers ask questions about the safety of

products, and the sellers are able to reassure them by explaining the location of production, the production protocol, and the control exercised by the Department of Plant Protection. Farmers recognize the needs of buyers in terms of types of vegetables and modify their production accordingly. These economic and marketing benefits, based on exchange of information and development of trust between farmers and consumers, have also been stated for western countries as outlined in the section "Literature Review."

The price advantages are clear for farmers who sell at retail stalls. For instance, they get a price of 8000 VND/kilogram when selling retail, instead of 5,000 VND/kilogram when selling produce to a collector (i.e., 60 percent more), which far exceeds the cost of overhead for the shop and duly compensates labor costs. On the contrary, farmers selling to the Cooperative do not get higher prices than when they sell to collectors. Selling to the Cooperative, however, has an advantage in that they purchase product daily on a regular basis. In contrast, sales to collectors are much more irregular and they are choosier with regard to the appearance of the vegetables they buy.

DISCUSSION

Our results show advantages for farmers and consumers in terms of direct sales, in line with the literature review. This point is developed in the conclusion. Yet, we saw that farmer direct sales are still quite limited, although increasing. Some reasons are provided below.

The major constraint is a financial one. Renting a shop costs around 10 million VND (600 USD) as an initial lump sum, then around 1 million VND per month (60 USD). Another constraint is the lack of regularity and variety of supply if the shop only sells the produce from one farmer group.

We also notice that farmers do not take full advantage of opportunities as direct suppliers to consumers. The retail consumers interviewed in Dang Xa locations stated that they have little time to visit the farms and discuss vegetable issues with the farmers. What seems more important to them is to have a guarantee from the place of purchase regarding the product's origin and certification of being "safe" issued by a public body as well as long-time interaction with the sellers in the shops – be they producers or not. The farmers may have to further promote the specific advantages they bring to consumers, compared to traders, who may more easily mix vegetables from various undisclosed origins. Also, individual farmer identity could be made visible in the stalls, including the name, profession and address of vendors, and pictures of the farms.

Moreover, the advantage of selling retail to consumers is not evenly distributed among the members of the farming groups. In fact, the main beneficiaries are the farmers who are also vendors in the shops, as they give preference to selling their produce. There is certainly a lack of a real collective nature in the matter of group sales. The other alternative would be to pay a sales commission on product sold covering their costs to those operating the retail shop, rather than them buying and reselling the products as ordinary collectors do.

CONCLUSIONS

The research conducted in Vietnam illustrates and confirms much of the information contained in literature on direct sales available from western countries. Direct sales provide economic benefits to farmers, which translates into higher income, because they are able to better promote the high quality of their vegetables, especially as it relates to safety. Food safety generates a number of information deficiencies and opportunism risks that are reduced by cutting intermediary stages between farmers and consumers. This likewise benefits consumers who are reassured in terms of the way food is produced, in addition to getting access to fresher and more affordable food.

Yet, one additional benefit mentioned in the section "Literature Review," that of social connectivity and solidarity, goes unnoticed in the Vietnamese context. This may illustrate that Vietnamese society has yet to reach the stage of postmaterialist values, including concerns for ethics, which are typical in affluent societies (Inglehart, 1977). In a situation of difficult economic conditions, farmers and consumers may be drawn more by pursuit of individual interests, rather than by values of solidarity that benefit everyone. Even in Western contexts, "civic" values are indeed difficult to emerge, and "farmers' markets remain fundamentally rooted in commodity relations" (Hinrichs, 2000, p. 295). Direct farmer–consumer relationships in Vietnam may actually be viewed in a positive way as the first step toward an increased solidarity between farmers and urban consumers. CSA could be tested in Vietnam as a way for farmers and urban consumers to become partners in a joint endeavor, not only producing safe food but also ensuring the long-term sustainability of a farming community.[1]

The chapter points out other specific features of vegetable direct sales in Vietnam compared with other countries. Selling though shops or market stalls rented by farmer groups is more commonplace than home deliveries or weekly farmer markets. This characteristic is linked with the concerns of

Vietnamese consumers for freshness and diversity of vegetables, hence their day-by-day purchases.

Yet, this type of sales displays some fragility. First, it implies high investments by farmers, and excludes smaller farmers from access to the final consumers. In this sense, direct sales in Vietnam differ from the situation of Western countries where direct sales enable underprivileged farmers to find outlets other than from modern distribution methods from which they may be excluded. In Vietnam, at the moment, the government shows a clear orientation toward the support of modern distribution with high private, local, and international investments, rather than to small-scale distribution benefiting the poor. In a situation of rising cost of urban space, it is more and more difficult for the urban poor to get access to a place to sell.

Hence, we recommend that the initiatives of the farmers' direct sales benefit more from the support of public authorities. Preferential credit could be given to farmer groups for investments in retailing locations. Some areas of the city could be reserved for farmers' markets, with collection of daily fees of a reduced amount compared with the other retail market places. This has been successfully done in Vientiane, Laos, where space near Thatluang temple has been allocated, by the urban authorities, for organic farm produce sales (*Profil*, 2007).

Second, a more rigorous control of the origin and certification of vegetables sold in "safe vegetable" stalls and shops should be exerted. Finally, more should be done to advertise places where vegetables sold directly by farmers can be found, and farmers should also be more involved in the communication with consumers on the specific advantages of buying from farmer groups.

This preliminary research also opens up new questions for further investigation. We need a more thorough comparison of the financial costs and benefits of direct retail sales relative to other types of sales, for example, through collectors or supermarkets. We also need to know more about the internal mechanics of the collective action taken by farmers to appraise how the benefits of direct sales are distributed within the group relative to the respective power basis of each member. Finally, as stated earlier, we need to make investigation regarding possible further involvement of consumers in the support of local sustainable agriculture, featuring programs of community involvement. Then, we will be able to conclude if present farmer direct sales in Vietnam are actually seeds for future alternative agri-food systems, in a world of rapid changes in food distribution where impersonal, commodity-driven mass distribution tries to dominate the scene (Bonanno & Constance, 2007).

NOTE

1. The second author of the chapter supports two farmers in peri-urban Hanoi, by financing a drainage system, agricultural inputs, and technical support. In return, she receives produce for which she pays more stable prices than the regular market prices. In cases of harvest losses, she lends some money so that the farmer can start the growing season again. This is still an individual initiative, but it could be easily transformed into a more collective scheme. Moreover, since 2008, the NGO "Action for the City" has supported a group of 10 organic vegetable growers in Soc Son district to organize home deliveries in Hanoi. One hundred and seventy consumers have now subscribed, and they pay for packs of vegetables delivered weekly at stable prices.

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CHAPTER 14

PARTICIPATION OF THE STATE IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD TO URBAN AREAS AND POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE VENEZUELAN AGRO FOOD SECTOR

Agustín Morales

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the current situation and the prospects of the food distribution system as a result of the State participation in this system by the state firms called Mercal *and* PDVal. *As a mean to achieve this objective, it was necessary to review, as a starting point, the historical situation in which these Venezuelan state firms appeared. Next, the transformations in that distribution system are studied and an interpretation of the* Mercal *phenomenon is proposed. Furthermore, the potential implications and prospects of the State participation in food distribution to urban areas are explained. Finally, an analysis of the probable implications of this participation upon the Venezuelan agricultural and food sector was conducted.*

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INTRODUCTION

During the past years, the referred structure has suffered important changes due to the founding of the firm *Mercal C.A*. This state owned company created to attend the needs of the less-favored sectors of society, since its foundation on April 16, 2003, has shown important dynamism (Ministerio de Alimentación, 2005). Regarding this, it is mentioned that on January 4, 2007, the results of a study were published (related to the impact of the 15 *social programs* carried out by the Venezuelan government) done by a renowned and prestigious surveyor, concluded that *Mercal* had the most acceptance among *socioeconomic sectors D and E* (highlight is ours), with a 50.8% and 64.4% penetration, respectively (Universidad Central deVenezuela, Facultad de Agronomía, 2007).

This important dynamism and level of acceptance, as of January 2007 until February 2008, has shown signs of weakening because it was in no condition to continually attend the growing demand of consumers, who have seen their income grow from among other sources, the different *social programs* enforced by the State, in view of the extraordinary expansion of the oil income, noticeably increasing public spending.

As of the first days of March 2008, the distribution of food seemed to recover in all the urban distribution structure of food. As for the programs displayed by the State in terms of food, it is not difficult to see the interest there is in solving this situation, since in addition to the operations of *Mercal* are those of *PDVal* (another State-owned company financed with the resources of Petróleos de Venezuela S.A., *PDVSA*). Both form what is called by the government the ''executing arms of the food policy.'' This way *Mercal* distributes food to the less-favored sectors with subsidized prices, and *PDVal* distributes basic food to other segments of the Venezuelan society with prices regulated and enforced in the Official Gazette.

Taking this context into consideration and the enforcement of food distribution policies, greatly financed by the State, it does not constitute an unprecedented success in the country if we take into consideration the history that surrounds the functioning and final destiny of the Agriculture Marketing Corporation (*Corpomercadeo*).[1] The purpose of this work is to analyze the current situation and perspectives of the structure of the urban distribution of foods as a consequence of the decision of the State to participate directly in said structure.

In accordance with the methodological process we used, this work has been structured as follows: after this introduction, the first part establishes the historical coordinates within which *Mercal* and *PDVal* appeared; this

way, it determines the origins of the object being studied. In the second part, we propose an interpretation of the phenomenon, developing all the aspects that compose this investigation, as are: *conceptualization, verification, and inference*. This way, our intention was to formulate a deductive reasoning with most attention on the *probable implications* of this phenomenon on the structure and functioning of the Venezuelan Agricultural and Food Sector if the conditions that allowed for the founding and further development of said "executing arms of the food policy" consolidate and prevail.

THE STRUCTURE OF URBAN DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD BEFORE THE FOUNDING OF *MERCAL*

The urban distribution structure of foods started to change importantly since the opening of the first facilities of *Makro Comercializadora S.A.* in 1992 in the city of Caracas. This company appeared on May 18, 1990, as a result of the association between Empresas Polar with the Dutch company known with the initials *SHV* (Steenklen Handles Verreniging). This association became *Makro Automercados Mayoristas S.A.* After this, according to the Constitutive Act located in the Commerce Registry of the Federal District and State of Miranda (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 1994), on March 18, 1992, it was decided the company would be named *Makro Comercializadora, S.A.*

The presence of *Makro*, with many of the peculiarities that characterize the so-called hypermarkets in Europe, meant a very important transformation in the urban distribution system of food (Morales, 1996). Such a change was specially important because the initial plan barely considered the opening of five facilities in Caracas, Valencia, Maracaibo, and Barquisimeto (Grupo Editorial Producto, 2005, p. 57), and practically overflowed as the number reached no less than 20 facilities located in the most important regions and cities of the country, a significant number to consider these as part of an accelerated process of transformation of the structure of urban distribution of food, particularly in this historical period of time.

Later, *CATIVEN*, a consortium integrated by the French *CASINO* group (with 50% of stock ownership), *ÉXITO-CADENALCO* from Colombia (with 28% of the package) and the *Polar* group of Venezuela (with 22%), assumed total control of the *Supermaxy's* operation. In its first stage, in 1995, the consortium, only with the presence of Makro, acquired the *CADA* supermarkets and *Maxy's* stores, and this way, it started an aggressive

Table 1. Quantitative Transformation and Percentage Variation Observed in the Urban Distribution System of Food in the 1990–2002 Period.

Distributors	Years			Variation % 2002/1990
	1990	1995	2002	
Small groceries	55.966	37.941	38.927	−30.0
Independent supermarkets	1.362	1.441	1.025	−25.0
Supermarket chains	234	265	200	−14.5
Hypermarkets		12	25	+108.0

Source: Prepared personally on the basis of the information provided by the company Datos (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 2003).

modernization program of these establishments that started to be called *CADA 2000*.

A rough quantification of this process and the significant growth of the so-called hypermarkets can be verified in Table 1.

As this development process of the GD appeared and the power of the mentioned companies increased, not only most of the retailers were being slowly substituted, but the group of economic agents that participated within the agro food sector would start to bear with the consequences of the process (Morales 1996; UCV Facultad de Agronomía, 2004-2008). Under these conditions, it was not difficult to foresee that the concentration would continue its rapid course, and it would consequently result complicated to work under the ''laws of the market.''

Taking into consideration the facts mentioned earlier, we conclude this point sustaining that the historical conditions that made it possible to conceptualize and explain the structure and functioning of the Venezuelan Agrofood Sector (VAS) up to the founding of the GD in the country, was significantly modified. Hence, the concepts and proposals current until the presence of the GD could not remain unchanged. Therefore, we consider an important change has occurred in the *structure* because the *core* (*Núcleo* in Spanish) that defines it and allows for the reproduction of most of the *agro industry complexes* (*Complejos Agroindustriales in Spanish*) that operate in the country started to show significant changes. What in most of the *Sectorial Complexes* (*Complejos Sectoriales* in Spanish; commonly know as ''agro industry complexes'') founded in the country had been designed around the *agrofood industry*, and decisions were made that guaranteed and ensured the reproduction of said *complexes*, which slowly started to lose this

capability. This capability started to surround the *Great Distribution*, which started to show its hegemony and reveal its capacity to establish hierarchies, organize, and direct the dynamics of the "*agrofood system*." In these conditions, the details of how this *core* works would have significant consequences in the evolution of all the *stages* (Etapas in Spanish) that form the "*agro industry complexes*" that operate in Venezuela, being that there are good reasons to consider that the decisions will irradiate from this new *core* that will guarantee and ensure the reproduction of the economical and social bases of these complexes. This ability that the *Great Distribution* has to ensure the reproduction of these complexes derives from its economic, technological independence, as well as its sufficiency to hold a relative conditioning over the rest of the *production stages* that form the mentioned *agro industry complexes*.

Such were in synthesis, the characteristics and interpretation of the events that preceded the apparition of *Mercal C.A*. as has been presented and reiterated, this company emerged in a context of an accelerated growth of the so-called *Great Distribution*.

Later, as has also been mentioned, *PDVal* comes into the seen and is characterized by a serious supply problem. Both events will be presented in the next point.

THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT IN WHICH *MERCAL* AND *PDVAL* EMERGED

In December 1998, Hugo Chávez Frías was elected by a vast majority as president of the Republic. Upon assuming power, he summoned a Constitutional Assembly to *re-found* the republic. This assembly produced a project for Constitution in three months, which was ratified in a popular election on December 15, 1999, with 70% of votes in favor. From the moment the referendum to approve the new constitution was summoned, the main business organization, *Fedecámaras*, decided to recommend a negative vote, as they considered that the constitutional text would have fatal consequences for the country.

In what does this new constitution differ from the revoked Constitution of 1961? Taking into consideration that there are many different aspects, for the purposes of this chapter, we highlight the socioeconomic aspects. On the one hand, these are clearly outlined in the Constitution of 1999, in contrast to the 1961 Constitution (which lacked a general title for this

subject) (Viciano, 2004, p. 59). On the other hand, the economic model contemplated in the 1999 Constitution counts with some supports considered basic for the type of society and State that was envisioned. Among those supports the following are highlighted: the principle of *food safety* for the people (highlighted because it represents a major element within the context from which *Mercal* appeared), the promotion of *rural development* and the struggle against large estates (*Latifundios* in Spanish).

After the new Constitution is enforced, a governability crisis emerges that derived primarily from the approval and application of 49 law decrees with which the government pretended to advance with what was called the ''revolutionary process.'' The general strike of December 10, 2001, that marked the beginning of the political crisis, became a general movement against this group of law decrees.

Some time after overcoming the rupture of the constitutional thread that occurred on April 11, 2002, an ''economic strike'' occurred, in which many companies decided to stop their production. But this was not all, a few days after this event, the employees of the country's main oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), decided to go on strike as well. The analysis of these events would require a space we do not have; instead, we point out that once these events were overcome, the current government applied the following measures, among other: (a) exchange and price control; (b) the decision to participate in the direct importation of goods; (c) increase of minimum wages; (d) the enforcement of the value added and bank debit tax, as well as taxes to business assets; a group of measures that favored what the government called the ''Endogenous Development Plan'' to guide its economic policy. According to the most important representatives of the government, it would mean a vision of ''inward development'' that would prioritize domestic production, supported by the exchange and price controls as instruments for industrial incentives. Thus, it would try to strengthen the participation of the State in the economy group and particularly, in the *processes of production, transformation, distribution, and consumption of agriculture food goods*.

In summary, we can say that *Mercal* shows up in a political scenario characterized by great uncertainty, a scenario in which the guarantee of ''food safety'' for the people with lower income (according to government representatives) was practically a need that could no longer be postponed due to the elevated unemployment rates and a worrying decrease of the purchase capacity of salaries (Banco Central de Venezuela, varios años-a, varios años-b, varios años-c, varios años-d), factors that made the food and

nutritional situation of less favored sectors of the Venezuelan society even more difficult (Landaeta, 2005, p. 274).

The important dynamics and level of acceptance mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, from January 2007 to February 2008, has shown signs of weakening because it was in no condition to attend the growing demands of consumers, who saw their income grow from, among other sources, the different *social programs* enforced by the State, which, in view of the significant expansion of its oil income, increased public spending. In reference to this, it is mentioned that despite that in 2007 the food demand had increased to over 30% in 2006; the market did not register a similar offer that was able to satisfy said increase. Therefore, along with the food shortage observed both in *Mercal* as well as in supermarkets and hypermarkets, the prices of food has increased significantly.

From the first day in March 2008, a recovery of the food supplies started to show in all the urban distribution structure of food. As for the programs displayed by the State in terms of food (as has been described in part of this chapter), a manifested interest in solving this situation can be seen because the operations developed by *Mercal* have been summed up to those of *PDVal*.

To solve the mentioned situation, the State has undertaken the following specific actions: (a) the relaunch of the Food Mission by creating Communal Markets managed by members of the communities that are benefited from the so-called Food Mission, (b) the restriction of exportation to bordering countries, (c) the enforcement of measures to avoid the so-called extraction smuggling, and (d) the significant increase of imports.

From the group of actions previously mentioned, it is convenient to highlight those related to *importations* that undoubtedly consume more and more US currency coming from the sale of oil. In this respect, it is said that the Commission for the Administration of Currency (CADIVI) has authorized during the first months of 2008 more than 704 million US dollars (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 2008) to import food. This amount represents approximately one-fourth of all the currency approved by this government entity between January 1 and March 5, 2008. Besides, we need to mention the fact regarding the subscription of agreements on food and energy between Venezuela and the Republic of Argentina, among which we should highlight the agreement between the Venezuelan Producer and Distributer of Food (*PDVal*) and the company Coto-Cicsa for the supply of food to Venezuela.

PROPOSALS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PHENOMENON

Theoretical – Conceptual Aspects

In the first place, the aspects to be considered are related to the concepts of "*Sectorial Complex*" and "*Sectorial Complex Core*," as well as those related to the "bi-univocal" correspondence between the *transformation* and *property* process structures, which have been analyzed and discussed in an article previous to this one (Morales, 2000).

The other theoretical aspect to be considered is the one related to the *institutions*. It is mentioned that the so-called New Institutional Economy (NIE) or "institutionalism" has derived from a series of "macroeconomic theories" that question the basis over which the neoclassic paradigm rests. These "theories" are inscribed within what is generally known with the name of "*New Institutional Economy*." One of the authors that most emphasizes the privileges of the State institutional and organizational structure as a major factor for growth and efficiency of the economies and societies is Douglas North (1984, 1989, 1993).

A considerable amount of works have been published on the NIE. Without wanting to judge the proposals in this abundant bibliography, we opt for highlighting the main aspects, that to our judgment, are the keystone of the Neoinstitutionalist Theory, these are: *limited rationality* (Simon, 1984), *opportunistic behavior* (Aguiar, 1996), *asymmetric information*, *risk*, *property rights*, *transaction costs* (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1975, 1985), as well as organizational and institutional solutions different to those of the market (Caballero, 2004; Powell & Dimaggio, 1999).

Regarding the *institutions* (North, 1994), it is mentioned that they are a set of rules and restrictions that have a decisive influence in the interchange, election, and behavior of the economic agents, the economic organization, the costs of transactions, and the economic performance. Without these, the interchange would be a costly process, dominated by social conflicts and distribution struggles that could arise from differences of economic interests. Within the same order of ideas, it adds that if no institutions existed, the egoism and maximizing conduct of economic agents would inevitably make specialization, cooperation, and the establishment of an economic coordination impossible. To summarize, without the presence of the above, it would be impossible to attenuate the opportunistic behavior of individuals and make specialization feasible, because it would be impossible to organize

the interchange in such a way to harmonize the potentially conflicting interests between the parts.

On the contrary, it points out that the *organizations* (North, 1993) constitute a group of individuals searching for similar objectives and deliberate purposes. These groups simultaneously form agents of institutional change, and therefore, it is important to establish the relationship that forms between the institutions and the organizations, whether these are formal or informal.

To end this part dedicated to the revision of aspects that have been considered the keystone of the Neoinstitutionalist Theory, we deem convenient to briefly refer to the so-called *institutional change*, conceived as the rupture of the balance in power and the factor that would provoke a transformation process in the structure of society and the behavior of its members, who will finally induce the change of attitude, values, norms, and conventions.

The historical conditions and the theoretical aspects examined up to this part of the chapter allow us to make the following proposal, among other: In the case that the conditions that allowed for the founding and further development of *Mercal* and *PDVal* were to consolidate and prevail, these state-owned companies would favor or be able to *share* with the GD the ability to determine hierarchies and progressively direct the dynamics of all the agricultural food sector of the country. In other words, participate and become an important part of the *Core* from which decisions would irradiate to guarantee and ensure the reproduction of the economic and social bases of the different *complexes* that form the so-called *Venezuelan agro food system*.

VERIFICATION OF THE PROPOSALS

In second place, it corresponds to the *verification* process, through which the validity or not of the proposals that were drawn are determined. This verification is sustained (besides from the quantitative information provided by official entities, which were mentioned in the previous point) by the uncontroversial facts expressed by academics, businessmen linked to the agro food industry and company executives, which were mentioned by Morales (2007).

As of the following paragraph, some of those facts will be referred to as well as those that have been occurring during the first months of 2008, which

have been widely distributed through different communications media and are part of the documentary support of the Project called *Venezuelan Agro Food System* executed by the Agro Food Research Unit of the UCV. (UCV Facultad de Agronomía, 2004–2008). Said facts are the following:

(a) According to a professor of Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA) in 18 months *Mercal* changed the food distribution structure (Boza, 2005) and constitutes an *opportunity* (highlight is ours) for the big product companies of massive consumption.
(b) The declarations of the president of *Conindustria*, who recognized that *Mercal* sells "low cost products to 40% of consumers." With the purpose of complementing the previously noted declarations, on our behalf we present Table 2.
(c) The recognition of the dimension and the roll of *Mercal* by the general manager of Sales and Distribution of Cargill Foods Venezuela (Fuenmayor, 2005).
(d) To consider *Mercal* as something more than a social program (Datanálisis, 2006) and the declarations of the director of one of the most important poll companies (Datanálisis) who affirmed "Mercal is actually the most *successful mission* (highlight is ours) of Government" (Datareport, 2006).
(e) The explanation of the Service Group to Trade coordinator of Datos Company on the strength of the sale points of *Mercal* (Fuenmayor, 2005).

Table 2. Prices Valid in Mercal and Supermarket Chains (Average Price per Category) and Percentual Variations Observed During October 2004.

Products	Prices in Mercal	Prices in Supermarket Chains	Percentual Variation
Rice	990	1,268	22
Pasta (spaghetti)	1,100	1,578	30
Sugar	740	1,047	30
Cooking oil	2,240	2,731	18
Sardines	420	495	15
Powdered milk	4,700	5,846	20
Corn flour	890	1,005	12
Tuna	850	1,022	17
Coffee	750	885	15

Source: Our own elaboration on the basis of information provided by the company DATOS i.r., "Trade Realities," March 2005 (UCV, Facultad deAgronomía, 2005).

Table 3. Type and Number of Establishments Installed by Mercal up to February 2006.

Type of Establishment	Number of Establishments
Mobile Mercalitos	273
Mercal type I	210
Mercal type II	867
Mercalitos	13,285
Supermercal	32
Storage centers (Centros de Acopio in Spanish)	110
Total	14,778

Source: Our own elaboration on the basis of information provided by Mercal, C.A. (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 2006).

(f) The numbers of Table 3, in which the increase of the sale points can be observed.
(g) The press release from Petróleos de Venezuela S.A. from which it can be inferred that it is possible that *PDVal* will continue extending and consolidating its distribution network during the months following February 2008.
(h) The press declarations on behalf of the vice-president of operations of *Pdval* who said: "We are dedicating to certain basic items to defeat the shortage because we share the *objective of building a network that covers all the country*" (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 2008; highlight is ours).

In February 2006, in the 14,778 facilities founded by this state-owned company, 5,530 metric tons were sold daily to more that 13.8 million beneficiaries and to that same date there were 499 suppliers incorporated into the supply chain for *Mercal*.

These and other events make us formulate a preliminary thesis in the following terms: the substantiveness of *Mercal* produced a major reconfiguration in the structure of the urban distribution of food that was happening in the country until this state-owned company was founded.

How the state-owned companies studied in this chapter gained an important share of the market (maybe due to the subsidies assigned with the huge financial resources available, at the price level they operate, the so-called unfair competition, tax exonerations, support from *CADIVI*, the structure that supports them, and probably the low operating costs of the sales points) allows us to corroborate the proposal presented in point 3.1, regarding the *possibility to share* with the GD, the ability to establish a

hierarchy and progressively direct the dynamics of all the agro food sector of the country; in other words, participate and be an important part of the *Core* from which decisions irradiate that will guarantee and ensure the reproduction of the economic and social bases of the different *complexes* that form the so-called *Venezuelan agro food system*.

INFERENCE

Taking into account the considerations presented up to this point, during the third stage we propose to formulate a deductive reasoning that will allow us to foresee the repercussions that may derive from this phenomenon. Two scenarios are established therefore: The first, that because of its nature would not require further comments nor a study as we propose, is related to the fact that it is impossible for the state to continue supporting this initiative (for fiscal and other reasons as those related to its efficiency); especially if during the period of its operations this company does not organize an adequate *logistic* management and consolidates a financial situation that will allow for its sustainability, and some other aspects could be added as corruption, probable loss of financial resources, the confrontation with companies that have traditionally been in charge of the manufacturing and distribution of food, as well as the presumable increase in bureaucracy, among other things.

The second scenario includes the probable repercussions that may derive from the studied phenomenon in the case that the conditions that allowed for the founding and further development of these companies prevail; this scenario will be treated (obviously at a high level of abstraction) as follows:

If our aspiration is to make a reasonable evaluation of the implications of the phenomenon being analyzed, we should start by admitting that since the approval and application of the new *Constitution*, it is possible to perceive the transformation in the economy, which shows relevant mutations in the exchange and conduct of the economic agents on a daily basis, as well as the performance of the markets, to quote just some of them.

Now that this premise has been described, we stress that the creation and functioning of *Mercal* is supported in articles 226 and 305 of the *Constitution* of the Republic, in accordance with articles 101 of the Organic Lay of Public Administration, 155 of the Law of Lands and agriculture Development, and 1, 11, and 14 of the Law of Agriculture Marketing. Therefore, as long as the international reserves were high, the exchange control was in force, there was no possible perspective of a drastic

devaluation and the exchange rate was convenient for the purposes of the Government, the survival of this company was ensured at least until 2008, year in which this study was concluded. Nevertheless, it is considered advisable to refer, next, to the last measures adopted by the government to confront the fiscal urgencies derived from the strong reduction of oil prices.

Although everything made to predict that the government would resort to a monetary devaluation, significantly increase the IVA tax, apply taxes to financial transactions and decide on a drastic cut of the government expending, nothing of this happened and on the very contrary, the measures announced by the government in March 2009 consisted of an increase of wages by 20% and a decision to not trim the social cost, mainly the one related to the programs that guarantee the food security of the people. For all this, the government has decided to increase public credit for the operations necessary to guarantee "nourishing sovereignty" and to preserve the social investment (UCV, Facultad de Agronomía, 2009).

