〈Artículo〉

Ethos, Community, and Violence : A Guatemalan Highland Community and Global Economy[1)]

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I The Town and Change in Economic Ethos

This study took place in a small indigenous town located in a mountainous region of the Guatemalan highlands. The town is in a tourist area described in guidebooks that are pubbished in Europe, the United States, and Japan. According to these books, not only is the landscape in that area exotic, but the community strongly embraces traditional customs. The people are open and for the most part friendly toward foreigners. Tourists to the region are often amazed at the enthusiasm the residents express in creating ties with foreigners.

Records of the town exist from the time of Spanish colonization. It is reported that John Lloyd Stephens, famous North American traveler, passed through the area in the 1840s. Early ethnographic research began with the studies by North American anthropologists concerning the agricultural production in the region during the 1930s, and traditional religion in 1945–46 (Stephens 1969[1841]; Stedelman 1940; Oakes 1951).

I conducted research on handicraft production and tourism in this town for a period of two months in 1996 (Ikeda 1997). I still have a strong impression of the words I often heard in my conversations with the people during this study, "Nowadays competition is very hard" (*Hoy hay mucha competencia*). These words are particularly apt as a symbol of the journey

of a community that has "chosen progress" and has been swept up in the wave of modernization and capitalism. This town, like many others in Guatemala and highland Chiapas, seems to be caught in the stormy sea of cultural transformation (Nash 1958; Cancian 1992: Chap.10).

In this article, the symbolic meaning of violence of the Guatemalan civil war and impacts on local (*emic*) interpretations of cultural transformations since 1981 will be examined. While focusing in particular on how people approach and think about economies, I take a close look at the ways that the socially constructed meanings of violence are connected to the economic ethos of the town. Consequently the term of economic ethos is defined as symbolic order of the wealth that can create cultural practice (bourdieu 1979) in a certain society. I begin by providing my own interpretation of the town's economic ethos during three different periods: (i) pre-1981, (ii) 1981-82, and (iii) 1983 and after.

II The Corporate Community in the "Period of Exploitation," Pre-1981

1 *Cofradía* and *Milpa* Logic

Land has traditionally served as the source of wealth in this town. As such, people's attitude toward production during this period had typically been land-centered. Fertility of the land meant its ability to produce corn. Owning land meant raising corn, and the size of the *milpa* determined one's wealth. Most ethnographies written on traditional, small farmers in Central America discuss corn production as being at the center of local economic activity and values. Corn fields, or *milpa*, did not simply yield the population's staple food. The cycle of agricultural labor throughout the year provided a rhythm to their lifestyle. Religious beliefs centering on local deities that control agricultural production informed the moral foundation of society.

The local area has a sloping geography made up of narrow mountain valleys. Currently, the landscape is planted with a variety of agricultural products in addition to corn. In the past it was commonly believed that, with proper care, the land would always provide. Once soil lost its fertility, new areas were cultivated and the fallow land became pasture for sheep and

other livestocks. Land lying fallow or used for pasture would recover after a few years and could possibly be used again as *milpa*.

According to this system of production, those owning and cultivating more land could accumulate greater wealth. It is claimed, however, that the *cofradía*, or traditional religious brotherhood, held the key to leveling the imbalance in wealth that this system tends to create. In the Highlands Chiapas of Mexico, traditional religious brotherhoods such as the *cofradía* organize religious and political activities of the community through what has been commonly referred to as a "cargo system." The *cofradía* organization is largely run by adult males. A rigid hierarchy is applied to various responsibilities (cargos) that each member of the organization is expected to carry out. As members rise in rank within the *cofradía*, their status in society also increases (Cancian 1992). However, in order for this to happen, participants must successfully attend to all of the duties prescribed by their rank in the *cofradía* association. Most duties include contributions of alcohol and food to various festivals. But, from an economic perspective, this has also been viewed as a way of redistributing wealth in the community. It is commonly thought that men with economic power can easily ascend through the ranks within the *cofradía*. In actuality, age and other factors are involved in ranking, along with various restrictive ceremonial matters. The correlation between economy and power is not so simple, rather, it is a more complex dialectical process centered on moral behavior. When the *cofradía* holds important meaning and power in community life, it possesses the function of redistributing wealth within the community.

Sheldon Annis (1987) has referred to the above economic ideology, based on subsistence production and landholding, as "milpa logic." Of course, *milpa logic* is an ideal model. Let us see how the concept applies to the people of this town.

The modern Mayan culture, as it pertains to economic activity, is never static. Various economic activities correspond with different economic situations. Differentiation lies in the size of one's landholding. Various strata are formed based on the amount of land owned. However, these strata are

difficult to distinguish as separate categories. For the people in this region, no real system of class division exists. Those lacking enough land to be self-sufficient inevitably become sharecroppers or wage laborers. We would see that the articulations to outer economy should not only make differentiation between economic strata but also integrate the economic ethos into the social order.

The roots of seasonal labor migration from this area, and its consequences, have been documented in earlier ethnographic research. Small holders and debtors, including those who need cash for festival expenses, have spent several months per year picking cotton or cutting sugar cane for a pittance in the plantations of the Pacific coast in southwestern Guatemala to accumulate enough money to pay debts and buy food. After 1970, many families also began to migrate to south to live on coffee plantations in the San Marcos region. In this case, workers were brought in as contract labor with wages paid in advance.

[Labor migration through the 1970s] (C.J., age 58, Indian, male)
Each village and town has a *caporal*[2]. This person leads the laborers and has a stable relationship with the plantation owner, or patron. He usually lives in the village or town. When the patron wants to gather laborers, he contacts the *caporal*. *Caporales* go to plantations, when requests arise, to meet with patrons to determine the manpower needed. The caporal then returns to the towns to recruit laborers, who work by *jornal* (day labor), and to establish a labor agreement with them. Contracts are calculated by multiplying the number of working days needed on the plantation by the daily wage for each laborer. The *caproal* pays the contracts in advance, upon recruitment, and the laborers are expected to pay-off this "debt" by working in the fields. This individual payment is called *habilitación*[3]. When the money is transferred, farmers are informed of the day in which their work is to begin and the day that the truck will arrive to take them off to the plantation.
Caporales establish labor agreements when workers are needed on farms. However, in this town, labor recruitment coincides with the fiesta system. *Caporales* arrive in September and October when people need money before the annual titular fiesta (All Saint's Day). Once the fiesta concludes in the second

week of November, trucks arrive to take them to the coastal regions. Many go together as a family, and some work on the plantations until September or November of the following year.

