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Note from the Editor

Michael Chibnik

The lead article in this issue is Kedron Thomas's winning paper in the 2008 competition for the Eric R. Wolf Prize. Her paper incisively analyzes the moral discourse surrounding "brand piracy" among Maya producers of nontraditional clothing in Guatemala. Details about the 2009 Wolf Prize can be found at the back of this issue. This issue also includes two photo essays. I encourage the submission of such essays, which nicely complement our written ethnographies. In the future, articles in the online version of the *Anthropology of Work Review* will sometimes include additional photographs to those published in the hard copy version.

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Structural Adjustment, Spatial Imaginaries, and "Piracy" in Guatemala's Apparel Industry

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Abstract

This article examines how urban violence influences the everyday lives of Guatemalan Maya entrepreneurs who make nontraditional clothing to sell in highland markets and Guatemala City. How urban space is imagined and experienced among apparel producers reflects a process of class differentiation linked to Guatemala's entrance into international trade and legal agreements. Realities of uneven access and unequal resource distribution allow some producers to take advantage of formal markets and official networks in the capital city, while others avoid the city streets out of fear. Such inequalities are obscured when entrepreneurs who benefit from urban connections talk about relative success in terms of a moral division between those who engage in brand piracy and those who do not. In line with an official discourse that blames "pirates," gangs, and other marginalized groups for the country's social and economic ills, apparel producers who do not copy popular

brands often view those who do as immoral and illegal. The case study presented here is fruitful ground for theorizing how cultural representations of urban space influence market strategies and moral logics amidst processes of economic and legal restructuring.

Keywords: urban space, apparel industry, piracy, morality, free trade, international law

Although Guatemala's long internal armed conflict officially ended in 1996, levels of violence are on the rise.

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Policy

The *Anthropology of Work Review* is the publication of the Society for the Anthropology of Work, which is a section of the American Anthropological Association. The goal of the journal is to publish research that will facilitate exchanges among those engaged in the study of all dimensions of human work. Articles and photo essays are welcomed from those working inside and outside academic contexts, from all nations and from all subfields and areas of specialty within anthropology. Theoretical and methodological discussions of the study of work and its contexts are encouraged, including interdisciplinary, collaborative, and student submissions.

Submission Guidelines

Articles submitted for peer review for publication in the *Anthropology of Work Review* may be sent at any time during the year. Please submit manuscripts electronically, in Word (without identifying headers and footers), accompanied by full contact information. Manuscripts should be 20–30 pages, including references, and be double-spaced and formatted according to the style guide available on the American Anthropological Association Internet site. Please send, as a separate attachment, a one-paragraph abstract for the article with at least five keywords. Send article manuscripts to the AWR General Editor, Michael Chibnik, at michael-chibnik@uiowa.edu. Correspondence may be addressed to Michael Chibnik at the Department of Anthropology, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1322.

All book review and visual review inquiries and manuscripts should be directed to the AWR Reviews Editor, Carrie Lane (clane@fullerton.edu), Department of American Studies, P.O. Box 6868, California State University, Fullerton; Fullerton, CA 92834-6868.

Book reviews should not exceed four double-spaced pages, and review essays should not exceed 15 pages.

There is a new section in the journal called *Scenes at Work* that includes photographs and photographic essays. Photographs of and/or by workers should be submitted electronically as tif files, in black and white. Inquiries, photographs, and photographic essays should be directed to Michael Chibnik at mchibnik@gmail.com.

Many Guatemalans see violence as a predominantly urban problem (McIlwaine and Moser 2001). Guatemala City, the capital, is widely regarded as an especially dangerous place. People who ride public buses expect to be robbed or assaulted on their daily commute. The homicide rate, which doubled between 2001 and 2006 on a national level, has reached an average of 250 people per month in the capital city alone (OCAVI 2006; Freedom House 2008).

I explore here how urban violence influences the everyday lives of indigenous Maya entrepreneurs who make and sell nontraditional clothing in highland markets and the capital city. My conclusions are based on eight months of ethnographic fieldwork among apparel workshop owners and employees in Tecpán, a large, predominantly Kaqchikel Maya town located about eighty kilometers from Guatemala City.¹ I argue that the ways in which urban space is imagined and experienced among *tecpaneco* apparel producers are related to class differentiation in Tecpán and shifting opportunities linked to Guatemala's entrance into international trade and legal agreements. Apparel producers in Tecpán both participate in and contest a spatial imaginary that portrays Guatemala City as dangerous. Many avoid the capital city streets when possible and associate urban life with violence and insecurity. Nonetheless, some producers have been able to establish useful connections with urban markets and official power structures in the capital city. To understand the relationship between market processes, class structures, and urban space, I draw on Ghassan Hage's (1996) concept of the "spatial imaginary," which emphasizes how particular kinds of space, such as the nation or the city, are thought to have particular qualities and how senses of community and belonging are often mapped onto geographical spaces. I also take a political economic approach, viewing space as networks of association that structure market systems (Harvey 1989).