Under these conditions, *Mercal and PDVal could* become an important part (together with those companies that form the "Great Distribution") of the *Core* from which decisions *irradiate* that *guarantee and ensure* the reproduction of the economic and social bases of the different *agro industry complexes* that form the Venezuelan Agro Food Sector. This way we would also witness a change in the *power* relationships that were being established as a consequence of the formation of the GD up to before the founding of *Mercal*. For this reason, the economic importance and power of the different socioeconomic agents that operate within the Agro Food Sector *would tend* to change, and we would *witness* a reordering of the social relations and the corresponding *power structures*.

Next, we will dedicate the last paragraphs to those aspects regarding the costs of transactions for the beneficiary agents of this social program.

The fact that the main "selling points" operate with reduced "operating costs" shows a very high penetration in the most remote places, and they have been able to "go up the slum areas" to get as close as possible to the consumers (and that there is the possibility to offer credits to have larger spaces in the selling points and acquire refrigerating equipment) means in practical terms a significant decrease in the purchase price as these consumers will not only find products at more attractive prices but also that their *transaction costs* will be reduced significantly. Under these circumstances, the expansion of *Mercal* will become greater because it will have been able to attract more clients and as a consequence, it will tend to displace its "competitors," among which are the food processing companies and those that were able to form what we have been calling

the *Great Distribution*. These, not to loose a greater market segment, would be forced to negotiate with *Mercal*.

If, as it has been announced, the purchasing mechanisms implemented by *Mercal* would adjust to the principles of the economy, transparency, honesty, efficiency, equality, competition, and publicity that should govern all quotation procedures, the economic *risk* and the *uncertainty* and, consequently, the *transaction costs* of the "competitors" and small and medium enterprises that produce food would also decrease. The reduction in the transaction costs would also stimulate investments, savings, jobs, technological innovation, and in general, the organization of complex collective actions. This is because with the purchase by the government (that would require an efficient supervisory system that would knock down any hint of corruption), a new space would open for national production within the new scheme that could imply "the development of inter-industrial relations ruled by a system of solidarity, explained in specific rules, established in a contract" (Green & Rocha dos Santos, 1992), similar to the one being observed in numerous regions of developed countries. Differently put, it would mean the achievement, on the one hand, of the configuration of a new socio productive scheme that would imply the incorporation of small and medium national food producers as suppliers for *Mercal C.A.* and, on the other hand, the development of regional economies with favorable conditions for this growth.

By reducing transaction costs for the consumers, for "competitors" and for the small and medium food companies, the possibility to have access to more favorable prices for consumers would be easy to predict. This success that could be qualified as the configuration of a "virtuous circle" and would allow low-income consumers (who destine a high percentage of their income to purchase food) to destine this "saved" part to satisfying other urgent needs and consequently stimulate the production of goods and services required to satisfy those basic needs. This "saved" part would be significant if we take into consideration only three aspects: (a) The so-called *price prime* of food for the city of Caracas at the time *Mercal* was being created was between 20 and 100 percent, including products regulated in the basic basked (Boza, 2005, p. 24); a conservative figure registered by Datos in 2004 indicated that class E had increased its purchasing power in more than 50% in nominal terms (Fuenmayor, 2005). (b) For low income families (who purchase foods more frequently because of liquidity, transportation, and storage capacity), the transportation cost of going to a distant establishment was very high in relation with the amount paid for the basic basket. (c) If the distance were not important, it would mean that the consumer would not

care for the time of transportation; hence, the opportunity cost of time for this agent would equal zero, a fact that does not adjust to reality (Castillo & Morales, 2004, p. 65).

Taking into account that there are not invariable facts, much less consummated, we conclude this chapter pointing out that the phenomenon being analyzed has been treated as a *process* considering it as the highly branched out mediation between present, a past that has not ended, and above all, a *possible future*.

NOTE

1. A marketing company of agro food goods created with the financial help of the State on August 21, 1970, and then liquidated after experiencing a severe crisis that reached its peak in the year 1981. In accordance with its financial statements, it experimented loses for more than half of its managed resources. These losses, according to reports filed in their archives, represent per se transfers on behalf of the State to the *agriculture industry*. Actually, the direct and indirect subsidies provided by the State and that were probably addressed to benefit the consumers were not perceived by the latter. The numbers reviewed (Morales, 1992) indicate that it was not the consumers who benefited from the subsidy policy. This mechanism used by the State that consisted in selling to the agriculture food industry goods at prices lower than purchasing them in the international market motivated the increase of imported supplies of these goods by the food processing industry, which due to its high concentration index (Morales, 1985) did not allow these subsidies to be captured and transferred to the end products. Quite on the contrary, during the mentioned years, it started an alarming price increase of foods (Morales, 1992, p. 287).

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PART IV
NATURAL RESOURCES AND RURAL WOMEN

CHAPTER 15

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: FOREST POLICY AND MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE ☆

Sabine Weiland

ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the building of environmental governance in two post-socialist countries of Southeastern Europe, Albania, and Croatia, with a focus on forest policy reforms. After the end of the socialist era, the countries have rapidly adopted new policies and legislation directed at sustainable forest management. The main driver of policy reform is the European and international influence. Yet the developments in the countries cannot be adequately described as a mere adoption of Western-style methods and solutions, as suggested in arguments on the catch-up development of transition states. The capacities needed in post-socialist countries to deal with environmental issues differ from those in industrial societies. On the contrary, there is no essentialistic link between environmental problems and solutions to these problems in post-socialist countries. The outline of the policy reforms in Croatia and Albania

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reveals very different approaches to sustainable forest management and different paths in the post-socialist transition process. It is argued that capacity development in forestry in transition states needs to be based on country-specific socio-political, economic, and cultural features to be successful.

INTRODUCTION

The building of environmental governance is one of the key challenges in the transition process of the post-socialist countries in Southeastern Europe. This holds true for the forest sector as well. Since the early 1990s, the transition countries in the region have rapidly adopted new forest policy and legislation. The perceived need for reforms has been related to new regulations in the area of land tenure, mainly the recognition of private property rights, and followed on the heels of legal reforms aimed at privatizing various aspects of the economy. Sustainable development of forests is generally an express objective of the new policy. The past emphasis on economic values in forestry has been replaced by a broader outlook that recognizes also environmental and social functions of the forest (Schmithüsen, Iselin, & Le Master, 2002; Jansky, Nevenic, Tikkanen, & Pajari, 2004).

The main driver of policy reform is the European and international influence. Membership in the European Union is connected with the obligation to implement the EU regulatory regime, and this is a powerful incentive for these countries to accept the environmental conditionality of the Union. Harmonization of forest legislation of the transition countries with EU requirements is however not necessary since forest policy is not a formalized policy area of the Union. Nevertheless, there exist European policy initiatives, such as the Resolution on a EU Forestry Strategy adopted in 1998, which emphasizes the multi-functional role of forests and the importance of sustainable forest management (Hogl, 2007). In addition, since the 1990s, a forest regime has evolved on the international level. Both the United Nations' international arrangements on forests (IAF) and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) were directed at the promotion of sustainable forest management (Tikkanen, 2007). International donor organizations also work to develop environmental governance capacities, as part of poverty reduction strategies in developing and transition countries. All these developments influence and shape the national forest policies in the countries of Southeastern Europe.

Despite the surprising speed of the reforms, it should not be overlooked that legal reforms and the introduction of new policy approaches do not automatically imply changes in the actual management practices. What is crucial is the building of capacities to put new policy approaches into practice. The initial assumption after the collapse of state socialism in Europe that economic liberalization and democratization of the post-socialist countries would almost automatically alleviate environmental problems has proven too simplistic, though. It became clear that these proposed solutions too closely reflected Western European conceptions of environmental quality and democracy, rather than the concerns of the local population (Herrschel & Forsyth, 2001). The resulting question that this article addresses is twofold: What forms of environmental governance need to be built in the transition countries of Southeastern Europe? What kind of capacities is required for this task?

Capacity building in forestry is not only an issue in the post-socialist countries of Southeastern Europe. Sustainable forest management is an important objective in all transition countries. About one-fourth of the world's forests are located in transition countries, and in most countries forests constitute an important sector of the economies and often are critical for the livelihood of the people (Pachova, Tikkanen, Pajari, & Nevenic, 2004, p. 1). Effective strategies have to be developed to reconcile sustainable forest management and sustainable economic and human development in these countries. Hence, the importance of capacity building for these tasks also goes beyond the Southeastern European region.

The chapter is organized as follows: In the subsequent section, the theoretical framework of the study, the concept of capacity building for the environment, is presented. The section "Forest Policy, Management, and Forest Policy Reforms in Southeastern Europe" outlines the current developments in forest policy and management in Southeastern Europe. Country studies on Croatia and Albania serve as illustrations of the development paths in different countries. The final section addresses the question of capacity building in forestry. It also draws some general conclusions for environmental capacity building in transition countries.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The concept of capacity for the environment is broadly defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) as "a society's ability to identify and solve environmental problems" (OECD,

1994, p. 8). Capacity is determined and shaped by political actors and their decisions, the dimensions and appropriateness of policy, availability of technical knowledge and expertise. Capacity-building, in turn, refers to efforts and strategies intended to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness of a society's performance in environmental matters.

Capacity-building has been a key concept in the development studies literature since the 1950s. Since the mid-1990s, the concept has become linked to the efforts of the World Bank, the IMF and other international donor organizations to develop "good governance," with the aim to reduce poverty in the poorest countries of the world. In terms of practical intervention, the building of capacity, as defined by international donors, includes various aspects of institution-building, development of state functions and the interactions between state, market, and civil society (Grindle, 2004, p. 526). The more specific notion of "environmental capacity-building" gained momentum after the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio 1992 and is now deployed more generally around discussions of sustainability and globalization.

In developing and transition countries, a lack of capacity might include insufficient monitoring and reporting capacities, underdeveloped democratic structures and processes, as well as deficient implementation capacities. Such deficits produce insufficient policy outcomes in various environmental fields. It is however not only developing countries but also advanced nations that face difficulties with regard to environmental capacities (Weidner & Jänicke, 2002). The assumption of a catch-up development that transition countries would just need to follow the predetermined path of the advanced nations is therefore mistaken. This also applies to the situation in post-socialist societies. In the same way as environmental degradation is not endemic to socialist regimes, post-socialism cannot be understood as synonym for new market liberalism and democracy without any environmental problems. Also the capacities needed in post-socialist countries to deal with environmental issues might differ from those in industrial societies.

Our aim is to argue against generalizing interpolations of Western experience and to make an attempt to appreciate different, and more local, approaches to the environment in the former socialist countries. In international policy initiatives, capacity-building has often become the code for the transformation of local knowledge, the disregard of existing capacities and the importation of rationalities based on Western discourses (Fagin, 2008). Yet the virtue of the capacity concept is the stress placed on the preconditions for successful policy intervention and thus on the objective limitations of policy success. Analysis of capacity must look not

just at the strengths and weaknesses of institutions, but also at the causes of (in)capacity. This opens up the view for a differentiated account of societal developing paths.

FOREST POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND FOREST POLICY REFORMS IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

Forests play an important role in the countries of Southeastern Europe. Most countries have a long tradition in forest management that dates back to the 19th century. During the socialist period, however, forest resources were heavily exploited. After the end of the regimes the countries face the challenge to adapt to the changes that occur from the political and economic transition that have a large impact also on the forest sector. This section outlines the changes in forest policy in the post-socialist countries in Southeastern Europe since the early 1990s. After a general overview, closer attention is paid to two countries in the region: Croatia and Albania, as examples to illustrate the differences in the transition paths of the countries. The outline is based on a review of existing literature as well as on interviews with forest actors in the countries that the author conducted.[1]

Since the early 1990s, the countries of Southeastern Europe have set out on a journey to transform their central planning regimes to open market economies and democracy. This resulted in policy reforms and the adoption of new legislation in forestry and in other areas of natural resource management. The aim was to establish a policy framework that effectively balances the economic, ecological, and social functions of natural resources. Given the emphasis placed on development of the economic values of forests in the past, the acknowledgement of the environmental and social functions of forests in these states required particular attention. As a consequence, sustainable use of forests is an express objective of all new forest laws.

Forest management has traditionally been envisaged as a technical discipline exclusively within the competence of professional foresters. Management plans were usually prepared in a scientific manner by the administration and applied to their relative areas. This attitude continues to be reflected in the new management planning provisions. The preparation of forest management plans is explicitly required and the issuing of harvesting authorizations is tied to the existence of a plan. Furthermore, at least basic requirements were established for the harvesting of resources (Mekouar & Castelein, 2002, pp. 6–7). This is an appropriate means of ensuring

sustainable exploitation of timber resources. Yet from the point of view of integration of forestry with related sectors and with regard to public participation, the technocratic management approach may be inadequate.

Citizens in many countries increasingly demand the consideration of other public values related to forest management, such as values associated with local needs, recreation, tourism, and biodiversity. As a rule, however, the new forest laws do not provide for public participation or the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes. The administrative bodies in the post-socialist countries do not yet seem to have recognized the potential benefits of participatory management, and the value of reaching a broad consensus among affected parties as a means of facilitating implementation of decisions. The new provisions also remain silent on another component of public participation, the access to relevant information that may be available to the authorities. The tradition of paternalistic forest management is still prevailing (Mekouar & Castelein, 2002, pp. 14–15). As for the integration of forestry with related sectors such as agriculture, grazing, tourism, and wildlife, this has not been addressed in most of the forest policy reforms. Forest administrations continue to follow a narrow approach focusing on technical forest management. Yet the integration of forest-related activities such as agriculture and grazing would all the more be important as they already put the forests under strong pressures in some of the countries (*ibid*., p. 16).

The major reform issue in the post-socialist states has been the ''privatization'' of the forest sector. Typically, this has included a number of strategies, which have been pursued to different extents in the countries of the region: restitution of forest land to former owners and establishment of a regime for private forest management; harvesting of trees carried out by private entities; transformation of State enterprises carrying out forestry works; and liberalization of forest produce prices (Mekouar & Castelein, 2002, pp. 8–14; Herbst, 2002, pp. 108–110). Yet the transfer of ownership and management tasks to private hands alone does not lead to a revitalization of the economy. All the above strategies require an adequate legal regime and institutions to safeguard sustainable management and public interest. Given the lack of professional experience and sometimes of financial capacity of many new forest owners, forestry administrations claim that appropriate management cannot be carried out by entities other than themselves. Excessively stringent rules such as the imposition of detailed management plans prepared by the administration may however discourage private activities and be difficult to implement. Hence, it is crucial to strike an appropriate balance between governmental control and encouragement

of private initiative. Furthermore, private forest holdings are often very small, and efficient and sustainable management is difficult. In organization terms, it is therefore important to encourage the establishment of associations among forest owners.

