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Pioneer Entrepreneurs:
Legal Capital and Social Network Changes in a First Generation Mexican Community

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

by

Leah Muse-Orlinoff

Committee in charge:

Professor David S. FitzGerald, Chair
Professor Ákos Róna-Tas
Professor John D. Skrentny
Professor Wayne A. Cornelius
Professor James E. Rauch

2014

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The Dissertation of Leah Muse-Orlinoff is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2014

Dedication

To MariCarmen, sine qui non.

Table of Contents

Signature Page iii

Dedication iv

Table of Contents v

List of Figures x

List of Tables xi

Acknowledgments xii

Vita xvi

Abstract xix

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Overview of Theory and Findings 2

Chapter Overview 5

Networks in Classical Sociological Theory 6

Relationships in Economic Sociology: Embeddedness and Social Capital 8

International Migration, Economic Sociology, and Social Networks 9

Expanding the Canon on Mexican Migrant Entrepreneurship 11

Yucatecan Communities in the United States and Mexico 13

Yucatecans are not "la Raza" 14

Maya as an ethnic and linguistic category 15

My Field Sites 20

The Sending Community: Oxkutzcab, Yucatán, Mexico 20

San Francisco as a migrant-receiving city 22

San Francisco as a Sassenian Global City 24

Data and Methods 29

Collecting Network Data 32

The “Life-Cycle” of International Migration and Settlement 35

The Scale and Scope of Yucatecan Migrant Entrepreneurs’ Businesses 35

Project Overview 36

Chapter 2: Social Networks and the Study of International Migration 42

Introduction 42

The Sociological Roots of Social Network Analysis 44
Defining Migrant Networks 49
Migrant Networks As Opportunities for Social Network Analysis 51
Migrant Networks and Flows of People 52
Migrant Networks and Flows of Money 56
Migrant Networks and the Flows of Information 59
Social Network Analysis 60
Proposals for Merging Migrant Networks and Social Network Analysis 62
Key Findings about Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Business Networks 65
My approach to studying migrant entrepreneurs' business networks 68
Chapter 3: The Role of Yucatecans' Relationships in International Migration 70
Introduction 70
Yucatecan Migration to the United States 72
Delays to International Migration from the Yucatán Peninsula 74
Yucatecan migration to San Francisco, 1960-1990 75
Limited Participation in the Bracero Program 76
The Second Wave of Yucatecan Migration: Post-Bracero, Pre-IRCA 77
Yucatecan Mass-Migration to San Francisco, 1990 - 2010 79
Case: Bernardo 81
Case: Miguel Suizo 83
Case: Juan 86
Case: Dalia Cauich 89
Discussion 92
Chapter 4: Network Diversification in a Constrained Labor Market 94
Introduction 94
International migration creates geographically concentrated social networks of migrants in receiving communities. 95
Homogeneous Relationships in an Ethnically Diverse Receiving Community 99
The Human Capital of Yucatecan Migrants in San Francisco 100
Labor market incorporation happens through migrants' social networks 101
Case: Paco's Mexican Kitchen as the Gateway to Restaurant Work 102
Case: Salvador, "El Chaparro" 103

Labor Market Incorporation through co-ethnic networks 107
Other cases of labor market incorporation through Yucatecans' co-ethnic social ties 108
Yucatecans hire their paisanos 109
Delayed Network Effects 111
Ethnic replacement 112
Labor Market Incorporation Diversifies Social Networks But Within Limits 113
Diversification of social networks through labor market incorporation 114
The limits of immigrant labor market incorporation: Occupational segregation and limits on upward mobility 115
Acquisition of Technical Skills Contributes to Occupational Segregation 116
Discussion and Conclusion 122
Chapter 5: Social Capital and Social Networks 124
Why are migrants' social networks efficient at connecting resource seekers with resources? 125
The rational actor explanation 125
The family cohesion explanation 126
The ethnic solidarity explanation 127
The structure of migrant networks facilitates the flow of resources within them 128
Settlement in the United States Diversifies Migrants' Network Composition 129
Network Density 134
Social Capital 136
Defining Social Capital 137
The individual and group-level components of social capital 139
Individual Social Capital 142
Structural Social Capital 143
Aggregated Social Capital 143
Aggregated Social Capital + Structural Social Capital = Network Topography 144
Network Topography in the Yucatecan Community 145
Different kinds of network ties yield different forms of social capital 147
Migrants' networks are characterized by a high proportion of multiplex ties 148
Brokerage and Structural Holes 149
Seeking out Opportunities for Brokerage 151
Different kinds of relationships yield different kinds of social capital 152

Chapter 6: Why Do Yucatecan Immigrants Become Entrepreneurs? 157
Introduction 157
The sociology of entrepreneurship 159
The problematic dichotomy of need-driven and opportunity-driven entrepreneurialism 161
Case: Dalia Cauich and the transition from cocina clandestina to El Príncipe 163
Entrepreneurialism is a vocation, but Yucatecan entrepreneurs give other people credit for the original idea 166
Case: Julian Blas, The Yucatecan Tequila Revolutionary 168
Case: Benicio 170
Business development is the "result" of someone else's suggestion 173
Monetization of care-taking as a first step to entrepreneurship 175
Conclusion 178
Chapter 7: Relationships and Business-Building Among Pioneer Entrepreneurs 180
Introduction 180
The sociology of immigrant entrepreneurship 181
Resource mobilization benefits from searching outside the co-ethnic network 185
Case: Agustín P. and Grupo Mesoamericano 185
Case: El Príncipe's Fraud, Debt, and Foreign Supporters 196
Case: La Cocina and the three lives of Restaurante Tulum 204
Case: Friendship, Fictive Kinship, and Los Paisanos 214
When ties fail 223
Discussion 224
Chapter 8: Social Networks, the Informal Economy, and Entrepreneurs' Use of Illicit Capital 230
Introduction 230
The Yucatecan Informal Economy and the Illicit Economy 231
Cocinas clandestinas 232
Transportistas 240
Legal status and economic position 251
Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Illicit Capital 252
Economic Position and Illicit Capital 258
Conclusion 259
Chapter 9: Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurship, Social Networks, and Legal Capital 261

Social Networks and the Immigration/Settlement Life-Cycle 261
Social Networks and and Immigrant Entrepreneurship 263
Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurs in a Sassenian Global City 265
Optimistic implications 265
Less optimistic implications 266
Returned Migrant Entrepreneurs 267
Legal Capital 268
The value and vulnerability of high network topography 277
Multiplexity 279
Conclusion 281
Theoretical Contributions 281
Areas of future research 282
Bibliography 285

List of Figures

Figure 5.1: "Ideal type" network of US-based relationships of recently arrived Yucatecan migrant in San Francisco..…………………………………………….…..... 131

Figure 5.2: "Ideal type" network of US-based relationships of settled Yucatecan migrant in San Francisco…………………………………………………………..…... 133

Figure 5.3: Two Dimensions of Relationships: Similarity and Intensity………………. 154

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Network transformations of pioneer entrepreneurs from a first-generation, ethnically homogenous migrant-sending community who settle in an urban receiving community…………………………………………………..… 3

Table 1.2: Demographics of Study Participants..……………………………………….. 31

Table 1.3: Businesses whose networks I gathered data on……………………..…….. 33

Table 5.1: Components of Social Capital……………………………..…………..…. 140

Table 8.1: Legal status and position in formal/informal economy of US-based pioneer entrepreneurs in San Francisco's Yucatecan community…………………….... 250

Table 8.2: Legal status and position in formal/informal economy of US-based pioneer entrepreneurs in San Francisco's Yucatecan community……………………...……. 257

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This dissertation is a feeble attempt to depict the complexities of the immigrant experience for both migrants and non-migrants, and I thank everyone in San Pancho and Oxkutzcab who was kind enough to participate in the project. Special thanks to the person

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Pioneer Entrepreneurs:
Legal Capital and Social Networks Changes
in a First Generation Mexican Community

by

Leah Muse-Orlinoff

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, San Diego, 2014

Professor David S. FitzGerald, Chair

In their efforts to mobilize the resources they need to start and run their businesses, pioneer entrepreneurs from a first-generation, low-resource immigrant community exemplify the interactive relationship between social capital and social networks: the individual social capital entrepreneurs have affects their position within a network, and their network position shapes how much access to latent social capital they have.

Throughout this dissertation, I use concepts from social network analysis to describe the structural aspects of migrant entrepreneurs' relationships. I also draw on extensive ethnographic data to understand the social context and decision-making processes that surround migration, settlement, and entrepreneurial outcomes. I tell a processual story, creating a "life-cycle" of immigration, settlement, labor market

incorporation, and entrepreneurship. Each stage requires different forms of social capital and transforms an actor's social network differently. Different amounts of legal capital, which refers to the kind and quality of legal status a migrant has, also affect migrants' microeconomic behavior and the structure and composition of their social network.

The process of assembling the people and resources needed to start a business in a first-generation immigrant community without ethnic resources or shareable capital elevates a pioneer entrepreneur's network topography – the combination of their structural social capital and their aggregate social capital – both within and externally to their co-ethnic network. Consistent with existant findings on immigrant entrepreneurship, I find that pioneer entrepreneurs depend on strong, bonding ties with family members in their business operations. However, I also find that pioneer entrepreneurs in the formal economy depend substantially on ties with non-co-ethnic partners to start and run their businesses. As such, they are the vanguard of their communities' social and economic incorporation into American society.

Framing migrants' social networks as a dependent variable offers new insights into the ways that broad social forces shape microeconomic behaviors and enable or constrain incorporation. In so doing, I show that pioneer entrepreneurs' relationships are dynamic, diverse, responsive to new social and economic contexts, and resilient.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Yucatecan diaspora in San Francisco, some 10,000 strong at its zenith, has found a labor niche in the hundreds of restaurant kitchens that feed hungry Bay Area residents. Yucatecan migrants work in nearly every level of restaurant kitchen hierarchies, from dishwasher to busboy, salad-maker, burrito-roller, and tortilla-shaper, to sous chef and head chef. "There probably isn't a restaurant in San Francisco without a Yucatecan in the kitchen," noted one community leader. And indeed, Yucatecans work in Greek, Pakistani, pizza, Thai, sushi, and upscale-Californian (among many other kinds of cuisine) restaurants.

But what of the food that nourished these kitchen workers when they were growing up in Yucatán? Where can a hungry migrant find a *panucho*, a plate of *poc chuc*, or a bowl of *relleno blanco*? What restaurants offer the smoky tang of *relleno negro*, the fiery jab of a habanero-laden *xnipec*, or the chewy Yucatecan-style tortillas?

Starting in the late 1990's, a handful of restaurants in San Francisco began to offer such comestibles. Some establishments emerged, strove for success, and folded after a few short months or years. Others have struggled into more enduring visibility, attracting critical praise or public condemnation. A handful operate in a perpetual entrepreneurial penumbra, sheltered from the view of the city health department and non-Yucatecan consumers by their clandestine operations and non-traditional locations.

This dissertation is the story of how such restaurants came to be, and of the entrepreneurs behind them. It is also, more generally, the story of how individuals from a

newly settled immigrant community, marked by high levels of legal vulnerability and low levels of human capital, manage the relationships they need to start and run businesses in the United States.

Overview of Theory and Findings

In telling the story of business owners in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco, California, in the late 1990's and first decades of the 2000's, I describe how networks — sets of relationships — shape economic behavior. I also describe how networks change in response to migrant entrepreneurs' economic behavior.

This second issue is the core of my dissertation. I offer a new way of understanding how incorporation happens by focusing on the dynamic nature of migrants' social networks. Specifically, I argue that structures including international migration and labor markets shape the social networks of aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs from an ethnic minority in Meso-America who have settled in the Bay Area. As these migrants come to and settle in California, their social networks are transformed by the auspices of clandestine migration, labor market incorporation, and occupational segregation in low-wage restaurant work.

Table 1.1: Network transformations of pioneer entrepreneurs from a first-generation, ethnically homogenous migrant-sending community who settle in an urban receiving community

Stage of Migration and Settlement Lifecycle	Network Composition (actors)	Network Ties (relationships among actors)	Other structural issues
Prior to international migration	Homogeneous	Bonding, strong	Bifurcated / binational; migrant ego is in sending country
Early years of settlement	Homogeneous	Bonding, strong	Bifurcated / binational; migrant ego is in receiving country
Labor market incorporation and ongoing settlement	Increasingly heterogeneous but homophilic	Primarily bonding, strong but increased proportion of strong/bridging (through exogamy) and weak/bridging (through workplace friendships)	Bifurcated / binational; restrictive immigration policies limit chances for face-to-face interaction among undocumented migrant network actors and their non-migrant family members. Documented migrants and binational actors (e.g., *transportistas*) gain in network topography since they are the only ones who have regular opportunities to interact with actors on both sides of the border.
Informal entrepreneurship	Intentionally homogenous	Almost all bonding, both strong and weak	Efforts to keep information about the business within homogenous ethnic network and away non-co-ethnic and regulatory actors
Formal entrepreneurship	Increasingly heterogeneous, some homophily but decreased proportion of binational ties	Increased salience of strong and weak bridging ties, increased importance of multiplex ties.	Ties to actors in the sending community diminish in importance as strong, bridging ties to non-co-ethnic network alters gain in social and economic importance

When migrants first arrive in the United States, they are embedded in homogenous networks characterized by dense, overlapping ties. Through labor market incorporation, their networks diversify, although the limits of labor market incorporation and occupational segregation translate into networks comprised primarily by people in the

same labor sector.

When migrants decide to go into business for themselves, which stems from the desire to maximize income and to fulfill an entrepreneurial vocation, they begin the process of seeking resources through their networks. This search for social capital transforms existing relationships and creates new ones.

In their efforts to mobilize the resources they need to start and run their businesses, pioneer entrepreneurs from a first-generation, low-resource immigrant community exemplify the interactive relationship between social capital and social network: the individual social capital entrepreneurs have affects their position within a network, and their network position shapes how much access to latent social capital they have and the microeconomic decisions pioneer entrepreneurs make.

Pioneer entrepreneurs depend on strong, bonding ties with family members and both strong and weak bridging ties with non-co-ethnic partners to start and run their businesses. The process of assembling the people and resources needed to start a business in a first-generation immigrant community without ethnic resources or shareable capital elevates a pioneer entrepreneur's network topography – the combination of their structural social capital and their aggregate social capital – both within and externally to their co-ethnic network. As such, they are the vanguard of social and economic incorporation into American society.

Throughout this dissertation, I use concepts from social network analysis to describe the structural aspects of migrant entrepreneurs' relationships. I also draw on extensive ethnographic data to understand the social context and decision-making processes that surround migration, settlement, and entrepreneurial outcomes. I tell a

processual story, creating a "life-cycle" of immigration, settlement, labor market incorporation, and entrepreneurship. Each stage requires different forms of social capital and transforms an actor's social network differently. Framing migrants' social networks as a dependent variable offers new insights into the ways that broad social forces shape microeconomic behaviors and enable or constrain incorporation.

Chapter Overview

I begin this chapter by sketching out a broad theoretical scaffold on which I construct my empirical house. I turn to classical sociological theorists' understanding of how sets of relationships among economic actors transmit the effects of one social force onto another. Next, I locate this project in the traditions of international migration, entrepreneurship, and social network analysis.

In the following section, I describe the places and people which made this project possible. The chapters that follow contain data and cases of Yucatecan migrants and entrepreneurs in the Sassenian "global city" of San Francisco in the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of this one. I present historical and cultural evidence for the ethnic separateness of Mayan Yucatecans in Mexico, a separateness which limits their access to the social capital of non-Yucatecan Mexicans from sending communities with longer histories of emigration to the United States.

I next sketch the sending and receiving communities: Oxkutzcab, an agricultural city in the southern part of the state of Yucatán, and San Francisco, an ethnically diverse, migrant-friendly city undergoing a transition to an ever-more stratified industrial and economic system. I locate this project in the market opportunities for migrants in the

service sector to create firms that cater to a technocratic elite with disposable income and global consumption patterns.

In the next section, I provide details on my data collection and respondents, and offer some thoughts on my position in the field. I conclude with an overview of each chapter's major findings.

This project draws on social network analysis tools and theories, including the structure and composition of migrant entrepreneurs' networks, to explain how social structures affect microeconomic practices and how, in turn, microeconomic exchanges transform social networks and thereby social structures. I offer a dynamic, processual understanding of how migrant networks change over time and as a result of new social and economic contexts, as called for by Aldrich & Waldinger (1990).

Networks in Classical Sociological Theory

Coleman has described Max Weber's basic theoretical premise as MACRO-micro-MACRO (1990). By this, Coleman means that Weber specifies the influence a given set of influential social forces have on microeconomic activity (see also Benjaminsen 2003). Weber then posits that the aggregate of these microeconomic activities create their own social gravity, by cohering into a set of broadly accepted or agreed on social practices.

One of the most famous examples of this causal relationship in Weber's work is, of course, his assertion that the strictures and dogmatic principles of ascetic Calvinist and Lutheran Protestantism shaped the practices of business owners in northwestern Europe, and the effect of these aggregated microeconomic practices was the solidification and

spread of modern capitalism (Weber 1992).

Sombart offered a different vision. He attributed the foundations of modern capitalism to religious precepts which informed the microeconomic activity of networks of Jewish traders. In order to trade with one another, the actors who comprised the trading networks developed financial and fiduciary tools, but because the networks were comprised of co-religionists, these new tools had to comply with specific theological criteria (Sombart 1969). These religiously-inflected tools spread through the network and eventually moved from the co-ethnic network into a broader, heterogeneous network of economic actors. Over time, the microeconomic behaviors which originated within a specific co-ethnic network cohered into international banking and trade which, in turn, amalgamated into modern capitalism.

Both Weber and Sombart, in other words, stipulate that economic exchanges between individuals explain how one social force (religious doctrine) shapes another (the emergence of modern capitalism). While Weber locates the mechanism for the relationship in an individual Protestant's urgency to demonstrate a salvation-worthy soul through his mercantile behavior, Sombart stipulates that microeconomic exchanges happen between individuals or firms embedded in social networks. The shared beliefs of the actors in the network regulate their exchange behavior internally and externally to the network. When enough actors outside the network[1] were willing to accept the microeconomic practices used within the network, a new economic system emerged.

Sombart's proposition contains an intriguing set of causal relationships that offer

[1] This dynamic can also be seen in Laitin's "tipping point," the moment at which a social practice transitions from stigmatized minority practice to accepted as legitimate and/or practiced by the majority (1998).

rich territory for empirical analysis. Is it the case that social networks do, in fact, transmit the effects of social forces onto microeconomic exchanges? In what kinds of circumstances does this transmission occur, and how do the structural characteristics of the network within which the microeconomic activity occurs heighten or mitigate the intensity with which actors respond to the pressures of large social forces? Finally, do these new microeconomic behaviors create new social networks?

Relationships in Economic Sociology: Embeddedness and Social Capital

These questions also connect with existing research on the social structural and network contexts of microeconomic activity (Granovetter [1985], Zukin & Dimaggio [1990], Swedberg & Granovetter [2001], and Uzzi [1996]). Social network scholars, as well as ethnographers like Stack (1974), Menjívar (2000), and Kyle (2000) ask how the relationships we are "embedded" in enable and constrain our behavior.

Scholars of social capital also seek to understand how connections among people lead to different kinds of social or political outcomes. Social capital, the resources that we have access to by virtue of who we know and how we know them[2], is said to be beneficial to both individual actors (Erickson 2001) and to large sectors of society, from neighborhoods to nations (Arneil 2006; Putnam 2000).

This dissertation applies Sombart's notion that social forces shape microeconomic behavior carried out within social network and thereby lead to new social forces to the study of immigrant entrepreneurs' search for social capital within their networks. I am able

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[2] In chapter 5, I outline a definition of social capital that permits a thorough consideration of the kinds of resources that immigrant entrepreneurs obtain through their social networks. However, I am primarily concerned with identifying the patterns in the relationships which are the site of resource exchange among actors. Indeed, the interpersonal site of these exchanges is what makes them interesting from a sociological perspective.

to link Granovetter's and Lin's micro-level studies (1973 and 2001, respectively) of social capital and social networks with Putnam's broader findings about the value of bridging social capital for social cohesion (2000). The cases in Chapter 7 depict how pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs rely on bridging ties to non-co-ethnic network alters to start and run their businesses. As they establish these relationships, pioneer entrepreneurs are the vanguard of social and economic incorporation into US society.

International Migration, Economic Sociology, and Social Networks

I accomplish multiple theoretical and empirical goals by locating this study of social networks, social capital, and microeconomic activity in the context of international migration and settlement.

For instance, the experiences of migrant entrepreneurs mirror in many important aspects those of native-born entrepreneurs: both groups confront enormous barriers to success and tremendous uncertainty (Knight 1957) as they begin and nurture their entrepreneurial projects. However, migrant entrepreneurs face specific challenges which reveal the processes of social and economic incorporation into US society (Borjas 1986; Fairlie 2012).

Migrant entrepreneurs from recently arrived or newly settled communities, for example, do not have access to information about how to start or run a business within their ethnic community: just as the first migrants from a given community are referred to as "pioneer migrants" (see, for example, Taylor, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Massey, and Pellegrino 1996), the first generation of business-owners from a migrant community are "pioneer entrepreneurs" who must forge their own path through the bureaucratic, financial,

and cultural unknowns of the US small business world.

The strategies by which entrepreneurs figure out what to do, how to do it, and with whom is a consistent theme throughout my dissertation. Such strategies are also compelling and observable processes of incorporation[3]. Social and economic incorporation entails working in the United States (Itzigsohn 2004; Raijman and Tienda 2000; van Tubergen, Maas, and Flap 2004) cultivating relationships with people from many different places and backgrounds (Alba, Logan, Stults, Marzan, and Zhang 1999), and developing ties to institutions like banks, community agencies, and cultural organizations (Marrow 2005). Incorporation is discernible through the diversification of migrants' social networks, and is one of the key new social forces which results from immigrant entrepreneurs establishing relationships with people from outside their ethnic community.