Guatemala has ratified several international treaties, including the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), in the past decade that have resulted in the adoption of economic policies that benefit multinational capital more than domestic clothing manufacturers. These policies include the criminalization of brand piracy – the unauthorized use of registered trademarks and brand names. This practice has been widespread for decades in Tecpán and other towns where nontraditional clothing is made.² Some producers, mainly those whose class position already affords them a competitive advantage, have abandoned piracy in favor of strategies of unique branding and now emphasize the importance of formalized business operations. They take advantage of connections to formal distribution channels and business services, government institutions, and educational opportunities in Guatemala City.

The realities of differential class positions and uneven resource distribution that structure market access are obscured when entrepreneurs who benefit from urban connections talk about their relative success in terms of a moral division between those who engage in brand piracy and those who do not. In line with an official discourse that blames "pirates," gangs, and other marginalized groups

for the country's social and economic ills, including urban violence, apparel producers who do not copy popular brands often view those who do as immoral and illegal, even as the smaller-scale producers who traffic in pirated brands are disadvantaged by levels of fear, crime, and violence that make the capital city a place to be avoided.

The Neoliberal Apparel Industry

The spatial imaginaries of Tecpán's apparel producers have taken shape amidst global restructuring of the apparel industry and a regional process of spatialization associated with the rise of *maquiladoras* (primarily foreign-owned garment assembly factories), informal economic activities, and everyday violence in and around Guatemala City. The neoliberal economic restructuring that has swept Latin America over the past three decades has reorganized global production chains, linking cheap industrial labor in places like Guatemala with U.S. and European consumers in new ways (Ong 1991). When the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) began promoting an export-led development approach in the 1970s, apparel production was one of the first export sectors introduced in many Asian and Latin American countries. Most clothing sold in the United States now travels a circuit: textiles produced in American, European, or Asian factories are imported to *maquiladoras* in tariff free zones in Latin America, the Caribbean, or other parts of Asia where a low-wage labor force cuts, assembles, finishes, and packages garments which are then exported to the United States for distribution and retail sale. The movement of cloth along this commodity chain has not only reorganized capital and labor relations on a global scale, but has also affected economic, social and spatial relations in the places where apparel production happens.

Export-led development is part of a larger neoliberal program in which communal lands are often privatized and agricultural markets opened to foreign imports, leading to massive job loss in domestic agriculture and patterns of rural dislocation and transnational migration. Economic restructuring that began in Guatemala in the 1980s has resulted in declining formal sector employment, both public and private, leaving the vast majority of Guatemalans engaged in informal sector activities, including piracy. At the same time, under pressure from the World Bank and IMF the Guatemalan state has reduced social service expenditures and lifted price controls on basic necessities. These changes have left many Guatemalans vulnerable to poverty and chronic unemployment, health insecurities, crime and violence (Chase-Dunn 2000; Green 2003).

It is in this context of broad-scale restructuring that the *maquila* boom took place in Guatemala. State-sponsored violence diminished in the 1980s; democratic reforms promised relative peace and stability. Though some factories had opened earlier, it was during this transitional period that significant numbers of foreign investors came to view Guatemala, with its low wages, low rates of unionization, and lax regulatory structures, as a favorable environment for industrial production. *Maquila* expansion, fueled mainly by U.S. and South Korean capital, was rapid (Petersen 1992). The number of factories nearly doubled between 1992 and 1996. By the mid-1990s, 130,000 Guatemalans were employed in almost 500 textile and garment factories; 99 percent

of their products were exported to the United States (Traub-Werner and Cravey 2002). By 2005, Mexican and Central American *maquiladoras* supplied nearly twenty percent of all apparel sold in U.S. stores (Abernathy et al. 2005).³

Most *maquiladoras* opened either on the outskirts of Guatemala City or along the initial 50 or so kilometers of the Pan-American Highway as it stretches westward into the highlands. The highway was the preferred location for manufacturers seeking ready access to urban infrastructure (e.g., shipping and transportation) and vast labor pools in the central highlands. Many highland residents affected by structural adjustment policies migrate to the capital and surrounding towns in search of factory employment (Goldín 2001) despite the notoriously poor working conditions and labor abuses common to *maquiladoras* (Ross 1997).⁴