----Were laborers transported by bus (*camioneta*)? [Ikeda]

No, no! They were transported in trucks (*camión*), just like livestock. Long ago, about eight trucks would arrive and take them to work in the fields. In the recent days, buses were used, but for the most part it was trucks.

This was how they were able to gather a work force. However, for the past 8 to 10 years [ca.1986-96] workers going to coastal plantations (*costa*: plantations on the Pacific coast)almost disappeared. Even now few people go to plantations for work. They can now work in this town in R (geographical name), a low-lying region, so it is no longer necessary to go to plantations.

According to *milpa* logic, the inequality of wealth and accumulation produced in a given region should be leveled by the *cofradía*'s fiesta activities. However, this has not been the case in most areas. More often than not, *cofradía* activities in the latter half of this century have become so overextended that participation as wage laborers in the global economy (e.g. as seasonal coffee pickers) has become essential to the maintenance of ceremonial festivals. In other words, the strength of the *cofradía* organization lies in its regularly held observances that drive local consumption and level economic imbalances in the community. Plantation laborers not only became wage laborers to maintain their livelihood, but many returned to their homes to participate in the annual schedule of ceremonial observances involving the *cofradía*. Accordingly, at least until the middle of this century, as the *cofradía* maintained its overall structure as an autonomous civil-religious organization with an embedded economic system for ceremonial expenditure, it can be surmised that it came to level the wealth (money) earned on outside plantations within the community. Furthermore, as local villagers turned to labor migration to solve the problem of self-sufficiency (i.e. as villagers turned "proletariat outside the village") ceremonial expenditures tended to escalate.

During this time, the market in this Indian community traded in regionally produced agricultural products and handicrafts. However, there was also a large inflow of products from outside the community, such as manufactured items. Aside from corn, the town did little exporting (products). The quantity being exported was nowhere close to industrialization standards. It can be estimated that wages earned on plantations constituted most of the monetary income and expenditures brought into the community from outside. Therefore, in this community, it was the money from outside that allowed the standard of community ceremonial expenditure to rise.

The long-term trend of rising ceremonial expenditure of the *cofradía*, due to participation in the greater global economy, had a greater impact on local concepts of community and economy than direct economic effect. An example of this influence can be found in the rise of handicraft production and sales through local cooperatives initiated in the 1970s. The concept of reciprocity between producers of traditional textiles and a cooperative run by the poor quickly became a popular idea.

[Handicraft cooperative] (L. A., age 57, Indian, male)[4]

The handicraft cooperative was initiated by women in district M (Geographical name). As the first corporation for handicrafts, this cooperative was fully functioning in the beginning period, exporting products outside of the town. However, the cooperative members (*socios*) were inexperienced at running the organization. To make matters worse, since A (Person's name), an employee of the cooperative, embezzled half of sales, the organization lost its ability to function normally. At this time, though I was involved in agriculture, members of the cooperative called on me to restructure the organization as A's replacement.

Before I began working at the cooperative, operations had essentially disintegrated. I wrote a letter to the government's cooperative assistance bureau and sought help from a variety of people working there. I can't remember myself if it was Sweden or Switzerland, but we received an application for assistance from the ambassador for one of those countries. I received money for travel expenses and was given the opportunity to participate in training at Chimaltenango on organizing a cooperative. At this training I first learned of the need

for a cooperative representative, accountant, and director, and of the roles that each perform.

Work at the cooperative at this time involved not only gathering textiles, bags and other handicrafts and then selling them on consignment at the store, but also taking the products around and peddling. We went to Quetzaltenango, Antigua, and Guatemala, as well as Comalapa, Jacaltenango, Atitlán, and San Juan on scheduled market days with products from this town to sell and make a profit for the cooperative.

I was so focused on work at the cooperative that I forgot about eating. I paid from by own pocket to participate in various events to learn about the cooperative. I woke at 5 a.m. to begin preparing the store. After closing and doing the books, I would stay awake into the night studying by myself. This was how, little by little, we increased the cooperative's capital and became able to purchase land to build our own store.

By this time I was traveling due to requests for consultation as other various cooperatives began to organize. I was also writing letters to overseas organizations to expand our market. As a result, in textiles, we began exporting to numerous countries.

On fiesta days (when many tourists and sightseers were in town, we made small fliers written in Spanish and English to distribute to the visitors. On these fliers we wrote, "Handicraft cooperative sells products made by the poor." Due to efforts such as this, our store was always overflowing.

At the end of the month, members of the cooperative would gather to collect their profit from consignment and expressed appreciation that the cooperative profits would rise each month. They brought me a variety of foods.

It is also important that management of the cooperative was carried out by the ethnic majority, Indians, rather than the minority *ladinos* who had a hold on power and authority in the business world at this time. In the beginning, though focused on making a profit, cooperatives also captured the moral spirit of the community. This is not so different from the organizational concept of the *cofradía*. The structure of social organization in the *cofradía* tied religion and politics together so that is was difficult to distinguish the two. At the same time, there was also a close relationship between ritual and social prestige. Increasing investment and social prestige was

considered unnecessary accumulation of wealth and consumption, and, according to Indians, immoral. However the introduction of the handcraft cooperative newly provides the social space in which *socios* (cooperative members) can maintain economic ethos attached *cofradía* ethics. They have articulated to the new concepts accounting for economic investment with traditional economic ethos instead of abandonment of actual *cofradía*.

From the Indian *cofradía* ethics the economic activities of *ladinos* were looked upon with both envy and disgust. *Ladinos* were under the dominion of the Catholic Church, and a great number migrated to this town from villages down the river valley. Other *ladinos* arrived in this town from Chiantla, a city of pilgrimage deeply connected to community fiesta (a place where *ladinos* have long resided and once held an equivalent administrative standing with the community). Though most *ladinos* were Catholics, they were excluded by the *cofradía*. In the mid-1970s, when the evangelical Protestant *Centroamérica* Church first began proselytizing, these *ladinos* made up the core of its believers.