Some specific capacity needs for forest policy development in the transition states of Southeastern Europe follow from the outlined reforms. Public awareness of the multiple functions of the forests and their cross-sectoral linkages is an important driver in the attainment of sustainable forest management. Measures to foster such awareness are therefore of vital importance. In addition, the ability to monitor and assess the multiple functions of forests should be improved. In the context of open market structures particular attention should be paid to a better understanding of the forest policy implications of public and private forest ownership since this is crucial for the success of the reforms. This also applies to the acquaintance with forest policy tools of self-financed forest management (Pachova et al., 2004, p. 10).

The establishment of provisions for sustainable forest management and the privatization of the forest sector have been the major topics in forest policy reforms in the transition countries of Southeastern Europe. The topics are not specific to this region though. Other countries of the former Eastern bloc in Central Europe (e.g., Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic), in Eastern Europe (e.g., Russia, Ukraine), as well as transition states in the Caucasus and Central Asia (e.g., Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan) have had similar experiences on their transition paths (Jansky et al., 2004; Nilsson, 2005). Nevertheless differences exist related to significant physical and structural diversity. The forest resources, the type of forest cover, landscape, and biodiversity shape the country-specific priorities that forest policy has to address. The level of economic development and the socio-political and institutional structures in a state determine the level of existing capacities for developing and implementing the necessary forest policies. These two types of characteristics are correlated to a certain extent in the transition countries of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe (Pachova et al., 2004).

Rather than focusing on the common features of transition countries in their forest policy reforms, we want to emphasize the existing differences though. The transition countries of the former Eastern Bloc are not a homogenous category. For this reason, we now zoom in on the forest policy reforms of two countries of Southeastern Europe, Croatia and Albania, which presumably reveal numerous similarities regarding their forest reforms. Despite that it will be shown that broad differences still exist.

CROATIA

In the first half of the 1990s, numerous pieces of legislation were passed that deal with forest regulation, as well as sustainability and biological diversity of the Croatian forests. The most important act is the Law on Forests from 1990 that aims at the sustainable management of the Croatian forests, through enhancement of multipurpose and economically sustainable use of forests, and through protection of forests. The forests are subject to forest management plans that are to be approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management.

In 2003, the Croatian government launched the National Forest Policy and Strategy (NFPS). It was part of a series of strategies and legal amendments in the area of environmental, agricultural, and regional planning within the process of adjustment for the accession to the European Union. The NFPS contains more than 100 strategic activities that are crucial for adjustment of the sector to conditions in European countries, among others regarding the economic viability and competitiveness of the forestry sector.

Forest Management

At present, the state owns 78% of the Croatian forests, 22% of forests are private-owned. Whereas the private woodlots are under the responsibility of the respective owners, the state forest is managed by a Forest Enterprise, called ''Hrvatske Šume.''

The State Forest Enterprise was founded in 1991 as a public company. Later the enterprise was restructured from a public company into a Limited Trading Company, founded by the Republic of Croatia (Posavec & Vuletić, 2004, p. 211). *Hrvatske Šume Ltd.* is organized as follows: Apart from the direction in Zagreb, the Enterprise operates 16 regional forest administrations and 169 forest offices. In addition, 14 forest companies (mostly for forest works that require larger and special equipment) belong to the organization (Hrvatske Šume, 2008).

The regional branches are the most important level of forest management. Here the management plans for each of the 650 management units are prepared, which then need to be approved by the Ministry. Each management plan covers a 10-year period. They are translated into annual operational plans, prescribing for example the amount of wood for cutting and the necessary silvicultural works. Moreover, a business plan for each unit is set up. In general, the implementation of the management plans is

high. Departures from the plans mostly result from unexpected events such as storms and forest fires. Compliance with the management plans is supervised by the Forestry Inspection, a body attached to the Ministry, through a system of internal as well as public control.

The administration of the Croatian state forests follows the so-called model of self-financing forestry (Martinić, 2000, p. 87). Administration tasks are performed by a company that is engaged not only in forest works but also in the marketing of the timber and timber products. The transformation of the Enterprise into a Limited Trading Company was an attempt to transfer a post-socialist State enterprise into a commercial enterprise. *Hrvatske Šume Ltd.* hence pursues a double objective: to successfully manage the state-owned forests as well as to conduct an economically sound business (Posavec & Vuletić, 2004, pp. 213–214).

The economic performance of the Forest Enterprise is considered satisfactory. About three-quarters of the business income stem from sales of wood assortments (Posavec & Vuletić, 2004, p. 220). However, the selling of the wood is, for the most part, carried out under non-market conditions at administratively regulated fixed prices. Buying rights for wood are distributed according to certain criteria and by applying a pricelist, approved by the Ministry of Economy. The wood price is fixed annually, depending on factors such as the volume and structure of the wood production and quality parameters (*ibid.*). As a consequence, the Forest Enterprise is hardly able to adapt to a constantly changing market. The fact that the production is largely determined by the legal regulations on forest management does not make it any easier. On the contrary, the Forest Enterprise was able to take advantage of the sustainable management practices as quality standards. In 2002, *Hrvatske Šume Ltd.* received the Forest Stewardship Council certificate for the forests under its management. Currently, national forests certification standards are in process of development.

About one-fifth of the Croatian forests are in private ownership. Presently, the number of private owners is nearly 600,000, and the average size of the private holdings is 0.7 ha. In many cases, these forests are highly degraded due to over-cutting, with a growing stock that is considerably lower than in state forests. According to the Law on Forests, the private owners are required to manage their forest properties sustainable. They are also obliged to provide for protection and reforestation measures. If the private owners do not carry out the appropriate measures and activities, the Forest Enterprise becomes responsible for the implementation of these measures. However, due to a lack of funding and financial supports, an

estimated 95% of the private forests do not have any management plan at all (Martinić, 2000, p. 84).

For that reason, the Forest Extension Service was established in 2006, a public institution that deals with private forests in Croatia. Organization building was driven by a public debate in the course of the passage of the National Forest Strategy and the new process of certification in the state forests. Demands by the private forest owners, among them a number of owners of larger properties (e.g., the church), were to increase the activities in their forests, for example, with regard to the opportunities for private owners to market timber and other products.

The overall objective of the new institution is to improve the management of the private forests, through organizing the development of management plans and through giving advice and professional education to the forest owners. The Service also performs administrative tasks, such as selection of trees for felling and providing the necessary documentation. Finally, the Service also organizes the selling of wood through tenders.

One of the main obstacles to sustainable forest management in the private Croatian forests is the small size of the woodlots, resulting from the fragmented ownership structure. The plots needed to be integrated into larger units to ensure a sustainable management. The Forest Extension Service therefore aims to foster the organization of the private owners. Until the end of 2007, 17 associations of private owners were founded, and the establishment of a national association of private owners is planned. For the Forest Extension Service, the associations are the most important partners for co-operation, and the Service tries to establish good working relations with them.

Toward Sustainable Forestry?

The outline of the Croatian forest policy developments revealed the sector's position half way between a socialist-style planning approach and a market approach. Sustainable management practices are achieved through state regulation and a well-functioning administration. The rigidity of the forest management planning system demands strict adherence to the plan and does not leave room for any learning or reflexivity at the lower levels. The economic orientation that came with the conversion of the Forest Enterprise into a Limited Trading Company is not fully realized yet. Here might be some potential for learning processes (when using the market mechanism in favor of sustainability goals, e.g., with the FSC certificate).

Yet the marketization can also have the reverse effect: the subordination of environmental goals to economic interests. The situation gets difficult however when it comes to private forests. A wide lack of forest management raises the question of capacity building from scratch. How can sustainable forest management be organized in private forests? What kind of incentives, for example, subsidies, would be needed to foster good management practices? Under which conditions could learning processes be initiated – among the forest owners, and their associations, as well as other stakeholders?

ALBANIA

Forest resources in Albania have been heavily exploited in the past decades. A considerable loss of forest area already took place in the 1960s, as a result of the government decision to clear forest for the creation of agriculture land. Forest depletion has continued since then, mainly because of persistent poverty in rural areas. Since 1990 Albanian society has undergone a fundamental transition, marked by changes in production structures, high unemployment, and unprecedented emigration. The forest sector has suffered much more from this transition than other sectors. The level of resource exploitation and the minimal investment into the sector have left the resource base in a very vulnerable condition. At the same time, the state of the forests is closely linked with the socio-economic well-being of the Albanian people. Therefore, and also under pressure of international political and donor organizations, the Albanian government was urged to take action to halt forest degradation.

The main piece of legislation to achieve the sustainable management of the country's forest resources is the "Law on Forests and the Forest Police" from 2005, which aims at "environmental conservation and the production of wood material and other forest products" (Agalliu, Decka, Dedej, & Ramaj, 2007, p. 19). On the basis of the poor condition of the forests, the Albanian government designed a strategy for the forest and pasture sector (Directorate General of Forests and Pastures [DGFP], 2005), which aims to ensure "the management, [and] sustainable and multifunctional development of forestry and pasture resources" (*ibid.*, p. 7). Several priority objectives for the next 10 years were outlined, including the halt of all commercial logging for a period of at least 10 years; protection and rehabilitation of forests and pastures through the increase of investments and incentives of private and collective initiatives; and further attention to

other socio-economic functions and services and the multiple use of forest and pasture (*ibid*., pp. 14–15). One consequence of the strategy is the limited possibility for timber production. The Albanian forest economy will therefore not be able to contribute much to the development of the wood processing industry, at least for the next 10–20 years. The restoration of the ecological functionality of the forests is given priority.

Forest Management

Approximately 50% of the population live in rural areas, and this fact has created strong relations between the local communities and forests. For long, forests have been the main source of community employment and incomes. At the same time, however, this has put great pressure on forests, which have suffered from degradation, resulting from unregulated and intense wood-harvesting to satisfy household needs for fuel, timber, and livestock fodder. For that reason, the areas close to rural communities are particularly degraded.

In 1994, the World Bank has launched a project to support better resources management, monitoring, and control (World Bank, 2004). Significant investments were made to improve the infrastructure of the Forestry Service through community participation. The Albanian Forestry Project aims at achieving a sustainable increase in the productivity of forests and pastures and at empowering local governments. Poverty reduction, through improvement of forests to generate incomes from natural resources and employment, is the overriding objective of the project.

Evaluation of the World Bank project revealed a positive impact on poverty alleviation. The communal forest and pasture management component in particular, with its targeted interventions in rural areas, has contributed significantly to reduce poverty in vulnerable areas (World Bank, 2004, pp. 7, 11–12). This success has set off broader policy reforms by the Albanian government to decentralize forest management tasks and responsibilities (see later in text).

A further objective of the project, to take the initial steps in the transition of the forestry sector to a market economy turned out to be less successful. The initial privatization of harvesting and wood processing enterprises proved difficult since the majority of private companies owned minimal and outdated equipment. Meanwhile, a system of issuing licenses to private companies undertaking activities in the sector of forests and pastures exist. Most of the licensed companies employ a small number of people and

possess some equipment that used to belong to state forest harvesting enterprises. In addition, the World Bank project was able to introduce a number of market-based mechanisms, such as wood-auctions (World Bank, 2004, p. 7). The largest challenge for the establishment of a market for forest products and work processes however is the substantial reduction of illegal logging activities. For that reason, the decentralization of forest management is regarded as key to improve forest governance. A new World Bank project was launched in 2004 to develop and expand the community-based approach to forest and pasture management.

Decentralization and Devolution

Before 1992, all Albanian forests and pastures were state property. The restitution to previous owners began in 1996. In 2001, 81% of the forest land was state-owned, 18% was community-owned, and only 1% was in private ownership (Dida, 2003, sec. 6.2). Traditionally the concept of land ownership played only a minor role. Forests and pastures were normally used on the basis of common law, that is, the user rights were with the families and were inherited over generations. Like this, the Albanian situation differs significantly from the ownership structures in other countries in the region, including Croatia. This is also the reason why the communities play such important role in forest management in Albania.

After the success the Communal Forest component of the World Bank project, an official decision was made to continue the transfer of state forests to the local governments, as new policy approach to sustainable forest management. The decentralization process aims to accomplish the transfer of forests and pastures in use to 218 communities and municipalities, accounting for 40% of the Albanian forests. Until 2002, the transfer already included 56 communities. Management plans have been worked out for all communities involved. The transfer of forests to the rest of the communities was officially approved in February 2008.

The process of transferring forest management to the communities is conceived as a procedure to increase awareness and responsibility of the local actors. Community boards have been installed, composed of representatives of the local government, stakeholders (user associations, local people), and the forest service. They collectively deal with the formulation of management plans and make the necessary decisions. The World Bank, as the international donor organization, accompanies the transfer process. One obstacle however is the lack of a developed

participation culture in Albania (Prifti & Hasko, 2003, p. 248). For that reason NGOs, such as the Netherlands Development Organisation SNV, also support the capacity building in the local government.

At this point, the transfer process is underway, with still many unresolved questions. Considerable debate is about how far the devolution process should go. Is the transfer of *user* rights to the communities, which deal with the allocation of rights and duties, the best way to secure sustainable management? Or should *property* rights also be given to the communities and eventually to the local people? It is argued that private ownership is be the best way to increase the individual interest in natural resources management and to induce sustainable income generation activities. Others however argue that private ownership leads to a fragmentation of the forests that contradicts sustainable management. Therefore, as is argued, collective ownership at community level with individually granted user rights is the better alternative.

Overall, the crucial question is whether it will be possible to establish local governance to manage the community forest. The potential for learning processes among the local government and the stakeholders exists. The difficulty however is the enormous pressure to succeed. This in turn might produce also counter-productive results, such as an opportunistic attitude vis-à-vis the international donors, for example, the establishment of pseudo organizations. Like this, the building of capacities for forest management would not be achieved.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter reviewed the current developments in forest policy and management in Southeastern Europe. In the broader context of forest policy development, the specific challenges these post-socialist countries face in the transition of their natural resource policies were revealed. The countries have important commonalities in their socio-economic, political, and institutional structures, in existing or inherited policies of natural resource management. The adoption of Western-style methods and solutions, suggested in arguments on the catch-up development of transition states, fail to acknowledge the diversity and specificity of the post-socialist societies. On the contrary, there is no essentialistic link between environmental problems and solutions to these problems in post-socialist countries. The outline of the policy reforms in Croatia and Albania revealed very different approaches in the pursuit of sustainable forest management and

different paths in the post-socialist transition process, resulting from country-specific socio-political, economic, and cultural features. Hence, despite existing commonalities, capacity needs for forest policy development in the transition states differ in terms of both nature and scope. To be successful, capacity development initiatives need to be situated at the interface of both.