Along the highway, the movement of migrant women and men into newly industrialized towns influences material and symbolic relationships between rural and urban areas. In a study of *maquila* labor in Guatemala, Liliana Goldín (2001) emphasizes that the shift to factory employment in the central highlands reshapes family- and community-level social dynamics. One important change is the "pseudo-urbanization of rural life" (Goldín 2001:36). In addition to the incipient proletarianization of youth working in the *maquila* sector, Goldín records a sentiment among highland townspeople that the benefits and ills of city life have accompanied the construction of *maquiladoras* along the highway. When migrant laborers move to centers of garment production, locals complain about drunken workers and rising crime. Gangs are commonly associated with Guatemala City and represent the "worst of urban life" coming to a small town (Goldín 2001:37). Townspeople attribute emergent security issues to urbanization rather than to broad-scale processes of dislocation and industrialization. A spatial imaginary that associates danger with urban life provides a cultural lens through which structural adjustment is interpreted as moral decline and community instability.

Apparel Production in Tecpán

It is commonly assumed that Maya men and women are employed in apparel production only as low-wage laborers in *maquiladoras* or purveyors of finely woven traditional garments. This myth overlooks the world of indigenous apparel entrepreneurs who manufacture and sell T-shirts, pants, jackets, and sweaters for domestic consumption. Tecpán is a hub in Guatemala's domestic apparel industry. An hour's drive from Guatemala City on the Pan-American Highway, just beyond the *maquiladoras*, Tecpán is a short distance from highland markets and urban shopping centers. A handful of indigenous families, part of the town's K'aqchikel Maya majority, began manufacturing and selling nontraditional clothing on the domestic market in the 1960s. A decade later, Guatemala's internal armed conflict was intensifying in the rural highlands. The apparel industry in Tecpán suffered during this time, with many entrepreneurs and community leaders fleeing to the capital or "disappearing" (Fischer and Hendrickson 2002). Not until the peace process began in the late 1980s did the local apparel industry take off, part of a larger context of Maya resurgence in the post-conflict period (Warren 1998).

Apparel production contributes significantly to Tecpán's economy. According to local estimates, there are about 500 Maya-owned garment factories and workshops in and around Tecpán. Most consist of a few knitting and sewing machines housed in a spare room of the owner's home. The largest producers own high-capacity machines and employ dozens of workers. They manufacture stylish clothing to sell in regional marketplaces and to national distributors. Local residents are proud of the booming industry. They commonly brag about how tecpanecos clothe the rest of the country and attribute the town's relative economic strength to the industry. The growth of apparel manufacturing has led to the establishment of a slew of textile and thread suppliers around town as well as machinery importers and embroidery and screen-printing shops. Nearly every family has a connection to the industry in some respect. A gendered division of labor positions male heads of households as factory owners and salespeople, while young men from rural hamlets are often employed as machinery operators. Young women are more often employed at sewing machines or in handwork, finishing, and packaging. Entire families are sometimes employed in the workshops, and the industry has grown largely through apprenticeship and kinship connections.⁵

Although the number of garment workshops continues to grow, demand for domestically manufactured clothing may be waning. Maya producers in Tecpán complain that the Guatemalan state, as in many developing countries, courts foreign capital and puts its own citizens at a competitive disadvantage. Some fear that CAFTA, which expanded and made permanent duty free measures in the agriculture, manufacturing, and textile and apparel sectors, locks in maquiladoras' dominance of the apparel export market and threatens the local labor pool. Alberto Ixim, a Maya man who began manufacturing children's knitwear in the 1980s, has these concerns. Don Alberto has done rather well in this business. He sells bulk quantities of sweaters, children's knitwear, and blankets in the highland markets to several distributors who comprise his customer base. Don Alberto is increasingly concerned that maquiladoras pose a threat to Tecpán's industry. His worries have a lot to do with the encroachment of maquiladoras up the Pan-American Highway. "If they move closer to Tecpán – the closest one right now is about 30 kilometers away – they will take employees from us. Everyone hears how they exploit workers, but they also give workers more benefits." As young people in Tecpán observe, maquiladoras promise year-round employment, guaranteed benefits, and steady cash flow, enticements not generally available to workers in the local apparel industry.

Don Alberto has also noticed a rise in "grey market" clothing available in the highland markets he visits once per week to sell his products. "You see a lot of shirts that are made in the maquiladoras, and they sell for 12–15 *quetzales* [about \$2] instead of 20 or 30 like the same clothes made here." These items are usually overruns or imperfect stock sold at a fraction of the retail price (McDonald and Roberts 1994). Don Alberto has seen the influx of these goods lower prices for him and his neighbors. Producers also frequently complain about foreign-owned retail chains gaining market strength in the highland region. The stores, they claim, sell

imported clothing at prices lower than Tecpán's producers can sustain. In 2005, for instance, Wal-Mart acquired controlling interest in the largest retail holdings corporation in Central America. The multinational giant currently has 145 retail outlets in Guatemala, including a *Dispensa Familiar* in Tecpán that sells groceries, clothing, and other consumer goods, just a block from the town center where the outdoor municipal market has served as a regional commercial hub for centuries (Fischer and Hendrickson 2002).