At the end of the 1950s, a branch line became operable between the town and Cuchumatán Highland road. (The road is not yet entirely paved today.) In the mid-60s, the pass was opened to buses. Ethnologists and photographers came by horse in the 1940s in search of the town's exotic Indians. However, groups of tourists are not known to have come to this town until the late 1960s. Records can be verified during the 1970s. The tourists during this era constitute the beginning of what are called "ethnic" or "adventure" tours today. There are currently no materials available estimating the number of visitors at this time. The first hotel in town, no rooms with showers, began business in the mid-60s. The second began operating in 1968.

2 Three Discourses on "Community and Development"

Confronted with the encroachment of a distinct economic culture from the outside, how have people perceived local economic conditions during this time? The Indian social outlook in this era can be represented by theories concerning this community from people in the following three categories.

These theories come from (i) guerrilla extremist intellectuals, (ii) the military regime, and (iii) Protestants and reformist Catholics.

(i) According to statements from guerrilla extremists, Indians make up Guatemala's distinctive ethnic group and are the victims of capitalism that has developed under protection of the army. Guerrilla organizations have considered the church and capitalists, represented by *ladino* and *gringo*, who means white foreigners, to be the vanguard of the exploitative class. Indians and *ladino* laborers, on the other hand, are considered the victims. Stripping Marxist thought of its color, the theory that Indians are victims of economic development parallels the view that organizers and people involved in the movement took at the time the cooperative was organized to sell handicrafts. It should be noted that at this time business and transportation were under the control of the wealthy *ladinos*, while Indians existed simply to supply cheap labor force. It was stressed when the cooperative was formed that the handicraft cooperative was to provide an opportunity for poor people, especially for women, to become economically independent.

(ii) Judging from actual events that took place in this town, the military regime's theory about the status of Indians is based on expanding racism embraced by members of the military regime. From the official army point of view, Indians are people who, left out of modernization, need the education and social benefits that modernization brings. This type of theory often appears in the period of violence described next. The logic of violent guerrilla sweep and complete military control that occurred in western highland Guatemala was based on the interpretation that the delay in Indian modernization permits covert communist secret maneuvers. This escalated to the idea that is was necessary to annihilate communists, the element obstructing the development of Indian modernization.

(iii) Reformist religious sects (grouped together here as those influencing and insisting that reform is necessary due to dissatisfaction with the present conditions) were not concerned with economic or political reform, but demanded the spiritual rectification of Indians. In the Cuchumatán highlands evangelical Protestant sects had already begun preaching in various villages

in the 1930s (La Farge 1974). However, such activities were localized and cannot necessarily be considered permanent. The first contact in this town with Protestant evangelizing was in the 1970s. Protestants criticized festival expenditures carried out by *cofrade* (member of *cofradía*) as a transgression and wasteful. This was particularly effective in converting the poorest segment of the population who struggled to finance their participation in the *cofradía's* ceremonial activities, thus eroding the economic foundations upon which the *cofradía* survived.

However, in this town, the dismantling of traditional organizations began even earlier with the arrival of the reformist Catholics, the Maryknoll mission in the early 1960s under the political condition after the counterrevolution in 1954.The principal actor responsible for the beginning of this breakdown was a white priest from the United States whose religious philosophy was inspired by the reformist Catholic movement. Catholic reformists veered from Orthodox Catholic philosophy in which it was far less concerned with the rapid expansion of Protestant teachings in Central America. Their primary goal was to wipe out folk Catholicism (the syncretistic religion, performed by the *cofradía*, brings orthodox Catholicism into contact with traditional Mayan cosmology). The Catholic priest that came to the town despised the pagan ceremonies carried out by the *cofradía* and prohibited them from conducting such events within the church. He also took down the many images of saints inside the church and restricted their worship. In addition, he educated the lay preachers, or catechists, gave them supervisory roles, and condemned all pagan ceremonies and the people involved in them. This Catholic reformist did not criticize the *cofradía* directly for their observances, rather, in censuring the traditional syncretistic faith; Catholic reformist transformed the organization of the *cofradía's* ritual expenditure. Generally speaking, this suppressed the usual *cofradía* observances, allowing traditional rites to be observed only at large village events, such as All Saint's Day. Little by little, this brought about the decline of the *cofradía's* influence on the town's everyday life.

Ⅲ Violence 1981–82

Revolutionary power cast Indians in the role of revolutionary supporters. In other words, the guerrilla plan for gaining power was to build a rural Indian militia that would eventually move into the cities. The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (*Ejército Guerillero de los Pobres*: EGP), one faction of the guerrilla resistance movement, arrived in town in early 1981 consisting mostly of *ladinos*. When they first arrived, they stole the hearts and minds of the local people with their message that land will be given to all. The guerrilla proclamation drew sympathy from the more educated Indians, especially local teachers. Many farmers were also swayed by the guerrilla ideology. The EGP conducted military training for boys and young men. While the EGP held political sway in the town, wealthy farmers and businesspeople owning land, the majority of who were ladinos, became the targets of terrorism. Occasionally, casual executions were carried out to boost morale within the guerrilla ranks.

The national army began pushing guerrilla forces out of the area between 1981 and 1982. The methods used to maintain political sway in the town pushed the residents' capacity for adapting to violence to the limit. The army relied solely upon the fear induced by brute force as its means of control. Townspeople suspected of collaborating with guerrillas were tortured and executed in various (hideous)ways. By the end of the army's occupation of the town, most residents viewed the army as a weapon of the state, designed to instill fear and nothing more. The following presents one man's memory of the situation.

[Guerrillas and the army] (C. J., age 30, Indian, male)

For over 30 years we were exploited on the plantations (*fincas*)of the Pacific coast. However, never during this time was there a chance to resist them (*ladinos*). Until 1981, that is.

[Arrival of the first guerrillas]

On a Saturday morning, 9 a.m., the EGP (Guerrilla Army of the Poor)came armed wearing masks. The group consisted of both men and women.250 were men, and 50 women. They scrawled various political slogans on walls with

paint. After about half an hour of doing that, the *contrapartes* (locals sympathetic to the guerrillas) were used to send out instructions to meet in the central park. More than 2,000 people gathered.