NOTE

1. Semi-structured interviews of normally 90 minutes. The interviewees were either political actors (from the responsible ministries, administrative bodies, extension services, stakeholders, such as forest owners associations, international donor organizations) or academics who work on forest topics. The interviews were conducted in February and March 2008.

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CHAPTER 16

HISTORIES AND CONTINUITIES OF WATER GOVERNANCE IN NORTHERN GHANA

Jennifer Hauck and Eva Youkhana

ABSTRACT

To counteract low water productivity in many developing countries, international donors promote community-based management. This practice was meant to replace top-down governmental approaches. In Ghana, the water sector came under review in the 1990s. Institutions have been decentralized, and management tasks transferred to communities, associations, and private-sector entities. While assigning ownership and responsibilities to communities is feasible for rural water management, the chapter shows that policy makers and practitioners tend to ignore the historical background of existing structures and antagonisms of traditional and present management systems. Implementation strategies are therefore prone to failure. The chapter analyzes the administrative history of water governance in Ghana and related problems to date. The case study on fisheries management has its setting in the Upper East Region of Ghana, where people use reservoirs to improve their livelihoods through irrigation, cattle watering, and fisheries. In the course of rehabilitation projects, rights and responsibilities of management have been handed over to user groups or associations and village committees. Clashing traditional, governmental, and participatory management strategies

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overtax communities to cope with responsibilities. Conflicts, mistrust, and overexploitation are some of the consequences.

INTRODUCTION

Participatory decision-making and community-based management, practices that are theoretically well established in the western world, comprise basic components associated with sustainable development. Although there is little doubt that development efforts should encourage participation and decision making from below, it is not possible to do so effectively without taking into consideration the complex socio-political and cultural histories.

The implementation of new water governance strategies in Ghana, and northern Ghana in particular, failed for many reasons that can be explained by looking at the historical coherences. History connects water-related issues to political contexts and social conditions and reveals antagonisms of traditional and present management structures. Considering that history has a tendency to repeat itself and that water is a highly political and politicized tool (Turton, 2005; Mollinga, Meinzen-Dick, & Merrey, 2007), it is of major importance to pay attention to pitfalls of the past to improve implementation of future reforms.

The first part of this chapter contains some theoretical considerations, the methodological approach and a short introduction to the Upper East Region (UER) of Ghana. Afterwards, the legal and administrative history of water governance in Ghana, as well as related problems to date are examined and complemented by a case study of local fisheries management in the UER. The chapter concludes with problems arising from the historical backgrounds and ideas about how to put them into practice.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Community participation and community-based management, accompanying administrative decentralization processes, have become the dominant strategy for reforming inefficient rural water allocation in developing countries. Unfortunately, these strategies have not always led to more sustainable management systems as described in detail regarding the example of rural water supplies in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Schouten & Moriarty, 2003; Harvey & Reed, 2006). Reasons for failures are, for example, according to Botes and van Rensberg (2000) and Njoh (2002), paternalistic postures of

authorities and/or development professionals, as well as local interest groups such as elders, or gate keeping practices by local elites.

Harvey and Reed (2006) further criticize that community members are often incorporated in voluntary work that lacks long-term incentives for individuals. Likewise, a lack of transparency and accountability, community coherence and leadership may affect and constrain community participation.

Cleaver (2001) points out that participatory approaches linked to institutional reforms do not acknowledge the fact that many decisions are negotiated and made outside formal organizations, during daily interactions that dominate social exchange and political decisions. Saravanan (2008, p. 11) adds that "decision-making processes do not represent communicative and consensual partnerships or strategic actions, but rather combines diverse social communicative skills over a period, making water management a socio-political process." Mollinga et al. (2007) point out the importance of context specificity and processes for institutional reform and underline the path dependency of institutional change. In contrast, "social engineering approaches" and blueprints with a general set of solutions are applied by development practitioners, who oversee the socio-political and cultural embeddedness of water management systems. They suggest a strategic approach to water management around the notions "problemshed" and "issue network" rather than a single purposive watershed perspective (Mollinga et al., 2007).

Another set of issues revolves around the question of what is understood by the term "community." Agrawal and Gibson (1999) as well as Lund (2003) criticize that there is neither a common understanding of the terminology "population/local people," nor a precise idea of the model of participatory collaboration or cooperation. Schouten and Moriarty (2003) add that many water development projects tend to homogenize the target group by pretending that conditions are the same everywhere.

It seems that participation has turned out to be an indispensable but not reflected ingredient for development projects. However, the redistribution of property rights, transfer of authority, as well as the reallocation of resources may also lead to a reassertion of powerful interest groups and to resource capture by elites, as Kothari (2001) points out.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The underlying study of this chapter is part of the GLOWA Volta research project (2000–2009), which was funded by the German Federal Ministry

of Education and Research and the state North Rhine Westphalia. Overall project objective was to design and implement a Decision Support System (DSS) for the sustainable allocation and management of water resources in the West-African Volta river basin under global climate change conditions. The UER was one focus area as its population is highly vulnerable to environmental change.

The research agenda of this study was driven by an interest in the impact of historically derived water governance structures for today's rural water sector. Additionally, problems related to participatory approaches and community-based water management strategies are put into focus. The historical part of the study is largely based on a review of relevant literature on the topic. The case study on rural fisheries is predominantly based on empirical data collected between February and August 2007. The data collection focused on two reservoirs and associated user communities in the UER. The reservoirs were selected because the two user communities Kajelo and Binduri had at least rudiments of a fishermen organization.

The investigations comprised group discussions with fishermen and fishmongers, semi-structured and open-ended interviews with fisheries scientists, staff members of the Ministry of Fisheries (MoFi), fishermen, and traditional authorities in the villages. A number of cattle owners, Water User Association (WUA) executives, NGO staff, and teachers provided an external view on the development of fisheries activities. In total 16 Net-Maps (Schiffer, 2007) were drawn. Net-Map is an interview-based network-mapping tool that helps people understand, visualize, discuss, and improve situations in which many different actors influence outcomes.

Information derived from interviews was triangulated with extensive observations and field notes taken during an eight-month stay in the village as well as with the literature from other research conducted in the area (Roncoli, 1994; Lund, 2006; Hesselberg & Yaro, 2006; Laube, 2007; Eguavoen, 2008).

All data contributed to an analysis that follows a process tracing procedure described by George and Bennett (2005) and Bennett and Elman (2006). Both emphasize the concept of path dependence and its elements of causal possibility, contingency, closure of alternatives, and constraints to the current path. Both stress the importance of comparative case studies for the analysis of complex causal relations. Following these suggestions, chronicles for each village are presented and compared to filter the causes of management failures.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE UPPER EAST REGION IN GHANA

The UER occupies the north-eastern part of Ghana and remains one of the most vulnerable and poor areas, characterized by environmental changes and unreliable rainfall patterns (Rodgers et al., 2007). During the rainy season, water is abundant and feeds a large number of shallow water bodies that dry up during the prolonged dry season.

The area is rather densely populated, even though migration to the resource rich and industrialized south seems to regulate the comparatively high birth rates in the region (Bacho & Bonye, 2006; Laube, 2007). The population lives on rain-fed subsistence agriculture, livestock rearing, and to some extent, fisheries and dry season gardening. This is possible due to more than 200 multipurpose reservoirs that were built over the past five decades to store rainwater.

Owing to historical patterns of immigration over hundreds of years, the region is home to a number of ethnic groups organized in different social systems, mainly segmented social groups and/or centralized political structures (Crook, 2005; Laube, 2007). This complex situation is aggravated by conflicts over scarce natural resources, creating disputes and warfare between families, clans, and different kinds of invaders (Massing, 1994; Lund, 2003; Bacho & Bonye, 2006; Kusimi, Fobil, Atuguba, Erawoc, & Oduro, 2006; Laube, 2007).

HISTORY OF RURAL WATER GOVERNANCE IN NORTH GHANA – FROM CUSTOMARY LAY TO WATER USER ASSOCIATIONS

To understand the ambiguity of local natural resources regimes better, it is necessary to describe briefly how customary laws, colonial legacy, and reforms after the formation of the nation state have influenced current land and water governance in northern Ghana. The advent of different water governance structures also portrays how public participation and administrative involvement of the population in the study area has evolved in the face of historical developments, and why traditional governance structures could partly persist.

Pre-Colonial Times

Before colonization, the main actors in customary land and water governance were earth priests, or so called *tendanas*, descendants of the first settlers of an area (Adjewodah & Beier, 2004; Lund, 2006; Opoku-Ankomah, Ampomah, & Somé, 2006;). They perform specific rituals and sacrifices to ensure the responsible use of natural resources (Opoku-Agyemang, 2005; Kusimi et al., 2006; Laube, 2007). Chieftaincy, a more political manifestation of control over natural resources, became important with the ongoing settlement of people from "outside" the region (Lund, 2006; Laube, 2007).

To protect the earth and to regulate the use of natural resources, priests and chiefs enforced a set of rules, including the imposition of sanctions and taboos on land and water use (Adjewodah & Beier, 2004). Water was publicly available and could be used for free (Opoku-Ankomah et al., 2006; Sarpong, undated, after Boateng, 1977; Lautze, Barry, & Youkhana, 2008). Pre-colonial tenure arrangements formed complex indigenous systems, managing traditional practices of subsistence farming, cattle herding (Lentz, 2006), and, to a minor extent, fishing.

Under Colonial Rule

After the Congo Conference in 1885, the Europeans colonized and regulated trade in Africa. As a British colony, the Gold Coast was subject to a common law legal system, and power was exercised with the assistance of the chiefs as local authorities (Cooke, 2004; Laube, 2007). In this process, the political authority of chiefs increased (Crook, 2005) and that of the *tendanas* was marginalized. This applies especially to northern Ghana, where colonial legislation often led to the ignorance of traditional land tenure regimes and the misappropriation of land (Roncoli, 1994, Akrong, 2006).

Although earth priests lost much of their power, traditional land and water management practices could partly persist under colonial rule since landholdings were not necessarily linked to political jurisdiction, but to lineages (Lund, 2006).

In the course of water conservation programs, initiated in the northern regions of the country by the colonial administration in the 1940s, reservoirs and dugouts were built to provide water for humans and livestock, as well as for irrigated crop production and fish (MacPherson & Agyenim-Boateng, 1991). The ownership of these reservoirs remained unclear, but tasks such as

water and land distribution, dam maintenance or measures to prevent soil erosion were originally retained by the local communities and put into effect through traditional local authorities (MacPherson & Agyenim-Boateng, 1991). Apart from the half-hearted infrastructural and institutional developments, the British had only little interest in developing these vast and low resource regions.

Post-Independent Developments

After independence in 1957, natural resources management regimes underwent major changes. Many water management institutions were created, such as the Volta River Authority (VRA) in 1961, the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation (GWSC) in 1965, and the Irrigation Development Authority (IDA) in 1977. Although the Department of Fisheries existed already, major changes took place in fisheries management. Responsibilities for fisheries administration, development, and regulation were formally handed over to the government (MacPherson & Agyenim-Boateng, 1991).

In contrast, many governing instruments were carried over from colonial times. The first president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, retained political power by cooperating with local chiefs. Misappropriation of land, which started during colonial administration, was not repealed but replaced by the State Property and Contracts Act of 1960. The act allowed political patronage, dominated Nkrumah's pragmatic, and opportunistic strategies to maintain control over land and related resources and allocate them to his political supporters (Laube, 2007). Despite this drawback, a significant number of small-scale irrigation schemes were developed throughout the North, which at least partly improved the situation in the respective communities.

REFORM PROCESSES AND LAND WATER GOVERNANCE TODAY

Under President Rawlings, the constitution of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) was put in place and decentralization and political participation became an outspoken subject in governance during the 1980s. By declaring the Local Government Law in 1988, district, municipal, and metropolitan assemblies were created with deliberative, legislative, and executive powers. Chiefs and traditional rulers had no seats in new local

government system (Buah, 1998). Although political power was shared through decentralization, funds remained in the hands of the central government (Holtkamp, 1994; Massing, 1994). Decentralization efforts were extended to include the rural water sector in Ghana in the early 1990s. As a cornerstone of the water sector reforms, carried out under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Water Resources Commission (WRC Act 522) was created in 1996. The WRC is composed as an umbrella organization, linking different user groups and stakeholders, including traditional authorities into its organizational structure. By that means, more public participation in water governance is targeted (van Edig, Engel, & Laube, 2002; Laube & van de Giesen, 2005).

Reforms also encompassed the fisheries sector, and fisheries and agricultural service provision was put together at the beginning of the 1990s (Kapetsky, 1991). All fisheries offices were closed down, and officers were either transferred to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) or retired. In 2005, when the Department of Fisheries was transformed again into a separate MoFi, both the number of staff and funds remained limited.

Rural water governance experienced significant changes when rights and responsibilities for the operation and maintenance of small-scale irrigation schemes, fish stocks, and reservoirs were transferred to WUAs. International donor directives suggested that increased community participation in decision-making processes would result in a "sense of ownership" (International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD], 2001). In the UER, the WUAs were developed under projects such as the Land Conservation and Smallholder Rehabilitation Projects (LACOSREP) I (1994–1998) and II (2000–2006) initiated by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The long-term aim for the WUAs is to ensure participatory, sustainable management of established and rehabilitated infrastructure, and thereby enhance the livelihoods of the WUA members (IFAD, 2001). In fact, the participatory conception of resources management contradicts the hierarchical/paternalistic traditional governance of resources, as well as the top-down approaches carried out during the first decades following Ghana's independence. Furthermore, WUAs did not receive any district level backing, such as bye-laws (van Edig et al., 2002), that would enable them to enforce management rules.

The legal framework for the enforcement of fisheries management rules is rather weak too. Although there was a new fisheries Act (Act 625) in the year 2002, it mainly focuses on marine fisheries and aquaculture issues.