Don Alberto, like other producers in Tecpán, also worries that CAFTA could mean the end of brand piracy, a staple of the domestic market. Manufacturers themselves report that as much as 80 percent of apparel production in and around Tecpán involves the use of pirated brands like Nike, Lacoste, Disney, and Abercrombie & Fitch. Manufacturers say that pirated logos, labels, and tags are easy to obtain. Local embroidery shops reproduce the most popular labels with varying degrees of verisimilitude. Many producers travel to markets or other factories in Totonicapán, Sacatepequez, or Guatemala City to purchase copied tags and labels in bulk. They can sometimes participate in grey market exchanges by purchasing tags, size stickers, and embroidered logos that have been smuggled out of maquiladoras. Still, the variable quality of the clothing and logo reproductions and the low prices at which these garments are sold means that brand piracy in Tecpán remains distinct from a "counterfeit" market, in which consumers may be convinced that they are buying an item whose manufacture has been authorized by the trademark holder (Phau et al. 2001:46–47).

The piracy market has been a boon to Tecpán's apparel manufacturers, as Guatemalan consumers and even tourists scramble to purchase knock-offs.⁶ Producers face new challenges as the globalization of markets threatens informal, pirated production. Processes of liberalization that shifted industrialized apparel production away from U.S. and European factories have made international intellectual property rights (IPR) protections a crucial mechanism for ensuring profitability in these regions (Correa 2000). The Guatemalan government has overhauled its IPR protections and developed new enforcement mechanisms in order to comply with international trade agreements.⁷ In the official view, pirates now belong to the criminal underside of the international economy, trading on the symbolic capital associated with global brands without returning profits to those who hold the rights.

Modern Pirates and the Politics of Blame

In the Guatemalan media, *piratas* [pirates] who hawk unauthorized reproductions of copyright- and trademark-protected materials are portrayed as law-breakers – "mercenaries of illegality," as one national newspaper calls them (Menocal 2005). They are viewed as participants in an underground market that threatens the ostensibly more legitimate business interests of multinational corporations, the integrity of Guatemala's economy, and the state's modernist aspirations. Pirates who are fully integrated into the contemporary global economy and work with the latest technologies of mass reproduction and circulation are said to be antithetical to Guatemala's legitimate participation in the international community, as defined according to an

official globalized view of economic development and progress (see Portes and Schauffler 2004). The *Prensa Libre*, one of the country's major dailies, writes, "They don't need to decipher maps or plunder ships to find the treasure that makes them millionaires. We are talking about the modern pirates . . . who cost the Guatemalan state millions in lost taxes" (Menocal 2005).

Official, media, and popular explanations for rising levels of violence and insecurity in Guatemala often blame youthful delinquents, gangs, and organized crime, a discursive process which conflates structural problems having to do with neoliberal reforms and democratic shortcomings with the cultural problems of unsavory social figures (Benson et al. 2008). The social and spatial proximity of street vendors hawking pirated goods in Guatemala City to street crime (e.g., pick-pocketing, mugging and assault) leads to piracy being lumped into a generalized portrait of violence as an intractable part of urban life. The political effect of a framing that defines piracy as opportunistic and criminal is to detract attention from state policies that contribute to rising levels of economic insecurity that underpin and sustain the market in cheap, pirated goods. The state and military have flexed their muscles through sporadic, well-reported crackdowns on piracy, confiscating the illegal compact discs, DVDs, and name-brand clothing sold in Guatemala City streets (Mauricio Martínez 2004). According to several vendors, the police resell these pirated goods for a profit.

National discourses regarding piracy that generally lump this practice together with delinquency and criminality overlook the everyday context in which piracy production occurs. Open sales of apparel featuring pirated brands as well as pirated software, CDs, and DVDs in municipal markets and city streets contradict the notion that piracy is an underground practice that the state must somehow root out. Many people who own apparel workshops in Tecpán regard the selection of brand names and logos as an important part of the design and marketing process. There is little discourse regarding the legality of copying trademark-protected brands except among a certain class of producers, ordinarily those who do not participate in the piracy market. Apparel producers capture more than a brand name when they sew a global logo onto a sweater. Brands are powerful social symbols and organizing structures of modernity (Miller 1997). The dominant meanings and values associated with fashion brands are the outcome of what Roland Barthes (1990) calls "the fashion system," constituted in the continual flow of recognizable styles and their constituent parts, including brand names, across producers and consumers.⁸