Their leader addressed everyone, lecturing on the crisis still present since the invasion by Spain, saying, "The time for revolution has come. Let's join together bearing arms and fight." In his speech, the leader accorded the people with a phrase that became very important as a key to their sympathy. This phrase was, "Release the land to the people," (*abra la tierra*). It drew applause from the crowd. Everyone got out their money and gave the guerrillas a warm reception with cola and bread.

The guerrillas took down the Guatemalan national flag that was in the park, erected one with Che Guevarra's face in its place, and burned the national flag in the square. It was about noon by this time.

[March 1981,two months later]

The EGP came to town again. They first appeared in surrounding villages, approaching the town from villages M, L, J, P, and T. Don F's father, Don C, was a guerrilla sympathizer and looked upon as the town leader by the people. The guerrillas gathered at Don C's home and conducted meetings over a 2-week period. At the beginning, the talk at these started off focused on theoretical matters. Soon, the guerrillas notified each household that it should send two male representatives for training. My older brother and I went from the C household. Training took place at night. My brother and I were fat at the time, so it was decided that we were not fit for the training. This turned out to be our saving grace.

[June 1981, another three months later]

By this time, the "philosophy" (*filosofía*) of the EGP had changed. They placed their own Officer of the Peace and lawyer in town to settle issues that arose. However, from my perspective, this was a very illogical strategy.

This town has always had fights over land boundaries. The guerrilla lawyers did not mediate by listening to both sides of a matter. They would receive a bribe from one party, say 500 quetzal, and assassinate the other during the night. In fights over lovers, a man might even request that his rival be killed. As guerrillas patrolled neighboring areas, they would enter stores where goods had been delivered, determine that the owner was wealthy, kill him, and destroy the store. I don't see how having goods available determines that the owner is rich. These are two different things. The store could be operating under a loan.

Guerrillas would burn buses and tear apart roads. They made their own laws, setting a 6 p.m. curfew. One farmer whose field was in a remote area was unable to make it home by the curfew. He returned at 7 p.m. and was killed under suspicion of spying. I think one man, "J.N.," killed about 50 or 60 villagers. Communication with the outside was cut off. The town, or community, could not even go to the local prefectural capital city (which at that time had been an often-frequented city). Roads were off limits, anyone seen traveling on a road was suspected of spying. However, at this time, even in this town, army spies were already hiding in the town, camouflaged as villagers.

As a result of guerrilla occupation and military objectives, most *ladinos* abandoned the village, leaving vacant many of the local businesses and much of the prime real estate.

[July–August 1981]

About 200 or 300 government soldiers arrived. Although there are numerous ranks within the military, these soldiers were ranked as *Kaibil*.[5] They wore red berets and their faces were covered with camouflage coloring. These men were much more dangerous [than the guerrillas], doing away with people as if killing cats or mice. They first arrived in R (name of area)and began by setting 60 homes on fire, killing two or three people, then they traveled down the road lighting other nearby homes on fire. Then, they came to the town, (*pueblo*). The soldiers raped about 20 to 25 women [in the pueblo]. Of those raped, some died from genital mutilation and others from sickness later. The machinery that the town had was destroyed.

The general of the army assembled people in the central park. He threatened to bomb the city with helicopters if not told the whereabouts of the guerrillas. Then, he told us to organize a militia and said they would provide weapons. Of course, now we know that this was all a lie. The general called people together saying he wanted to elect leaders from the town. A number of men were selected, who then went before the militia. After all the men had gathered, the general made the following statement. "You are the leaders of the guerrillas, and we are all going to kill you." The *kaibil* were called forward. Each man's fingers were cut off with a knife, his stomach ripped open, penis cut off, head cracked with a machete, the skin on the back of his legs taken off, and then finally shot and killed. In other cases, they were killed by being drenched in oil and burned. About 140 men met death in such ways. The final ten men, said to be the most important ten guerrillas, were made to walk the road to S (name of a nearby town on the other side of the mountain, about a

five hours walk through the mountains). Over the course of the route the soldiers sliced the men's ears, cut off their toes, and made them continue walking, and did everything they could to torture them so that they died an agonizingly painful death.

When it got dark, the townspeople carried away the bodies of the victims, held a quick wake, and then took them to the cemetery as they were for burial. In the morning, bones and nails, all that was left of the fingers due to wild dogs, were lying in the square. After assembling the people, the soldiers threatened the elderly with pistols, making them run as they shot at their feet. Then, having had their fun watching the panic, they killed them.

[September–October 1981]

This type of torture continued for several days, so people began to flee the town. They went to live in the mountains or migrated to the *finca* on the Pacific coast. The army made the church their base for about 4 months. During this time, it was almost a ghost town. Only the elderly were able to stay, since they were free from suspicion of guerrilla involvement.

[Beginning of 1982]

The army gathered people in front of the church, shut all the adult males within and told them, "We are now going to start burning everything. People will probably not be able to live here." Hearing this message, some cried, some fell to the ground. However, the next morning the army suddenly left the town. Thinking this very odd, everyone turned on their radio and found out that the Lucas García government had fallen in a coup to General Ríos Montt. However, hearing this, people started saying that the army would probably return. So that the town would never again be put under such suffering, the people sent a representative to the capital to make an agreement with General Ríos Montt or his secretary. The town representative was told by the new government, "Have each home display the Guatemalan national flag. If homes do not display the national flag, the area will most likely be bombed."

The same army returned, but their philosophy had changed by this time. They stopped recklessly killing villagers. The soldiers were to make the people literate. However, in the classroom they were always asking, "Where are the guerrillas?" (*¿Dónde están los guerrilleros?*) The army also assembled white rocks spelling out the name of the town on a mountain slope to the north. This is still visible on the side of the mountain today.

The preceding quotation describes the logic and method the army or

military government decided upon to eradicate communism in the villages. When the army first invades, homes left vacant mark guerrilla sympathizers; undesirable elements such as this must be burned down. From the army's perspective torture was justified because humans will reveal the truth if afraid. To prevent residents in developing villages from joining guerrillas out of resentment, the army provided people with food and sheet zinc for weathering the elements. In regions where guerrillas were eliminated by military attacks, the army organized local militias and supplied them with rifles as a means of self-defense against future "communist" (guerrilla) encroachment. The organization of local civilian defense patrols (*Patrulla de Autodefensa Civil*, PAC) to provide security was later called "beans and rifles" (*frijoles y fusiles*), a slogan for providing food and a means of self-defense against communism.