THE CASE OF FISHERIES IN THE UPPER EAST REGION

In-depth studies of two reservoirs and attached communities in the UER provide some insights into how fisheries management, as one aspect of water governance, developed. Thereby fishery is understood as a livelihood strategy devoted to catching fish to generate income, as well as for home consumption.

Historical Development of Fisheries Management in Reservoirs

Binduri

The Binduri reservoir was not used for fishing after its construction in the early 1950s because the right gear and skills were not available for fishing in deeper bodies of water. The Department of Fisheries (DoF) opened a training camp in the late 1960s and introduced new, modern fishing gear and methods. According to old fishermen, many villagers showed interest in the new activity; however, the DoF limited fishing to men who had successfully completed the training and knew how to fish in a sustainable way.

In the course of decentralization, the training camp closed down. The fishermen groups split up under different chief fishermen, management collapsed, and fish catches declined. Retired DoF staff explained that the formation of groups that could take over management was never a priority. Fishermen stated that they felt abandoned by the state, which was supposed to be responsible for the reservoir. At that time fishing was open to everybody who could buy gear henceforward available in the markets. The rising number of fishermen and inappropriate fishing gear led to over-exploitation. The earth priest realized this, but, as described earlier, he lost his authority and had no influence on the fishing activities.

The current extension officer reported that he tried to reform a fishermen association after the reservoir was rehabilitated under LACOSREP I in the 1990s. He urged the fishermen to save some money, asked them to elect one chief fisherman, have regular meetings to discuss management rules, and enforce them. The group, and thus the management rules, failed soon after the contributed money was embezzled by the treasurer. The fishermen gave a number of reasons why the person responsible was not held accountable. Most important were the close kinship ties in the village. One fisherman put it in a nutshell: "He is a close relative. If I am bringing him to jail I am also the one to bail him out." Another reason was the fishermen's inability to keep and monitor account books.

Other reasons given by fishermen for group formation failure were the inappropriate behavior of the extension officer. He only dealt with the chief fisherman, who, although officially elected, was not fully accepted by the others. Since the officer hardly made an appearance in the village he was also perceived as a man who did not fulfill his duties.

The conflicts between the young and the old fishermen and the lack of legitimate leadership led to a situation where high fishing pressure and open access to the reservoir depleted the fish stock significantly (Hauck, 2008).

Kajelo

One of the few customary principles in Kajelo is the strict taboo to hunt crocodiles as they are seen to be hosts of the ancestors. The enforcement of this taboo is the responsibility of the local chief and not, as in other villages, that of the earth priest. Further, in Kajelo community every sub-village has an elder who has only some of the rights and duties of a *tendana*, such as conflict mediation or sacrifices.

In 1969 a DoF training camp opened in Kajelo, and villagers picked up the new fishing methods quickly. Implemented restrictions on fisheries activities were accepted even by the local authorities, since these regulations led to high catches per day. As in Binduri, the DoF extension staff did not pay attention to the positive effects of the joint management. After the DoF withdrew from the village the fishermen group spilt up again.

A new extension officer who entered the village in 2004 during the dam rehabilitation under LACOSREP II tried to revive the fishermen's group in the Kajelo community. As in Binduri, the attempts to rehabilitate the fisheries management failed because of the discrepancies in handling financial contributions and the disagreement among fishermen about the choice of their leader. According to the fishermen interviewed, another reason for failure was the disagreement about what to do with those who violated the management rules. Most fishermen expected the extension officer to assist in enforcing rules by sanctioning violators. Actually they had neither the standing nor the means to do so.

Apart from the conflicts about leadership, a loose group of young fishermen formed. This group, so the complaints of the older fishermen and elders, refused to observe any management rule, refused to pay their contribution, and could not even be disciplined by traditional authorities. The young fishermen argued that the elders tried to stop them, without giving a proper explanation or providing them with income alternatives. Furthermore, the young fishermen accused the older ones of breaking

their own rules and embezzling the contributed money. As a result of these conflicts, the reservoir is now accessible to everybody and subject to over-exploitation (Hauck, 2008).

COMPARING SUMMARY OF THE TWO CASES

In both villages fishermen were familiar with gear constraints, recovery periods, and other passive management strategies, yet they were not implemented. Local authorities have lost their influence, especially on younger fishermen, due to the paternalistic posture of the DoF extension agents, who tried to replace existing management structures. Moreover, the top-down approach of the extension staff prevented the formation of a participatory, self-governing fishermen group from the beginning.

Chances to make a difference in fisheries management emerged in the last 10 years from the LACOSREP projects and from the new MoFi. However, the reformation of the fishermen groups, where participatory decision making was envisaged, turned out to have little impact on management structures. First, fishing developed into a viable income source in the past 50 years (Hauck, 2008), and alternatives are still rare. It is therefore difficult to stop people from earning an income with fishing, even for short periods of time. Second, the extension officers treated the fishermen group as a homogenous entity, being led by a single person. In fact several fishermen groups and leaders did exist. By favoring one fishermen group, the extension officer actually increased conflict potentials. For that reason communication among fishermen broke down.

The fact that saving started without having opened an account or having agreed on certain transparency rules led to mistrust among the fishermen. Weak, unaccountable leaders, who were breaking the rules and embezzled money, did not provide incentives for others to participate in management. The lack of financial means and the assumption that people volunteer for management tasks created a situation in which finally no one felt responsible for the resources.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the historical process of rural water and fisheries governance in northern Ghana provides evidence for the gap between theory and

practice of community-based, participatory management. Attempts of different external agents to transform the historically derived, complex institutional landscape by establishing user-based management failed for a number of reasons. After decades of top-down paternalism, water users were unable to realize the new idea of participatory decision making and establish legitimate leadership without intensive assistance. Poorly trained extension staff worsened the situation by ignoring the heterogeneity of the user communities. Their top-down behavior increased conflicts and resistance to change. Apart from that the communities, standing at the bottom of governmental assignations and programs, were often over-stretched with the rather difficult nature of the personally unrewarding management tasks assigned to them.

However, extension agents only enforce the development policies that are designed by external actors. In Ghana, colonial rulers, state authorities, and development experts have tried to reform water governance structures often without understanding existing decision-making processes and path dependent structures.

We do agree with Mollinga et al. (2007) that much too simplified approaches that are applied to all, without considering the socio-political complexity, are actually responsible for the drawbacks of progress. Recognizing participatory and community-based management as an additional burden rather than a remedy leads to the conclusion that communities at least need enough means and specialized technical assistance to meet the imposed requirements. Development practitioners providing encouragement and motivation, capacity building, and training should also enhance communication and accompany group formation, processes that are rarely considered.

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CHAPTER 17

GENDER, BODIES AND ETHNICITY IN RURAL PLACES: SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN RURAL VICTORIA

Gayle Farnsworth

ABSTRACT

From a post-colonial feminist perspective, this chapter explores how themes of gender and ethnicity combine to produce an embodied narrative of the everyday lived experience of one immigrant woman in a small country town. Her story was told to me as part of an interpretive study via a face to face interview. Her personal history of trauma and dislocation influenced by the wider cultural frameworks and expectations that inform her way of doing gender and ethnicity shape the way she experiences the pleasures and pains of a rural life. In this rural place, she finds that her embodied narrative does not conform to the set of socially constructed meanings that lead to inclusion so her body is reconstructed as ''other'' and as such is subjected to covert and overt practices that exclude and marginalize her. The discussion is situated within the field of rural studies as the settlement of immigrant women in rural places is seen as a process of social restructuring contextualized and influenced by the social and cultural meanings attached to those places.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years economic and social change has been at the forefront of the change panorama in rural areas of Australia. As a result of unbalanced reporting on some of these changes, a perception that rural areas of Australia are in crisis has developed (Lockie & Bourke, 2001). It is against this backdrop of perceived crisis that Australia's previous Liberal government introduced a policy initiative designed to encourage immigrants to settle in rural areas of Australia [Department of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), 2003a, 2005b]. This initiative included mechanisms such as a two-year waiting period before immigrants on a family visa could claim social security benefits, funding, and support for community-based relocation of humanitarian entrants to rural areas, and a wide range of fast tracking residency strategies that would encourage skilled immigrants to settle in rural places. The settlement of immigrant women in rural places through any of these mechanisms is a social restructuring process that ignores the embodied stories of the immigrant women who find themselves in these places.

As a result of these mechanisms some rural places have experienced an influx of immigrants in recent years. Not that the settlement of immigrants is new to horticultural regions in Australia. Post–World War II immigrants, particularly southern Italian immigrants, chose to settle in rural places so they could re-establish their horticultural roots.

However, immigration occurs in a different context today and is impacted on by a totally new and diverse range of push and pull factors. Research into the settlement experiences of immigrant women in northwest Victoria was driven by a need to inform policy makers and local settlement workers of how immigrant women today engage and constitute expressively the character of the rural place surrounding them and how this influences their settlement outcomes. This chapter presents three core themes emerging from analysis of one interview collected as part of a larger PhD study; the body and work, the mothering body, and the other body.

METHODS

This study is designed using a socially constructed view of rurality. This allows for the narratives of immigrant women to be examined in light of the structural influences associated with the rural place in which they are attempting to settle. Cloke (2006) calls this the "outside looking in."

Furthermore, this view allows for the narratives of immigrant women to be examined from the "inside looking out," thus accounting for difference, identity, and embodiment (Cloke, 2006). Socially constructed views of gender and ethnicity are also used in this study as they allow for the inter-subjective nature of immigrant women's everyday lived experiences in rural places to be accounted for. Employing such a lens on analysis of data shows how the interplay between the characteristics of the rural place and the fluid nature of the identities of the immigrant women lead to the construction of new identities in new places (Lorber, 1994).

Also used in this study is a socially constructed view of gender and ethnicity that incorporates aspects of place. McDowell (1999, p. 2) describes this view in terms of "narratives that are situated" explaining how this takes "conceptualizations of gender and ethnicity as complex and shifting social constructs beyond a consideration of social relations alone to a consideration of social relations across space."

My own invisible yet culturally dominant practices need to be acknowledged when interpreting answers to questions about how immigrant women embody the rural otherwise I risk representing their differences as a deviance, a strongly contested implication in research that links it with a deficit model. Albet-Mas and Nogue-Font (1998) warn that western women may construct themselves as the normative referent and represent immigrant women as other. Connotations of otherness are also likely to occur when definitions of ethnicity that coalesce all minority groups are used. Otherness is described as a feeling of difference associated with social isolation and marginalization. Although ethnicity creates a feeling of belonging, its counter position to the norm positions it as a state of otherness (McDowell, 1999; Spickard & Burroughs, 2000). In traditionally Anglo-centric rural places differences may be perceived as intimidating or threatening by members of the dominant culture.

Furthermore, this study is designed so that the reshaping of immigrant women's biographies in rural places can be explored. These biographies, shaped by wider cultural frameworks and expectations, define how women in a particular culture must experience something (Morgan, Brandth, & Kvande, 2005, p. 5). In a new culture, women may be expected to experience the same thing in a different way that they may not necessarily understand. For instance, in a study of Ethiopian women's settlement in Israel, Fenster (1998) found that Ethiopian women who experienced menstruation differently to Israeli women could not bear the shame associated with the absence of menstruation huts. Awareness of their own bodies determined that they should experience menstruation as shameful, whereas in the case of Israeli women, awareness of their bodies determined that they experience it

as a sign of normal healthy functioning. This example shows that only research and reports that focus attention on the influence of the setting and the way it interacts with themes of gender and ethnicity can produce an embodied narrative of being an immigrant woman in a rural place.

Finally, disembodied stories arose as an issue in this study as a result of applying a post colonial feminist lens to a reading of other accounts of settlement. Stories told in government research and reports ignored the everyday lived experience of immigrant women in rural places. Reports on government-sponsored research into the settlement outcomes of immigrants to Australia conclude that immigrants are generally very satisfied with life in Australia (DIMIA, 2003b). Criticism of these reports though highlights their preoccupation with economic practicalities and their failure to recognize the importance of social outcomes (Jupp, 2002). Large longitudinal surveys such as the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (DIMIA, 2005a) measure immigrant's satisfaction with housing, employment, income, etc. but pay little or fairly obscure attention to immigrant's participation in civic society or sense of belonging or their progress toward achievement of personal goals. Most importantly though, no importance is attributed in the research to where immigrants have settled. Without due attention to this critical fact, the reporting of settlement outcomes is disembodied.

In an attempt to turn around disembodied accounts of the way immigrant women experience life in a rural setting, I interviewed 20 immigrant women across three sites in rural northwest Victoria. They were selected using purposeful sampling and interviewed using semi-structured face to face interview techniques. The interview discussed in this chapter took place in the smallest of the three sites. 2006 Census data show this small rural district with a population of just under 4,000 as being characterized by a complex mix of cultural and linguistic diversity, low incomes, low levels of educational achievement, and insecure, seasonal underemployment. It is also a place isolated by some distance from both its local and its state governments, which means that it is not well serviced. A few services such as job network agencies, schools, health service, banks, and basic shopping are available full time, other services such as Centrelink (government social security agency), Vicroads (government roads regulatory authority), and adult education are available on a visiting or outreach basis, while others such as legal aid, drug and alcohol services, relationship services, community care services, public transport within the local district, and migrant resource services are not available at all.

Themes emerging from the data so far suggest that there are multiple aspects of embodiment being played out by immigrant women in rural

places today. Factors affecting the way these aspects of embodiment are experienced and expressed include the push/pull factors that have encouraged immigrant women to relocate and how well the characteristics of the place match their needs and expectations.

THE BODY AND WORK

Most refugees come to a new country as a result of a push factor. Their expectations regarding their new country at the time of arrival may be little more than day to day survival. This was the case for Eva when she arrived in Australia; however, five years later she found herself in a small country town in northwest Victoria with expectations that now went beyond daily survival. In her new town she wanted employment, a secure home, education for herself and her children, lifestyle opportunities, and friendship.

Q. What would your ideal place to live and work look like?
More eschools, more bus transfers, more hospital, more people to work, more jobs
Q. Why are these things (hospitals, schools, transport, jobs) important to you?
Not get eschool, you not understand something, if you not understand – me not understand, is same, you can't help me, can't help me

Eva had been living in Darwin following her arrival in Australia. After seeing an ad on TV, she packed up her children and caught a bus, 3,000 kilometers to Grapeville believing that because of her knowledge of vegetable growing in Haiti, she would be able to do farm work without having to know how to speak, read, and write English.