Brand pirates in Tecpán are thus pirates of modernity in two senses. They tactically poach logos to capture a bundle of values having to do with "fashion," participating in a form of signification that some have characterized as a "hallmark of the late modern" era (Coombe 1993:413). In this sense, they pirate modernity itself. Modernity is not simply an empirical, historical condition, but, more broadly, a set of attitudes and expectations that privilege what is perceived to be Western or cosmopolitan, as well as those rhetorics of progress that accompany the development of a world economic system (Appadurai 1996). Producers in Tecpán take a measure of pride in their knowledge of the

latest fashion trends. One producer commented, "The popular brands sell fast and that is the only way to earn a living. Last year, it was Tommy Hilfiger, Winnie the Pooh, and Spiderman. Every child wanted Spiderman on his shirt, his jacket, his backpack. This year, it's Lacoste. If I don't keep up with what they want, then I can't do good business." But modernity can also be fruitfully understood in terms of the highly rationalized institutional arrangements and market logics that organize contemporary social and economic networks (Giddens 1990). In this sense, pirates are caught in a thoroughly modern predicament. They are relegated to the wrong side of international legal and trade agreements that globalize a narrow understanding of property rights, beneficially used by corporations in conjunction with nation-states to determine who can legitimately produce fashion, who can consume it, and who cannot. Pirates are caught between being subjects of modernity from the perspective of globalizing legal and trade regimes and being agents of modernity in the local, entrepreneurial context.

Local Responses to Industry Changes

In addition to protecting corporate investment and promoting economic development, trademark law is hailed by proponents as a mechanism for establishing consumer rights and norms against lying and deception (Bone 2004). Arguments in favor of the institutionalization and expansion of this legal doctrine are often couched in terms of the spread of democracy, progress and prosperity (Bettig 1996), a deep entanglement of Western values with legal and economic principles. These values shape debates over trademark protections in international arenas and also pervade local settings where they are sometimes embraced and sometimes contested by those with something at stake in their application.

In Tecpán, garment manufacturers have responded in a variety of ways to the criminalization of piracy and market pressures of trade liberalization. For many producers, piracy remains a routine part of the manufacturing and marketing process. Others depart from local norms of piracy and have adopted new practices and strategies. Some manufacturers have created their own brands, for instance, using indigenous symbols and signs from Classic Maya hieroglyphs to terms from their native Kaqchikel. This entrepreneurial strategy of market differentiation builds on the revitalization of indigenous identity in Guatemala's post-conflict context. The Pérez family, for example, runs a workshop that produces sweaters sold in boutiques and retail chains in Guatemala City. The operation is overseen by two brothers. Their father was an early purveyor of sweater production in the 1970s. Their workshop houses four knitting machines and a few sewing machines. The Pérez family uses the Kaqchikel term for woven textile, *kem*, on the tags sewn into each sweater. For this family and other producers, Maya identity has become an authorized and objectified economic strategy, a way to capitalize on what differentiates indigenous apparel manufacturers from maquiladoras and foreign-based firms, as well as neighbors who engage in piracy (Thomas 2006).

New economic strategies of unique branding have been accompanied by the rise of an actively demarcated moral divide between brand pirates and those who use their

own brands. One of the Pérez brothers asked, "What if someone started using our brand [Kem] to sell their clothes?" He continued, "It wouldn't be fair. It would be a crime." He adopts the language of trademark protectionism and sees local, perhaps neighboring producers as a threat to brand sovereignty. Producers like him often view themselves as morally superior because they obey the law, engage in official regulatory channels, and do not pirate. I asked another producer who manufactures children's clothing why he has registered his factory with the state tax administration and adopted the family name, Jiatz, as a brand. He replied: "Most people do not know that piracy is illegal, but some know and just don't care." As we talked in the cutting and assembly room of his workshop, his wife and two young men from neighboring hamlets speedily stitched together the front and back sections of toddler-sized pants. He continued, "We put our own name on our clothing. Some people think that their garments will sell faster if there is a cartoon, maybe Mickey Mouse or Spiderman, on the tag. For us, we depend on higher quality to keep our customers." He then added, "There is also the ethical question. It would be a crime to use someone else's brand. It's a question of what is right and wrong."

Reflexive moral sensibilities regarding piracy, linked to localized judgments about competitors, are crucial components of the process by which economic and legal reforms are taking root in this corner of the apparel industry. The integration of IPR law into the legislative codes of developing nations is characterized by legal scholars and economists as a process of "harmonization" (Blakely 2000). Anthropologists have shown, however, that the movement of legal frameworks across borders more often involves a difficult and unpredictable process of translation and transformation. Intellectual property rights are "never fully successful in being everywhere the same" (Tsing 2004:10) because of the productive frictions that attend to movement across disparate political and cultural contexts (Hirsch and Strathern 2004; Vann 2006). In Guatemala, it is not simply the case that people are following or ignoring trademark laws as they are implemented. Rather, the law becomes a charged social and cultural terrain where people construct moral positions and craft strategies of market differentiation, exclusion, and expansion.