My analysis is also deeply informed by the wealth of literature on migrant networks (Bashi 2007; Hagan 1994; Krissman 1995; Menjívar 2000; Singer and Massey 1997). Although dozens of scholars of international migration have used the metaphor of networks to explain how migration happens (Bashi 2007; Krissman 1995; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987), what happens to migrants once they're in the receiving context (Hagan 1994; Menjívar 2000), and the ongoing relationships between migrants and non-migrants (Horst 2006; Levitt 1998; Muse-Orlinoff, Matus Ruiz, Ambort,

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[3] **Defining Incorporation.** Marrow observes that scholarship on immigrant incorporation into (specifically) US society falls into several broad categories, including economic, social and cultural, political, and bureaucratic (Marrow 2005 and 2009; see also Ramakrishnan & Espenshade, 2001). Bloemraad offers a general definition of incorporation as the point at which immigrants' behaviors resemble the behaviors of a given native-born population, even if there is variation across groups (Bloemraad 2006). For the purposes of my dissertation, I focus on economic and social incorporation. I define economic incorporation as a combination of income-generating activities, use of credit (including credit cards, lines of credit, and mortgages), and regular expenditures in support of entrepreneurial activity (such as lease payments, insurance expenses, and the cost of inputs such as utilities, ingredients, gas, and security) in the United States. I characterize social incorporation by considering the proportion of ongoing relationships a migrant entrepreneur has with immigrants from other communities of origin and/or native-born Americans.

and Cárdenas 2009; Portes 2001), few such studies have done so using concepts from the field of social network analysis.

Existing studies of ethnic or migrant entrepreneurship typically emphasize the mobilization of resources within the ethnic community as the *sine qua non* of migrant enterprises. For instance, Aldrich & Waldinger (1990); Light & Bonacich (1988); Light (1972); Logan, Alba, & Stults (2003); and Waldinger, Aldrich, & Ward (2006) demonstrate that immigrant entrepreneurs raise capital, find suitable locations, and identify distributors within co-ethnic and co-national communities in their country of reception. According to these and other studies, resources are made available through social relationships based on common origins, religion, or language, and the shared experience of marginalization (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Tsukashima 1998; Valdez 2008).

Yet for the Yucatecan community in San Francisco, such resources do not exist. There is not a swath of experienced business owners who provide guidance or suggestions, and there are no community resources for financing or vertical integration. Given the agricultural backgrounds of Yucatecan migrants to the Bay Area, capital imported from "back home" is not an option for aspiring entrepreneurs. Yucatecan entrepreneurs profiled in this dissertation consequently exemplify the challenges facing pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs.

Expanding the Canon on Mexican Migrant Entrepreneurship

This project not only highlights the emergence of a network of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, it adds to our limited sociological understanding of Mexican immigrant entrepreneurship. Despite the prevalence of Mexican migrants in the United

States, social scientists have paid very little about the networks of Mexican migrant entrepreneurs. Most of the literature on migrant or transnational entrepreneurs focuses on actors from other ethnic communities (Light and Bonacich 1988; Light, Sabagh, Bozorgmehr, and Der-Martirosian 1994; Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller 2002), and the foundational studies of immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship draw on the experiences of Cuban, Korean, and Iranian migrant communities who are socially and economically privileged relative to Meso-American migrant communities.

Raijman and Tienda note that the reasons for the omission of Mexican entrepreneurs from the sociological canon are complex (2000:440), but point to the concentration of Mexican entrepreneurs in the informal economy as one of the barriers to more comprehensive studies of Mexican immigrant entrepreneurship. This project addresses the issue of Mexican entrepreneurial activity in the informal economy by treating unincorporated business as enteprises facing their own set of economic and social challenges, but deserving of the same analytical seriousness as firms operating in the formal sector. Instead of excluding Mexican entrepreneurs in the informal economy from sociological analysis, in other words, I expand the definition of entrepreneurship to include businesses which exist outside an official regulatory framework. Doing so enables a much needed analysis of the economic and social processes of business formation in a first generation Mexican immigrant community.

Two other aspects of this project distinguishes it from much of the existing scholarship on Mexican immigrant entrepreneurship. The first is that I concentrate my analysis on the experiences of U.S.-based rather than transnational entrepreneurs, which is the focus of Hernández León's 2008 study of the binational networks of Mexican migrants

in Houston and Monterrey. The second is that I focus specifically on Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs, rather than using them as a comparative category (as in Raijman and Tienda [2003] and Valdez [2008]).

This project also contributes to the growing scholarship on indigenous Mexican migration to the United States (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Lewin Fischer 2007; Fox and Rivera Salgado 2004; Smith 2006; Stephen 2007). Mexican migration is not monolithic, and the experiences of indigenous migrants differ from their *mestizo* counterparts. Yet Yucatecan migrants exemplify many of the processes of contemporary Meso-American migration to the United States. The auspices of their migration, the processes by which they migrate, and their experiences upon arrival are representative of many other Meso-American communities. They are exceptional to the extent that, despite being Mexican nationals, they are not automatically subsumed into the cultural category of "Mexican" by other Mexican migrants because of Yucatecans' distinctive linguistic and cultural practices.

Yucatecan Communities in the United States and Mexico

The context for this study is an ethnically distinct, primarily undocumented, first-generation immigrant community in a global city during a time of economic transformation and extremely limited opportunities for legalization. In light of its recent incorporation into international migration flows, the Yucatecan community in the Bay Area is an excellent stand-in for the incorporation experience of migrant communities newly arrived in the United States.

Specifically, I conducted the research for this project in the Yucatecan community

in the San Francisco Bay Area. Over the course of four years, I interviewed dozens of business owners and hundreds of community members. A list of the business owners interviewed can be found below.

Yucatecans are not "la Raza"

Yucatecans are a large ethno-linguistic minority from the northern part of the Yucatán Peninsula. The community is primarily indigenous and traces its roots to the Classical Maya civilization of 2000 BC. In this section, I argue that the cultural history and particular linguistic heritage of the Yucatecan Mayans differentiate them from other Mexican communities. These differences are pronounced and persistent, and are reflected and reified by anti-Yucatecan discrimination in Mexico and the United States. As a consequence of this entrenched prejudice, Yucatecans are debarred from accessing much of the social capital that shapes migration and settlement and which is available to Mexican migrants from more long-standing communities of origin (particularly western-central Mexico and to a lesser extent southern Mexican states like Oaxaca and Guerrero).

The linguistic patterns of Yucatecan migrants — and the concomitant discrimination against them at the hands of other Mexicans — continues in the United States. For instance, in one of my interviews I if Yucatecan migrants work in restaurants that belong to Mexicans from other parts of the country. Cristóbal explained that it's not all that common:

> Cristóbal: Yeah, but only a few. What happens is that norteños [from] the northern part of Mexico [are] a little aggressive, more aggressive… They always think that the southern part (of Mexico) is less. So me, being in the US, I realized that a lot of people from Jalisco, a lot of people from Michoacán, always criticize Yucatecans a little more. Both for the accent, how we talk, and also for the… way of life. I mean, for me, in my opinion,

> the norteño thinks less of Yucatecans because people from Michoacán or from Jalisco always make fun of [our] accent[4].

Cristóbal's explanation aligns precisely with linguists who find that Maya is a "marked" language and that the Spanish spoken by native Maya speakers (or those who grow up bilingual in Maya-speaking communities) is marked as socially inferior to the Spanish spoken in the rest of the republic.

Maya as an ethnic and linguistic category

Lizama Quijano notes that a specifically Mayan cultural identity emerged only as a result of the colonialism's logic of taxonomies: before the arrival of the Spanish in the early 1500's, inhabitants of what we now think of as the Yucatán peninsula likely referred to themselves as being *originarios* of a particular village or other demonym. Once the Spanish had taken political, military, and religious control of Meso-America, according to Lizama Quijano, it became bureaucratically useful to differentiate the Maya from, for example, the Nahuatl or the Zapotecos.

Over time, the term Maya eventually came to mean "a group of individuals who self-identify and who are identified as being descendents of the [pre-Columbian] Meso-American people who lived in the [Yucatán] Peninsula since time immemorial and who have, retain, and protect a specific culture which differentiates them from the Mexico which is *mestizo* and *criollo"* (Lizama Quijano, 2007:38[5]).

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[4] *Cristóbal: sí, pero muy pocos. Lo que pasa es que el norteño, la parte norte de México es un poquito agresivo, es más agresivo... siempre piensa de que ya [la] parte sur es menos. Entonces yo estando en Estados Unidos, yo me dí cuenta de que muchos de Jalisco, muchos de Michoacán siempre critican un poco más al yucateco. Tanto por el acento de como habla y también por el…sistema de vida. O sea, siempre, para mí mi punto de vista es que el norte ha pensado un poco menos acerca del yucateco…porque el michoacao o el de Jalico siempre se burla del acento.*

[5] "Un conjunto de indivíduos que se identifican y son identificados como descendientes del [pre-colombino] pueblo mesoamericano que habitaba la península [de Yucatán] desde tiempo atrás y que posee, mantiene y

This definition highlights the important fact that the category of "Maya" is both assigned and assumed: although it became an important point of ethnic differentiation and, in fact, subjugation, the various communities to whom the name was assigned adopted it as a collective identity. Moreover, the term Maya is a "linguanym," since the ethnonym (the name for a people) is derived from the language the people spoke.[6] The indigenous people of the Yucatán peninsula speak a language called *Maaya*, which is now often referred to *maya yucateco* or Yucatecan Maya to distinguish it from Mayan languages spoken in Chiapas and neighboring countries.

Lizama Quijano (2007) as well as Whiteside (2006) and others have pointed to the importance of the Maya language as a key component of ethnic identity in the region. Not everyone who lives in the state or the peninsula of Yucatán speaks Maya or is Maya-dominant. Nevertheless, Lizama Quijano finds that regional linguistic patterns "act as the axis which defines an 'imagined community' [Anderson 1991:6][7]" (2007:137) which includes "*mayeros*" (Maya-dominant) and non-*mayeros* (Spanish-dominant). In Mexico, he says, "language has been the principal marker of identity, [and] among Yucatecan society, the Maya language has not been an exception: whoever speaks [it] will be considered part of the Maya people, carrying with it a series of socially defined characteristics[8]" (2007:146).

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guarda una cultura específica que lo diferencia del México mestizo y criollo" (Lizama Quijano 2007:38).

[6] As archaeologists and linguists became more familiar with the history and sociolinguistic diversity of Southeastern Mexico and Central America, the term "Maya" has come to encompass a geographically, linguistically, and culturally diverse set of communities extending across Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and El Salvador and through time to more than 2 millennia before the common era. The many languages spoken by the "Maya" people are not, for the most part, mutually intelligible, but they do share common linguistic roots.

[7] "Funciona como el eje que articula un 'comunidad imaginaria' [Anderson 1991:6]" (2007:137)

[8] "La lengua ha sido el principal marcador de la identidad, [y] entre la sociedad yucateca la lengua maya no ha sido la excepcion: quien hable este idioma será considerado como parte del pueblo maya, cargando con ello una serie de características socialmente definidas" (2007:146).

These socially defined characteristics extend into the Spanish spoken by residents of the Yucatán peninsula.[9] The Spanish spoken in the Yucatecan peninsula is heavily inflected by Mayan pronunciation, cadence, and grammar. A research colleague, who is a member of an indigenous community from Southern Mexico but who has spent most of his life living in Mexico City and other more northern parts of the country, admitted that many Mexicans think the Yucatecan accent sounds silly, akin to the way Americans often find the distinctive speech patterns of the northern plains to sound "funny" — for instance, the way people speak in the movie Fargo or Sarah Palin's sing-songy speech which has extremely rounded vowels, lots of gerunds, and few ending consonants. Whiteside refers to the Yucatecan Spanish accent as "marked" because the specific linguistic traits of Maya-speakers or Yucatecans with heavy regional accents often experience discrimination or prejudice by non-Yucatecan Mexicans in Mexico and abroad (2006).

This discrimination can certainly stem from a perception of Yucatecans as "*indios*," a term that Lizama Quijano emphasizes as being extremely pejorative in reference to Yucatecan Mayans. However, one of the unusual legacies of the particular flavor of colonialism in the Yucatecan peninsula is that while many Maya speakers do share certain "indigenous" phenotypical characteristics, there are many speakers of Yucatecan Maya who are as light-skinned as their Spanish ancestors. There are two reasons for this occurrence.

First, under Spanish colonial rule and well into Mexico's independence, Yucatecan Mayans lived under a brutal system of feudal peonage on large *haciendas* (plantations).

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[9] The term "Yucatecan" is a demonym, referring to people, places, or objects from the Mexican part of Yucatecan peninsula; a political identity, referring to residents of the Mexican state of *Yucatán*; and a cultural identity, referring to the specific cultural traditions among the communities from the states of Yucatán, Campeche, and Quintana Roo.

Among other forms of subjugation and cruelty the Mayan serfs experienced was the common practice of the *derecho del señor*, in which the owners of haciendas or plantations in the region would force women in their employ into sexual relationships. As a consequence, many Maya women had children fathered by white plantation owners as well as indigenous husbands; even now, decades after the eradication of the formal hacienda system, families in Yucatán often consist of siblings with markedly different phenotypes.

One of the most notable examples of this phenomenon that I observed in Oxkutzcab was the Pech family. Daniel Pech, has spent quite a bit of time in the United States and is one of the most sought-out local historians of the community. Santos is a fairly dark-skinned man with the broad, round face and thick, black hair of many Mayans. His brother, however, is exceedingly fair-skinned, with reddish hair and more typically Caucasian features. It nearly strained belief that these two men, so vastly unalike in appearance, could be brothers; Santos, however, was explicit and insistent in his claim that the difference in their physiognomy was because their father had been born from one of these forcible sexual relationships between a *hacendado* and a woman — Santos and his brother's paternal grandmother — who belonged to his hacienda.

The second reason for the phenotypical diversity of Maya speakers is that Maya was one of the only indigenous languages in the Americas -- perhaps the only one -- which was spoken not only by the descendants of the people who lived in the region prior to the Spanish, but by many of the ethnically Spanish colonizers as well. As such, the much of the Yucatecan middle class and bourgeoisie[10] speak some Maya and have the characteristic

[10] This is particularly true in the cities and towns outside the urbanized areas of Mérida, Chetumal, and the Riviera Maya)

Yucatecan accent when they speak Spanish.

In addition to the persistence of the Maya language despite a legacy of serfdom and subjugation, two other aspects of Yucatecan-ness distinguish Yucatecans from other Mexicans are the region's distinctive last names and its cuisine (Lizama Quijano [2007], Whiteside [2006], Matus Ruiz [2012]).

First, there are certainly families in the Yucatán who have "standard" Mexican last names like Gonzalez, Magaña, or Pacheco. However, there are also many families whose last names have distinctively Maya origins: Pech, Pech, Cauich, Chan, Dzul, Cocom, Cauich, and Uicab are all fairly typical last names in Yucatán. One of the unusual aspects of Yucatecan migration to San Francisco is that between Yucatecan migrants' use of Maya in public places, vaguely Asian features, and their last names, which are not obviously Mexican, they can easily be mistaken for southeast Asian: someone who has the last name Chan and speaks a tonal language is not often assumed to be Mexican.

Second, Yucatecan food is *sui generis*: it draws on many of the same ingredients as other Mexican regional cuisines, but uses them in a way that creates a particularly Yucatecan foodscape. Despite the often prejudicial attitudes towards Yucatecans in Mexico, Yucatecan food is considered to be among the country's finest, and there are a number of nationally-famous Yucatecan restaurants in Mexico City and throughout the Peninsula.

The flavors and textures of Yucatecan food are so distinct from other Mexican gastronomic cuisines that Ayora Diaz argues that Yucatecans have "an awareness of peoplehood that, without giving rise to separatist desires, sustains the regional certitude that Yucatecan culture is different from Mexican culture" (Ayora Díaz 2012:7). This

distinctiveness persists, along with speaking Maya or Maya-accented Spanish, into the settled Yucatecan community in the United States. In San Francisco a number of restaurants serve specifically "Yucatecan" or "Mayan" food. These restaurants — which are discussed in chapters 7 and 8 of this dissertation — do not typically serve non-Yucatecan Mexican food alongside *panuchos*, *salbutes*, or *relleno negro*. Instead, they reflect and reinforce the ethnic separateness of the Yucatecan community relative to the broader Mexican diaspora in the Bay Area.

My Field Sites

The Sending Community: Oxkutzcab, Yucatán, Mexico

Oxkutzcab is a small city nestled in the agriculturally productive southern part of the state of Yucatán. The city, whose name means "the place of honey, tobacco, and breadfruit" in Maya, lies just to the north of a series of low hills called the Puuc. The Puuc hills contain archaeological sites, including the tourist-friendly Uxmal, as well as geologic formations such as the enormous cavern system known as Lol-Tun.

Residents of Oxkutzcab and its *comsarías* (tiny agricultural suburbs) grow corn, beans, chiles, and other staple crops for household consumption. Many families also raised cash crops like habanero chiles, *achiote,* and fruit for sale at the regional *central de abastos* (wholesale market) on the city's outskirts.

> Lázaro: There are people with money, but it's mostly just peasants. Yeah, people are basically peasants, they get up at 5 in the morning to go to their plot of land, the weather doesn't matter to them, like this cold, they don't care. They're on their land, sowing, harvesting oranges, lemons, anything they have to sell. And they go sell it, and live off it[11].

[11] *Lázaro: Hay gente de dinero, pero mayormente pura gente campesina. Si la gente es pura campesina que*

Oxkutzcab is particularly known for its citrus and fruit production, and the county proudly refers to itself as the "orchard of the state." Visitors to Oxkutzcab's central market, which caters more to individuals and households than does the enterprise-level marketplace outside of town, are struck by the sweet, pungent smell of rotting oranges, lemons, grapefruits and tangerines. Fruits of every color and size are stacked in wooden crates and gunnysack bags. Merchants and shoppers argue in Maya over prices and quantities, while everyone tries to avoid stepping on the spoiled fruit pulp and rinds that give the cement ground a glossy, slimy citrus patina.

Oxkutzcab has been an international migrant-sending community since the early 1960's. Much more will be said about the town's history of emigration in chapter 3; here, the salient point is that the town is tightly linked with San Francisco through large-scale immigration.

Gregorio, a returned migrant, described the situation in his home town: "Most people here (in Ox) have already gone to the US. Most people have been there, the majority, because there are like 10,000 people from Oxkutzcab over there [in San Francisco].[12]"

Walking around Oxkutzcab, a visitor cannot miss the presence of the *hijos ausentes* who live in San Francisco[13]. From the "Super California" supermarket (which was actually converted into a series of food stalls), to the town center (known as "*dauntáun*" after San

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se levanta a las 5 de la mañana para irse a su terrenito, no les importa el clima, así como este friíto, no les interesa. Ellos etán en el terreno, sembrando, bajando la naranja, el limón, todo lo que necesitan de vender. Si van a vender, de lo que ellos sobreviven.

[12] *Gregorio: "La mayoría de la gente también aquí ya fueron a Estados Unidos, … la mayoría ya estuvieron allá, la mayoría eh porque aquí hay como unos 10, 000 personas allá de quí de Oxkutzcab."*

[13] People from Oxkutzcab also migrate to Portland and Texas. The Portland community numbers in the thousands, while only a few hundred migrants from Oxkutzcab have settled in Texas or other parts of the US.

Francisco's "downtown"), San Francisco is part of the landscape in Oxkutzcab. In 2009, during the yearly *Feria de la Naranja*, the Orange Festival, a giant model of the Golden Gate Bridge was constructed out of oranges. For people in Oxkutzcab, then, San Francisco and is like a very far away suburb.

Despite the omnipresence of San Francisco in Oxkutzcab, the political realities of US immigration policy preclude much back-and-forth travel. The economic and physical costs of clandestine re-entry dissuade most migrants living in the US without authorization from returning "home" for visits. Migrants with green cards or US citizenship do visit Oxkutzcab, and there is some circular undocumented migration. The most regular circulation between the two communities, however, is via the several dozen *transportistas* who operate informal import/export businesses and whose experiences are described in chapter 8. The upshot of the "bottling up" (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009) of undocumented migrants in San Francisco is long-term family separation and deeper incorporation of migrants into US society.

Oxkutzcab is the primary sending community for Yucatecan migrants in the Bay Area. It is not the only one, however; migrants from dozens of towns in southern Yucatán live in San Francisco, Santa Zenaida, Oakland, and San Mateo County. As a result, I use the term "Yucatecan" to refer to the migrants whose experiences I present in this dissertation.

San Francisco as a migrant-receiving city

San Francisco is California's most densely populated city, although at 825,000 its population pales relative to Los Angeles, San Diego, and even San Jose. It is a notably

immigrant-friendly city, and has been a Sanctuary City since 1989. Being a Sanctuary City that local law enforcement (the city's police force) cannot participate in immigration-related enforcement. As a practical matter, undocumented migrants are able to live, work, and obtain healthcare in San Francisco without much trouble.

San Francisco's liberal approach to immigrant incorporation does not mean that the results of my project are limited to Sanctuary Cities. While many of the immigrant entrepreneurs I interviewed were undocumented, the social processes I identified – in particular, the role of community organizations and the usefulness of ties with non-co-ethnic partners in support of fledgling business ventures – are likely to exist in a range of social and political contexts. A comparative study of an analogous first-generation immigrant community in a city with highly restrictive immigration policies would, I suspect, yield similar results, although with a greater concentration of undocumented migrants in the informal economy.

At the zenith of Yucatecan settlement in San Francisco, an estimated 10,000 migrants lived in the city. That figure accounts for roughly 1% of the city's total population, but comprises a substantially larger proportion of the Hispanic and Latino-origin population of "San Pancho." About 15% of San Francisco's residents are of Hispanic or Latino origin, and Yucatecans account for approximately 8% of them. However, only 88,000 San Franciscans indicated that Spanish is their primary language; this figure suggests that Yucatecans constitute closer to 11% of the foreign-born Latin American population in the city.

