

INTRODUCTION

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Anthropologists have long studied marketplaces and market transactions as arenas of economic and social behavior, engaging in debates about what defines a market as well as extending the concept to diverse social economic practices cross-culturally (Bohannon and Dalton 1962). Debates about markets in economic anthropology include the formalist versus substantivist debates of the 1960s (see Wilk and Cliggett 2007) and, more recently, conceptual divisions between formal and informal economies (Smith 1990). Globalization has only increased interest in the anthropological quest to understand the market as a concept and as a place.

As the four essays in this special issue illustrate, the market remains an important domain of ethnographic inquiry. Indeed, intra-disciplinary arguments haunt the essays in this issue. When formalist anthropologists (e.g., Cook 1966) accused substantivist anthropologists of not grasping basic economic principles and limiting their analytical perspectives through synchronic analyses, and when substantivists charged formalists of force-fitting cultural and social practices in Western economic categories and denying cultural specific forms of knowledge and meaning in order to make universalistic claims, both sides lost sight of how neither position precluded the other. Equally problematic are the debates around the concepts of formal and informal markets (Geertz 1963; Hart 1973; Smith 1989) that anthropologists today are challenging with empirically grounded ethnographic evidence (Lindell 2010; Tranberg-Hansen and Vaa 2004). The authors in this issue stimulate thinking about various kinds of markets in global contexts—who participates in them, what kinds of economic exchanges are present, and what kinds of social and political relations exist in economic processes that resist binary forms of reasoning and explanation.

The specters of Polanyi (1957) and Wallerstein (2004) are also present here as the authors present literal markets where livestock is bartered (Niger), markets where international goods are sold on the street by women in Bolivia, new markets for formerly domestic and gendered goods now considered part of national heritage and sold to elites and foreigners in Morocco, and markets in which wholesalers and supermarket buyers in Argentina negotiate terms of exchange based on knowledge. The contributors' ethnographic examples are not

limited to defining markets merely as places of commodity circulation or systems of exchange that link producers and consumers, nor do they reiterate the now common Polanyi mantra that economies are culturally and historically embedded. Instead, they offer examples that both fuse and challenge these perspectives by showing the ways in which power plays out in marketplace exchange as it does in political and social spheres. The authors explore shifting concepts of citizenship in relation to ethnic identity, changing labor regimes in relation to gender, dialectical relationships between community and economy, and the importance of social interactions and knowledge in both actual marketplaces and markets of goods. While there is differential access to commodities, mobility, and information in specific political economies, the subjects of these essays are clearly situated in a neoliberal political moment.

The essays congeal around the themes of marginality and the tension between different levels of market practice. Whether the markets are on-the-ground phenomena or virtual exchanges in the global stratosphere, they often are imagined as bounded and performative, able to transform people with a seeming independent agency. The authors of these essays, however, demystify the agency of the market and situate agency within the people who populate and mobilize them.

Each case study takes up the issue of marginality from a distinct perspective. In Isabel Scarborough's essay, the history of indigenous women's marginalization to Bolivia's nationhood affects the way their economic activities and concepts of identity are configured in the current politics of the market and of the State. Under an indigenized State and within the broader contexts of globalization, Cholas—the indigenous market women—are transforming how they sell indigeneity in the marketplace, as well as in the nation. According to Claire Nicholas, the marginalization of women's work in the Moroccan economy is changing due to NGOs, co-operatives, and enterprising women who are caught within an expanding global economy in which local, national, and international exchanges converge. Marie Greenough's article shows how the marginality of Niger to the world system has as much to do with how and where pastoralist Fulbe tend their herds as with how scholars conceptualize the global economy and world systems. The Fulbe are marginal in three senses: by location (their distance from economic and political centers of power), by virtue of the harsh natural environment in which they live, and by the very conceptual frameworks that anthropologists use to define their markets. By contrast, in Viteri and Arce's essay on the Buenos Aires Central Wholesale Market, the produce wholesalers find themselves being marginalized by the development of supermarkets with new economic practices and bases of knowledge and power. To counter this squeeze to the economic margins, wholesalers expand their social networks to acquire useful knowledge.

The authors not only describe horizontal exchanges, they also explore vertical movements of money, goods, knowledge, and social status. Markets and marketplace life, whether highly personal and political or impersonal and economic, can seem continuous and embedded in every social act. This makes positing a scale of complexity from barter to monetized exchange to fluid financial capital within a Polyanian framework a pitfall the authors avoid (Maurer 2005). At the same time, while Wallerstein (2004) may be correct in his assertion that there are merely different political-economic systems, the authors in this issue resist fitting their cases into a world systems model, challenging the relation of center to periphery and configurations of power from the local to the global.

In Scarborough's essay, indigeneity is defined through cultural and economic practices in the market. She adds to Seligmann's (2001) research on indigenous vendors in the Peruvian Andes by expanding an understanding of markets, not merely as places designated as indigenous, but as places in which indigeneity is an entrepreneurial strategy used to improve one's citizenship. She builds on the research of Kapchan (1996) and of Little (2004) on the ethnic and gendered identities in economic and political contexts, and joins a growing anthropological literature that explores how globalization changes ethnic groups and indigenous peoples who reconceptualize themselves in terms of commodification and marketing (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; DeHart 2010). Scarborough's demonstrates how the enterprising young Chola women are expanding social networks and changing their class status without shedding their ethnicities or their mothers' marketplace businesses. She delineates how the new, educated market women—armed with the acumen of their market mothers as well as academic degrees—transform the relation of local to global markets, as well as national politics. While they work in the "informal economy," their ties with government officials and their savvy in using identity politics to their economic advantage make them important entrepreneurs, moving goods and transforming ethnic, class, and gender relations. Nonetheless, in an interesting twist, these Cholas are economically powerful largely because of neoliberal policies yet they are supporters of the opposition socialist party, mainly because of their ethnicity. In the marketplace and in Bolivian politics, indigeneity shifts valences from an ethnic to a political category, the Cholas aligning themselves with their identities as indigenous rather than as market women or entrepreneurs tout court. While in other contexts, economic advancement may lead to a kind of class homogenization, in this case, identity politics takes a more important role as the Cholas distinguish themselves not only economically but also politically. Despite this, their attempts to formalize trade with other nations were foiled, as the transnational flow of goods remains in the hands of a few economic and non-indigenous elite.