Spatial Imaginaries, Urban Violence, and Market Connections

The ethical debates taking shape around piracy highlight how trademark law and associated values influence moral sensibilities and business practices in Tecpán's apparel industry. What is covered over in claims about pirates who "just don't care" about piracy's illegality, as the children's clothing manufacturer put it, is the extent to which market and class structures determine whether or not one has access to alternative marketing strategies and emergent market opportunities. The risks and opportunities associated with free trade, urban space, and the criminalization of piracy are unevenly distributed among Tecpán's manufacturers.

From the earliest days of garment production in Tecpán, the capital city has been an important trading center. As with many other families, Don Alberto's parents got

their start in the apparel trade by selling baby clothes in Guatemala City markets. They bought a knitting machine in the early 1970s and made hats and blankets at their home in Xenimajuyu', a small hamlet outside Tecpán. Alberto's father would leave the village late at night in order to arrive early in Guatemala City on market days. Alberto's mother, Doña Eugenia, explained, "It was much safer back then. There were not as many cars on the roads and we didn't fear robbers. Not like today. My husband would walk up and down the path from Xenimajuyu' to Tecpán. He would carry the hats and blankets in a bag. Then, he would ride to Guatemala City to sell to *mayoristas* [wholesalers] and some of the hats would go to El Salvador." Her eyes light up when she talks about the little hats she made on their rusty machine ending up in another country. "There was no market for baby clothes around here back then because everyone made their own. But in El Salvador, they didn't make these things so we could always sell what we made." At that time, the capital served as an international trading post for the Central American market. In many such stories, Guatemala City is remembered as a vibrant center of economic life and a gateway to distant places.

Things have certainly changed, as Eugenia points out. The distinction she makes between the days when her husband did not fear walking the dark streets of Tecpán or riding into the capital in the twilight hours and the level of violence today is striking, perhaps even surprising, when one considers the rest of her story. In 1982, at the height of the genocide, Alberto's father was killed not far from their rural home. His body was later discovered in the woods outside Xenimajuyu'. Eugenia moved her family into Tecpán's semiurban core and eventually built a small house where she continued to make children's clothing and sell in Guatemala City to support her family. Alberto's father was one among many in the region to meet this fate, most at the hands of soldiers, state-sponsored death squads, and armed civil patrols acting on government orders (CEH 1999). Fear and threat are not something new for Eugenia and her family; what has changed are the spatial coordinates of violence. During the largely rural conflict, urban spaces provided something of a refuge for many Maya people. The population of Guatemala City nearly doubled from 1973 to 1987, a period that includes the worst years of the conflict (CITGUA 1991). In Eugenia's talk of the new forms of violence that threaten travelers along the Pan-American Highway and in the capital city streets, it is as if the promises of the city, and of the 1996 Peace Accords, had failed miserably. Rather than steady improvement in the general welfare and security of the population, the post-conflict era has seen the rise of new forms of violence that are perhaps more amorphous if no less threatening (see Fischer and Benson 2006). Eugenia's story reveals a spatial ordering of insecurity that now associates the capital city and even Tecpán's urbanizing core with danger and rural space with safety and security.

Others in Tecpán share Eugenia's fears about the city. A number of workshop owners refuse to sell in Guatemala City because of the level of crime and violence. Producers who do not own their own vehicle depend on public transportation to access markets, and public buses are often hijacked and robbed. "It's just not worth it," I heard from

one workshop owner who makes and sells women's sweaters. "If you don't have your own car, it's not worth it to ride the bus into the capital. Everything will be stolen from you and you can't do anything about it." Another producer said, "Even if you make it to *La Terminal* with your packages, you might get attacked in the street. It's not safe." Perhaps playing up the difficulties of his job as a small-scale manufacturer, this producer nonetheless echoes the sentiments expressed to me by many others. Producers commonly say they prefer to sell to wholesalers in highland market towns where the bus rides are safer even if one has to worry about hairpin turns and brake failure on the steep hillsides.