The organization of civilian defense patrols instituted a new type of violence and signaled the beginning of a new order in society, an order that replaced the already declining *cofradía*. Once implemented, the economic endeavors of townspeople were restricted under a new form of social control. To put it another way, the local civilian patrol was a system of social control centered on the power of males, and in some ways the patrols could be seen as a form of institutionalized terrorism. In Indian society, the males traditionally assume the authoritative role of head-of-household. As such, they also assume the role of economic provider and decision-maker within the household. Furthermore, participation in the civilian defense patrols further legitimized male authority in this town by tying men's traditional roles to the ideology of national security imposed by the army. This had the effect of solidifying a powerful and obedient social hierarchy at the household and community levels.

The influence of violence on local economic activity amounted to more than a simple interruption. Over these two years the fabric of society was ripped apart. To begin with, almost all ladinos had left town. This meant the halt of economic activities that they had once controlled. Of course, they were not the only people who fled. While under army rule, the town had be-

come basically devoid of any life. Immediately following the army invasion, townspeople ran to the nearby mountains and had to set up camp. And as army terror and execution became an everyday part of life, many of those who remained in town took to the mountains or headed for plantations on the Pacific coast in search of work. In short, this was the beginning of Indian displacement within the country. As entrance to refugee camps established in Mexico became routine, even more of the remaining people left, officially recognized as refugees. In any case, after the exodus, this town became a ghost town. "Along with the army, wild animals were all that remained in the town" (C.J., age 30, Indian male).

After this dismantling of society, Indians began to return little by little beginning in 1983. However, the great majority of *ladinos* and other residents, did not return. Indians had always comprised the majority of the population and since the *ladinos* had taken flight in 1981, they (Indians) were able to take control of economic and political power.

The army's campaign of destruction changed even the landscape of the village. The extent of the damage was such that visitors to the town who had no prior knowledge of the situation were so overwhelmed by fear, that it is said they did not so much as set foot outside their hotel during their stay. The following episode brings the terrible state of affairs to light.

> **[Return to the Town of Violence]** (M. O., late 50s, *ladina* female)
> We got into the lodging and restaurant business after buying this inn from my husband's younger sister.
> When the guerrillas came, *ladinos* sold their land and homes to Indians for nothing and got out of the area. In the end, there was only one other family remaining besides ours.
> Visitors basically disappeared, and the situation was awful. So, my husband decided to leave for the regional capital. Just as he was to set off, we learned that the army was coming on the radio. Whether they came or not, it would look like he ran away. I left with just a cup in one large basket. Standing in the cargo area of a truck, that was all the luggage I had. On the road we passed about 10 army trucks. In R(an area) many homes had been burned. The army seemed to think that any empty homes marked guerrilla sympathizers. I left

with tears flowing down my face.

I lived in H(a town) for about a year. However, always feeling that our lives were tied to our hometown, my husband decided to return. For me, the memory of the terror in which we fled was too much. I did not want to go back. Therefore, on our return I was again crying the whole way. When we arrived, the tears came again at the sight of our home, utterly changed. All our household fixtures had been pillaged. The army had apparently tried to burn down our inn, since a section of the building was charred. Luckily the fire did not spread and our inn was left standing.

Once again, we started over and tried to get the inn going. Of course, at first there were no visitors to the town. After a while, a couple tourists did appear. However, after seeing the burned villages along the way, they arrived so frightened, no one would set foot outside the inn. My husband encouraged them by saying, "The danger has now passed. You can go anywhere you please." Not a soul listened to his attempts to ease their fears.

In asking why such destruction and violence came to this town, the people have explained the causes from diverse points of view. The dialogue on this question has become more open. Some believe both the guerrillas and the army came as punishment for the corruption of the people who adopted the beliefs invoked by white priest to abandon traditional customs. Others offered a more prophetic explanation, saying the violence was sent from the gods. And some explained the situation in much the same way as the guerrillas, saying that it was a result of the village exploitation by the cities.

To me, the people's varied interpretations and stories represent an oral history of the situation to date. Needless to say, we cannot deny the influence of the psychological operation by military that induces people to blame for the victims (cf. CEH 1999, Vol.IV: 73–86; REMHI 1998 : 216–218). Moreover, as one listens to these interpretations, one gets the sense that interpreting the history of their own town has been an important part of the process of adaptation as they go about assembling their lives in the aftermath of the insurgencies. After fourteen years, people have considered the meaning of the violence and by interpreting it in various ways, have tried to overcome the pain so deeply ingrained in their memory.

IV From *Costa* to *Norte*

From my understanding of the period following the political violence and civil strife that occurred during 1981 and 1982, the economic ethos of this society underwent fundamental change. Since my research was conducted in both 1987 and 1996, I had to reconstruct all the details of this change from the memories and experiences of the people who lived through the violent period. These personal narratives make clear the ways that the violent period in this town has marked and divided the lives of those who were adults at that time. Characteristics of the period following the violence are divided into the following three areas for consideration: The organization of violence, the psychological effects of the violence on local politics and economy, and finally, the resurgence of economic activities.

1 Organization of Violence

What significance has the organization of civilian defense patrols for the new social order? The significance lies in the continuance of low-intensity terrorism that had already taken root. In villages where civilian defense patrols were in operation, a "militaristic social order" was formed. In this situation, people had no other choice but to arrange their lives to fit the system. For those wanting to put the violence behind them psychologically, the only option was to suppress the emotions they felt while suffering violence everyday. Most of the people became hesitant to speak about matters of politics, let alone the violence, due to the connection to terrifying memories. However, in order to survive in the wake of violence, people sought a new identity. Ritual obedience in the name of the *cofradía* transformed into militaristic obedience for the sake of an anticommunist ideology that threatened the lives of all who did not fall into line, i.e. those who did not "voluntarily" participate in the civilian defense patrols. This was in tune with the xenophobic sentiment among Indians at the time. Traditional rituals seemed to lack the power to bind the people after the violence. In addition, chronic insufficiencies of land at the end of the "period of exploitation" meant that people would have to turn to new methods for producing wealth or money, namely business

activities.