These market entrepreneurs have university degrees and “organic” knowledge gained from their mothers, but no longer dress like them. They reclaim indigenous market knowledge as they reclaim their ethnic heritage. Indeed this knowledge has positive affect, whereas school book learning is “cold.”

With Moroccan embroidery, Nicholas takes a close look at commodification of women’s labor and the ways in which this affects gendered concepts of identity. In contrast to Scarborough, she focuses on the ways in which womanhood is embedded in embroidery work, showing that in the movement to market exchange Moroccan women become new kinds of workers who redefine what it means to be a woman. She draws attention to how changing labor practices and perceptions of work articulate with Moroccan notions of womanhood through examining the choices of two female embroiderers with regards to work and marriage. Building on Crawford (2008) and Newcomb’s (2008) work, Nicholas demonstrates how Moroccan women mediate religious practices, traditional cultural concepts of womanhood, and the demands of global tourism. She shows how market economies are transforming Moroccan gender concepts (Kapchan 1996), and demonstrates how difficult these changes can be. She provides a clear example of how Moroccan women’s embroidery labor differs from Latin American indigenous women’s artisanal work (Femenías 2004; Little 2004) as it fits within household, community, and global economies. The women’s dilemmas provide striking contrasts to the economic autonomy of Chola and Fulbe women, as described by Scarborough and Greenough in this issue.

Nicholas calls attention to the close relation between market skills and gender roles that lead to different conclusions from those described by Fernandez-Kelly (1983) and Ong (1987). Embroidery is still viewed as a domestic skill, and less as skilled labor, and thus remains on the border between household and formal economies. The money earned from embroidery goes not only to buy luxury items (which marks it as a traditional pastime rather than an economic necessity) but also to more capital-intensive uses like buying land. In contrast to many other societies (Moore 1988), the income of married women in Morocco often belongs to them and is used for them, rather than as contributions to the family household. Nicholas also shows how economic markets are linked to marriage markets. Women, too, are commodities, but gender relations are transforming, especially because women’s incomes are needed in the emerging nuclear family. Perhaps it is not only the embroidery market that is changing, but the marriage market as well.

Greenough elucidates how the pastoralist Fulbe economies of bartering connect to capitalist exchanges in national and global networks. Smallstock marketing and its transformation into exchanges for imported goods through

brokers and traders illustrate these global connections and show how smallstock markets can be pathways to economic development. This is an aspect of political engagement that deserves to be recognized, since the consequences of intervention are always ethically fraught, albeit worthy.

Fulbe livestock markets are an excellent example of Gudeman's (2001) argument that market and community are two transactional and dialectical domains. In this case, smallstock (sheep and goats) bridges these domains and travels between them. As Greenough clearly demonstrates, livestock exchanges in pastoralist societies are part of both conceptual frameworks, providing a means to acquire and accumulate capital, and a social glue that links kin and community members to each other. Drawing on Tsing's (2005) research that traces global connections in social and political contexts, she shows how smallstock bridge Gudeman's (2001) horizontal market and community exchange domains, and are tied to capital's vertical organization, contributing to socio-economic mobilization. In short, Fulbe household economies are part of global economies and part of every economy between these poles, linking individuals, kin, and community members to cash, loans, governmental support, and social and political networks.

Importantly, Greenough provides ethnographic evidence that pastoralist societies, such as the Fulbe, are located well within the global economic systems (*pace* Wallerstein 2004), and argues that pastoralists are capitalists par excellence who work the natural environment in ways world systems theorists inadequately consider. She illustrates how the natural environment is a substantial variable that figures into real economic calculations of individuals and how households and socio-cultural phenomena are connected to economic transformations.

Viteri and Arce's article on the Buenos Aires wholesale market explores the kinds of knowledge embedded in the exchanges between supermarket clients and wholesalers. Supermarket procurement buyers go directly to growers in order to save money and maximize profits, but this is at the expense of produce wholesalers. The shifting role of the middleperson's importance with contemporary market exchange systems and their creative responses to these changes pose challenges to earlier ethnographic research on marketplaces (Clark 1994), market systems (Smith 1976), and middlepersons (Mintz 1957). The authors illustrate the importance of knowledge, in combination with social networks, to individuals' livelihoods.

Since the modern supermarket can appear to be a hegemonic economic entity that has gone global with the advent of neoliberal policies, Viteri and Arce provide an example of how forms of economic power can be acquired by wholesalers to gain economic and social knowledge. These insights build on a growing ethnographic literature that questions non-traditional export crop

development, free trade agreements between stronger and weaker nations, and neoliberal policies (2006).

The authors of this special issue on markets pay close attention to particular economic practices as they are situated within social and political processes, both local and global. All use the concept and context of the local market as a way to critique conceptualizations of global market exchange and neoliberal policies.

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