The rising level of crime and danger in the capital city is certainly real. Apparel producers in Tecpán have experienced bus robberies and witnessed violence in urban markets. At the same time, stories and rumors passed among workshop owners and employees resonate with sensationalized media reports that propagate a "climate of fear" (Godoy 2006). National discourses in which urban life is portrayed as chaotic, crime-ridden and threatening serve the immediate interests of both media organizations relying on fear and gore to boost circulation figures and politicians using scare tactics to garner votes for their "total security" platforms (common in the 2007 national election), which advocate an iron fist solution to crime and violence (Thomas and Benson 2008). The visions of urban space promoted in such discourses have come to form a hegemonic spatial imaginary in contemporary Guatemala. The concept of spatial imaginaries has been fruitfully employed by anthropologists to understand how spatialized categories of belonging like the "nation" matter for the constitution of identity politics and anti-immigrant sentiments (Anderson and Taylor 2005). Writing about spatial imaginaries in Australia, for example, Hage (2000) explores how racist ideologies of exclusion and marginalization, as well as multicultural discourses of "tolerance," rely upon a spatial logic whereby immigration issues are framed as matters of national and community-level territorial defense. In Guatemala, conservative ideologies of neoliberal development and antidemocratic, militarized security are justified in terms of a spatial logic that associates "the city" with crime bosses, gangs, drug-traffickers and other blameworthy individuals who are said to be the root of post-conflict economic and social problems.

The stories of urban violence that circulate among apparel producers share this same spatial imaginary even though producers themselves are often scapegoated as pirates in media stories and official reports. Some apparel producers, however, also talk about the city in terms of business opportunities. What separates those who see market potential in the capital and those who see only danger is often a matter of class position. Producers who do not participate in piracy generally have entrepreneurial relationships with state institutions. They are registered with the state tax administration and use receipts for purchasing and sales transactions, keep careful financial records, and pay business taxes. The incorporation and formalization process requires knowledge of bureaucratic procedures and some degree of literacy. Producers who formalize their operations have generally benefited from educational opportunities, often in the capital city, that prepared

them for formal market dealings. This is not an option for most Maya producers, who generally have low levels of education.

The Pérez family and about 20 other producers who have formal operations have responded to trade liberalization and the criminalization of piracy by organizing into a marketing association. They view this association as a necessary step toward expanding their reach in the domestic market and preparing the way for export contracting. The group formed as a direct response to Guatemala's entrance into CAFTA. In 2006, when the trade agreement was implemented, several producers paid to attend a series of seminars in Guatemala City on CAFTA's implications for the textile and apparel industries. They met with officials from Guatemala's export promotion agency (a public-private partnership) who walked them through the rules and regulations for exporting apparel to the United States and other foreign markets. The Pérez brothers and their colleagues returned from these meetings with the idea for a marketing association through which several dozen producers could collectively secure an export contract.

The question of who is invited to participate in this marketing opportunity and who gets excluded is a point of contention among manufacturers in Tecpán. Association organizers tend to disparage the informality and piracy that dominate the local apparel industry. They envision a cooperative endeavor in which only formal, legal producers will be allowed to participate, and comment that the people who traffic in piracy are unprofessional and not suited to the new demands of the free trade environment. Again echoing the media reports cited above, this small group of entrepreneurs characterizes pirates as shady characters who produce low quality goods and traffic in informal markets. Among those outside the group, talk frequently turns to the big plans and big money that the association's members stand to make. From the outside, the association itself looks somewhat shady – a small group of entrepreneurial spirits bent on following new laws and aligning themselves with government agencies.

The association members are not the only producers who benefit from urban connections. With more than 20 percent of the Guatemalan population living in the capital region, Guatemala City remains a center of commercial life. Producers who have the safety of their own automobiles and the machinery and labor to produce at sufficient quantities explained to me that working with distributors and retailers in Guatemala City is more lucrative than selling to wholesalers in the highland markets. Some have secured regular contracts with retail stores to produce branded clothing. Others have contracts with distributors who work out of office buildings set above the fray of piracy and crime. Unlike wholesalers in the highlands and street vendors in the capital, these distributors contract for specific quantities to be delivered on fixed dates. If a producer does not meet quality standards and contractual obligations, he may lose the business. But distributors in the city pay on delivery or in scheduled installments, whereas wholesalers in the rural marketplaces demand credit and pay only as the goods are sold. The latter arrangement can make it difficult for apparel manufacturers to keep cash on hand to buy production inputs, save money for capital improvements, or keep

employees on staff full time, especially during the rainy season (May to October) when sales are slower. As a result, those who sell in highland markets commonly face cash flow deficits, have to invest in employee recruitment and training with each new season, and sometimes depend on other sources of income to supplement their earnings from garment production.

For apparel producers struggling to make sense of post-conflict insecurities and survive market pressures, spatial imaginaries regarding rural and urban space “provide a seemingly orderly map for orienting oneself amidst the disorder of social life” (Guano 2004:72). Many apparel manufacturers in Tecpán have ceded urban space to thieves and gangs, refusing to participate in markets there because of perceived dangers. For others, including marketing association members and those who have formalized their businesses, urban space figures prominently in plans for entrepreneurial success. For those with sufficient economic and educational resources, access to automobiles, and business and official connections, the city takes shape both perceptually and practically as a somewhat exclusive entrepreneurial space, even if the threat of crime and violence still looms large. These class and market advantages, which permit some producers a different relationship to the city, are hidden from view when decisions about whether or not to participate in piracy and informal markets are couched in terms of moral integrity and a principled commitment to working through official (public and private) business channels. Such ethical stances allow well-positioned producers to distance themselves from the worlds of piracy and informality so often targeted in national discourse as sources of economic and social decline and insecurity. At the same time, media reports that essentialize piracy as a criminal trade cover over important differences such as access to capital and access to markets that structure apparel production on the ground.