Q. Tell me your story of how you came to be in Grapeville?
I jus live there in Darwin, jus go eschool in Darwin. Sometime me go me see other children, I see e children writing, me not understand, I say oh me try writing but sometime I jus go home, me sit down crying, I think oh me maybe not understand at all. I see on the TV get job in Grapeville, I say oh maybe I go to Grapeville because I say in Haiti I work in garden, I think they jus tell me what to do, I think in the garden maybe not hard for me

Eva quickly learnt though that her "inside looking out" was at odds with opportunities available to her in this rural place. In the rural subsistence lifestyle of her past, Eva knew her body as it related to her ability to work. Hers was the body of a strong and proud agricultural worker.

Q. When did you start working in the garden?
About 5, 6 years old cos when mum and my dad work too hard my mum and my dad growing banana and potato, different potato, and taro, in my language it … . Not taro, coffee and corn. My dad growing rice some for market some for eat you have to grow some for market get money for some things, mmm very hard, yeah you have to work every day, you just take weed out of garden clean garden

But on arrival in Grapeville she found that lack of public transport within the farming district made her plan to work on farms impossible.

> me thinking maybe when we go somewhere okay no problem is easy like Darwin because in Darwin when you want go somewhere you not need people to help you, you go you take bus, but here not same, not same, you have to have someone help you. In Darwin you get too many bus, you come, you go back, you come, you go back. In here you have to get car to go work

The capacity of her body to work forms part of her self-esteem, and as a single parent she wants to accept full responsibility for the financial well being of her children. However, covertly, she is denied the opportunity to participate in this important activity and fulfill this responsibility. Eva understands that her body is for work and is shamed by her enforced idleness.

> I stay home, I not work, I hear on TV they say ooh many work in Grapeville in farm, I think is easy cos in Haiti I work in garden, but when I come here … is not easy

> You get bored sometime, is really important. In Haiti is different, in Haiti you not get money from government, you have to work to get money

Lack of public transport is a political problem that Eva is powerless to change. In this sense Eva is the embodiment of "the somatic society – a society in which major political and personal problems are both problematized in the body and expressed through it" (Turner, 1994, p. 1). At a personal level, language and literacy issues make getting a license and thus having independent transport difficult. She cannot attend language and literacy classes as in this rural place there are only limited classes available at night and she would need transport to get there. Again, covertly in this rural place she is denied the opportunity to participate in an activity that would improve and extend her employment opportunities.

> In Haiti if you want sew clothes you go you stay with someone for one, maybe two years, you watch how they do it, you don't need read and write, you just watch and do it together, then you come back home, you do it yourself

Language and literacy skills are basic requirements in almost any type of employment today. Cleaners, kitchen hands, and in some cases even volunteers need to read job sheets or safety procedures or fill out time sheets or incident reports. Because building those skills is so difficult for Eva in this rural place, she will never be able to do any work other than seasonal manual farm labor.

THE MOTHERING BODY

Eva experiences her body as being fundamental to her capacity to nurture her children. Nurturing her children is important to her because it is a function of her body associated with her gendered and culturally mediated self-esteem and sense of purpose.

> I think I get job in Grapeville because in Haiti you have children, you look after children, eh your family look after children. In Australia, government look after children, is not like for me, for me family look after children

But the ability of her body to nurture her children is threatened in this rural place by covert practices and experiences that exclude and marginalize. For instance, limited, non-existent, or culturally inappropriate service provision in this rural place means that she is denied access to information and social support. She is denied informed choice when it comes to making decisions about her children's lives.

Q. Is this the kind of lifestyle that you want for your children?
No, is not good, I want find better for my children
Q. Is there anything about Grapeville that makes it hard for you to get the lifestyle choices that you would like for your children?
Like me, me not speaking good English, me not writing me not read, in my country if you not understand you ask somebody, you work together, you understand, here you not understand you can't ask anybody, Sophia [15 year old daughter] help me sometime

The greatest threat, however, to the capacity of her body to nurture her children is illness. When she is sick she worries that she will die and her children will be orphaned. There are no structures in this rural place, either formally as government funded services or informally as ethnically based community support groups, to help her deal with these issues.

> In Grapeville I like to get more hospital, if you get too sick they can't help you here, you have to go to [larger town]. No-one look after my children, oh I scared

Eva is alone in this rural place. There are only two other adults sharing her ethnicity in town, and they are male. She has no group power, and she is bereft of gendered solidarity. Current research concludes that social isolation is a contributing factor to ill-health (Kakakaios, 2003). Relocation to this rural place signifies a disruption to Eva's balance of life creating a sense of illness even in the absence of disease (Emami, Benner, Lipson, & Ekman, 2000). Eva experiences rurality as discontinuity and imbalance of life.

> In my country you even when you go get water, you go someone's house, you say you go get water, they say yes you go together, you go get water together you talk. Even when you go shopping you say your friend, you not go shopping, okay you give me your money I go shopping for you. Here I jus stay home, no friend, no people to talk

THE OTHER BODY

The specific features of Eva's body are crucial to her everyday recognition and identification (Turner, 1994, p. 79). Her skin color and her hair are the physical features that represent connection to an ethnic history. Yet they have led to overt practices and experiences that exclude, marginalize, and "other" her. White Australian-born mothers have challenged her ability to fulfill the commitments associated with enrolling her child in a ballet class because they have made assumptions about her lifestyle practices based on the color of her skin. Cresswell (1996) speaks of this lack of understanding of how things are done in terms of doxa conformity, the unspoken rules about how one should behave in a particular place, and how if you do not conform to the rules then you are excluded from the inner circle. A number of Australian studies on the settlement of immigrants in rural places have shown that this leads to patronizing treatment and a sense of being just tolerated as opposed to being included (Regional Women's Advisory Council, 2004; Madden, 2004; Taylor & Stanovic, 2005).

Q. Can you describe interactions that you have with members of the community other than members of your own ethnic community?
Yes when I take Julia to ballet, some mother talk to me, other mother not talk, I jus sit with babby and when is time for her go up she go. We jus sit not talk, no talk, no talk, nobody talk to me.
Q. Tell me about the feelings you get from your interactions with people in Grapeville?
When I talking to people in Grapeville I thinking maybe I see everybody together, I thinking maybe no get too many people from my country living,

maybe you thinking me not good, I thinking I see everybody together, with best friends, me no same no same for me
Q. So you feel different?
Yes, different. If my children get sick I have to ring the ambulance; you ring the taxi you wait five hours for taxi to come, no good

Data collected in this interview suggest that this rural place exploits Eva's situation, erodes her confidence and self-esteem, and isolates her. She cannot enjoy the "covert prestige that symbolizes and enacts rural gendered group identity as she doesn't share the linguistic or cultural constructs through which that social identity is mediated" (Emami et al., 2000, p. 1). It deserves therefore to be reiterated that only conceptualizations of "the rural" that focus attention on how everyday lived experiences are contextualized and influenced by the social and cultural meanings attached to rural places can produce an embodied narrative of being an immigrant woman in a rural place.

Only socially constructed views that account for structuring influences as well as for difference, identity, and embodiment can focus attention on the way the characteristics of the rural setting interact with themes of gender and ethnicity.

As feminist researchers, Eva's story shows us how constructions of rural community as white need to be challenged more rigorously than they currently are in literature around social policy and the implementation and evaluation of government settlement support services. Indeed Eva's story must help us advocate for ways of defining "the rural" that resist Anglo-centric or normative connotations and instead are inclusive of the many diverse and individual narratives that are today "the rural."

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CHAPTER 18

WOMEN FARMERS' NETWORKING IN JAPAN: A CASE STUDY OF A PIONEERING NETWORK

Juri Hara-Fukuyo

ABSTRACT

After World War II, many types of organizations were established in rural areas and that enabled women farmers to form networks. Most of these organizations, however, were clearly divided into those for women and those for men: a situation that still currently persists. Since the 1980s, the networking of women farmers for the development of personal networks increased and some nationwide network organizations were established. Through an analysis of the case of the "Rural Heroines Exciting Network" – one of the first networks of Japanese women farmers – the chapter points out the significance of networking. Networking is relevant because (1) it allows women to connect among themselves and as individuals with the outside world. In this way, women gain confidence. (2) Through the network, members get expressive support and information. (3) The common values at the network level play a balancing role in regard to the norms dominant at the local community. Those characteristics have some similarities with those of the "women in agriculture" movement that gained popularity in 1990s worldwide.

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INTRODUCTION

Women farmers' personal network or social capital is one of the critical factors for developing their abilities and improving their status in farm management and in local society (Baylina & Bock, 2004). Since the 1990s, there has been the emergence of a wealth of collective movements in many countries such as Australia, Canada, and Ireland. Together, these episodes allowed observers to speak about "the women in agriculture movement." This movement promoted the recognition and participation of women in agriculture (Shortall, 1994; Liepins, 1998; Pini, Panelli, & Dale-Hallett, 2007). Researches have analyzed its characteristics and impact at the personal but also social and political levels. Liepins states that the "women in agriculture movement" generated important results such as growth in women's confidence, pride of being seen as farmers, and greater participation in farming at the personal level. Also the movement has been viewed as a factor that increased sensitivity to women's involvement in farming and decision making at the social level (Liepins, 1998, p. 152).

Employing a network analysis, in this chapter, I report a case of a women farmer network in Japan that is similar to the aforementioned movement. I examine the case of a pioneering network organization in Japan, "Inakano Heroine Wakuwaku Network," which can be translated as "Rural Heroines Exciting Network."[1] How it was formed and what impact it has had will be discussed. The meaning of their networking as well as its effects on farm management will be pointed out, in an attempt to clarify what function the personal networking performs in developing women farmers' abilities and improving their status. With these results, I compare the Japanese experience with the "women in agriculture" movement.

RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC

Women farmers' networking is being encouraged as a policy in Japan,[2] and it is already considered a fact that networking helps women farmers improve their status in the industry and in the region, and it is viewed as a factor that revitalizes local areas. There have been some case studies on networking organizations of women farmers, and their significance has been debated (Abe, 2000). However, because of the ambiguity of the word "network," their nature, working, and process of growth country-wide have not been fully sorted out.

The following is my basic perspective and the method of analysis for networks. The personal network research is defined as an attempt to explain activities and consciousness of an individual through putting the whole personal relationships into perspective and analyzing their characteristics (Morioka, 2000). Such personal networks include those that are "assigned" to the individual and those that he/she joins voluntarily. One of the characteristics of the personal network research is that it can focus not only on relatively given networks of families and neighbors but also on networks formed by an individual's choice (Fischer, 1982). In this sense, forming or joining a networking organization can be considered one of the opportunities to voluntarily create a new network.

What functions does a personal network have from the subject's point of view? They can be roughly classified into social integration, access to various resources (support, information, etc.), and authority on norms (Yasuda, 1997). Namely, a personal network plays a role of interface that connects an individual with society, through which he or she gains various social supports, and such interaction provides the authority on norms. These social supports can be classified into instrumental support and expressive support. The former includes material aids, substantive services, and information, whereas the latter includes intimate interaction, assurance of values, and self-evaluation. Gaining these supports provides motivation for establishing a personal network.

THE SITUATION OF RURAL WOMEN NETWORK AND RESEARCH METHOD

The personal network research has mainly focused on urban society and has rarely dealt with women in rural areas. But a few previous pieces of research on personal networks of women and residents in rural areas with little urbanization demonstrated that they are small-scaled, dense, confined in a small area, and homogeneous with higher ratios of families and neighbors (Fischer, 1982; Nobe, 1991; Hara-Fukuyo, 1995). These results suggest that personal networks of rural women are more given than chosen, individual social relation resources are homogeneous, and the networks have strong influences in terms of norms.[3] Empirical studies on networks of rural women in Japan show that friend networks are actually being formed by choice, but their geographical coverage and opportunities to form relationships are both limited (Nobe, 1991; Hara-Fukuyo, 1995).

One of the opportunities to form relationships is to join an organization. There has long been a tradition in rural Japan where participation of the entire household or the head of the family was a general rule. After WWII, various organizations were born in rural areas that allowed women to join. But the aforementioned tradition persisted, and the organizations that women could join were often limited and different from that for men (Nakamichi, 2000). Home life improvement practice group and the women's department at the agricultural cooperative are cases in point. The former is a group for women only, and it was formed with the support of the government following American model (Ichida, 2000). Agricultural cooperatives were composed of farm managers who owned farm land, and women could only participate in women's department as women members, which did not have right to vote. At present, agricultural cooperatives encourage participation of more than one person from each household, but women's participation is still low, about 16% of all regular members, and there are very few women executives.[4] Gender inequality in networking still remains today.

After the International Women's Year (1975), the Japanese government was faced with the necessity to promote gender equality in rural areas. Home life improvement practice groups became important media for the government to promote equal participation in management and in rural communities, and the government urged to increase the number of the women members in agricultural cooperatives and other decision-making organizations (Ichida, 2000). Thus, women farmers had already had access to other women farmers or extension advisors in local communities, when many women farmers started to try to network more freely in various parts of Japan in the 1980s. Their movement has brought about some nationwide network organizations.

Then, what is it that women farmers try to gain by establishing their own networks? This will be investigated during the case study on the "Rural Heroines Exciting Network" ("Rural Heroines") from the perspective of a personal network.

I study the characteristics of "Rural Heroines" by surveying its history and also through interviews conducted with the members of Ibaraki Branch of "Rural Heroines."

HISTORY OF "RURAL HEROINES"

"Rural Heroines" is the oldest and best-known nationwide network organization for rural women in Japan. It was first established in 1994

when a national exchange convention was held (Yamazaki, 2004). Yoko Yamazaki, one of the central figures, had published a book "Warera Inaka no Hiroin Tachi (Our Rural Heroines)" (Yamazaki, 1988), a report on the study tour on farming in Europe that she took with her colleagues. Because of the book, she was asked to give lectures at meetings of women farmers all over the country, which gave her the opportunity to meet many women. Some of them took the initiative and organized a national convention for nationwide networking (Yamazaki, 2004).

The first national convention started at noon and lasted until noon of the following day in Tokyo with 263 participants. There were sessions such as panel discussions, relay speeches, and group discussions. The vitality and good management of the organizers and speakers impressed many participants (Yamazaki, 2004 and "Heroine News").[5] Later, it was held approximately once every three years. With some variations in the content, it was continued to the sixth convention in 2008 with total of more than 1,200 women participated. It provided an opportunity to meet, to speak up, and to send out messages to the urbanized society and the male-dominated society.