An enabling factor in this situation was the pervasive and permanent *ladino* flight in this town, most of who had held dominion in business activity prior to and through the period of violence. The yoke on *ladino* control over businesses had been lifted. The reason behind the *ladino* domination over local business was not due to a lack of business acumen on the part of Indians. There is no basis for positing a lack of indigenous commercial sensibility; An interregional market system (*plaza*) has been active in this area for hundreds of years. The problem was that *ladinos* had previously established a monopoly in transportation, wholesale of factory-produced goods, and at the middleman level of distribution. There was no margin for intervening in the system later. In this context the Indians in this town also carried the burden of "Penny Capitalism" (Tax 1953). Penny capitalism refers to the continuous circulation of capital through the ritual activities of the *cofradía* which result in the gradual development and elevation of a person's social standing, rather than an accumulation of wealth, or economic standing. However, in this town, *cofradía* had already begun to deteriorate and weaken during the exploitation period due to the work of the reformist Catholics as well as of the white priest[6]. Thus some Indians began to accumulate wealth prior to the violence.

2 Political and Economic Influence of Violence

During the 1980s, the world began to learn of the destruction of numerous villages, customs, and culture due to the long-term terrorism of guerrillas and the army in western highland Guatemala. Health and community development programs were extended by governmental and non-governmental agencies of developed countries beginning in the mid-1980 s. Based on humanistic interventions, the various forms of development aid program arriving in Guatemala were supposed to be fairly administered. These international aids programs have applied the spur to articulate with local social order with outer economy. However, at least from the perspective of overall social influence on this town, it is not an exaggeration to say that the actual basis of economic improvements came about during the 1990s due to illegal la-

bor migration to the U.S. and the lack of regulations on money from outside.

As mentioned earlier, the way to obtain money in the exploitation period was by going to the Pacific Coast of southwestern Guatemala (*la costa*) and working as a seasonal laborer in the plantations. In addition to the unfamiliar climate and severe working conditions, labor in *la costa* led to numerous cases of tropical and infectious diseases such as malaria. Furthermore, in order to gather a large enough work forces, labor recruiters would visit the homes of laborers while people were preparing for festivals and pay them their wages in advance. Once the rites were over and people had used up the money, first trucks, and later chartered buses would arrive to town, bound for the plantations. Needless to say, this type of system for procuring workers did not leave a favorable impression toward labor in *la costa*.

However, a system with more appeal began to develop around 1990: Illegal labour migration in the United States. This involved attempting to "travel" to the U.S. by handing over relatively large fees to traffickers called *coyotes*. What the *coyote* were doing was against the law, but a newspaper in the capital city boldly ran an advertisement saying, "All it takes is an ID card, and you can be in America." There are actually various forms of this sort of "travel" organized by *coyotes*. Some services will even deliver them to the border using chartered buses and trucks or public transportation, with agents at each point along the route to guide the way. At the border between Mexico and the United States, there is a strict inspection at the U.S. immigration office. At border areas, Hispanics so frequently are victims of fraud and crime that illegal entry gets more and more dangerous.

The United States adopted a strict policy to eliminate illegal workers entering the country from Mexico. However, in light of protecting human rights, the U.S. tried to expedite the delivery of visas, including work visas, to political refugees from Guatemala. Therefore, the number of Guatemalans asserting that they had to flee Guatemala for political reasons increased, as Indians from this town and western Guatemala were at some point exposed as illegal immigrants in the United States. Within Guatemala, it is said that after the army killed people in a village, it presumably placed guerrilla propa-

ganda fly bill in the pockets of victims to justify the execution. In thinking about "political refugees in disguise" in the U.S., it appears that this type of "technique" used by the army to justify the victimization of Indians (i.e. by changing the identity of the deceased) has been co-opted by the townspeople themselves. In a different form and a completely different context, the townspeople have claimed a new identity (i.e. by claiming political persecution), and have used it as a "technique" to justify a more secure livelihood and economic existence as laborers in the United States. Even if they *were* crossing the border for economic reasons, their hometown happened to be embroiled in political dispute. And as long as they claimed to be "political refugees", very little could be done to disprove them. In the first place, it is absurd to discuss how to classify one segment of refugees as "political", and another as "economic." Herein lies the reason that it became possible to use the "technique" created by those in power (the army) as a way to protect one's existence.

Illegal Hispanic immigrants in the United States are called *mojados*, or "wetbacks", based stories about swimming across the Río Grande. Although accurate statistics on *mojados* from this town are not available, local people estimate that about 1,500 from the town are working the U.S.. If this is taken as fact, it accounts for about 7.5% of the town's total population of 20,000.

The following image of *mojados* has been drawn by assembling stories of former labor migrants and from families who had a member currently working in the U.S. At first, many men were crossing the border to the United States. Since a considerable amount of money was given to *coyotes*, most leaving would borrow from relatives or take out loans locally. Both the number one and number two motivating factors to go to the U.S. were the high value of the money. There were some that did want to learn about foreign countries, but since the cost of "travel" was not easy to come by, it is safe to say that the main reason was economic. If unsuccessful at first, most kept trying, borrowing more money, until they made it. If they never made it, they could not pay back the money they borrowed to give the *coyote*. Consequently it can be said that the journey to *el norte* utilizing *coyote* might be

gamble with high stakes to their credence and lives or "deep play" (Geertz 1973 : 432).

Approximately half of those who have made the trip have lost communication with their hometown. The half that has remained in contact with their families somehow found work and sent money home. Most immigrants to the United States stay for a period of six months to a year. Recently, the number of women leaving for the United States has grown. This increase came as men began making a stable income and could then send for the women. Before long, some became permanent residents, established families, and were able to stop sending money home. Although the passage to the United States was expensive and strenuous, it was surprisingly easy to return home. By simply declaring their status as an illegal alien at the United States' immigration bureau, they would be safely sent home at no cost under deportation procedures.

3 Renewal of Economic Activities

The amount of money sent back by *mojados* varied with the living standards of the area they settled in. However, each mailing would usually be several hundred dollars. One can imagine the huge economic significance of this amount, considering the GDP per capita (estimation in 1997) for Guatemala was $1,455 U.S. Since the number of *mojados* greatly increased in the 1990s, the U.S. dollars sent back to their families grew to an impressive sum. As this was not brought about by growth of economic activities in their local areas, it could be said to contribute to the development of a kind of "bubble economy." On my visit to the town after 9 years away, I was impressed not only by the increase in number of new houses that had been built, but also by the size of the houses, many having two-stories made from concrete block. Townspeople would point out these houses and say in unison, "Their son is working in the United States."