Conclusion

Spatial imaginaries in Guatemala have historically linked urban space, ladinos, and modernity on the one hand and rural space, *indígenas*, and tradition on the other (Fischer and Brown 1996:10–11). Diane Nelson’s (1999) work on “Maya-hackers” documents how Maya cultural and political activists negotiate these binaries, which can be both empowering and belittling. Such binaries are the basis for claims about cultural continuity and ethnic identity, and yet also the source of prevailing stereotypes and patterns of discrimination (Fischer 1999; 2002). Nelson is interested in the hybrid cultural forms and social strategies that define how Maya actors engage with the state. Writing specifically about activists and public intellectuals, she says that Maya-hackers are “decoding and reprogramming such familiar binary oppositions as those between past and future, between being rooted in geography and being mobile, between being traditional as opposed to modern . . . between mountain shrines and mini-malls, and between unpaved roads and the information superhighway” (Nelson 1999:249–250).

I have sought here to extend the analysis of how such binaries are constituted, challenged, and reinscribed by emphasizing the distinctly spatial dimension of these divisions

in the context of neoliberal restructuring and legal reform. The daily production and marketing practices of tecpaneco apparel manufacturers challenge tidy dichotomies such as traditional/modern and rural/urban. Piracy producers traffic in powerful symbols of modernity in the form of global brands. Tecpán’s apparel industry is interwoven with Guatemala City’s public and private sectors, global trade, and international legal structures and fashion systems. Moreover, the informal economic sectors that proliferate in neoliberal cities disrupt commonly held expectations of modernity that link urban space with progressive social services and stable institutions (Lewinson 1998; Ferguson 1999). In Guatemala, the discursive pairing of urban space with informality, crime, and violence is now a powerful resource in its own right, appropriated in national media and political arenas and evident in emergent moral divisions between differently positioned apparel producers in Tecpán.

Notes

- 1 Between 2006 and 2008, I conducted ethnographic interviews with 25 workshop owners and employees and spent time in their businesses, homes, and in marketplaces. This research forms part of an ongoing investigation of the apparel industry in Guatemala’s central highlands.
- 2 Brand piracy is a public and generally accepted practice in Guatemala, and Tecpán is a well-known center of clothing production. Nonetheless, my research design takes into account potential legal, social, and economic threats to individual piracy producers. The names of piracy producers were not recorded during interviews, and names and identifying characteristics have been changed in this article to protect informants’ identities.
- 3 Despite the rapid expansion of the maquila sector in Guatemala in recent decades, factory employment is far from secure. In the late 1990s, nearly 100 maquiladoras closed and moved operations elsewhere (Goldín 2001).
- 4 The gendered dimensions of factory employment and labor abuses are well-documented. In Guatemala, between 70 and 80 percent of maquila workers are young girls and unmarried women (Goldín 2001).
- 5 A similar pattern of industry growth was reported in Omar Ortez’s (2004) study of the domestic apparel industry in the department of Totonicapán.
- 6 Guatemala ranks fifth in Latin America and first in Central America in sales of pirated goods (Menocal 2005).
- 7 These changes were principally mandated by the TRIPS Agreement, which Guatemala implemented in 2000. The legislative implementation of CAFTA in 2006 included additional IPR laws.
- 8 In my ongoing research, I am examining local cultural logics behind style choices and aesthetic preferences, building on the work of ethnographers who have usefully examined fashion in cultural context (see Hansen 2004).

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Industrial Anthropology in Argentina

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Abstract

This paper examines the history and practice of industrial anthropology in Argentina. The development of this subfield is discussed in the context of Argentina's recent history and research institutions.

Keywords: Argentina, industrial anthropology

Introduction

The anthropology of work has only recently become a research focus among Latin American scholars. The first

systematic studies of work by Latin American-based social scientists began in the 1960s; even then most such research was carried out by sociologists. However, work and workers have never been absent from ethnographic research in Argentina. Descriptions of work lives have often appeared in studies by political, medical, economic, and educational anthropologists. Although numerous anthropologists in Mexico and Brazil and other Latin American countries have been focusing specifically on work for some time now, Argentinean scholars were less active in this field until the 1980s. This article reviews the work that has been