There are several important caveats about these figures. The first is that the bulk of the Yucatecan community in San Francisco is undocumented, and undocumented migrants

are consistently undercounted in the US Census. Second, selecting for Spanish as a dominant language theoretically excludes Maya-dominant speakers. Relatedly, monolingual Maya speakers (or Maya-dominant bilingual Spanish speakers) are unlikely to have participated in the census. Third, the likely exclusion of the undocumented, Maya-dominant population from the census elides the residential density of the Yucatecan migrant community in both neighborhoods (particularly the Mission and the Tenderloin) and in residences. it is common for unmarried male migrants, or those married men who are in San Francisco without their spouses, to live with anywhere from 9 to 15 other men in 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. These undercounts do not change the overall estimate of migrants from Yucatán who are living in San Francisco, since that estimate comes from bureaucrats in Yucatán and community leaders in San Francisco (see chapter 4).

San Francisco as a Sassenian Global City

San Francisco fits Saskia Sassen's definition of a "global city" almost exactly. In her 2001 book, she asked how the "world economy [shapes] the life of cities" (2001:3) and found that there is a set of large urban areas in which the means of production of global capital are so concentrated that the city's social and economic structures are reshaped in the service of producing and reproducing ever more money. Sassen identifies four criteria for a metropolitan area to fit her definition of a global city:

1. Within the urb are located a number of "highly concentrated command points in the organization of the world economy." San Francisco and its suburbs are home to some of the world's biggest and most profitable corporations, primarily in the world of technology (Apple, Google, Yahoo, Twitter, GenenTech, etc), but also in the world of

finance (Wells Fargo, American Express), retail (The Gap, Levi Strauss), and media production (LucasFilms, Dolby Labs).

2. The city is a "key location for finance for specialized service firms which have replaced manufacturing as the leading economic sectors." The growth of the tech industry in and around San Francisco has led to the emergence of highly specialized firms that design software and online experiences, protect or litigate about intellectual property, or provide financing and business development experience ("angel" investors and traditional venture capital firms). Many of the jobs at these companies are white-collar engineering or managerial positions. At the same time, there has been an increase in mechanization and computer-based technology at the ports in San Francisco Bay, which reduces the number of human beings that can be employed.

3. The Bay Area is widely recognized as a "[site] of production, including the production of innovations, in [its globally] leading industries." Few cities in the US, let a lone the rest of the world, are as closely linked with a single industrial sector as San Francisco and Silicon Valley are with technological innovation for both hardware and software.

4. Yet San Francisco does not only produce these innovations, the Bay Area consumes them ravenously. As Sassen puts it, a global city includes "markets for the products and the innovations produced."

The growth of the technology and digital design sectors in San Francisco and the surrounding area has, like many socioeconomic phenomena, a self-reinforcing aspect to it: because there are flourishing tech firms in the Bay Area, companies that want to be adjacent to tech firms (venture capitalists and marketing companies, for instance) set up

shop in the vicinity. The proximity of these firms draws more new companies to the area. The result is a localized cluster of firms that control the means of production and the financial systems that support a global industrial sector.

Sassen attributes this clustering to increased Weberian "coordination." A more specifically network-oriented approach would instead look to the work of Annalee Saxenian, who found that geographic proximity enhanced firms' ability to work efficiently, share resources and learning, and compared Silicon Valley's tech industry to the Route 128 corridor outside of Boston. Although both regions' tech industries can trace their roots to federal defense spending at universities during WWII, Silicon Valley's tech industry has experienced sustained growth while Route 128's, in which firms were further apart and less tightly connected through interlocking directorates and shared sources of investment, declined during the 1980's and 1990's (Saxenian 1994).

Sassen wrote Global Cities more than a decade before the first and two decades before the second internet booms in the San Francisco area. Yet her description of what happens to jobs in a metropolitan area once there is a sizable cluster of firms who a control substantial portion of a given global economic sector cluster is amazingly on the money (as it were). Writing about London, New York, and Tokyo, she found that in global cities experience a series of:

> …changes in the organization of work reflected in a shift in the job supply and polarization in the income distribution and occupational distribution of workers. Major growth industries show a greater incidence of jobs at the high- and low-paying ends of the scale than do…older industries…[a] vast supply of low-wage jobs [are] required by high-income gentrification in both its residential and commercial settings (Sassen 2001:9).

This clustering of jobs in the high- and low-wage disproportionately affects

immigrant workers, who become — or remain — “concentrated in lower-paying, more traditional service industries” (2001:318). Simultaneously, Sassen wrote, “style, high prices, and an ultraurban context characterize the… practice of consumption” (317). Both these dynamics have unfolded in San Francisco, and are intimately tied to the dynamics of Yucatecan migration to the region during the 1990s and early 2000’s.

As the regional economy expanded with the massive infusion of technodollars, so too did the number of places to spend them. The Bay Area’s tech boom in the late 1990’s created a new version of the yuppie — young urban professionals with global palates and money to spend (Adelson 2002). David H., a long-time resident of San Francisco, remarked that over the several decades that he has lived in the region, the transformation of the city’s economic and small-business infrastructure was most extreme during this time period. He recalled that within a year, streets where pedestrian safety was marginal at best suddenly had upscale restaurants and valet parking. The infusion of money into the city, he said, made certain neighborhoods suddenly “unrecognizable.” San Francisco began to evolve from a laid back, somewhat shabby, bohemian place to a city of competitive consumers eager to find the most innovative or most authentic new restaurant.

The growth in the restaurant industry generated a massive gravitational pull from southern Mexico towards the Bay Area. The result was a half-decade of large-scale clandestine migration from the farms of Yucatán to the industrial kitchens of San Francisco. Chapter 3 in this dissertation focuses on the historical context and social processes of this migration and the relationships that make it possible.

Despite Sassen’s prescience, or perhaps simply her perceptive sociological analysis, the experience of Yucatecan migrants to San Francisco in the 1990’s and early

2000's suggest a few important dynamics that Sassen did not highlight as salient aspects of a global city.

First, while Sassen notes that the concentration of global capital in the hands of a gentrifying elite creates new forms of dependence on low-wage service workers, she does not observe that such service workers may find it desirable to create firms which cater specifically to the wealthy.

Second, she overlooks the development of firms which offer goods and services to immigrant consumers (Kloosterman and Rath 2002). Migrant workers are hungry for a taste of home, and often willing to pay someone to cook it for them. Families with small children need someone to look after them and adults want traditional clothes for special occasions and grocery stores that carry spices, sweets, or other sundries from back home.

Both of these forms of business-development create opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs to enact new forms of social and economic incorporation, by taking out loans or credit cards, building their business networks, and learning how to interact with regulatory agencies.

Third, the cultural contexts of global cities — which emphasize style, design, and technical innovation — inform the business, consumption and self-presentation behavior of immigrant and low-wage workers and entrepreneurs. In San Francisco, this dynamic can be seen in the stylish haircut and tribal tattoos of a Yucatecan restaurant worker, the insistence of a Yucatecan entrepreneur that her business have a website, and the ubiquitous iPhones in the hands and earphones in the ears of everyone in the city, regardless of their place of birth. One observer described these patterns of rapid technological adoption:

Anita: No, the Yucatecans who come here [to San Francisco], even those

> who don't have any education, even in their first week, they've got a cell phone, they know how to use it better than all of us, they're texting, they've got the best [cell phone] plans and they know everything about all the plans that are out there and if they're available in Spanish, they're getting hooked up with them in Spanish. Then they've also got digital cameras, they have digital video cameras and they know how to use them, as soon as they can they've got a computer and know how to use the Internet. For a lot of them it's probably because they're young, but, man, these guys are the most technologically advanced migrants I've ever seen[14].

Sassen's framework of a "Global City" helps contextualize San Francisco's regional economy and occupational clustering. However, my dissertation finds its inspiration in these overlooked dynamics: the ways in which immigrants nurture an entrepreneurial vision in the face of challenging social and economic structures.

Data and Methods

I collected data for this study through a combination of semi-structured interviews and participant observations, with a consistent focus on the relationships between the entrepreneur and other actors involved in the creation and operation of his/her business. I entered the field in December, 2008, with a two-week trip to San Francisco and a month in Oxkutzcab. During that time, a research colleague and I used a snowball sample to meet and interview Yucatecan entrepreneurs operating in the formal economy in San Francisco at that time. We also met and interviewed leaders of Grupo Mesoamericano (see chapter 7).

In Oxkutzcab, we used a snowball sample started in San Francisco to identify and interview migrants' family members. We also identified entrepreneurs including restaurant

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[14] *Anita*: *Los yucas que llegan aquí, los aún que tienen nada de educación, puro que en la primera semana tienen el celular, saben operarlo mejor que todos nosotros, textean, tienen los mejores planes y saben todo de los planes que hay y si estan disponibles en español, estan acudiendo ellos en español pero tambien tienen cámaras digitales, tienen cámaras de video digital y saben operarlas, en cuanto pueden tienen una computadora y saben manejar el internet. Muchos probablemente porque ya es el grueso de jovenes, pero hijoles, esos son los migrantes más tecnológicamente avanzados que yo he visto.*

owners and *transportistas* based on the signs outside their restaurants and houses and interviewed nearly all of them. We interviewed the county president, the head of INDEMAYA, and the staff at the local remittance agency.

I returned to the field (San Francisco) in December, 2010. I lived in San Francisco from December, 2010 until June, 2013 but the bulk of my field research was completed between January, 2011 and February 2012. Over the course of that year, I re-interviewed many of the entrepreneurs I had first met in 2008, and tried to track down the ones whose businesses had folded. I also re-interviewed the non-entrepreneurs I had met during my first stint in the field, and conducted informal interviews with dozens of Yucatecan migrants I met on the bus, eating at restaurants, and at social events. It was during this time that I was also able to visit the informal restaurants, the *cocinas clandestinas*, which had not been possible on my first time in the field. I visited with Yucatecan migrants at their houses and their places of work, and hung out with them at cafes. When I was in social interactions, I tried to be as unobtrusive as possible about taking notes, and wrote comprehensive field notes later. When I conducted formal semi-structured interviews, I transcribed answers word-for-word. I drew from over 1,500 pages of transcripts and notes in preparing this dissertation.

Table 1.2: Demographics of Study Participants (note: migrants includes both current and returned)

Migrants (* indicates mode)	
*From Yucatán	76
From Mexico	4
From Central America	3
From Elsewhere	4
Non-Migrants (US-born)	3
Non-Migrants (in Mexico)	16
Total	N=106
Legal Status (migrants only) (* indicates mode)	
*Undocumented	53
LPR	16
US Citizen	19
Unknown	2
Total	N=87
Migration Generation (* indicates mode)	
Bracero (1946 – 1964)	1
Post-Bracero, Pre-IRCA (1965 – 1985)	14
Post-IRCA (1985 – 1994)	22
*Mass-migration (1995 – 2005)	50
Total	N=87
Gender (all respondents) (* indicates mode)	
Female	33
*Male	73
Total	N=106
Last known occupation in the US (migrants only) (* indicates mode)	
Self-employed food service (formal sector)	14
Self-employed food service (informal sector)	4
*Restaurant staff	42
Self-employed services (formal sector)	0
Self-employed services (informal sector)	9
Shelf stocker	2
Professional or managerial	7
Other	3
Retired	2
Unknown	6
Total	N=87

The respondents for this study are a pretty representative sample of the Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco. The modal answer for each demographic category – male, undocumented, arrived after 1995, works in a restaurant kitchen – align with the description of the Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco shared by community leaders and bureaucrats in the sending community.

All data was collected with approval from UCSD's Institutional Review Board. The UCSD IRB granted me a signature waiver for approvals because so many of the people I interviewed for this project are undocumented or involved with illicit or legally ambiguous economic activity.

Collecting Network Data

This project uses qualitative data to describe how social networks enable and constrain microeconomic activity, and how such microeconomic activity shapes new network substructures. To that end, my interviews and participant observation focused on the relationships that entrepreneurs relied on to start and run their businesses. I followed an ethnographic technique of not prompting interviewees, but instead noted who respondents mentioned in the regular course of the interview and participant observation and the nature of those relationships. I would then ask for clarification about the relationships, and, when possible, interview that person as well.

I to ensure that my interactions with respondents were respectful and enjoyable. I sought to cultivate a reputation as a close, discreet listener. This was sometimes challenging, especially when I wanted to confirm a data point I had heard about an entrepreneur but had to wait for a second and third interviewee to confirm it without my

prompting.

Table 1.3: Businesses whose networks I gathered data on

	Number of Enterprises
Formal Economy	16
Informal Economy	12
Has Connection to Illicit Money	7
No Known Connection to Illicit Money	21
Operating (as of 2013)	14
No Longer Operating (as of 2013)	12
Unclear	2
Total	N=28

The data in the chapters that comprise this dissertation are excerpts from the interviews and detailed descriptions based on my field notes. In a few cases, I include network graphs that show a particular set of relationships.

The Yucatecan community in San Francisco is tight-knit and the entrepreneurs within it well known. In order to protect the anonymity of my research participants, names and certain identifying details have been changed. These alterations do not change the analysis, but are a vital part of my responsibility to the respondents who so generously shared their time and experiences with me.

In San Francisco, I was helped in gaining the trust of respondents by starting my field research alongside Maximino Matus Ruiz, a Mexican research colleague. His shared nationality with the migrants we were interviewing helped lower the barriers to entry into the community. Following the initial field visit to San Francisco, Max and I visited Oxkutzcab. There, we met relatives of the migrants we had interviewed in San Francisco. We were also able to establish trust with participants by discussing our experiences in San

Francisco with migrants nostalgic for the diversity, the restaurants, and their salaries. No one was nostalgic for the weather, however.

When it came time for me to return to the field full-time, I benefitted from these previous experiences. I reached out to Yucatecan migrants I had interviewed two years prior, and asked them to help me make new connections in the community. I was able to share my experience in Oxkutzcab as a way to prove my *bona fides* with Yucatecan migrants who were unsure about my status – was I really a student, or could I be from an immigration enforcement agency? Being able to describe certain houses or local landmarks in "Ox" as the city is often called reassured Yucatecans I met that I actually was doing what I claimed. I also took several Maya classes, hoping to learn enough to have basic conversations in Maya. Unfortunately, I only learned a few words, which was fortunately enough to get new contacts to laugh at my feeble attempts and relax around me.

Many of the conversations I had and interviews I did initially revolved around food. I often explained that I was a student interested in studying Yucatecan food and restaurants. This approach was helpful because in my experience just about everyone has an opinion about food and is delighted to share it with an inquisitive and enthusiastic listener. Framing my questions about food also gave me good access to both men and women – the men who work in restaurants and the women who cook at home, the men who eat at the *cocinas clandestinas* and the women who run them.

Through my data analysis, I used the qualitative and ethnographic data I obtained through the interviews and participant observation to generate social network data (see chapter 2 for a deeper discussion of the methodological challenges to studying migrant networks from an SNA perspective). For each restaurant described in chapter 7, for

example, I created a small network dataset that included information on the entrepreneur's relationships prior to starting the business, during its operations, and, when relevant, after the business closed. I used these datasets and the network graphs they generated as the foundation for my analyses in chapters 7 and 8.

The "Life-Cycle" of International Migration and Settlement

This dissertation is structured in approximately chronological order for a given Yucatecan migrant. I refer to this chronology as the "life-cycle" of international migration and settlement. This life-cycle schematic includes the decision to migrate, resource mobilization for the purposes of international migration (in the cases described herein, primarily clandestine), the process of crossing the border, initial settlement, labor-market incorporation, and, for some migrants, entrepreneurial activity. Through all of these life-cycle phases, I focus on the way that migants' existing relationships acquire new meanings at the same time that new social and economic circumstances also engender new kinds of connections. In the final chapter of this dissertation, I offer some preliminary analysis of the role of social networks on return migration, but the bulk of this project is centered on the experiences of U.S.-based migrants and how their social networks change over the course of the migration and settlement life-cycle.

The Scale and Scope of Yucatecan Migrant Entrepreneurs' Businesses

Immigrant-owned enterprises are a vital part of the American economy and have been the subject of sociological inquiry since the 1940's (see, for example, Lee 1949, and the more thorough review of this literature in chapter 6). Such businesses come in all sizes and sectors, and exist in the formal, the informal, and the illicit economies. The economic

and social dynamics of running a large enterprise are quite different from running a small business, just as operating in the informal economy entails a different set of opportunities and challenges than operating in the formal economy. While many scholars use the terms "self-employment" and "entrepreneurship" to distinguish between the sociological and economic contexts of smaller and larger firms, scholars of immigrant entrepreneurship are less inclined to focus on these analytic categories. Instead, studies of immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship typically ask what role a business-owner (an "entrepreneur," regardless of the size of the enterprise) plays in creating jobs for co-nationals (Portes 1987), the role of ethnic resources in supporting business development (Light 1972), and the relative advantage of certain ethnic groups' social capital or business orientation (Valdez 2008).

This project asks a different set of questions. Throughout this dissertation, I use the changing social and economic contexts of immigrant entrepreneurs' experiences as a lens which reveals how social networks change over the course of the immigration and settlement life-cycle. To that end, it is important to note that I do not attempt to re-theorize the sociology of entrepreneurship in any substantive way. Instead, I use the emergence of very small firms, typically with staffs of fewer than 15, in an immigrant community, to articulate the changes in composition and structure in immigrant entrepreneurs' social networks through the process of resource mobilization.

Project Overview

Living in San Francisco afforded me the chance every day for two and a half years to interact with Yucatecan migrants. Observing the challenges to and strategies for these entrepreneurs' incorporation into American society provides an exceptional vantage point

for understanding how migrants' social networks and the microeconomic exchanges within them are shaped by macro structures such as border security policy, macroeconomic conditions, and labor market dynamics; how such microeconomic exchanges affect social networks among migrants and non-migrants; and the way migrant networks can in turn affect social structures such as ethnic economies, international economic transfer systems, and socioeconomic (class) systems.

In Chapter 2 I outline the theoretical framework of my dissertation by bringing together social network analysis and the concept of migrant networks. I begin by noting several of the common lines of inquiry in social network analysis and migrant networks. I then offer a critique of existing scholarship on migrant networks from a social networks perspective, and suggest some ways that research on migrant networks might enrich our understanding of social networks more generally. I conclude by positioning my dissertation as a way to bridge the "structural hole" between social network analysis and scholarly attention to migrant networks.

Chapter 3 traces the history of Yucatecan migration to San Francisco. The experiences of Yucatecan migrants follow the same social and microeconomic patterns of other large-scale undocumented Mexican migrant communities in the United States. The basic premise of social network analysis is that the sets of relationships we are embedded in enable and constrain our behavior. The social networks that undergird the structured processes of international migration are the site of resource exchange among aspiring migrants, their non-migrant family members, and US-based migrants.

Focusing on the relationships that migrants rely on to enable their clandestine entry into the US reveals that migrant networks do not exist independently from the networks

that aspiring migrants are already embedded in. Instead, aspiring migrants and households work through existing relationships to obtain the resources they need. In so doing, existing kinship relationships acquire new social and economic dimensions specific to the processes of international mobility.

In chapter 4 I argue that, similar to patterns observed in other migrant communities, Yucatecan migrants rely on family members and close friends from within their ethnic community to find their first jobs in the United States. Over time, migrants' social networks diversify through their participation in the wage labor market. As a result, migrants with experience in the wage labor market in the US find out about job openings from non-Yucatecan friends. In other words, the longer migrants are in the US labor market, the greater the diversity of network ties and the less redundant the information within their networks. However, contrary to the conventional wisdom that says that networks diversify, so do job opportunities, as Yucatecan migrant networks diversify in San Francisco, they do not experience labor mobility, instead remaining "niched" in restaurant kitchens.

Chapter 5 develops the theoretical framework for the empirical findings in the second half of my dissertation: the dynamics of international migration and settlement in the United States create changes in migrants' social network structure and composition which alter the opportunity structure for network actors' microeconomic behavior. I connect the literature on social network structure to the literature on social capital, and offer new ways of understanding how the structure and composition of a network shapes the dynamics of resource exchange within it. Social capital can be latent or active, and individual or collective. An individual's social capital results from both their structural

position within a given network (their degree centrality) and their individual attributes including their other forms of capital (human, economic, legal), their willingness and ability to share these, and their influence or reputation among their network alters. I also find that a person's need for access to resources can lead to the development of new network substructures. This interdependence (access to various forms capital and network change) results in a virtuous, or self-reinforcing cycle in which adept social capital cultivators identify opportunities to acquire more through the intentional cultivation of new relationships; in so doing, they increase their own structural and aggregated social capital in a measure I refer to as network topography.

Chapter 6 argues that the decision to become self-employed[15] comes from the desire to maximize income under constraints, the perception of a market opportunity, and personal motivations including a strong desire for autonomy and an entrepreneurial vocation. In the early stages, entrepreneurial also requires an entrepreneur's household to develop economic strategies capable of mitigating the risks of self-employment. Entrepreneurship requires a good or service to purvey, a market willing to bear the price the entrepreneur sets, and access to necessary the tools and materials. Finally, self-employment in the formal economy requires social capital in the form of information, advice, legal proxies, and financing including credit, loans, etc.