The remittance was not merely used to build new homes. It initiated a variety of expenditures and investments, such as starting businesses or purchasing trucks. There was also a jump in the price of land, although this did not lead to a land-rolling situation. The approach to savings and modern fi-

nance had not sufficiently spread. Finally a bank branch was to be established in the town, and a representative was sent to conduct a survey. This was another effect of bubble economy.

Regular markets traditionally functioned as the distributor of local agricultural products. However, during this 10-year period, the market function drastically changed to that of distributor of foreign agricultural products and factory-made products from outside the town. Even in the period of "exploitation" money made on the coastal plantations was spent in the regular markets and contributed to economic activity. Currently, however, much more money flows into town from *mojados* than from *la costa* and the influence that this has had on the town cannot be compared to previous times.

Textile handicrafts began to be traded in the market during this period as well, and a sector that could be called the handicraft industry began to develop within the town. As this local industry grew, the character of several textiles began to change and one item symbolizing a self determined identity, the *morral* (knit shoulder bag) was promoted as a commercial product for sale in outside markets. Today, thousands of semi-finished versions of these knit bags are forwarded for processing outside of town. These products are not only sold domestically, but exported to the United States and Europe (Ikeda 1997).

V Transformations

To speak accurately about current conditions in the town we must consider what the townspeople have experienced. When Indians explain the changes in the town, they now speak with a clear awareness of a shift from a dependent subject of economic exploitation, to an independent economic subject, possessing a free will and able to do as they please. This change reflects the diversity in the identities they can choose from. For example, in the past, when the *cofradía* was contested, most people recognized only two options for the future, "revolutionary reform", or "reverence of militaristic order." However, now it is believed that all people can freely conduct business under economic liberalism.

The guerrillas initially captured the spirit of the people with the slogan "release the land to the people". This was because land was seen as the reservoir of wealth. The army who appeared later destroyed this society. However, the army that nearly turned the society into a vacant space instilled violence through order in the form of civilian organizations, while it obscured the people's political awareness. Through low-intensive terrorism, or the "entrenching of terrorism", devised by the military government, a uniform order returned to the town. This type of political stability characterized by the suppression of political thought, in effect lead many people to seek out new economic strategies to improve their lives. However, the violence inherent in the new militaristic order gradually became seen as a restraint on the current style of "free economy". Under the new conditions, the political view that saw violence as an effective means of social control and economic development, no longer held water. For economic development on any level, there is no heavier yoke than violence. Many social and political changes occurred at that time that influenced people to adopt this new way of thinking. In addition to the fruits of domestic politics, such as guarantees of public peace and freedom to make political statements, the Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Rigoberta Menchú, maintained direct dialogues with foreigners involved in providing assistance. Menchu's efforts helped to shine an international spotlight on the violence in Guatemala. The arrival of assistance organizations from overseas in the town spurred the discovery of "business" as a new source of survival. At the same time, the concept of "negotiation" with the agencies beyond national boundaries was also becoming popular. This "negotiation" included such activities as working illegally in foreign countries and exporting handicrafts and other goods. Naturally, tourism development also became a popular venue for creating and accumulating wealth.

[On Tourism] (C. J., age 58, Indian, male)
Originally, handicrafts in this town (such as men and women's folk clothing and hand woven bags) were not for tourists, but were made for our own use. If tourists purchase these as souvenirs, it adds that much to our family income. However, these are always our own items. Here, a girl is weaving cloth [for

women's traditional dress], but it is for a different girl in the same family. In particular, recently the content of handmade folk craft has become intricate, which brings about a jump in price. So if tourists stop buying, there is nothing they can be used for. The handicrafts are that elaborate.

Some say that tourism industry helps our livelihood. I don't feel that way. Those making money on tourists are people that run inns, souvenir shops, and restaurants.

This town has been visited by tourists for over 20 years. Since foreigners began coming, people have little by little made friends and become kind to them. This puzzles me, why local people are so nice to foreigners.

The peace accords in late 1996 between, *Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca*, URNG (Guatemalan people's revolutionary unity), the antigovernment power and the government were a step toward recognizing the human rights of all Indians as free "economic" individuals. One NGO in the town, through teaching Spanish classes for tourists and providing cultural education, upholds many of the aims of neoliberalism, making connections with the outside world in working toward project goals for the town's economic autonomy. This includes assistance projects for independent, self-sustaining clinics, Indian political and economic autonomy, support for reforestation projects, and aid for sustainable development. In other words, economic development in this town has bridged the gap between xenophobic sentiment and fraternity with foreign tourists found in Indian identity formation.

With the stabilization of public order in the latter half of the 1980s, propagation began of various evangelical Protestant sects that achieved success in producing mass converts. Following the violence in 1981–82, congregation of the *Centoamérica* Church, which has the longest evangelical history in the town, shifted from *ladinos* to Indians. Traditional folk religion also enjoyed a brief revival in early 1982. However, this was limited to the mere symbolic establishment of two crosses, one in front of the church and the other in front of prehistoric ruins in the mountains. The Roman Catholic faith was strengthened and the revival movement was declined. These proc-

esses brought the *cofradía*, not to mention *cofradía* traditions, to a halt. The function of fiesta for protectorate saints and other observances also shifted from teaching traditional values to recreational festivals or holidays enjoyed by the family.

This brings us to the present,1996. These various changes have accelerated the bubble economy created by the influx of foreign money from illegal workers in the United States. However, my impression is that the peak is gradually approaching. The townspeople tend to agree that the current economic activity, especially handicraft production, is slowing down little by little. I often heard people say, "Business is decreasing", "Nowadays competition is fierce". Thus, the speculative behavior in the land market that occurred during the early period of the bubble economy is now also relaxing. The economic ineguality among Indians in this town has also grown. Of course, in a general sense, the town has become more prosperous.