Other activities include publishing the non-regular "Heroine News" and miscellanies, organizing local seminars and lectures, and exchanging their own produce. Motivated individuals take initiatives and others participate on their own account. In 2000, they bought in Snow Brand Milk Products that caused the well-publicized food poisoning incident, seeking a way to get involved rather than simply criticize (Yamazaki, Sakakida, Oishi, & Kishi, 2004). In January 2003, they sought and gained an approval as a not-for-profit organization to clarify their position.

Table 1 shows the history of "Rural Heroines" along with women farmer–related measures and other organizations. It clearly indicates "Rural Heroines" was a pioneer movement, formed before the Ministry's programs for women networking that were introduced based on the ministry's basic vision for rural women reported in 1992.

The trend of the times was to support rural women's social participation and empowerment, and discussions on measures and policies were becoming livelier[6]. "Rural Heroines" captured the attention of the media and the public as an actual case of networking by women farmers. They encouraged many other networking organizations for women farmers to come into existence. There were branch networks of "Rural Heroines" for each prefecture such as in Ibaraki. But the establishment of "Rural Heroines" influenced the movement of women farmers networking itself.

Table 1. The History of Rural Women Network Organizations and Measures Related in Japan.

	Measures Related	Rural Heroines National-Wide	Rural Heroines in Ibaraki	Other Women's Network Organizations
1985	Law on securing, etc. of equal opportunity and treatment between men and women in employment			
1987		Ms. Yamazaki's travel to Europe		
1988		Publication of the first book of Ms. Yamazaki	Lecture of Ms. Yamazaki in Ibaraki prefecture	
1990			(Ibaraki prefecture "female farmers' leaders" qualification started)	
1992	The Vision report: mid-to long- tem perspectives on women in the new agricultural, forest and fishing communities toward 2001			
1994		The first national convention	Rural Heroine's Ibraki branch "Hibari network" established	

1995	Promotion of family management agreement			"Japan Female Farm Managers Council" established
1996		The second national convention		
1999	Basic law for a gender-equal society Basic law on food, agriculture and rural areas	The third national convention		
2000		Buying in activity for Snow Brand Milk Product		
2002		The fourth national convention		
2003		Certified as a Not-for-Profit Organization by the local government		
2005		The fifth national convention	The inauguration of The Frozen Dessert Study Group of Hibari Network	"Yamato Rinrin Agri-N et" established
2006				"Japan Stock Raising Ikiiki Network" established
2008		The sixth national convention		

CHARACTERISTICS OF "RURAL HEROINES"

"Rural Heroines" is a network organization that is very open. No qualification is required to participate, there is no seniority system, and each participant stands on the even ground. By letting individuals take initiatives, their personal choices and judgment are respected. These characteristics can be attributed to the thoughts of Ms. Yamazaki and the process of formation of the network.

Ms. and Mr. Yamazaki did not have any farming background[7]. She graduated from a university in Tokyo and was working for a company when she married. She reclaimed land with her husband in Fukui Prefecture, and after 13 years, she decided to travel to Europe to inspect their farming, hoping to find answers to the questions that came up while working as a farmer, especially about the richness of farming life and sexual division of labor. Accepting her husband's suggestion that it is better to learn about different values with her friends, she invited the members of a young wives' group to the trip to Europe, which was realized only after studying English and world affairs intensively, gaining grants through the agricultural improvement and extension center, and persuading their families. During the two-week trip to Denmark, Germany, and some other countries, each participant had opportunities to learn about farming in Europe and to experience the simple but rich farming life. They observed how family members discussed until all were satisfied, how the husband and wife cooperated, and how independent each generation was. From these, they had a chance to reflect on their farming life: its strengths and limitations in Japan, where economic goals are valued too highly, implicit communication is common in stem family. Ms. Yamazaki's (1988) first book gives a vivid account of this.

Let us list up the stimulating messages this book gave to women farmers all over the country: (a) It introduced the idea of overseas study tours for farming women; (b) it showed an attitude of retaining one's own opinions and beliefs against the government's rigidity during the process of gaining public grants; (c) it advocated that women should be more assertive and persuasive in their families; and from the actual experiences of the trip, it conveyed that (d) richness of farming life does not depend solely on economic factors; and (e) there were things only farmers could understand each other despite the difference in nationality or culture. Thus, the book made an appeal of uniqueness and strength of women farmers.

It is inferred that these messages led women farmers to realize and become proud of their potential abilities. They also prompted the women to become

aware that they needed to make efforts to bring out and nurture their potential abilities.

"Rural Heroines" made it into holding a national convention with the help of the above inspirations from Ms. Yamazaki's book. As a consequence, the women gathered had some idea about Ms. Yamazaki's values, her personal history, and her managing style. They either identified with her or aspired to be like her. In a way, this national network started with sharing the values, which is the most remarkable characteristic of "Rural Heroines." At each national convention, participants invited more new people, trying to create a network with a respect toward an individual's humanity and will. Through this, "Rural Heroines" has maintained its characteristic of a value-sharing network.

From this "Rural Heroines" sprung up many branch networks in various regions. The Hibari Network in Ibaraki prefecture is one of them. Although the national convention has been held every three years, many members wished to meet more often but with less hassle. They wished they could expand their circle of friends. There were also requests from members for opportunities to exchange information within the local prefecture. These led to form local networks and local meetings.

ACTIVITIES AND THE MEMBERS OF IBARAKI BRANCH

What it signifies to participate in "Rural Heroines" will be investigated through a questionnaire by mail and interviews to the Ibaraki branch "Hibari Network" members. The questionnaire was sent to all the 36 members in 2007, and 20 responded. Additionally we carried out in-depth interviews with six members.

The Hibari Network was established by some of the 13 people who participated in the first national convention. They held their first local meeting in the same year and have remained active since then. Ms. Utsugizaki, the head of the network, publishes the "Hibari News" three or four times a year and has held a meeting almost every year in one form or another, such as classes on produce processing, as well as study tours to visit "Heroines" farms in other prefectures. They recruit people other than the national convention participants, providing opportunities for women farmers in Ibaraki to interact. One of their activities is the product development of frozen desserts with their produce such as pear, blueberry, chestnuts, milk, spinach, and so on. It has yet to turn a profit, but some

members started to use it as their own gift, and it is also used in the food and farming education program (Hara-Fukuyo, 2007).

The members' living places cover nine municipalities spreading almost the entire prefecture within a 50-km radius. Their age ranges from 39 to 64, many of them in their 50s. What they produce is of great variety: meat, fruits, flowers, and seeds, many conducting mixed farming. The family workforce is from one to four persons, two being the most common, in eight households. Two respondents are the manager themselves, and many say that they co-manage with their husband and/or children. They take partial charge of such tasks as bookkeeping and accounting, fattening management, labor management, and sales. Because the majority is in their 50s, almost all play a central role in management. Some said that the severity of their responsibility prevents them from participating in the organizational activities.

The respondents participate actively in anywhere between one and seven organizations besides ''Rural Heroines.'' Those include community, municipal, prefectural, and national level organizations. Their activities range from produce processing, direct sales, promotion of gender equality, and making recommendations to the government. Many are women-only organizations. Activities that involve practical affairs such as processing and direct sales mostly belong to municipal-level organizations. Many of the respondents have experiences as an executive in these organizations. Nine are certified farmers, one has been a board member at Agriculture Cooperative and many are considered a local woman leader. Most respondents first joined a community-level organization and have expanded their area of activities. After gaining knowledge, presentation skills, and self-confidence as a farmer through ''Rural Heroines,'' some of them got involved in local activities in decision making.

SIGNIFICANCE OF "RURAL HEROINES" FOR THE MEMBERS

I asked in the questionnaire what kind of interaction a member has had with other members of ''Rural Heroines.'' I prepared eight items for multiple answers. In those items, ''exchange information'' was the top choice of 12 respondents, followed by ''learn the other's activities in newspapers and magazines (11)'' and ''exchange produce as gifts (9).'' Other answers were ''invitation to events (6),'' ''visit to farm (5),'' ''exchange produce for sale or for processing(4),'' ''exchange letters or e-mail (3),'' and ''introduce friends or children (2).''

The information in this case regards the know-how of presentation and event holding, and general information such as farming conditions and government handling in other areas, rather than specific information for solving certain problems. The next common form of interaction "learn the other's activities in newspapers and magazines" is about the same personal interactions that can provide an example to follow in order to improve oneself. To "exchange the produce as a gift" is to exchange the sense of intimacy as a form of socialization, and it is also to confirm one's own sense of value as a farmer. These results suggest that they are seeking expressive support rather than instrumental support. They want to learn about other women's activities and their know-how, and they want to confirm their self-confidence as a farmer.

The main appeal of "Rural Heroines" according to respondents was "many inspiring members (8)," followed by "easy enrollment and withdrawal (7)," and "no ties to the government (7)." Other items I had prepared were "non-farming members (6)," "I can participate in only what I'm interested in (5)," and "I can operate independently of my husband and our farm management (4)." In the comments column, one wrote,

> Not quite like the people in my everyday life, some members are looking ahead. Meeting such people is very inspiring.

Another wrote,

> It is encouraging and motivating to think about the fellow hardworking farmers all over the country.

Thus, interaction itself seems to be the main appeal. Others also wrote,

> I learned that anybody can come forward and participate if they want to,

and

> It is wonderful that so many of us gather from all over the country to talk about our own dreams, our children, and our farming, and we give presentations, exchange our ideas …

Members seem to consider expressing their opinions and improving presentation skills also to be positive characteristics of "Rural Heroines." Others still wrote,

> Because there is no influence from the government, we can act and talk freely,

and

> I really like the fact that we can make friends of everyone regardless of their positions.

Thus, members give their support because this is a network organization created by women farmers' themselves with almost no help from the government, and it allows free interactions among members regardless of their positions in other organizations or the scale of their family farms that are often important in government-related organizations.

Interactions among "Rural Heroines" members are not recognized to have had economic effects on farm management. But some answered that interaction gave them good motivation on farm management. There are also some examples that a member learned a new way of cultivation from another member and adopted it to her management, or a member introduced a good nursery garden to another who began to deal with it. These examples show that networking of women bring their farm management new information from their own source of knowledge. By bringing new information, women farmers gain certain power on their management.

DISCUSSION

The aforementioned text is the report on the history and activities of "Rural Heroines" and its Ibaraki branch and also how the members evaluate it. What this network signifies is discussed along with the three functions of a personal network: social integration, access to various resources, and authority on norms.

First, let us consider social integration from a subject's point of view. By joining "Rural Heroines," a woman farmer becomes able to interact with outstanding women farmers from all over the country. Their accessibility expands because of the name list, which becomes an asset for these women. Making friends nationwide gives them an uplifting feeling. It becomes possible to gain access to a foreign country, government, mass media, and corporations through network members. This is indicated by the result of the survey that the main appeal of "Rural Heroines" was "Many inspiring members," the source of their motivation. Through participating in the networking organization, how women connect with society changes. By connecting themselves as an individual with the outside world without being confined in the frameworks of the household or the region, the women are gaining new confidence and responsibility.

Next, let us focus on the access to the resources. Few women join this network seeking for instrumental support regarding management. As I observed in its history, this network organization was formed on the foundation of sharing certain values. The survey result shows that expressive

support is more important to members. There is not much expectation of instrumental support to improve their farm management. However, some members are utilizing the agricultural technology that they have learned through this network in their own farm management, which is how they gain information resources and mobilize them to empower themselves.

Last, how can a personal network be the authority on norms? All the six points of "Rural Heroines"' appeal ("many inspiring members," "easy enrollment and withdrawal," etc.) are related to a set of norms different from the one that is given within the social relationships of the community. Each point of appeal can be translated into interaction with like-minded people, good relationships regardless of the length of time, freedom from the government, the world beyond farming, self-assertion, and relationships outside the household principle, all suggesting a set of norms different from the ones in the community. As a previous study indicates that a dispersed network guarantees an "escape" from the pressure of norms (Nozawa, 1995), it is inferred that the common values at "Rural Heroines" (emphasis on farming life, doubts toward the attitude that puts economy ahead of all else, denial of blind obedience toward the old authority, equal relationship with the government, etc.) play a balancing role in regard with the dominant norms in a narrow community.

CONCLUSIONS

As indicated earlier, through "Rural Heroines Exciting Network," women farmers formed their personal networks that are not available in their local groups. I pointed out the significance of networking for each member from the perspective of social network analysis.

The case of "Rural Heroine" seems to be similar with the "women in agriculture" movement. As for the impact on personal level, Japanese women farmers also gained self-confidence, insistence on being seen as farmers, and greater participation in farming. In terms of social level, however, it looks different as the movement for equal participation in decision making is rather week in this Japanese movement. That is partly because the Japanese government has promoted gender equality in rural areas, preventing voluntary movements to become active. Accordingly, "Rural Heroines" has not been involved in collective actions to realize equal participation politically. However, it has supported some members who became involved politically at the local level. This behavior achieved some tactical advantages as it avoided attacks from the local establishment, not as reported in some countries' experience (Pini, 2008), and allowed more

women to participate in a context in which social change is difficult due to the role played by the family and traditional organizations. Further examination of the common points between the ''women in agriculture'' movement and the case examined here is left to future studies.

NOTES

1. The translations of the names of network organizations in this chapter are by the author and are not authorized by the network organizations.
2. In the ''Measures for Sustainable Development of Agriculture'' issued in March 2005 as a part of the Basic Plans for Food, Agriculture, and Rural Areas, ''networking by women farmers'' was encouraged to increase women's participation in farm management and a local community, along with providing seminars for starting a business related to farming.
3. A network's high density is supposed to be an index closely related to the strength of norms.
4. Refer to the page of gender equality in the web site of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: http://www.maff.go.jp/j/keiei/kourei/danzyo/index.html (mainly in Japanese).
5. I have participated in the first, the fifth, and the sixth convention.
6. Regarding recent change of women farmes' situation in Japan, refer to Kawate (2010).
7. They are regarded as New Famers. Female new farmers with non-agricultural backgroud tend to have network outside farming and community (Hara-Fukuyo, 2010). That applies to Ms.Yamazaki's case.

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