Chapter 7 draws on cases from interviews and participant observation I conducted

[15] In this analysis I do not distinguish between self-employment and entrepreneurialism – I use the terms interchangeably to refer to include all self-directed economic activity. Attempting to distinguish between "self-employment" and "entrepreneurialism" among Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco (and in Oxkutzcab) was confounding, because of the persistent reliance on wage-labor by fledgling business owners, the deep involvement of family members in supporting entrepreneurial activity, and the fluctuating need for paid assistance. Instead, I follow (Schumpeter 2008) and Baumol (1968) who locate the key contribution of the entrepreneur to be the one who came up with the idea for the firm's activities.

with 10[16] entrepreneurs in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco to show that the search for and use of alters' (external) social capital transforms the network substructures the entrepreneur is embedded in. These changes include the simple ties becoming multiplex; the bridging of structural holes through brokerage; and increasing degree centrality. I find that Entrepreneurs from newly arrived immigrant communities characterized by low levels of human capital and which are primarily undocumented draw on and cultivate relationships with network actors from outside the entrepreneur's own community in order to gain access to the social capital non-co-ethnic network actors have. Entrepreneurs who are particularly adept at managing relationships are in a better structural position to access such money, information, and support. While access to these resources does not guarantee that a business will flourish, lack of access to them hinders business activity. In this way, adept social capital cultivators experience a virtuous cycle of strategic network development, increased access to social capital, and greater influence within the network.

In Chapter 8 I argue that the choices entrepreneurs make about operating in the informal or the formal economy social networks shape the way that their networks are configured. Entrepreneurs who operate in the informal economy intentionally maintain homogeneous social networks dominated by strong and weak bonding ties. On the other hand, entrepreneurs who operate in the formal economy cultivate networks with strong and weak bonding and bridging ties in order to maintain flows of new information and access otherwise unavailable resources and capital.

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[16] This includes the owners and their spouses, and includes one non-Yucatecan owner of a Yucatecan restaurant. Two Yucatecan entrepreneurs did not participate in the project.

Meanwhile, the decision to become self-employed creates a need for capital and other resources. Entrepreneurs seek to fill this need by searching for sources of money, goods, or labor through their networks. I find that entrepreneurs with pre-existing strong, bonding relationships with individuals engaged in illicit activity and a perception that access to legitimate forms of financing are constrained because of legal status, inadequate credit, or bad advice ere more likely, relative to their counterparts without both of these criteria, to depend in some way on illicit capital.

Chapter 9 brings together the discussion of entrepreneurship and social network transformation as a component of incorporation. I outline a theory of legal capital as a way to explain how entrepreneurs' position in the formal or the informal economy and their access to different forms of legal authority to enter, live in, and work in the United States, yields different incorporation outcomes.

Chapter 2: Social Networks and the Study of International Migration

Chapter Abstract: In this chapter I outline the theoretical framework of my dissertation by bringing together social network analysis and the concept of migrant networks. I begin by noting several of the common lines of inquiry in social network analysis and migrant networks. I then offer a critique of existing scholarship on migrant networks from a social networks perspective, and suggest some ways that research on migrant networks might enrich our understanding of social networks more generally. I conclude by positioning my dissertation as a way to bridge the "structural hole" between social network analysis and scholarly attention to migrant networks.

Introduction

There is a substantial difference in the way migrologists and networkists approach the study of social networks. It would not be too much of an oversimplification to say that migrologists (social scientists who study international migration) are interested in what happens *because* of networks, while networkists (social scientists who are principally interested in social network analysis) focus on what happens *within* networks.

For instance, migrologists use the concept of "networks" to explain how people, money, or information move around in different kinds of migrant communities. In the international migration literature it is common to read that people migrate, information flows, and jobs are found because of networks.

However, this approach is problematic for a couple of important reasons. For instance, networks in general, and social networks in particular, are typically defined as social structures (Hanneman and Riddle 2005; Wasserman and Faust 1994). So when

migrologists say that networks "channel," networks "lower," and networks "provide," they are imbuing networks with active powers not generally attributed to social structures.

By contrast, networkists focus specifically on the structural aspects of networks. Their task is usually to explain how network structures affect the exchange of resources within the network, by asking questions about the characteristics of the different people who make up the network and the number and quality of ties that they have with one another.

Put differently, the epistemological foundation of the networkists' approach is that a network is a social structure within which action occurs but is constrained by the network actors' relationships. Migrologists' epistemological assumption is that the sum total of the relationships within a posited network affect particular migration or settlement outcomes by making it easier for people or resources to move.

Migrologists are not wrong: the costs of migration are lowered in the context of network ties, jobs are easier to find through networks, and money is remitted or loaned because people have network ties. Most assuredly, I do not seek to debunk the notion of a migrant network altogether. Rather, my critique of migrant networks is aimed at refining their definition in order to bring the theoretical and methodological tools of social network analysis to bear on the study of migrant networks.

Indeed, migrologists' approach to studying networks has created fascinating and important opportunities for networkists. For instance, migrologists are often much better at including an experiential component of their network studies than are networkists, who too often treat networks as static structures devoid of actual human beings. More fundamentally, the things that migrologists are interested in offer networkists rich

methodological and theoretical material which, for the most point, has gone untouched by networkists.

This dissertation pulls from both traditions. I provide social context to a structural consideration of migrants' networks; I also use the networkists' framing and terminology to focus specifically on how migrant's relationships evolve through the processes of international migration, settlement, and entrepreneurship. In so doing, I show that migrants' relationships are dynamic, diverse, responsive to new social and economic contexts, and resilient.

The Sociological Roots of Social Network Analysis

Before continuing with my critique of migrant networks from a social networks perspective, I define some of the terms used in this chapter and dissertation.

- A network is a set of relationships.
- In network analysis, these relationships are called ties and the entities which are related are nodes or actors.
- A social network[17] is a set of relationships among people and/or institutions.

These terms derive from the field of study known as social network analysis. Social network analysis (SNA) is a branch of economic sociology, although it also has roots in economics (Ben-Porath 1980; Greif 1989), physics (Newman, Barabási, and Watts 2006; Watts 2003), and anthropology (Malinowski and de la Fuente 1982).

The notion that sets of relationships are an important organizing principle of social action has been a fundamental part of social scientific study for a century or more, although

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[17] A network can also be conceptual (a set of ideas connected in some way; for instance, books which share certain political ideologies) or material (a telephone network or a power grid).

the term "network" is of more recent coinage.

Even from the earliest phases of network study, network researchers were specifically interested in the effects of network structure – the kinds of people included in the network and the characteristics of their relationships with one another – on social action. In the early 20th century, Mauss (1967), Simmel (1990), and Sombart (1969) asked questions about who we know and how we know them affects what we do. Simmel's discussion of *tertius gaudens*[18], for example, and his extended analysis of the "webs" of personal relationships (1955) suggests that he saw networks as a fruitful explanation of social behavior. Mauss's insights into the overlapping system of gift-giving shows how networks exist not only within but between groups. Sombart in particular was among the first to explore the connections between sociopolitical contexts, network structures, and economic outcomes: he argued that a combination of geographically disperse social networks and social marginalization led Jews to create new forms of financial transactions, and thereby develop modern capitalism.

Social networks as an explicit object of focus emerged within anthropology in the middle part of the 20th century. J. Clyde Mitchell, himself one of the pioneer students of social networks, suggests that Barnes and Boissevain were among the very first to "[raise] the notion of the social network…from a metaphorical to a conceptual statement about social relationships in social situations" (Mitchell 1974:280); from the beginning, the empirical agenda was to determine "how the social links of individuals in any given society...[influence] the behavior of the people involved in [the] network" (ibid).

[18] The *tertius gaudens* (the third [party] who benefits) is the individual who brokers a deal between or connects two otherwise unconnected parties. Middlemen traders or mediators in conflictual situations can both be *tertius gaudens*.

Harrison White spearheaded the branch of sociology which is particularly concerned with the mathematical analysis of social networks (Swedberg 2003; White 1992), and the network of students who have studied with him directly or who have been taught by his students still reflects his strong influence. For instance, Mark Granovetter, who was one of White's students, wrote an article which has allegedly been cited in more scholarly articles than any other: "The Strength of Weak Ties" (Granovetter 1973). Granovetter asked how the structure of a job seeker's social network affected their ability to find employment. In the article, Granovetter argues that information most likely to lead to a new job comes not from people with whom the seekers is closest, but from individuals with whom the seeker had "weak" ties: ex-co-workers, casual acquaintances, or distant neighbors. Granovetter explained this pattern by suggesting that there is a large amount of information redundancy among people who know each other well; everyone knows the same kinds of things. If you are looking for a job, your closest friends are likely only to know about the same job openings you already know about, because you know basically the same amount about the same things. People one knows less well, on the other hand, have access to different kind of information, so their knowledge will increase both the quantity and quality of information the seeker obtains about job prospects. Hagan's research on a Guatemalan Maya community in Houston echoed Granovetter's findings, but her research was done with a strictly qualitative methodology (Hagan 1994).

After Granovetter brought social network studies into the forefront of economic sociology, Burt offered additional insights into how different structural positions in networks yield different economic returns to actors. Burt's best-known contribution is the notion of brokerage, network actors who link two otherwise unconnected networks (Burt

2005)[19]. Brokers, who fill these “structural holes” – the gaps between sets of relationships – have the opportunity to control the quantity and quality of information passed between the networks. This structural position results in an economic benefit to the broker. For instance, corporate head hunters are brokers who link two otherwise unconnected networks: a company seeking highly qualified executives and a pool of candidates seeking new jobs. The head hunter capitalizes on his or her ability to bring the two networks into contact, and receives a fee for successfully matching applicants with hirers. Labor recruiters who connect migrant workers with employers can also receive benefits from their structural position between the network of employers and the network of hirable labor; however, to my knowledge no research has been done from an SNA perspective on the economic (and non-economic) returns to migrant labor recruiters[20].

White, Granovetter, and Burt – along with dozens of other influential network scholars – laid the foundation for the social network analysis in economic sociology. While the methodologies and tools that scholars use to analyze their data have changed, the fundamental question remains constant: what does a structural analysis of a set of relationships tell us about opportunities for and constraints on social action?

Migrologists have also engaged with this question. For example, Hagan (1994), Krissman (1995, 2005), Thomas and Znaniecki (1996), and Bashi (2007) include cursory

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[19] Burt drew heavily on Simmel’s notion of the *tertius gaudens* in his framing of brokers: for Burt, brokers are, quite clearly, the third (party) who benefits from becoming involved in an exchange of resources between two others. For both Burt and Simmel, a three-party social context for exchange differs qualitatively from a dyadic exchange relationship because the power distribution shifts. Social network analysis also recognizes a difference between dyadic and triadic relationships: although dyads (connections between two actors) are the essential building blocks of networks, a network does not exist until there are at least three nodes.

[20] Krissman (1995, 2005) offers some of the most provocative and intriguing critiques of the concept of migrant networks, and specifically identifies the role of migrant labor recruiters in engendering and structuring migration flows. However, Krissman’s work, like Hagan’s in Houston, is strictly qualitative, and does not draw on the tools or methods of SNA.

forms of social network analysis in their work. However, as will be discussed in a subsequent section of this paper, these studies remain focused on networks as explanations for migration and settlement outcomes instead of engaging with network analysis per se[21].

Hagan's and Krissman's work follows in the long and valuable tradition of qualitative research on migration and settlement. However, this emphasis on ethnography and qualitative data is part of the reason why there has been little effort to apply SNA to studies of migrant networks. In its current form, social network analysis is an predominantly quantitative methodology[22]. Network data sets can include a relatively small number of network actors (it is not an outrageous proposition to do fairly complex data analysis on a network consisting of 30 people; (see Freeman 2003), or they can be enormous (e.g., the millions of people who use Facebook). These analyses are sociologically compelling even when they are "only" concerned with the structural aspects of networks, something that more actor-oriented sociologists often find unappealing.

For instance, these structural analyses provide new insight into the way power is unevenly distributed in networks. The distribution of power in networks also has important implications for the way information and resources flow through networks. Indeed, these two issues (structural aspects of and the flow of resources within networks) are the two primary branches of social network analysis in economic sociology. The study of migrant networks offer an excellent point of inquiry into the intersection of these two issues – an opportunity I will return to in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Existing scholarship of migrant networks also highlights an aspect of social

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[21] Bashi's work (2007) does offer a new metaphor to describe the structure of migrant networks. However, her discussion of "hubs and spokes" is not grounded in social network analysis.

[22] There are some notable and excellent exceptions. AnnaLee Saxenian's work on interfirm networks in Silicon Valley and along Route 128 in Massachusetts is one notable example (Saxenian 1996).

network analysis which is largely lacking in the SNA field: the *experiences* of network actors. In particular, there is a need for research from an SNA perspective to moderate the emphasis on structures with a consideration of what the people in networks (and in some cases, the people who used to be in a given network) have to say about their relationships and their conceptions about the distribution of power within the set of relationships being analyzed (a point that Hanneman and Riddle make a point of emphasizing in their discussion of brokerage [2005]).

Adding a qualitative aspect to the structural analysis of social networks also opens up space to think about how networks form and fall apart. White's early description of networks as social structures which result from the constant coupling and decoupling of identities (1992) offers an extraordinary starting point for migrologists interested in how particular kinds of migrant networks form and fall apart (as in Menjívar 2000). Just as social network analysis has much to offer the study of migrant networks – the subject of the next section of this chapter – migration scholars have some important contributions to make to social network analysis.

Defining Migrant Networks

If a social network is a set of relationships between people, then is a migrant network simply a set of relationship between migrants? Well, no. A migrant network can include migrants *and* non-migrants (Muse-Orlinoff, Matus Ruiz, Ambort, and Cárdenas 2009). Perhaps, then, a migrant network is a set of relationships that exist between migrants in a receiving community and non-migrants who remain in their sending community. Again, no, or perhaps not necessarily: a migrant network can exist across international

borders (Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987), but it can also be comprised of people from the same community of origin who live in the same receiving community (Menjívar 2000). To the extent that these migrants have relationships with one another which comprise a social structure of resource exchange (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993), a migrant network can exist domestically.

Migrant networks have also been described as links between people which exist both through time (Massey, Goldring, and Durand 1994) – as a way to explain patterns of migration across generations – and which are situated in specific historical moments (such as the rapid mobilization of monetary and material assistance within the Haitian immigrant community following the devastating earthquake of January 2010).

These quick examples point to one of the most significant weaknesses in the study of migrant networks: the lack of a coherent definition of what, exactly, a migrant network is. I propose the following definition as a way to ground the following critique of migrant networks from an SNA perspective, and to lay the groundwork for applying the tools of SNA to the study of migrant networks:

- Migrant networks are sets of relationships between people
- Who live in a migrant-sending community and those who reside in a receiving community
  or
- Who are from the same sending community and who live in the same receiving community.

This preliminary definition is useful as a starting point because it requires researchers to identify the geographic context of the network they want to analyze. However, the methodological challenges have just begun, because effective network analysis also requires scholars to define the boundaries of the network (Aldrich and Herker

1977). "Defining the network's boundaries" means establishing criteria for who is an actor in the network and who is not (Wasserman and Faust 1994). These parameters mean specifying the temporal aspect of the network, and setting rules about the kinds of relationships which are of analytic importance to answer the question being asked by the researcher (Wellman 1983).

I created an "immigration and settlement life-cycle" which enabled me to create snapshots of migrant entrepreneurs' networks at different points in time. I noted who respondents mentioned in the course of my interviews and participant observation and the nature of those relationships. I would then ask for clarification about the relationships, and, when possible, interview that person as well. In other words, my respondents revealed their first- and second-degree connections through our semi-structured interviews

Starting to define what a migrant network is highlights some of the problems with existing scholarship on migrant networks. The next section considers some ways that using the concepts and methods of SNA could enrich our understanding of migration and settlement.

Migrant Networks As Opportunities for Social Network Analysis

This section of the chapter identifies ways the tools and concepts of social network analysis to migrant networks can enrich our understanding of how the structured relationships which exist in communities of migration affect flows of people, information, and money. I accomplish this by asking how SNA might provide additional insights or different results if used to analyze some of the most essential themes in international migration studies.

Migrant Networks and Flows of People

Cumulative causation is one way researchers explain the creation and maintenance of international migration flows (Fussell 2010; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987; Massey and Espinosa 1997). Cumulative causation can be thought of as social inertia, or the idea that an object or a group in motion tends to stay in motion: once a migration flow has begun, it develops its own momentum and becomes a self-perpetuating process. The process begins when a pioneer migrant or small group of initial migrants settle in a receiving community. They provide information and resources to aspiring migrants in the community of origin, who then migrate. These new migrants in turn provide information and resources to more and more aspiring migrants, who continue the cycle.

Cumulative causation has strong points: it is empirically verifiable that a small group of pioneer migrants can generate much larger flows by providing resources to their friends and family members who want to migrate (Bashi 2007; Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987). However, in its most bare-bones version, cumulative causation should lead to exponential growth of migration, since each person who gets incorporated into the migration stream makes it more likely that their relations and acquaintances migrate. Yet this does not occur: out-migration ebbs and flows, and, critically, not everyone in a given community of origin gets drawn into the flow.

Thinking about social networks helps refine the concept of cumulative causation, by explicitly considering (1) the directionality and content of resource exchanges among migrants and potential migrants and (2) the types of relationships which are more and less

likely to lead to migration assistance.

A social networks approach is particularly fruitful for thinking about the exchange or flow of resources within communities on different sides of a border. For instance, cumulative causation creates an exchange model in which information and resources flow from the receiving community to the sending community, and people flow the other way[23]. However, information transmission is subject to social dynamics – it is filtered through particular individuals who put their own spin on it and who control its dissemination. As a result, certain kinds of information are communicated and other kinds are withheld; migrants may communicate the good news about plentiful jobs and high wages but keep to themselves information about the hardships of being separated from family members or experiencing mistreatment (Hirsch 2003). Additionally, migrants in receiving destinations may want to encourage the migration of particular individuals and filter the information they transmit about life in the receiving community accordingly (Bashi 2007). The composition of the migrant stream is affected by the information communicated within the network, but the broad-brush model of cumulative causation does not specifically consider such dynamics.

The other benefit of drawing on social networks to explain the auspices of migration is that it allows detailed analysis of the relationships between migrants and non-migrants. Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González, for instance, find that three types of relationships predominate within migration networks: kinship, friendship, and *paisanaje* (1987). Even more specifically, certain kinds of kinship ties, such as brothers, uncles and

[23] There is, of course, a lot of return migration within international migration contexts: after a sojourn or a certain amount of time in a receiving community, some migrants return to their community of origin. They may or may not decide to migrate again in the future; their previous experience, in addition to the resources and information within their networks, facilitates their repeat migration.

nephews, and cousins are more likely than other types of familial ties to exist within migration networks. But presumably, potential migrants have multiple cousins, and not every nephew with a migrant uncle migrates. More is bound up in these relationships than a simple description of the kind of tie (Hirsch 2003; Horst 2006), and social network analysis offers the tools to analyze such content.

Efforts to explain migration through a social networks approach have largely missed this opportunity. Indeed, rather than drawing on the relationship-focused modeling techniques of social network analysis, quantitative research on migrant networks has relied mostly on aggregate historical data. Doing so[24] eliminates the possibility of tracing interpersonal network ties, which is critical in developing strong network models for understanding behavioral outcomes (Burt 2005; Podolny and Rauch 2007).

Furthermore, existing studies of migrant networks primarily consider dyadic family or social ties (Davis, Stecklov, and Winters 2002; Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa, and Spittel 2001). Dichotomizing interpersonal relationships obscures the complexity of family and fictive kin relationships, and the multiple kinds of connections that potential migrants have with US-based migrants.

In a similar vein, Krissman contends that chain, or dyadic models of migrant networks ignore the nuanced role that non-familial and multiply-connected network actors such as labor recruiters and employers play in shaping international migration. Instead of a network model comprised purely of one-to-one communication, Krissman argues that networks are comprised of "cogs" – actors "located at the heart of the network" (2005:28)

[24] Additionally, existing network studies of migrant networks rely overwhelmingly on historical data. This historical focus obviates consideration of communities which have more recently been incorporated into the migrant streams (Davis, Stecklov, and Winters 2002; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Winters, De Janvry, and Sadoulet 2001).

and who link other actors together. Krissman further contends that cogs have a measurable scope of influence, or reachability, depending on how many other network members they can mobilize. Finally, Krissman recognizes that ties between network actors vary in nature, and can be reciprocal or asymmetrical depending on the motivations of the cog. However, while Krissman notes that network actors have different forms and amounts of influence depending on their role (or structural position) in the network, he does not use SNA to test this idea.

Bashi's work on West Indian migrant networks is one of the few qualitative migration network studies to go beyond a simple one-to-one relationship model in understanding the effect of network connections on migration outcomes (2007). Bashi develops what she terms a "hub and spoke" model of migrant networks, finding that key individuals, whom she refers to as "hubs" occupy critical positions and play powerful roles within migrant networks. Hubs select potential migrants, whom Bashi refers to as "spokes", arrange for their migration, and assist them with integration and settlement in the community of reception. Bashi's research is an exciting initial attempt to model complex migrant networks; however, like Krissman's work, her data is exclusively ethnographic.

The findings from these qualitative network studies point to a compelling opportunity to apply the more quantitative approaches of SNA to migration research. Studies which exclusively utilize qualitative data make it difficult to identify complex patterns in behavior or outcomes, or to speak to the statistical significance of a finding. Additionally, the opportunity to consider the structural features of a migration network is missed when researchers do not draw on the tools of social network analysis. For instance,

social network analysis would find that pioneer migrants are filling structural holes[25] which exist between the network of potential migrants in a sending community and individuals (migrant or otherwise) in a receiving community[26]. As a broker responsible for the closure of that structural hole, pioneer migrants acquire a great deal of power, since they can control what kinds of information and resources get transmitted to whom. Kyle (2004) and Bashi (2007) both note that decisions to share or withhold information are an important means of protecting a migrant's position and power within a migrant network; however, they have not drawn on the structural concepts of social network analysis which would enable the detailed analysis of how the consequences these choices have for the subsequent formation of the migrant network.