Ⅵ Conclusion

After 1996 we have obtained huge testimonies not only of victims but also of perpetrators of the violence. A lot of interdisciplinary and multidimensional approaches including psychological, economic, political, and anthropological studies, have tried for analyzing *la violencia* by Guatemalan civilian activists (e. g., 1998; CEH 1999). Many anthropologist even in Japan have published books and articles on recovering Indian cultural processes, especially so-called "Pan-Maya movement" (Fisher and Brown 1996; Warren 1998; Ota 1999).

The interpretation that I have accounted for can be different from the traditional and/or orthodox image of Guatemalan Indian that has been mentioned as a victim of the violence. I think that the political and historical situation of the town can be heterodox. I would like to present my interpretation as an alternative pathway to the modernization not in general but in certain historical context. The proposal of mine is to stress that we should carefully clarify the multiple dimensions of the symbolic impact and the public memories on *la violencia* by adding even heterodox ethnographic data.

The impact of the violence that occurred from 1981 to 82 on the change in local economic consciousness is so great it cannot be measured. The expressions, "before the violence" and "after the violence" were used many times over throughout the process of my interviews as significant time markers that hold important meaning in the public memory of local history.

What I want to draw attention to here concerns the symbolic meaning of violence. Since the most violent epoch in Guatemala, many anthropologists have endeavored to tell the world about the problems of violence and, even more earnestly, the systematic creation of unjust conditions by the army (e.g. Carmack 1988). Those who suffered are the only people who can claim to know the reality of this experience, the reality of violence and injustice. It is a bitter history lesson, just hearing about the situation. I believe there is another dimension to this type of experience that requires our attention: The social transformation of those living in the era.

For those who remained silent in 1987,violence has become so essential in relating the town's history that they have since put together a lecture-quality address under a language and cultural education project for tourists. As many other people broke the silence, speaking about the violence and pain became significant beyond that of an anguishing common experience. This seems to suggest that recounting the violence, relating their stories to tourists and foreigners, has been an elemental step in obtaining a new identity.

A change has also occurred in what was considered the "source of wealth" before and after the violence. Before the violence, this source was the soil or land, more specifically *milpa* or cornfields. Cultivating land was seen as the key to satisfying the family's consumptive and material needs. Informing this image was the belief that the land would always provide, that the cycle of corn production could (and would) continue for perpetuity.

However, the attitude toward land as a source of wealth changed after the violence. "Making even one more quetzal", and, "Everyone wants to own a store", are common statements illustrating how thinking changed. Affluence is now seen as something that can be gained through business activities.

Or in another sense, the road through "outside" leads to become rich. Despite the risk involved the aspiration to work in the United States as a *mojado* was the easiest access to the fountain of wealth. In order to accomplish such ideals, humans must become both politically and economically free individuals. For this to happen, Indians, as well as *ladinos* need to be educated. Furthermore, Indians must become economically independent from *ladinos*. Rather than revolution through militarism, this should happen through the creation of a peaceful nation that guarantees human rights. Peace negotiations between the government and the guerrillas are being carried out because people believe that peace will provide stable economic growth.

The shift in economic consciousness experienced in the town does not in any way reflect the type of gradual process that characterizes political and economic change. Rather, the violent events that occurred in this town's recent history have sparked a unique pattern of social change, a pattern that resonates with, but does not mirror, Bourdieu's (1979) description of the lower-class proletariat in Algeria in 1960. Unlike the rapid processes of social change normally fostered by the emergence of capitalist relations of production, the processes of social and psychological reorganization in Indian society are moving gradually. The physical and psychological destruction caused by violence has helped to create new social and economic environments in which Indians are working to adapt.

Notes

1) This paper is based on a translation of the paper by the same author (Ikeda 1998). My research location was a town (*municipio*) in Huehuetenango (*Departamento de Huehuetenango*), Guatemala. Indians who speak Mam, a Mayan language, constitute the majority of the population. Most Indians wear the same style of ethnic clothing. The territory of the town is also formed of one main ethnic sphere. Indians speaking a different Mayan languages and Spanish-speaking *ladino* (Hispanic) are in the minority. From the southwestern Cuchumatán Highlands in western Guatemala, the entire town spreads over numerous valleys rising from 1000 to some 3000 meters above sea level. It is about 300 square kilometers, with a population of 19,735 (based on a 1994 survey). I stayed in the

town center commonly referred to as the pueblo (*Cabecera Municipal*) from September through October 1996, and conducted research in the area during these two months. I conducted ethnographic research concerning the influence of tourism on handicraft production in one of Guatemala's western highland towns over a two-month period beginning in September 1996.The materials are based on the reproduction of notes I took from interviews, conversations, and from narratives of the local people during my fieldwork both in Spanish and in Mam. The groundwork for my observations was laid by the information contained in " Ethnography of Culture Creation of in Guatemala Tourism and Transition in Class, Race, and Gender," an ethnographic research report led by Dr. Yoshinobu Ota and funded through the *Monbusho* (Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture) grant for scientific research in 1996. I thank Mr. Bert Roberts, graduate student of University of Iowa. Also, though I cannot list their names, I am very grateful to the many people in Guatemala who provided me with their stories. I would like give special thanks to the families of José Calmo and Don Enrique Martínez. Their cooperation was greatly appreciated.

2) The original meaning of *caporal* is caretaker of a farm. However, according to this speaker's explanation, it is a local person who makes labor arrangements upon receiving contracts from farms.

3) In Latin America, *habilitación* generally means a loan in kind. Here, it refers to a deposit or an advance payment of a portion of wages.

4) Written materials concerning cooperatives at the time of establishment were all burned at the hands of the army. Memory of people of L.A.'s generation is commonly vague, but after putting together information from numerous other related sources, it can be postulated that he worked at the cooperative from about 1971 to 1978.

5) The *Kaibil* [*Kaibil Balam* in a Mayan language] is the name of the special forces of the modern militaryborrowed from the pre-Columbian Mayan warrior class.

6) The traditional ceremonial system was not entirely abandoned. The *cofradía* supporting *Caja Real* (Royal/True Box) is "still" in existence. And, traditional events are "still" carried out by *chimanes*: Shamans, clairvoyants, and priests. These ceremonies are not open to the public, but it is not that the need has been lost. By restoring the rights of indigenous culture, it is very possible that these observances could be "revived" and given legitimacy under a new social context.

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