Migrant Networks and Flows of Money

Migrant networks are also critical for understanding how migration is financed. Study after study on the economic auspices of migration suggest that capital from family members and social ties is an essential component of making international migration feasible (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003). Funding for migration and settlement is transferred along network ties; as a result, such financing entails social obligations. Although funding between close family members may come with little expectation of repayment, or with relaxed terms (i.e., no interest or no deadline on returning the money), financing provided by more distant relations may carry both financial and social costs. For instance, failure to repay loans may seriously disrupt the relationship and create social stigma or community censure. For loans secured through community ties such as

[25] Structural holes exist when there is no direct linkage between two networks or network substructures.
[26] For more on structural holes, see Burt (1995) and (2005).

loansharks, the social and financial consequences for non-payment may be borne not just by the migrant but by his or her family. Likewise, financial support is often provided for migrants when they arrive in destination communities by family or friends who have already settled: as Menjívar poignantly demonstrates (Menjívar 2000), the inability of migrants to repay this financial assistance or to contribute adequately to household expenditures can cause serious friction between friends and family members or even lead to the dissolution of a relationship.

These socially embedded financial transactions are commonplace and complex (Zelizer 1996, 2000). However, few scholars have analyzed them with a social networks approach. Instead, migrant networks are described as social structures which "lower the cost of migration" since financial resources are provided by some network actors to others. This way of describing the social dynamics of international migration attributes action or power to the network per se. Yet networks are social structures and cannot, of their own volition, act. Furthermore, it is overly simplistic to say that two people from a single sending community are equally likely to migrate merely because they are part of the same social network; each one's gender, reputation, family status, and individual preferences combine with their structural position within the network (the features described above) and lead to individual outcomes. Rather, networks are sets of relationships, and it is a potential migrant's structural position within these relationships which determines whether and how to mobilize resources to migrate internationally (Boyd 1989). When describing the set of relationships and their influence on the auspices of international migration, researchers should consider the structural features of the network: for instance, who is included in the set, the type of relationship which exists between the potential migrant and

the other people in the network, and the resources which the different network participants can and are willing to provide to each other.

Approaching the economic networks of international migration using the tools of social network analysis would identify those individuals who, through their financing of multiple individuals' migration, occupy powerful structural positions within the network. Two conclusions are likely to emerge. First, those who can finance the migration of one person tend to finance the migration of multiple people. This would substantiate Bashi's work on West Indian "hubs" who arranged for the successful migration of several "cogs." It would also support the idea that migrant communities are stratified, by identifying those migrants who are relatively more privileged than their friends and family members who do not have the financial wherewithal to sponsor the migration of their kin.

The other finding that would probably emerge from a social network analysis approach to the economics of international migration is that the power[27] to finance trips exists on both sides of a given border, but is distributed differently in the two contexts. In a given receiving community, power would be more dispersed: although not everyone can sponsor new migration, the number of individuals or families who can is likely to be higher than the number of individuals in the sending community who can do so. In the sending community, therefore, the loansharks or wealthy families who can and do provide financing for migration can be selective about who receives such support and under what conditions. A networks approach would highlight these *non-migrant* actors' structural position and their ability to influence the flow of people across borders by controlling who

[27] Here I define power as the ability to provide or deny resources – in this case, financial and/or logistical support for new migration.

has access to resources.

Migrant Networks and the Flows of Information

Abundant empirical research indicates that the majority of migrants in the US obtain their jobs through someone they know; however, the limitations on migrant social networks may limit the kinds of jobs which are known to be available and accessible in a given community. This process of word-of-mouth job search combined with the limitations thereof reflect what Granovetter terms the strength of weak ties (Granovetter, 1973; see Bagchi 2001 on the role of weak ties in labor immigration): people with whom an actor is closest (i.e., those in his or her immediate social network) may be able to help the actor get an initial job. However, if the actor does not diversify the information flowing through his or her network by having ties with other kinds of people, then the quality of the information diminishes. As a result, job prospects, in terms of quality of position and wages, stagnate.

As an example, Hagan describes the limitations on employment faced by a Guatemalan migrant community in Texas (Hagan 1994): she explains that because essentially all the women were employed as domestic workers for wealthy Texas families, even if they had wanted to get a job doing something else, the only kind of information about jobs that circulated through the women's social network was about positions as domestic workers. Because they had no weak ties – or in other words, because there was such a deep and unbridged structural hole between the women's network and the networks of other potential employers –information about other kinds of jobs was limited and the women remained working for low wages in difficult conditions for a relatively small group

of employers.

One of the effects of network-driven labor incorporation is that migrants tend to become concentrated in sectoral niches: if the pioneer migrants from a particular community of origin start working in restaurants, for instance, the network effects of information dissemination will lead to a concentration of migrants from that community working in restaurants. These sectors – gardening, custodial work, domestic service, or high-tech and software programming – can become labor ghettos from which it is difficult for migrants to emerge. As some of these sectors become ever more identified with migrants or with people from particular national origins, native-born workers may leave the sector. Applying the tools of SNA to social contexts in which migrants or other marginalized workers are experiencing hardships in labor mobility would be an excellent policy or advocacy intervention. It would be possible identify network actors most able to connect otherwise unconnected networks and facilitate the exchange of employment-related information; it would also create a fascinating opportunity to observe how network structures evolve when a structural hole is intentionally filled by a broker.

Social Network Analysis

The basic elements of social networks are nodes — which represent individual actors — and ties — which are the relationships between them. Social network analysis uses a variety of mathematical and statistical measurements to describe the way actors and relationships among them are distributed within a given network. While my analysis is not as mathematically oriented as some SNA, in this section I incorporate some of the key metrics used to describe the structure of social networks. Applying the concepts of SNA to

a qualitative study of networks highlights the broader social dynamics of microeconomic behavior: it becomes easier to see how relationships and resources contained within those relationships inform social action.

My use of concepts from structural network analysis also adds important nuance to the literature on migrant networks, which tend to use the word "network" without incorporating any of the rich theoretical or methodological tools afforded by SNA. Finally, my approach is an effort to re-introduce the social aspects of SNA: much of the existing literature on social networks focuses so intensely on the mathematical and physics-derived analysis of the structures that it is easy to forget that researchers are actually talking about human beings.

Social network analysts use non-probabilistic methods to decide who is included within a given study's population. The challenge is to identify where to draw the boundary between who is included in a network. One way to draw boundaries is to start from a given ego and use a modified snowball sample, in which the network "ends" when the ego does not identify any additional first-degree contacts. This is the approach that I used. I followed an ethnographic technique of not prompting interviewees but instead focused my analysis on who respondents mentioned in the regular course of the interview and participant observation and the nature of those relationships.

Social network analysis is a branch of the mathematical approach to the study of social behavior and is consequently based on a different epistemology than statistical approaches. In broad terms, social network analysis is extremely well suited for inductive studies of the structured relations among groups of entities and the ways in which the structure of those relations enables and constrains action. The assumption is the

researcher's observations about the set of relations which comprise the network "accurately [reflect] the 'real' or 'final' or 'equilibrium' status of the network." Meanwhile, inferential statistics is concerned with replicability and generalizability. To my mind, the question we should ask as network researchers is what these data tell us about how patterned structures of relationships shape behavior in different social or economic contexts.

A closed network is one with easily identified boundaries — in other words, when it is possible to be entirely sure that the analysis incorporates all possible actors. An example of a closed network would be the migrant sending and receiving relations among the roughly 200 countries in the world.

Proposals for Merging Migrant Networks and Social Network Analysis

Krissman argues that much of the literature on migrant networks utilizes the concept of network metaphorically to the detriment of strong empirical analysis (Krissman 2005). I contend that even beyond the underspecified and overly metaphorical use of the term network, many migration scholars have reified the concept to such an extent that they invest networks with active powers not generally attributed to social structures. As described above, migration scholars have described networks as possessing active powers not generally attributed to social structures: it is common to read that networks "channel," networks "lower," and networks "provide." Additionally, in most studies of migrant networks, the networks are simply posited as existing, and neither the processes by which they form nor their structural elements have been thoroughly explored.

In this chapter, I argue that the theories and methods of social network analysis can

shed light on previously unconsidered dynamics of international migration. I likewise suggest that some of the epistemic assumptions and methodological emphases of migrant network research can enrich the field of social network analysis. I specifically propose that:

1. Migrologists adopt a more robust definition of migrant network, consistent with the way networkists define social networks.

Doing so will diminish the overly metaphorical use of the term network to explain international migration processes and create opportunities to examine how structural elements of migrant networks affect migration and settlement outcomes.

2. Migrologists engage with social network analysis to explore more fully how sets of relationships affect the flow of people, money, and information within migrant communities.

Applying SNA to studies of migrant networks highlights how power is distributed in ways that might not be initially apparent. Using the tools of social network analysis will also encourage migrologists to be much more specific about the parameters, boundaries, and assumptions they are making about who is included in the network and who is not.

3. Networkists and migrologists consider the experiential aspect of being part of – or excluded from – a network.

Including a qualitative element to the collection of network data mitigates against the overly structural, exclusively quantitative outlook common to networkists. Migrologists have admirably shown how qualitative and ethnographic data can reveal important details about network structure, and should continue to engage with actor-oriented, humanistic approaches to collecting information about migrants and non-migrants who are part of a network being analyzed.

4. Migrologists and networkists ask how networks come to exist, how they change over time, and how they fall apart.

The ways sets of relationships evolve over time – and the effect that other structural contexts have on network dynamics – are a critical point of inquiry that few networkists and only a limited number of migrologists have focused on. However, both camps would benefit from a consistent and thoughtful analysis of the process of network formation as well as analysis of the network's dynamics and/or effects.

The methodological challenges to applying social network analysis to migrant networks are undeniably substantial. Social networks are not static; the relationships which comprise the basic building blocks of social networks change and evolve over time, and resources and people flow through networks (Dodds, Watts, and Sabel 2003; Newman, Barabási, and Watts 2006; Watts 2003). The dynamic nature of networks presents methodological challenges to researchers, including where to draw the boundaries of the network and which iteration of the network is the most representative or appropriate for analysis. It is also exceptionally difficult to collect detailed network data from people in multiple places, at different times. For example, to construct network models of a migrant's network (structural) position at the time of migration, a researcher needs to have data on what the set of relationships s/he had *at that time* looked like. Such detailed data can be difficult to collect retrospectively. Furthermore, to collect full network data researchers need to be able to interview everyone in the network.

These challenges are mitigated by a dual focus on the social processes of network formation and structural analysis of the network once it has been created; the processual story informs the decision about which structure is the most appropriate to analyze, while

the structural analysis provides analytic leverage for the ethnographic process story.

I also advocate for thinking about network formation as a dependent variable. I argue that by reframing how sociologists of international migration approach their study of networks, new understandings of the distribution of power and the complex relationships migrants and non-migrants have with others emerge. For instance, social network analysis[28] can demonstrate (1) that migrants are strategic actors in the process of network formation and (2) that resources and consequently power are differentially distributed in migrant networks. Networks are valuable both as independent and dependent variables; however, their study has been limited to their effect on outcomes (as independent variables) and these studies have not brought the rich tools of social network analysis to bear.

Key Findings about Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Business Networks

My dissertation attempts to meet these four goals. While my project at its broadest level aims at showing how pioneer entrepreneurs, the first individuals from a recently-settled migrant community to start businesses – contribute to social and economic incorporation, I have a specific interest in applying the theoretical and methodological tools of social network analysis to this study of immigrant entrepreneurs' business

[28] Certainly, no single theoretical or methodological approach can explain all social phenomena. For instance, social networks cannot fully explain the development of policies to control or enforce international migration or migrant settlement. Nor does social network analysis provide detailed insight into describe patterns of nativism or attempts to create instrumentally multi-cultural societies. Social networks explain ways *around* obstacles to action but not the emergence of these obstacles. Rather, the benefit of drawing on social network analysis in the study of social network is the ability to explain action in context of social relationships. Finally, social network analysis captures a *particular* set of social relationships at a *specific* moment in time, and is therefore not ideal for explaining historical change. Nonetheless, by situating action in systems of social relationships, and by framing the development of social relationships in different political, cultural, and economic systems, social network analysis offers an exceptional way to highlight micro-level phenomena in macro-level context.

networks. In so doing, I seek to close the “structural hole” (Burt 1995, 2005) which exists between social network analysis and studies of international migration (as described in both Boyd 1989 and Swedberg 2003).

Much of the academic literature on immigrant entrepreneurship highlights the exchange of resources within a specific ethnic community (Light and Bonacich 1988; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). However, my findings challenge the notion that immigrant entrepreneurs operate in a bounded or ethnically homogenous community.

My dissertation draws on the theories and methodologies of social network analysis to examine the effects of legal status, ethnicity, and social network composition on pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs’ microeconomic activity. I focus on three specific outcomes of pioneer migrant entrepreneurs’ business-development processes:

The role of strong cross-ethnic ties. Pioneer entrepreneurs who only have know or work with people from their particular ethnic or national community have less access to information and resources than those pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs who actively seek out non-co-ethnic partners, investors, advisors, employees, or vendors. Non-co-ethnic ties are of particular importance for undocumented entrepreneurs who are unable to obtain funding from formal institutions such as banks or credit unions and who consequently must rely on other people to act as proxies or intermediaries.

Changing forms of community influence. As pioneer entrepreneurs develop ties with people within and outside their ethnic communities, their structural position changes[29]

[29] Pioneer entrepreneurs develop ties with a lot of people from their ethnic community. These entrepreneurs can then decide who to share resources or information with, who to connect, or who to exclude or deny resources to. This form of influence over the flow of resources within a network is measured by a concept known as centrality, and over the course of their business’ lifespan pioneer entrepreneurs have higher measures of centrality (influence within their ethnic/national networks). On the other hand, successful

and they develop new forms of influence over the flow of resources in their networks. For instance, within their ethnic communities, pioneer entrepreneurs can affect the way other community members enter the labor market and may become advocates for particular social or political causes. Because pioneer entrepreneurs connect ethnic and non-co-ethnic networks they can also exert control over the kind of information or resources exchanged between these networks. Pioneer entrepreneurs can and do create particular notions of what a certain cultural product (food, for example; Matus Ruiz 2012) "should" be through their business dealings with non-co-ethnic customers. In so doing, they create and disseminate concepts of ethnicity, authenticity, and identity in the broader receiving community.

The importance of institutional embeddedness. Pioneer entrepreneurs who establish strong and lasting relationships with community organizations or institutions report better business outcomes, in term of business longevity and profitability. Pioneer entrepreneurs who do not have relationships with institutions report greater dependence on illicit sources of capital.

My research advances social network analysis by utilizing ethnographic methods to collect data on the processes of network formation. Focusing on the *process* of network development makes it possible to consider how an entrepreneur's strategic economic behavior shapes his or her social field (see also Granovetter 1992). In other words, observing how immigrant entrepreneurs make connections in pursuit of business resources – networking in its purest form – reveals the ways immigrant entrepreneurs generate deep and diverse ties to people and institutions within and outside their ethnic community. This

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pioneer entrepreneurs also report many ties to people outside their ethnic/national communities. In this way, pioneer entrepreneurs act as brokers, or the actors who connect two otherwise unconnected networks. Brokers are influential network actors because they control the flow of information <u>between</u> networks. These measures have also been referred to as "bonding" and "bridging" social capital (Putnam 2000).

aspect of my project represents an exceptional viewpoint into the active economic and social incorporation of a newly settled immigrant community into American society.

My approach to studying migrant entrepreneurs' business networks

Harrison White talks about social network formation and change as the coupling and decoupling of identities (White 1992). This notion is helpful for this analysis of how migrant networks change over the course of the migration and settlement life-cycle. As migrants move through the stages of international mobility, residential and labor incorporation, and the early stages of entrepreneurial activity, the relationships they have acquire new meanings as migrants and their contacts exchange resources. For example, the process of clandestine international migration requires information and funds which are provided from family members on both sides of an international border. These resource exchange are facilitated by existing relationships which take on a specific new identity of "migration resource exchange relationship," oriented towards the purposive action (as in Lin 2001) of getting someone safely across the border. Once the migrant has successfully crossed into the United States, however, the relationships he or she is embedded in become decoupled from the identity of a "migration" network and become part of a larger "migrant" network. As described above, this "migrant" network is often conceptualized at a macro level, which would encompass all of the relationships which exist among a set of migrants from a given sending community. Yet taking such a zoomed-out view complicates the effort to clarify how the social processes of migration and settlement affects the relationships that comprise these networks.

In order to achieve a nuanced understanding of network changes across different phases of the migation and settlement life-cycle, I use an intentionally micro-level perspective. The networks I describe in this dissertation are typically described from a given migrant ego's perspective. In other words, I show how the set of relationships a given migrant has changes in structure and composition according to the various resource-mobilization needs associated with clandestine migration, labor market incorporation, and business building.

In many cases, these ego-centric networks overlap. They also aggregate, along with the thousands of other ego-centric networks of Yucatecan migrants living in San Francisco, into a broader and much more complex "Yucatecan migrant network." Depending on the questions a researcher wished to ask about the influence of the social processes of international mobility and settlement on sets of relationships (or vice versa), it may prove helpful to approach the study of Yucatecan migrant networks from this broader perspective, or even to inquire about the role of bi-national ties on key social and economic dynamics. However, the present study is limited to an analysis of how the sets of relationships aspiring in which Yucatecan migrant entrepreneurs are embedded change as a result of the search for resources to support international migration,

Chapter 3: The Role of Yucatecans' Relationships in International Migration

Chapter Abstract: This chapter traces the history of Yucatecan migration to San Francisco. The experiences of Yucatecan migrants follow the same social and microeconomic patterns of other large-scale undocumented Mexican migrant communities in the United States. The basic premise of social network analysis is that the sets of relationships we are embedded in enable and constrain our behavior. The social networks that undergird the structured processes of international migration are the site of resource exchange among aspiring migrants, their non-migrant family members, and US-based migrants.

Focusing on the relationships that migrants rely on to enable their clandestine entry into the US reveals that migrant networks do not exist independently from the networks that aspiring migrants are already embedded in. Instead, aspiring migrants and households work through existing relationships to obtain the resources they need. In so doing, existing kinship relationships acquire new social and economic dimensions specific to the processes of international mobility.

Introduction

Mexican migrants to the United States have sown a fertile field for social scientists to reap. The study of Mexican migration to the United States has been an unendingly fruitful source of sociological, economic, and political knowledge, about practices in sending communities (FitzGerald 2009), receiving communities (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994) and transnational communities (Smith 2006). Thousands of articles and scholarly works have sought to disentangle the relative efficacy of political regimes and economic downturns on deterring clandestine migration (Borger and Muse-Orlinoff 2010), the role of remittances in fostering micro- and macro-economic development (Conway and Cohen 1998), the consequences of long-term separation or family reunification for migrant

households (Hirsch 2003; Muse-Orlinoff, Córdova, Angulo, Kanungo, and Rodríguez 2009), and the incorporation outcomes of migrants in new and traditional receiving contexts (Marrow 2011; Zúñiga and Hernández León 2006).

This study approaches Mexican migration obliquely: through the experiences of an ethnic minority from southeast Mexico. The Yucatán Peninsula has only latterly begun contributing migrants to the *norte*-ward stream of millions who, for a century, have made their way across the border in search of new opportunities to improve their life chances.

Because of the particular ethnic and historic contexts of Yucatecan migrants to the United States, as described in the previous chapter, I treat the experiences of the Yucatecan migrant community in San Francisco as a proxy for new migrant populations without the long-standing migration and settlement resources available to Mexican migrants from sending communities with more entrenched northward flows.

This chapter contextualizes the labor market incorporation and entrepreneurial patterns of Yucatecan migrants living in the Bay Area by first describing how they got there, and the auspices of their migration. I focus specifically on the relationships which undergird the processes of international mobility and settlement, as a way to bring my network perspective to bear on the dynamics of the migrants interviewed for this project.

I identify four distinct eras of Yucatecan migration to the United States: the Bracero program, which led to the labor migration of 17 migrants from Oxkutzcab to the US in the early 1960's; the post-Bracero/pre-IRCA migration of these men's family members, who either migrated legally through their fathers or arrived in time to obtain legal status through IRCA; a period of small-scale migration between 1986 and 1995; and the mass-migration of thousands of Yucatecans per year between 1995 and 2003/4.

The context for these migration waves are: (1) push factors including climate change and destructive weather patterns that make agriculture increasingly challenging; (2) restrictive immigration policies that incentivize clandestine entry, and (3) a global city undergoing a profound economic transformation which resulted in the expansion of service-sector jobs that did not require English or — de facto — legal status.

The cases of Yucatecan migrants in this chapter indicate that migrant networks do not exist independently from the networks that aspiring migrants are already embedded in. Instead, aspiring migrants and households work through existing relationships to obtain the resources they need. In so doing, existing kinship relationships acquire new social and economic dimensions specific to the processes of international mobility.

Yucatecan Migration to the United States

The Yucatán Peninsula juts north like a giant thumb from the palm of Mexico and the wrist of Central America. The peninsula, which divides the Gulf of Mexico from the Caribbean Sea, is tropical, storm-prone, and dotted with limestone sinkholes known as *cenotes*. Three Mexican states — Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo — as well as all of Belize and part of Guatemala partition the peninsula into a handful of political entities, although a shared history of historical grandeur, colonial subjugation, and climatic struggle played out in similar fashion across all three countries in the region.

In the Mexican portion of the peninsula, the collapse of the classical Maya civilization in the 10th century C.E. led to the decline of the region's city-states. When the Spanish arrived in the early 16th century, they instituted an ethnically stratified labor system based on slavery and serfdom. It lasted officially for three centuries, but persists, in

actuality, even until today (García Bernal 2005; Sabido Méndez 1995).

White descendants of the original Spanish *conquistadores* set up large *haciendas* (plantations) for the cultivation of cash crops, chiefly *henequen* (sisal) and sugarcane. Labor for these plantations came from indigenous communities in the region; although chattel slavery of the kind practiced in the Caribbean and the southern part of the United States was not implemented in Yucatán, the social and economic conditions of the indigenous Maya-speaking population were grueling, deplorable, and persistently exploitative. Families lived as sharecroppers, scarcely able to produce enough corn and food to subsist on.

Eventually, the social and economic situation became untenable, and Yucatán erupted into violence during the Caste War in the second half of the 19th century. Afterward, with the hacienda system in shambles, communities cohered around small town centers, and a combination of household and communal (*ejidal*) agricultural production prevailed.

The Yucatán peninsula is both tropically lush and frequently infertile. Although the peninsula is, on the whole, known for its warm climate, abundant rainfall, and agricultural diversity, in reality the soil is of poor quality and perishing droughts and destructive storms both occur with frequency. Subsistence agriculture, even when complemented by animal husbandry, hunting, and the cultivation of honey, is an economically precarious way for Yucatecans to support their families. Yet these activities have long formed the foundation of Yucatecan communities' economic production.

Delays to International Migration from the Yucatán Peninsula

Despite persistent hardship in Yucatán, Yucatecans did not begin migrating to the United States in large numbers until the very end of the 20th century (Lewin Fischer 2007). Several factors worked together to limit the incorporation of Yucatecan migrants into the US-bound flow of Mexicans.

First, the Yucatán Peninsula is geographically isolated from the rest of Mexico by thick jungle and mountains that run between the southern part of the peninsula and the narrow part of Mexico east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. In addition, the northward geographical orientation of the peninsula itself makes overland travel to the United States an immensely long journey: from Mérida, the capital of the state of Yucatán, to the US border city of Brownsville, Texas — the closest US port of entry that does not require traveling by boat — is a trip of some 2,200 kilometers. Other ports of entry are even further; Mérida to El Paso is 3100 kilometers, and Mérida to San Diego is 4100 kilometers. These trips, which still take several days on good roads by bus or car, were almost impossibly long prior to the construction of the Mexican highway system. These transportation constraints recall the challenges of Mixtec and Zapotec communities in getting to both regional markets and the United States, as identified by Rivera Salgado (1999).

By contrast, travel from Guadalajara, in the "cradle" of Mexican migration, to the United States, can be accomplished in fewer than 1,000 kilometers (to the border crossing at Brownsville). Additionally, the construction of railroads in the 19th century that linked central-western Mexico to the US's midwest greatly facilitated international migration from Jalisco, Aguascalientes, and Guanajuato, turning these states (along with Michoacán,

Durango and Hidalgo) into the historic epicenter of US-bound Mexican migration. Such transportation did not exist between the Yucatán and the United States until the 1960's (Adler 2000), and thereby delayed Yucatecans' entry into the flow of Mexican migration.

A second factor which forestalled large-scale migration from Yucatán to the United States was the development of regional labor markets first in Mérida, and subsequently in the state-subsidized tourist boomtowns of Cancún and the Riviera Maya. The development of the Riviera Maya in the 1970's generated a sustained demand for construction and service workers in the hotels and other businesses that sprang up along the northwestern coast of the peninsula, in the state of Quintana Roo. Yucatecans looking for wage-labor opportunities were able to find work and support their families without having to travel to the United States, and were often close enough to return home for weekends as well as town festivals, seasonal holidays, and family gatherings (Re Cruz 2008; Rodríguez, Wittlinger, and Manzanero Rodríguez 2007).

Yucatecan migration to San Francisco, 1960-1990

Yet the lure of wages and job opportunities in the United States was not completely unknown in Yucatán. As the processes of migration from Mexico to the United States matured, more and more towns began sending residents to the US — a kind of national cumulative causation. One of the major catalysts for this expansion of migrant-sending communities was the demand for labor in the United States precipitated by WWII. In light of the military service and oversees deployment of between 13 and 16 million American men and women, the agricultural sector in the US experienced labor shortages. In response, the US Department of Labor created a bilateral labor agreement with Mexico, under which

Mexican men were granted guest worker visas and sent to work on farms, railroads, meatpacking plants, or other industrial entities. This program, known semi-officially as the Bracero Program, lasted two decades, from 1946 until 1964.

Limited Participation in the Bracero Program

In the beginning, the Bracero Program principally drew labor from the historic sending communities of central-western Mexico. As time went on, however, the regional makeup of the participants diversified, and men from southern, eastern, and eventually men from southeastern Mexico enrolled in the program. A small group of men from Oxkutzcab (Fortuny Loret de Mola puts the number at 17 [2004:229]) became Braceros in the early 1960's, in the program's final years. One of these men, born Francisco Blas, described his Bracero experience:

> Francisco: I was born and raised in Oxkutzcab, Yucatán. I was born in 1932. I came [to the United States] as a bracero, picking tomatoes, picking oranges, cutting lettuce…I picked tomatoes in Woodland[, California], I picked peaches in Medesville [sic], I picked cotton in Lubbock, Texas, I picked oranges in…San Juan Capistrano[30].

When the Bracero program ended, Paco recalls that he was able to legalize his status in the United States: "I got my papers, I wasn't illegal for even a day. After [being a *bracero*], they told me I don't have any more work. So I went to a lawyer and got my papers.[31]"

After legalizing his status, Paco brought his wife, Esme, and his children from

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[30] *Tomas: Yo soy originario de Oxkutzcab Yucatán. Nací en 1932…Vine [a los Estados Unidos] de bracero, trabajaba de bracero piscando tomate, piscando naranjas, cortando lechuga…Pisqué tomates en Woodland [California], pisqué duraznos en Medesville [sic], pisqué algodón en [Lubbock,] Texas, pisqué oranges en…San Juan Capistrano."*

[31] *Tomas: "Arreglé mis papeles, yo un día no estuve de ilegal… Luego [de haber trabajado en la pisca] me dijeron que no tengo más trabajo. Y fui a una abogada y arreglé mis papeles."*

Yucatán to San Francisco. They settled in San Francisco, which Paco had seen and liked during his Bracero days. In 1968, Paco opened Paco's Mexican Restaurant in the Richmond district, in the foggy northwest corner of San Francisco. The restaurant served standard, Americanized Mexican food and tequila to local consumers, and Paco's became a neighborhood fixture. Anita, who grew up near Paco's and who, years later, became involved with the Yucatecan community through her Yucatecan husband, recalls Paco's this way:

> Anita: I'm from that neighborhood, I've known my whole life that there was this big Mexican restaurant…Paco's Mexican Restaurant… I always heard about that place, it's where people are happy and there's tequila. It's a Mexican place, right? Later I thought, well, I probably didn't think about it much but I thought that [Paco] was probably from Jalisco. I mean, no one realized… I was aware that it was a big restaurant for like, parties, and that it was a Mexican restaurants, one of the few outside of the Mission. But [I had] no idea they were from the Yucatán Peninsula[32].

As Paco's flourished, and Paco and his family prospered, he added a second enterprise to his economic activity: he began importing undocumented workers from Oxkutzcab. As will be described in more detail below, Paco would cover the cost of the clandestine border crossing for the migrant. Upon arriving in San Francisco, new arrivals would be put to work in the kitchen of Paco's Mexican Restaurant. Their wages would be withheld in recompense for their travel and border crossing expenses. This practice created a slow, steady trickle of clandestine Yucatecan migrants to the Bay Area.

The Second Wave of Yucatecan Migration: Post-Bracero, Pre-IRCA

[32] *Anita*: *Yo soy de esa colonia, he sabido toda la vida que había este gran restaurante mexicano…Tommy's Mexican Restaurant. …Yo siempre he escuchado de ese lugar donde va la gente que es felíz y hay tequila. Es un lugar mexicano, no?, despues pensaba, a lo mejor no lo pensaba mucho pero pensaba que a lo mejor era de Jalisco. Osea, nadie se daba cuenta. ...estaba conciente que era un restaurante grande así tipo fiesta y era restaurante mexicano. Y de los pocos fuera de la Missión y nada de idea que venía de la peninsula de Yucatán.*

When the Bracero program ended, the handful of Yucatecan migrants who had been guest workers in the United States obtained greencards. The children of several men who had been braceros also came to the US. For instance, the father of Don Tito had been a bracero. Don Tito came to the United States in 1978. He spent four years working in berry fields in Oregon, returned briefly to Oxkutzcab, and then came back to the US in time to obtain his permanent residency through IRCA in 1988 or 1989 (he was unclear about the precise year). At that point, he relocated to Lodi, California, 100 miles northeast of San Francisco. In Lodi, Don Tito recalled, he was put to work picking pears and apples. Despite his years of work in the berry fields in Oregon, and his childhood gathering many kinds of fruit in Oxkutzcab, the apples and pears mystified him: he could not, he said, figure out how to pick them. He eventually learned, but did not spend long in Lodi.

Don Tito and a few friends, eventually made their way to San Francisco on the basis of rumors that work in that city was easy to come by. They, together with Paco Blas and his slow but steady stream of imported workers, comprise nearly the entire group of "pioneer migrants" from Oxkutzcab to San Francisco. Knowing that Paco liked to hire his paisano*s* and that by this time in Don Tito's migration experience Paco's Restaurant had been around for two decades or so, I asked Don Tito if he had approached Paco Blas for a job. A look of derision crossed Don Tito's face, and he answered, "no, because if Francisco does a favor for you, he throws it in your face later."

Don Tito said that instead of going to Paco, an uncle of his friend Don Rodrigo agreed to find them jobs. However, Don Tito and Don Rodrigo would have to pay the uncle for the job placement. This dynamic, of certain community members controlling the entry into the labor market of their family and friends, will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter

4.

By the mid 1980's there was a small, socially cohesive group of migrants from Oxkutzcab living in San Francisco. Most had papers, obtained first through the Bracero Program or IRCA, and later by legally migrating spouses and children. This first generation of migrants likely did not exceed 100 people, and strong ties of kinship, marriage, and *compadrazgo* — co-godparenting — characterize many of the relationships among this group. Additionally many of these individuals still reside in San Francisco for a good portion of the year, although almost all spend time in Oxkutzcab where they have built solid and capacious houses that are not, however, as grandiose as those built by later generations of migrants who are trapped in the United States because of the cost and danger of clandestine re-entry (Cornelius, FitzGerald, Lewin Fischer, and Muse-Orlinoff 2010).

Yucatecan Mass-Migration to San Francisco, 1990 - 2010

From the mid-1980's to the mid-1990's little changed in the composition of the Yucatecan community in San Francisco. The few new arrivals who showed up often did so via Paco's transnational, semi-exploitative labor funnel. These migrants were almost always undocumented, and were predominantly young men unaccompanied by wives or children. And then, in the late 1990's, everything changed.

A number of factors precipitated the sudden large-scale emigration out of Oxkutzcab to San Francisco.

- The challenges of growing enough food to sustain a family, much less earn a profit in the regional marketplaces, especially in the face of climatic challenges (*ibid*) and dropping citrus prices.
- The overall regional incorporation of Yucatán into the flow of US-bound Mexican migrants: it was during this time, for instance, that migrants from Tunkás also began migrating in relatively substantial numbers to Santa Ana,

Anaheim; that those from Cenotillo went to San Bernardino, people from Muna went to Thousand Oaks, etc.

- The self-reinforcing cycle of market dynamics of clandestine border crossing, in which the demand for people smugglers is matched by a steady supply of willing, if expensive, coyotes
- The rapid growth of the regional economy in the San Francisco Bay area as a result of the first internet bubble in the late 1990s. This last issue, and its consequences on the labor market in the area will be picked up again in the chapter on labor market incorporation.

The combination of these contextual factors and shifts in labor market opportunities – the pushes and the pulls – engendered an abrupt transformation of the Yucatecan migrant flow. What had been a slow but steady trickle of northward bound migrants turned into caravans of buses departing weekly from the Oxkutzcab's town center, headed for the border in Arizona. What had been a small, tight-knit community of migrants in San Francisco characterized by many strong ties and decades-long migration experience became a community comprised of thousands of newly arrived migrants shivering in the raw San Francisco air and mystified by, as one Yucatecan recalled, "buses that talk to you." And what had been a community of a few hundred was suddenly a population of 10,000.

> Gregorio: "When I got [to San Francisco in about 1990], there were about 100 people from Oxkutzcab, more or less. People started going around 1995, that's when it started. People started coming…in huge numbers.[33]"
>
> Doña Zenaida: In those years (the 1980's), when I went [to San Francisco] the first time, there weren't many [Yucatecans]. 20 years ago, [it wasn't] as intense as it is now. There were some [Yucatecans], but not many. Now, wherever you go, you see a paisano (compatriot). Now, any store you go to, you get there and see a paisano and everything. You go to a restaurant and [paisanos] are there. There's a lot[34].

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[33] *Gregorio: Cuando llegue allí nomás lo que habían ahí de Oxkutzcab eran como unos cien más o menos. La gente empezó a ir por ahí del 95, es cuando empezó, la gente ya venía así mira, pero por montones.*

[34] *Doña Zenaida: En aquellos años (the 1980's), que fuí la primera vez no mucho. Ahora como 20 años, no exagerado como ahorita. Si hay también, si hay varios pero no mucho. Ahorita [a] donde te giras ves [a] tu*

Not everyone arrived at once, of course. The large-scale migration from Oxkutzcab occurred primarily between the winters of 1995-6 and 2003-4. During that period, thousands of Yucatecans arrived in San Francisco every year. A community leader, recalling the influx, recalled, "I'd see someone in Ox over the holidays, and then boom, two or three weeks later, I'd run into him on Mission Street… 'hey, dude, what are doing here?' I'd ask him, 'when the hell did you arrive?' And he'd say, 'hey, I just got here!' It was amazing." For his part, Lázaro recalled that when he came to San Francisco in 2001, "at that time we came with almost 100 people. 10 buses left [Oxkutzcab] for the airport… [we traveled] from Mérida to the DF, from the DF to Hermosillo, and in Hermosillo there were 10 more buses waiting for us that took us to the border. Everyone [was] from Yucatán.[35]"

The shift to mass-migration from Oxkutzcab to San Francisco happened quickly, while the dynamics of who migrated continued to reflect social norms of gender and the salience of family ties in facilitating clandestine migration.

The following cases exemplify these dynamics.

Case: Bernardo

Bernardo arrived in San Francisco in 1991, a few years in advance of when emigration from Oxkutzcab reached its zenith. Bernardo made the trip with family friends who knew the route:

I came with some people I knew, with family friends… they had lived here

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paisano. *Ahorta tienda que vayas, llegas allá y [ves] un* paisano *y todo. Vas en un restaurant [y] están allá. Mucho hay.*

[35] *Lázaro*: "*en ese tiempo nosotros venimos casi con cién personas, se salio casi (con) diéz combis para el aeropuerto… Desde Merida al D.F. y del D.F. a Hermosillo y de Hermosillo ya nos estaban esperando otras combis que ya nos llevaron hasta la frontera…Todos [eran] de Yucatán.*"

> [in San Francisco] before, they knew the area here in San Francisco, they knew the life here. And that's why my mom and dad felt okay trusting them to bring me, so that I could come to San Francisco[36].

Bernardo described the decision to migrate as having been made for him by his parents:

> I had a brother who lived here for 10 years. Since 1981 my brother [was] here and the thing is that my brother was doing [stuff], building, having all his stuff there, with the money that gets sent from [San Francisco to Mexico]. So he built his stuff there and then my dad and mom said, 'well, so many things can happen being in the norte, why don't we send you to [check it out]?' And me, without wanting it, even[37].

Bernardo recalled his journey from Oxkutzcab to San Francisco as having occurred in phases, each one bringing him closer to the border crossing in Mexico's far northwest and ultimately the Bay Area: "from [my] town to Mérida, from Mérida to Mexico DF, stop in Mexico City, [then] to Tijuana, from Tijuana to San Diego, from San Diego to San Francisco.[38]" The detail with which Bernardo remembered his itinerary points to the centrality of the migration journey in migrants' memories: nearly 20 years after the fact, Bernardo still recalled the precise stopping points on his 5,000 km trip from Yucatán to the United States. The trip may also retain a certain power in Bernardo's mind because he was barely 15 years old when his parents dispatched him to the United States.

Bernardo migrated without papers despite the fact that his brother had acquired legal permanent residency through IRCA. However, Bernardo's brother was able to

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[36] *Bernardo: Vine con conocidos, con amigos que la familia ya conocían…y ya habían radicado antes aquí, ellos ya conocían el lugar aquí en San Francisco, ya conocían la vida aquí. Y fue por lo cual mi mamá y papá se animaron más a confiar en ellos a que me trayeran, a que yo viniera a San Francisco.*

[37] *Bernardo*: *Yo tenía un hermano que ya radicaba aquí por 10 años. Desde [el] 81 mi hermano aquí y pues la cosa es que estaba mi hermano haciendo, construyendo, teniendo lo de él allí, con el dinero que uno manda de aquí. Pues él construyó llá sus cosas y de allá pues mi papá y mi mamá dijeron, 'pues tantas cosas se pueden hacer estando en el norte, ¿por qué no te mandamos a ver?' — y sin voluntad, sin la mía.*

[38] *Bernardo*: *"del pueblo hasta Mérida, de Mérida a México (DF), escala México, a Tijuana, de Tijuana a San Diego, de San Diego a San Francisco."*

arrange for tourist visas for Bernardo's parents who began traveling back and forth between Yucatán and the United States and operating a small-scale import/export business bringing certain importable foods from Mexico into the US and clothes, electronics, and other goods to non-migrant family members in Yucatán (see Chapter 8).

Bernardo's family typifies the mixed-status families in which family members' legal statuses vary substantially. Bernardo's brother is an LPR, Bernardo — until getting deported in 2010 — was undocumented, their parents were permitted to travel back and forth as often as they liked with their tourist visas, as long as they did not remain in the United States more than 6 months, and Bernardo's children are US citizens by virtue of having been born in the United States.

Bernardo's migration experience is also typical in the way that his parents arranged for him to travel with close, trustworthy family friends: they may have been sending an adolescent to another country without permission to enter, but they did all they could to ensure that he would arrive safely. In addition, Bernardo's brother was able to serve as a temporary guardian for Bernardo when he got to San Francisco. In this reliance on close relationships marked by high degrees of trust, Bernardo's experience exemplifies the patterns of clandestine migration from Mexico to the United States.

Case: Miguel Suizo

Miguel Suizo was born in 1977 in Oxkutzcab, the second of three brothers in a lower-middle class Spanish-speaking household. After finishing *secundaria* in Oxkutzcab, he enrolled for a year in the town's private high school, but soon decided to seek a new path:

> A lot of us got the idea to [migrate] because of the situation we were in. Wanting to study but there weren't the same chances as now. Before, there was a high school but you had to pay. It was private… I spent a year in [that] high school and I had to pay, my grandma helped me, my mom helped me, but I could see that it was hurting them financially. They were doing so many things for me, so I said, 'no, I'd better go look for more options[39].'

Miguel Suizo decided to follow the path of many residents of agricultural towns in the Yucatán Peninsula who seek work in Mérida, the state's capital, and the tourist destinations along the Riviera Maya (as in (Castellanos 2010 and Rodríguez, Wittlinger, and Manzanero Rodríguez 2007). However, Miguel Suizo was not happy with the options he found: "I started by going to Mérida and I didn't like it, I tried to go to Cancún and the same thing — I didn't like it because of how little education we had.[40]"

Miguel Suizo attributes his dislike of the options in urbanized and tourist destinations in Yucatán as resulting from his lack of education; the limitations also stemmed from limited social capital which constrained his access to well-paying job opportunities and his growing sense that life in the United States was both lucrative and attainable.

Miguel Suizo recalls that his cousin Esteban, a legal migrant, traveled back and forth between San Francisco and Oxkutzcab regularly. When he would show up in Oxkutzcab, Miguel Suizo and his other cousins marveled at the things and money Esteban brought with him: "when he got [to Oxkutzcab], we saw how he was dressed, bad-ass shoes, shirts, t-shirts, and a little money. So we asked him, 'hey, how do you do it?' [He'd

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[39] *Miguel Suizo: ...a muchos nos idearon la idea de viajar por la situación en que estábamos. De querer estudiar y no habían los mismos chances que ahorita. Antes había una escuela preparatoria…que a fuerza era de paga. Era privada…estuve un año en la prepa y ya de allá me costeaba, me ayudaba mi abuelita, me ayudaba mi Mamá, pero veía que les hacía daño en lo económico. Eran muchas las cosas que estaban haciendo por mí y digo — no, mejor voy a buscar más opciones.*

[40] *Miguel Suizo*: *"Empecé, fui a Mérida y no me gustó, intenté ir a Cancún y lo mismo, no me gustó por la falta de preparación que llevábamos.*

say,] 'Well, in the [US] that's how it is[41]."

Esteban's cool clothes and cash came from working as a cook at a restaurant in San Francisco. When Miguel Suizo was 18, Esteban encouraged him to head north: "it was when there was a work opportunity that he told me, 'hey, get here as soon as you can because in one of the restaurants where I'm working there's gonna be an opening[42]." Miguel Suizo described this invitation as a typical occurrence among his friends:

> I have buddies that are [migrating], they get chances to go, they have the money or someone who pays for them. They go and when they go, they say, 'the day that I'm there and I'm all set, if you want to come, you let my know,' or 'I'll call you in a little bit and if you're ready or if I'm ready to pay for you to get here, you can come[43].'

Miguel Suizo explained that when he arrived in San Francisco he experienced the same desire to make it possible for his friends and family to join him in the United States:

> You get that feeling of wanting to help your friend, your friend or your relative, or like in my case… me too, when I got [to San Francisco] and I saw the place and the salary, and how people live. I wanted that [people] who were [in Mexico], mostly my relatives, could be where I was[44].

In the meantime, however, the first challenge was to arrange to get across the border without papers — always an expensive endeavor. Esteban backed up his invitation to Miguel Suizo with an investment in his cousin's migration, and Miguel Suizo sold off some livestock he had acquired: "Esteban lent me part [of the money I needed], I came up

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[41] *Miguel Suizo:* "*Cuando él llegaba acá, veíamos como venía vestido, zapatos así chingones, camisas, playeras y un poco de dinero. Y le preguntábamos — ¿oye, cómo le haces? — no, pues allá en el otro lado así es.*"

[42] *"Cuando hubo la oportunidad de trabajo fue cuando él me dijo — hey, vente lo más pronto que puedas porque ya hay en uno de los dos restaurantes donde estoy trabajando va a haber chance."}*

[43] *Hay compañeros que están yendo, que les salen chances de irse, tienen el dinero o alguien les va a financiar. Ellos pues van y cuando ellos van, nos dicen — el día que yo esté allá y yo esté bien, si tu quieres venir me hablas o yo te voy a hablar dentro de tanto tiempo y si estás listo o yo estoy listo para pagar tu entrada, puedes venir…"*

[44] *Miguel Suizo*: *Tiene uno ese sentimiento de querer ayudar a su amigo, a su amigo a su pariente o es como por mi caso…yo igual cuando llegué allá y vi el lugar y el trabajo y la paga y como se vive. Me dió ganas de que los que estén [en México], principalmente mis familiares, estuvieran donde yo estoy…*

with another part because I was working for it. I sold off some animals I had… before going I had livestock, pigs[45]."

For Miguel Suizo, information and money from Esteban, who was based in the United States, were critical in his decision to migrate. This dynamic is typical of migration from Mexico to the United States (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003), as is the way that Esteban urged his cousin to migrate specifically so that Miguel Suizo could get a job at the same restaurant where Esteban was already working. I describe Miguel Suizo's incorporation into the labor market in San Francisco in chapter 5.

Miguel Suizo's experience exemplify the social norms around clandestine migration in Oxkutzcab. Migrating to the United States without authorization is socially condoned, and there is no stigma attached to migrating for "low-status" work. In addition, Miguel Suizo's migration was facilitated by a male cousin, which is a prevalent pattern among undocumented Mexican migrants to the United States (first identified in Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987).

Case: Juan

Juan's experience mirrors some of Miguel Suizo's, particularly in his migration alongside a male cousin. However, Juan developed a relationship with Paco Blas, who provided Juan. with the money he needed to re-enter the US after returning to Yucatán for a year.

Juan grew up in Yaxhachén, one of the small agricultural communities in the

[45] *Miguel Suizo: Esteban me prestó una parte [del dinero que necesitaba], yo puse una parte también porque por lo mismo trabajaba. Se vendieron unos animalitos que tenía acá. Antes de irme tenía ganado, cochinos.*

county of Oxkutzcab. Juan, his parents, and his 7 brothers and sisters grew corn and other crops on the family's land, and Juan went to school as money and farming allowed. He graduated from primary school in 2000 at 17, and headed for San Francisco in the company of a cousin who had entered the United States clandestinely several times before.

Notably, Juan's father, a non-migrant in the small town outside of Oxkutzcab where his family lived, was instrumental in arranging his son's migration to San Francisco: "my dad went to ask my cousin, he said, 'you know what, my son wants to migrate. Will you take him?' 'Yes, sure, I will take him so he can find work[46].'" In order to migrate this first time, Juan's family pawned their house and borrowed money from his cousin's mother.

Juan' cousin worked at Paco's Mexican Restaurant and after a few months of washing dishes at a Chinese restaurant, Juan found a job there too. Three and a half years later, he was fed up with life in the United States and returned to Yucatán: "I got annoyed, you know, so I put together some money, I built my house [in Yucatán], I bought my car, that's how it went. I went for a year of vacation[47]." During his year in Yucatán, Juan married his girlfriend, whom he had met prior to migrating the first time and with whom he had maintained a long-distance relationship over the phone.

In order to support his new family, Juan decided to return to San Francisco, and appealed to Don Francisco for help getting back into the United States: "I came back again… in 2006… my boss loaned me [the money to make the return trip to the US]. Don Francisco [Blas]… a little at a time, in less than two months, I repaid him. Three thousand

[46] *Juan: "mi papá se lo fue a preguntar [a mi primo], dijo,'sabe qué, mi hijo quiere [migrar], ¿si lo llevas?'sí, está bien, sí lo llevo a que consiga trabajo."*

[47] *Juan*: "*Me fastidié así, ya junté un poco de dinero, hice mi casa, compré mi carro, fue así. Un año fui de vacaciones."*

dollars[48].” During the time that Juan was repaying the migration loan[49], regular payments were deducted from his paycheck. However, he was not charged interest on the money he borrowed from Paco’s, unlike the first time he borrowed money to finance a clandestine trip to the United States. That loan, taken from his aunt, carried a 10% interest rate. Juan described this as the “family” interest rate; his aunt typically charges borrowers 20% interest.

Juan bought one of his brothers a plane ticket from Mérida to Hermosillo and paid for the coyote that brought his brother into the United States. However, this brother *“se escapó”* with his girlfriend to the Southeast (either Atlanta or Alabama, Juan was not sure). The term *“escaparse”* used by Juano describe his brother’s relocation suggests a sense of betrayal, as if Juan expected his brother to return Juan’s generosity by remaining in San Francisco. Nevertheless, Juan’s experience exemplifies the important role that the institution of Paco’s Mexican Restaurant played in facilitating clandestine migration from Yucatán to the United States. Juan’s arrival was possible because of his cousin’s employment at Paco’s. When Juan wanted to come back to the United States after spending a year in Yucatán, Paco’s loaned him the money he needed to make it across the border. And working at Paco’s enabled Juano sponsor the clandestine migration of his brother.

Juan, like many migrants from Oxkutzcab, supported the migration of family members to the United States by loaning them or giving them money to pay for clandestine border crossing. In this way, Juan exemplifies the social patterns Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González traced in Return to Aztlan (1987), and serves as a rebuff to Bashi’s

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[48] Juan: *“Regresé otra vez…[en] 2006…mi patrón me lo prestó [el dinero para hacer el viaje de regreso a los EEUU]. Don Tomás…Poquito a poquito, en menos de dos meses se lo devolví. Tres mil dólares.”*

[49] This was the second loan Juan had taken out from Tommy’s: during his first stay, he had borrowed $5,000 to build a house in Yaxhachen.

findings that "spokes" — who receive migration assistance from relatives — do not in turn help other migrants make it to the United States (Bashi 2007).

Case: Dalia Cauich

Dalia Cauich is a petite woman in her late thirties with a dry wit and a knack for telling stories. During my time in the field, Dalia began referring to me as "Lela," which in Spanish means "Dummy." "*Hola, Lela!*," she'd call out when I'd walk into the place we regularly met. "*Cómo estás, Lela*?" Yucatecans often give one another dirty or insulting nicknames as a sign of *compañerismo*, but it was typical of Dalia's sense of humor that it was impossible to tell if she was intentionally calling me Dummy or if she had internalized my name as such and found it deliciously funny.

Dalia grew up in Oxkutzcab with two brothers and parents who sold produce in Oxkutzcab and throughout the peninsula. She remembers that during her childhood, the family sometimes could only rely on what they grew: "I remember that [sometimes] we didn't have anything to eat, my mother took avocados, made guacamole, put it in tortillas, and that's what there was. We ate just beans, tortillas, avocados…[50]"

When Dalia was a teenager, she went to secretarial school, and then left Oxkutzcab for the island of Cozumel where her mother ran a produce stand. Dalia spent 5 years working in her mother's fruit stand, where she learned the rudiments of running a small business. From there, she recalls, she obtained work in another store which sent her to other parts of southeastern Mexico on business. During this time, however, Dalia was dreaming of going to the United States. After 10 years of thinking about migrating, in September,

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[50] *Dalia*: *"recuerdo tambien que no teniamos qué comer, mi madre agarraba los aguacates, hacia guacamole, lo ponia en tortillas y era lo que habia, comiamos puros frijoles y tortillas, aguacates…*

1998 Dalia joined the wave of Oxkutzcabenses headed to San Francisco.

Like Miguel Suizo, Bernardo, and Benicio, Dalia had no way of migrating to the United States legally. Instead, she joined a group of Oxkutzcabenses who traveled first to Mérida, flew to Nogales, and then crossed the border on foot into Arizona. During Dalia's trip to the United States, she inadvertently got stuck in Los Angeles. She made a series of phone calls to family members in Mexico and the US as well as the people smuggler who had gotten her across the border to Arizona:

> [Once we had crossed the border] a coyote picked us up. I spent almost a month with another person… in Nogales. Then in Nogales we were in a hotel, they told us that they were going to bring us [to San Francisco] but that person never came and so they stuck us in a hotel. Then another person picked us up…and we got to Tucson, but in Tucscon the coyote's brother-in-law was drunk. So they… took me to the airport, they bought me a fake ticket. But that person told me 'the first stop is San Jose.' 'Got it, ok,' I said, 'it's fine,' I said, and I followed that rule. But it was Los Angeles, and I got out in Los Angeles without realizing it.
>
> When I saw Los Angeles, I was there and with the Migra behind me [i.e., on the other side of the security checkpoint]…I had to call Yucatán and call one of my brothers in San Francisco. He told me, 'if you go back in [to the airport] they'll catch you.' But I got lucky, the coyote had a sister in Los Angeles… so I had to track down that person. They came to get me at the airport… and that night…they bought me a bus ticket to San Jose.[51]

At the time of her migration, one of Dalia's younger brothers was already living in San Francisco. He contributed $200 towards the cost of her migration. Dalia disdains this amount as small; she recalls a friend of her parents as having been more influential in

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[51] *Dalia*: *Nos recogió [un] coyote, yo estuve casi un mes con otra persona…en Nogales, de Nogales estuvimos en un hotel, nos dijeron que nos iban a traer pero nunca llegó esa persona y ya nos iba a echar en el hotel. De allá nos recogión otra persona…llegamos a Tucson y de Tucson su cuñado de la coyota estaba tomado. Y de allá me … me llevaron al aeropuerto, me compraron un boleto falso. Pero esa persona me dijo "primera parada es San José"… ajá, y OK le digo, está bien, le digo, yo obedecí esa regla, [pero] eran Los Ángeles, yo me bajé en Los Ángeles…sin darme cuenta y cuando yo miré ya a los Ángeles ya estoy y la migración estaba atras…Tuve que hablar a Yucatán y uno de mis hermanos que estaba [en San Francisco]…y me dice, 'si entras, te van a agarrar.' Pero que suerte tengo, la coyota tenía una hermana de Los Ángeles …y tuve que localizar a esa persona, me encontraron en el aeropuerto…y en la noche…me compraron boleto de autobus para San José."*

helping her arrange to migrate. Dalia and her husband Esteban used the term "*recomendada*" to describe the dynamic of being able to stay with a non-familial contact when she first arrived in San Francisco:

> Q: Did you go straight to your brother's house?
> Dalia: No, I was *recomendada*. Other people helped me.
> Esteban: [Yucatecans] say '*recomendados'* for those people who are getting help, who are borrowing a room while they look for work and stuff[52].

Being *recomendado* and having a safe place to land when a migrant first arrives in a new city is an important part of arranging to migrate. In Dalia's case, she was *"recomendada"* to a woman known as Doña Clemencia, the ex-wife of Don Tito, whose story is described above. Doña Clemencia migrated legally through her husband; both Clemencia and Tito then assisted new migrants from Mexico make their way to and settle safely in San Francisco.

Dalia was able to rely on Doña Clemencia's assistance because Dalia's parents knew Clemencia, trusted her, and were able to ask that she assist their daughter when she made it to the United States. Likewise, Bernardo's parents made specific and important decisions about the auspices of his migration based on who they knew and trusted.

These cases suggest that that non-migrants participate in migration decisions and arrangements in ways that are overlooked when the concept of a chain or a hub-and-spoke are used to describe who participates and how in migrant networks. Dalia's case and Bernardo's example, which are both typical scenarios for undocumented migrants from Mexico, instead underscore how studies of how social networks influence international

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[52] *Q: ¿Usted llegó directo allí a la casa de su hermano?*
Dalia: No, estuve recomendada…Otras personas me ayudaron.
Esteban: [Los yucatecos] le llaman recomendados a que de que le ayudaron en prestarle el cuartito mientras buscaba trabajo y todo.

migration behavior must include people and information from the country of origin. Members of migrant social networks, particularly in the early phases of migration and settlement, transmit information northwards and southwards. This information is important in facilitating successful clandestine migration, but it is the relationships among migrants and non-migrants that make migration possible and desirable.

Discussion

Migration is made possible by the exchange of microeconomic resources within family and community social networks (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Davis, Stecklov, and Winters 2002; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987). However, the structured processes of international migration also create constraints on who can realistically migrate, under what contexts, and to where. Social norms around gender roles, the concentration of community or family members in a particular location, and migrants' human capital create limits on who can become part of the international flow of migration, and the specific details of their international mobility.

Much has been written about the structured relationships that shape clandestine migration from Mexico to the US (see, *inter alia*, Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987; Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003). These studies note the gendered dynamics of migration (Hirsch 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Muse-Orlinoff, Córdova, Angulo, Kanungo, and Rodríguez 2009), the role of labor brokers in connecting aspiring labor migrants to jobs (Krissman 1995), and the patterns of familial ties that first-time migrants rely on (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Hernández-Díaz 2009; García and Barreno 2007).

My data indicate that all three of these patterns characterize the patterns of Yucatecan migration to the US. In addition, the above cases highlight two other key findings about the social contexts of resource exchange to support clandestine migration.

1. Clandestine migration does not only depend on the resources available from a migrant's own relationships. The ties that a migrant's family members (both migrant and non-migrant) have are important in facilitating first-time clandestine migration.
2. Once in the US, migrants make new relationships which yield new resources for subsequent clandestine re-entry into the US.

Finally, migrant networks do not exist independently from the networks that aspiring migrants are already embedded in. Instead, aspiring migrants and households work through existing relationships to obtain the resources they need. In so doing, existing kinship relationships acquire new social and economic dimensions specific to the processes of international mobility. These new dimensions are the first stage of network transformations that result from the processes of international migration and settlement. The next chapter describes the changes in migrants' social network works that occur during labor market incorporation.

Chapter 4: Network Diversification in a Constrained Labor Market

Introduction

In this chapter I argue that, similar to patterns observed in other migrant communities (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Hagan 1994; Smith 2006), Yucatecan migrants rely on family members and close friends from within their ethnic community to find their first jobs in the United States. Over time, migrants' social networks diversify through their participation in the wage labor market. As a result, migrants with experience in the wage labor market in the US find out about job openings from non-Yucatecan as well as Yucatecan network alters. In other words, the longer migrants are in the US labor market, the greater the diversity of network ties and the less redundant the information within their networks. However, contrary to the conventional wisdom that says that when networks diversify, so do job opportunities (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996), as Yucatecan migrant networks diversify in San Francisco, they do not experience labor mobility.

Contrary to the prevailing claims of the literature on brokerage, I find that network actors who connect co-ethnic immigrant job seekers to job openings are not necessarily doing so for financial gain; however, they do experience key economic, emotional or psychological benefits from such activity. Instead, they select for employees' traits that will lead to cohesive, congenial co-workers.

I conclude by arguing that once employed in wage-labor jobs, employment

opportunities are ultimately constrained by migrants' lack of documentation, non-transferable technical skills, limited human capital, and redundant information resulting from high concentrations of co-ethnic co-workers. As a result, and despite the increasing diversification of their social networks, the Yucatecan migrant experience in the Bay Area can be described as both one of labor market incorporation and occupational segregation.

International migration creates geographically concentrated social networks of migrants in receiving communities.

In theory, a migrant who leaves Mexico to find work in the United States can decide to go anywhere he or she wants to. However, the concentration of family, friends, and hometown neighbors in specific destination in the United States frequently acts as a constraint on the actor's decision about where to go first: migrants go where their people are.

This pattern was very much in existence in the Yucatecan community. As described above, Yucatecan mass-migration began in earnest in the mid-1990's. A combination of existing social networks in San Francisco and a tremendous expansion of the labor market resulting from the Bay Area tech bubble of the 1990's precipitated a relatively fast and large-scale influx of Yucatecans to "San Pancho" (Pancho is the Spanish diminutive for Francisco). The lion's share of these migrants were from a string of communities along a 4-lane highway that cuts through the jungle in the southern part of the state of Yucatán. These cities, for instance Oxkutzcab, Peto, Ticul, and Tekax, are urban in comparison with their surrounding small towns, but hardly metropolises.

According to INEGI's 2010 Censo de Poblacion y Vivienda, Oxkutzcab and its surrounding *comisarias* have an official population of just under 28,000, with an additional 147 residents in the United States. However, in a 2009 interview with a local INDEMAYA[53] representative, at that time there were 10,000 residents of Oxkutzcab and its environs living in the United States, nearly all of them in San Francisco. This official explained that had arrived at this figure by (1) counting the local citizens who had not voted in the previous election cycle and (2) going into the small agricultural communities in the county and asking where everyone was. During the interview with this official, he pulled out 3-ring binders which contained sheaves of paper, each one of which was a photocopy of half a dozen ID cards from the Mexican Institute of Federal Elections. Small pencil checkmarks indicated those residents who had voted, and he pointed out that the ID cards which lacked checkmarks were those of people known to be living in the United States.

This methodology is incomplete, if not outright illegal. For another thing, residents who did not vote are not necessarily living in the United States; they could very well be living in Mérida, in Cancún, or in Mexico City. Second, INDEMAYA's estimate excludes local residents who are too young to have obtained an IFE card — in other words, anyone who was not yet 18 at the time of the previous election. And third, obtaining an IFE ID card requires that the applicant have "*un modo honesto de vivir,"* which in theory would exclude malingerers or convicts[54] from consideration in INDEMAYA's calculations.

Nevertheless, community leaders in both the US and Yucatán agree that the INDEMAYA calculations are fairly accurate. This accuracy is due to a number of factors,

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[53] The Institute for the Development of Mayan Culture in the State of Yucatán (El Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Cultura Maya en el Estado de Yucatán). A state agency that promoted Maya language and acted as a liaison between the state government and Mayan-speaking communities in the United States.
[54] http://www.ife.org.mx/portal/site/ifev2/Sistema_Politico_Electoral_Mexicano/

including:

1. The high odds that local migrants are, in fact, in the United States. Domestic or internal migration from Oxkutzcab to other cities in the region or in Mexico has not been as high as rates reported in other Yucatecan towns of emigration. For instance, residents of Tunkás, which is further north in the dryer and flatter part of the state, have for many decades traveled to Mérida or the Riviera Maya for work (Echeverría Victoria, Cen Caamal, Escalante Góngora, and Quintal López 2011; Rodríguez, Wittlinger, and Manzanero Rodríguez 2007). By contrast, it is generally agreed that if residents of Oxkutzcab go anywhere, it is probably to the US.
2. Overestimates of the number of US-based migrants are mitigated by the undercount of US-based migrants who do not have IFE cards.
3. The fact that Oxkutzcab and especially the *comisarías* are relatively small towns and most people have a pretty good idea of where everyone is.

This last point deserves some additional reflection. As the county seat, Oxkutzcab has a town hall and offices for several federal services including INDEMAYA; it also has a dozen or so schools of various sizes and levels, a handful of medical clinics, and a commercial area affectionately referred to as "*dauntáun*" (downtown). Walking across the city in any direction takes just over an hour, and less time in one of the fleet of yellow tricycle rickshaws that transport people and merchandise from neighborhood to neighborhood. Oxkutzcab is not as small as other migrant-sending communities I have spent time in, but it is small enough that after only a day or two my research colleague and I were given nicknames that somehow became immediately ubiquitous. When we would

introduce ourselves to new contacts, they would often respond, “oh, sure, el chino y la güerita, I’ve heard of you guys.” That is to say, word gets around Oxkutzcab quickly, conveyed in Maya, in Spanish, and in the bilingual conversations people have with friends and relatives they meet in the course of their day.

The small-town feel of Oxkutzcab is heightened by the complex family ties that link households across the city and from the city proper to the much smaller groups of households that comprise the county’s *comisarías*. These *comisarías* typically consist of a few dozen houses in various states of construction, with a small convenience store and perhaps an elementary school. Within the county of Oxkutzcab, however, and again in a way that mirrors the social and genealogical makeup of many other rural Mexican communities, a handful of surnames predominate. In Oxkutzcab, for instance, the family, the Peraza family, the Magaña family, and the Pacho family all have multiple branches and generations that live throughout the city.

Growing up in a town that is geographically small and linked by ties of blood and fictive kinship means that residents are enmeshed in relationships that are both strong (because of duration and intensity) and homogeneous (that is, with people like themselves). Naturally, not all ties in Oxkutzcab are intensely close, nor is everyone precisely the same.[55] However, in a family-oriented, fairly rural small town, many people’s principal relationships are with family members and friends from childhood. Furthermore, the experiences of growing up in a community like Oxkutzcab are in many instances more similar than they are different.

[55] Oxkutzcab does have a small middle-class comprised of teachers, owners of larger tracts of land, white collar professionals, and bureaucrats.

Homogeneous Relationships in an Ethnically Diverse Receiving Community

Pre-migration relationships in Yucatán are strong and not particularly diverse. The social networks through which Yucatecans migrate to the United States are comprised of the same kinds of ties — close and similar. And because of the pattern of opting for a destination where a migrant already has friends and relatives, when Yucatecans arrive in San Francisco, they are absorbed into a community comprised of people they have known for a very long time and who are very much like themselves.

> Lázaro (arrived in 1995): I arrived at my brother's house… Here in San Francisco, we arrived here at 16th and Mission, but there were a lot of people there, there were like 20 people. I thought I was going to be with him, we were gonna be [the two of us] but no. There were four shared rooms, there were about 20 guys…all from Oxkutzcab[56].

> Silvio (arrived in 1990): "[In San Francisco] it's almost all relatives, friends of relatives, cousins and brothers and other stuff, I mean, brothers and cousins[57]."

The continuity of relationships in San Francisco is heightened by the geographical concentration of Yucatecan migrants in the city (similar to residential dynamics observed by Hagan 1994). Within San Francisco, Yucatecan migrants primarily reside in two essentially contiguous neighborhoods, the Mission and the Civic Center/Tenderloin. The neighborhoods, about 2 miles apart, are connected by a short ride on the San Francisco BART system, a 15 minute bus ride, or a 30 minute walk. There are apartment buildings in both areas which are almost entirely inhabited by Yucatecan households. These households

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[56] *Lázaro: Llego en casa de mi hermano...Aquí en San Francisco, aquí en la 16 y Mission llegamos pero ahí habían muchas personas, habían como veinte personas. Yo pensé que iba yo a llegar con el, íbamos a estar o algo, no. Eran cuartos compartidos, eran aproximadamente habían 20 personas…Todos de Oxkutzcab.*

[57] *Silvio: Son casi todos puro pariente, amigos de parientes, primos y hermanos de otros niveles, por ejemplo, hermanos y primos.*

consist of families by themselves, families who rent out extra space to additional tenants, or a group of men who sling hammocks or find a few square feet for a mattress and a single storage container for their clothes and personal belongings. In essence, Yucatecans in San Francisco have translated their strong social ties into residential proximity.

> Doña Ana: They started congregating…in the Mission: 'Hey, come on, why don't you come live here, there's more work.' And so they started congregating in the Mission, it started growing with a lot of people from Oxkutzcab. The whole Mission, people from Oxkutzcab everywhere. A lot of them[58].

The Human Capital of Yucatecan Migrants in San Francisco

While no comprehensive survey has established the average amount of education that Yucatecan migrants to San Francisco have, residents of Tunkás, a town in the northern part of the state, had a median of 5.5 years of education (Cornelius, FitzGerald, Lewin Fischer, and Muse-Orlinoff 2010). In Tunkás, as in many rural Mexican communities, the amount of education varies considerably by age cohort; over the past several decades, the Mexican federal educational system has expanded and improved access to primary and secondary schools. As a result, most Yucatecans under 30 have finished *secundaria*, or middle school. Older Yucatecans are more likely to have only completed *primaria*, or elementary school. These statistics suggest that most Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco have at least a primary school education and many have completed middle school. A smaller proportion are likely to have finished high school, and only a few to have acquired a college degree.

These low levels of educational attainment are compounded by limited English

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[58] *Doña Ana: se fueron concentrando que… en la Mision. —Oye, vente, por qué no vienes a vivir acá, hay más trabajo— y ya se fueron concentrando en la Mision, se fue expandiendo con mucha gente de Oxkutzcab. Todo lo que es La Mision, Oxkutzcabeños por todos lados. Muchísimos.*

proficiency among newly arrived Yucatecan migrants. Most Yucatecans in San Francisco are bilingual in Spanish and Maya. Some are monolingual Maya speakers, and some are monolingual Spanish speakers, but the majority are proficient in both languages. Anecdotally, Yucatecans who arrive speaking no Spanish end up learning to speak it upon arrival. More surprisingly, monolingual Spanish speakers are also likely to end up learning — or improving — their Maya here in San Francisco, as Maya is very frequently spoken among kitchen crews and monolingual Spanish-speaking Yucatecans report that they dislike being excluded from the banter and gossip their coworkers exchange on the job.

Few Yucatecans speak English prior to arriving in the United States; the only interviewee who did was the one who had trained as a medical doctor in Mexico City. Even so, he recalls that his English, prior to arrival in the US, was rudimentary. As a result, newly arrived Yucatecan migrants are constrained to jobs where they can obtain and keep employment without needing to speak English. San Francisco's regional economy is primarily based on the high tech sector, international banking, and tourism. Jobs in these sectors are unattainable for migrants with relatively low levels of educational attainment and limited English skills; as a consequence, migrants from communities characterized by low levels of human capital work in jobs that provide services consumed by workers in the white-collar economy of the Bay Area (as in Adler 2000).

Labor market incorporation happens through migrants' social networks

As described in the previous chapter, the structured processes of international migration create social networks in receiving communities which primarily consist of strong, bonding ties.

Similar to patterns identified in other immigrant communities (Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Borger 2009; Hagan 1994), Yucatecan migrants use these strong bonding ties to obtain their first jobs in the United States.

These studies present strong evidence that social networks comprised of strong and close ties are efficient in helping new migrants find jobs. Efficiency here refers to the relative ease with which network actors seeking a resource are able to obtain it. In this case, the resource being sought is information about job opportunities for undocumented recent arrivals from Mexico with limited English skills, an elementary or middle-school education, and job skills gained working in Mexico. Seekers are able to obtain the resource easily because the network structure permits — and often prioritizes — the flow of information about jobs to those seeking such information.

The cases presented below exemplify the dynamics of labor market incorporation through a co-ethnic network.

Case: Paco's Mexican Kitchen as the Gateway to Restaurant Work

Despite — or perhaps because of — the restrictions described above, Yucatecans have found a labor niche in the more than 3,500 restaurant kitchens of San Francisco (James 2011). It would be facile to attribute the concentration of Yucatecans in the restaurant industry in San Francisco exclusively to the labor market's port of entry at Paco's Mexican Restaurant. However, the skills that new arrivals gained by working at Paco's gave them marketable skills in a region with an industrial base built on extremely high-skilled labor.

As described in the preceding chapter, Francisco — or more commonly, Paco —

Blas was one of the pioneer migrants from Yucatán to settle in San Francisco. After working as a Bracero in agricultural communities south of the Bay Area, Paco and his wife settled in a quiet neighborhood called the Outer Richmond several miles west of downtown San Francisco. The Richmond stretches east to west across 50 blocks, in a narrow strip of the city north of Golden Gate Park. The Blass' decision to settle in the Richmond is surprising, since it is not a neighborhood with a reputation as a Mexican destination. Indeed, it is notably difficult to get from the Richmond to the Mission District, the traditional neighborhood for Mexican and Central American migrants in San Francisco (Menjívar 2000): even now, it take nearly an hour on the city buses to get from *las avenidas* (as the Richmond District is known in Spanish) to the Spanish-speaking heart of *la Misión.*

In 1965, Paco and his wife Esme opened Paco's Mexican Restaurant, a low-ceilinged restaurant on the ground floor of a two-story rowhouse on the main thoroughfare through the neighborhood. The restaurant served Mexican-American staples like enchiladas, burritos, and fajitas, but very little Yucatecan food. From the beginning of his operations, Paco opted to hire his *paisanos*, other Yucatecans, to work in the kitchen. Until his death in 2011, in fact, and as described in chapter 3, Paco would help aspiring Yucatecan migrants finance their trips across the border, by fronting them the money and withholding it from their wages until he felt the debt had been repaid. He also provided housing for his workers, on the second floor of the building that Paco's Mexican Restaurant occupied.

Case: Salvador, "El Chaparro"

Salvador, a man in his 60's, left Oxkutzcab for San Francisco in 1979. He was part

of the small group of Yucatecan migrants who migrated between the end of the Bracero program and the mid 1990's, and who were eventually able to legalize their presence in the United States through IRCA in the late 1980's. Salvador described how he traveled to San Francisco in the company of Carmelo Blas, Paco's brother, and started working at Paco's Mexican Restaurant as soon as he arrived in the US in 1979:

> Q: Did you ever work [at Paco's]?
> Chaparro: Yeah, I worked there, the first time that we went, we were there, with [Paco's] brother, we [migrated] with his brother so we were at the restaurant, over there in the house on the second floor….[I was there for like] six months…because they don't pay you, they don't pay you. I mean, they help you, right? They give you food, but you work for them, but they don't pay you until they find some [other] work for you or some friend calls with a job…. [After a while] some friends called me, because they knew that I was there, so they told me, 'we're going to get you a job so you can get out of there, because there they're gonna… they exploit everyone there…' He didn't pay anyone in the restaurant, no one, they didn't pay, everyone who gets to their house, they work there, they wash dishes there, there are some who wait tables, there are some who cook, there are some who bartend, and all that… and no one pays them[59].

Paco Blas's involvement with facilitating new migration from Yucatán to San Francisco led to a constant stream of new employees. This new stream was necessary in large part because the low wages and questionable living situation that Paco provided led to a high degree of employee turnover. Like Salvador, migrants would arrive, excited by the prospect of living and working in San Francisco; they would soon become disillusioned by what felt like exploitative working conditions at the hand of their paisano and the

[59] *Q: ¿A usted le tocó trabajar en ese restaurante alguna vez?*
Chaparro: Si me tocó trabajar porque allá cuando la primerita vez cuando fuimos, alllá estuvimos, allá con su hermano fuimos y entonces alla en el restarant estuvimos, allá en la casa del segundo piso… como seis meses. … porque de allá no te paga, no te pagan, claro que te ayudan verdad, te dan la comida pero trabajas para ellos, pero ellos no te pagan hasta que ellos aveces te buscan trabajo o algún amigo te llame para un trabajo. … [Al rato] Unos amigos me hablaron, pues supieron que estaba yo allá, entonces me dijeron 'te vamos a conseguir trabajo para que te vas a quitar de allá, porque allá te van, a todo el mundo explotan allá'…el no pagaba a nadie en el restaurant, nadie, no pagaba, todos lo que llegan a su casa, allá trabajan, allá lavan platos, hay unos que meserean, hay unos que cocinan, hay unos que sirven tragos y todo eso…[y] nadie les pagaba.

sponsor of their migration.

This tactic of exploiting new migrants who do not speak English and are not aware of their rights or value on the labor market is not exclusive to Yucatecans or Mexicans (see, for instance, Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996). In February, 2013, a bakery in Chinatown that was paying its workers $4 an hour and requiring them to work 11 hour shifts 6 days a week settled a lawsuit with the City of San Francisco that sued the bakery for the workers' lost wages. Since the minimum wage in San Francisco was nearly $10 an hour when the suit was first brought, the bakery was required to compensate its staff $525,000 in back pay (Coté 2013; Pape 2013).

While Paco's was never the target of this kind of lawsuit, workers did become impatient with the low wages and long hours. After leaving Paco's, they found employment in other restaurant kitchens in San Francisco: their skills as dishwashers, prep chefs, and waiters were transferable to other restaurants. And as a city with an enormous number of restaurants — conventional wisdom says that San Francisco has more restaurants per capita than any other American city — work in restaurant kitchens abounded. Over time, working at Paco's Mexican Restaurant was the point of entry into the labor market in San Francisco for hundreds of Yucatecans.

As a diaspora of ex-Paco's employees expanded through the restaurant ecosystem in San Francisco, new Yucatecan arrivals were increasingly able to bypass the Paco's experience. By the time that the large-scale migration from Yucatán to California began in the mid-1990's, migrants were able to find employment in restaurants across the city. When I began my field research in late 2010, a community leader averred that "there [wasn't] a restaurant in the city without at least one Yucatecan dude working in the

kitchen."

This claim was echoed, independently, on a number of occasions with other community members. For instance:

> Anita: The bulk of the community in San Francisco [who come from] the area around Oxkutzcab work in restaurants, not in Mexican or Yucatecan restaurants but in restaurants from all over the world. This is a migrant city, they work in Vietnamese restaurants, Chinese, Thai, French, Greek, Middle Eastern, super yuppy seafood restaurants that are over in the tourist area in the Embarcadero, on the pier, downtown, all of the lunch places downtown. I mean, it's amazing, they're in the East Bay, even some of the ones that work here work in the East Bay also[60].

And indeed, my experience as a resident of San Francisco and the experiences of my interviewees bore out this community perception: 71%[61] of the Yucatecan migrants I interviewed worked in the restaurant industry in some capacity. I interviewed Yucatecans who work or who have worked in Thai, Greek, Pakistani, pizza, Cajun, Italian, French, upscale-American, and Palestinian restaurants, as well as in burger joints, diners, and burrito stands. Although it continues to be unusual to see Yucatecans working in Central American restaurants or restaurants that serve regional Mexican food, the chef at the sole Oaxacan restaurant in San Francisco was Yucatecan. In fact, the only restaurants where I never saw Yucatecans working were Chinese restaurants. I attribute this lack of Yucatecan workers in Chinese restaurants to the existence of a plentiful and exploitable Chinese labor force that Chinese restaurant owners draw from. In addition, Yucatecans reported that they did not want to work at Chinese restaurants because they believe that Chinese business

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[60] *Anita: El grueso de la comunidad en San Francisco de la zona de Oxkutzcab trabajan en restaurantes, no en restaurantes mexicanos o yucatecos sino que en restaurantes de todo el mundo, es una ciudad migrante acá, trabajan en restaurantes vietnamítas, chinos, tailandéses, frances, griegos, del medio oriente, restaurantes super fresas de mariscos que están en toda la zona turística. En el embarcadero, en el muelle en el centro, todas las loncherías del centro. O sea, es impresionante, estan en el esat bay, tambíen unos que trabajan aquí trabajan en restaurantes en el este de la bahía.*

[61] 53 of the 75 Yucatecan migrants whose experiences appear in this dissertation work or had worked in the restaurant industry in their last job in the US.

owners do not treat their employees well:

> Gregorio: I ended up working in a Chinese restaurant where, oof! They give you a job but it's too much and really low pay. They want you to work but they don't pay the way they're supposed to, so I didn't last there, like fifteen days, [after] the first two weeks I saw what the work was like and all that and I opted to get out of there.[62]

> Doña Elvira: But also you realize that the worst slave-drivers [in San Francisco] are the Chinese… Because the Chinese sell a lot and pay their workers very little, and it's said that they limit their food.[63]

Yucatecan migrants I interviewed acknowledged this concentration of their *paisanos* in San Francisco's restaurant kitchens. Consider this comment by a Yucatecan restaurant owner who did not work in the restaurant field at first:

> Q: You weren't interested in the restaurant thing?
> Ruben: Well, yeah, but since my first job was at the fruit stand, I got used to it. But yeah, the rest of my paisanos who are [in San Francisco] are mostly in restaurants… I mean, San Francisco is that, there's only restaurants[64].

Labor Market Incorporation through co-ethnic networks

This occupational concentration is unusual for Mexican migrants, which are among the least "niched" migrant communities in California (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996). In other words, there is proportionally more occupational diversity among Mexican immigrants than, for example, Chinese or Japanese migrants. While Waldinger and Bozorgmehr (1996) and Smith (2006) found that occupational niches provide economic benefits to ethnic communities (by virtue of increased training opportunities), the benefit to

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[62] *Gregorio: llegue a trabajar en un restaurant chino que donde ¡uff! es, te dan un trabajo pero exagerado y poquita paga. Quieren ellos que trabajes pero no te pagan como se debe, y no dure ahí, como unos 15 días, la primera quincena, vi como estaba el trabajo y todo ese y preferí salirme de ahí.}*

[63] *Doña Elvira: Pero también si se da cuenta los más negreros allá son los chinos....Porque los chinos se vende mucho y pagan muy poco a sus trabajadores y dicen que la comida se las limitan.*

[64] *Q: ¿A usted no le llamó la atención lo del restaurante…?*
Ruben: De hecho sí, pero como que fue mí primer empleo eso de la frutería en un puesto, me acostumbré más a ello. Como no, los demás paisanos *que están allá mayormente en restaurantes …. Bueno, San Francisco es eso, puro restaurante hay.*

the Yucatecan immigrant community in San Francisco comes from the chance to provide jobs for their friends and relatives[65].

Miguel Suizo recalls that he started working almost immediately upon arriving in San Francisco.

> Q: Did you arrive [in San Francisco] to work… I mean, with work set?
> A: Yeah, by the second day [I was in San Francisco I was working]… The second day of work, they brought me to where Esteban had invited me, because I was only waiting for them to accept me[66].

Miguel Suizo's case falls on the farthest end of the spectrum of ease with which new migrants find work; his immediate employment is not surprising, however, in light of the fact that the timing of his migration was linked to his cousin Esteban' urging that he hurry up and make it to San Francisco because jobs at the restaurants where Esteban worked were about to become available (see Chapter 3).

Other cases of labor market incorporation through Yucatecans' co-ethnic social ties

> **Lázaro**
> Q: You said that you got your job at a restaurant through your brother?
> Lázaro: Through a friend… he's a friend from childhood and he brought me to the job and that's how I started working. There in that restaurant is where we were for a long time. That's it, through a friend [I've had] for years I was able to start [working][67].

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[65] Putnam notes that over-concentration in a single niche can lead to negative economic outcomes, because the expectations of assistance based on ethnic solidarity can breed resentment and countervailing forces that diminish 'excessive' success (2000:322). This dynamic can also be seen as an example of the disadvantages of over-embeddedness in Uzzi's work, inasmuch as firms with a high proportion of very close ties to other firms were more vulnerable to production and sales glitches (1999). During my interviews, however, none of the people I spoke to indicated that they experienced the expectation to connect migrants with job openingsas anything other than a positive opportunity.

[66] *Q: ¿Tú llegaste a trabajar…o sea, con trabajo puesto?*
Miguel Suizo: Sí, hasta el segundo día (de haber llegado estaba trabajando)… El segundo día de trabajo…ya me llevaron donde Esteban me había invitado, pues solo estaba esperando que me aceptaran."

[67] *Q: Usted dice que entro a trabajar a un restaurante atravez de su hermano?*
Lázaro: Atravez de un amigo…es un amigo de infancia también y me llevo al trabajo y así fue como yo pude entrar a trabajar. Allá en ese restaurant…. Ahí fue donde estuvimos por mucho tiempo….Así, por medio de

Fernando
In 1995, I was about to turn 16… I migrated with a neighbor, a friend. I arrived at my brother's, he was here before me, and some friends… In San Francisco, in the Mission… [we had an apartment]. I think there were 14 of us, there were two bedrooms, a living room, a bathroom, and a kitchen… I got there and they put me at an American restaurant [called] Max's Opera… Some of my brother's friends put me there…[but] one day I got mad and took off my apron and I gave it to the chef [note: this means he quit and walked off the job]. Then, well, I was walking around, and I said to myself, 'I don't know if I'm going to find another job.' But when I got home a friend came to see me, he said, 'they told me you quit [your job] at Max's, do you want to come [work] at the taquería[68]?'

Gregorio:
Q: How did you get your job there in the pizzeria?
Gregorio: Well, the same thing, through friends. It's through friends, they tell you, you ask them, you go outside and you say, 'hey, you know what, I need to work, do you know where there are any jobs anywhere?[69]'

Miguel Suizo: I helped a lot of guys from [Ox], just like a lot of guys helped me. It's a mutual help, it's like we say, "the hook-up[70]."

Yucatecans hire their paisanos

Word of mouth was one way that Yucatecan job seekers found work in the restaurant sector in San Francisco. Another way was through Yucatecans who rose through the kitchen hierarchies and were given the task of hiring their own teams. The men I spoke to — and they were all men — who had been in a position to hire kitchen staff spoke of

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un amigo de años también que entré yo.

[68] *Fernando: En 1995, iba yo a complir 16...me fuí con un vecino, un amigo... Yo llegué con un hermano que ya estaba antes que yo [y] Unos amigos... En San Francisco, ahí en la Missión...[teníamos] un departamento...Eramos creo 14, eran dos cuartos, una sala y un baño y una cocina... Yo llegué allá y me metieron a un restaurant americano, ese "Max's Opera"...Unos amigos de mí hermano me metieron ahí…....un día me moleste y [me] quite mí mandil y se lo dí al cheff. Despues pues caminando así en la calle, osea digo —si no voy a buscar otro trabajo decía— pero llegando a la casa me fue a ver un amigo, me dijo, 'ya me dijeron que te quitaste de Max´s, ¿quieres venir a la taquería?'*

[69] *Q: ¿y cómo consiguió usted su trabajo allá en esa pizzería?*
Gregorio: pues lo mismo, por amigos. Ya sea los amigos te dicen, les preguntas, sales ahí en la calle y les dices —oye, sabes qué, necesito trabajar no sabes dónde está un trabajito por allá?

[70] *Miguel Suizo: muchos [de] los de aquí ayudé, así como tambíen muchos me ayudaron, es una ayuda mutua es como se dice "El conecte."*

their experience hiring paisano*s*.

For example, Bernardo worked in a variety of restaurants including Burger King and McDonalds as well as restaurants that served Chinese, Japanese, Italian, French, and American cuisine. He eventually got a job at Stinking Rose where he was promoted to manager. Once a manager, he recalled, he was able to hire fellow Yucatecans:

> Q: Once you were manager, were you able to help other paisanos get jobs at that place, for example?
> Bernardo: Yeah…I helped a bunch of paisanos, a lot of paisanos…Once they know that someone from Yucatán is in charge, Yucatecans come towards you… It's kind of like a magnet. It's like a magnet, you know, that keeps attracting more[71].

Hagan (1994) and Waldinger and Lichter (2003) note that occupational clustering is often a result of employer preferences (in addition to the constraints on labor market occupation which accompany different levels of human capital). For the Yucatecan community in San Francisco, however, the employer preference is enacted by the kitchen managers who hire the sous chefs, the salad- and sauce-makers, and the *tortillera*s.

> Q: So were you able to put your team together right there in the kitchen?
> Federico: It depends on your boss, you need your boss's authorization…. They gave me total control, 'take the restaurant, do what you want with it, in your style, the way you want.' [And] I have always worked with people from Oxkutzcab. I prefer [my team] to be my people[72].

When Yucatecans hire their compatriots, they select for a key ethnic resource (as in Light 1972): an appropriately hard-working, team-oriented attitude. For instance:

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[71] *Q: Una vez que ya era usted manager, podía ayudar a otros* paisano*s que entraran a trabajar a ese lugar por ejemplo?*
Bernardo: Sí, inclusive… ayudé a bastantes paisano*s, muchos* paisano*s…. una vez sabiendo que una persona de Yucatán está a cargo, los yucatecos van hacia ti…O sea, es como un iman. Es como un iman, o sea, que va atrayendo más.*

[72] *Q: ¿Ahí mismo en la cocina usted podía formar su equípo?*
Federico: Todo depende de tu patrón, necesitas la autorización del dueño…a mí me dieron el mando completo, toma el restaurant, haz lo que quieras y haz a tu gusto, como tu quieras...Yo siempre he trabajado con gente de Oxkutzcab....Prefiero que sea mí gente.

> Benicio: In San Francisco you get the thing where when restaurants get applications, it's according to the lay that they have to get applications, no discrimination. But in reality it's 'bring me someone who you can guarantee is a worker.' For example, if I'm gonna bring someone to work, I'm going to teach him to work, the manager or the chef doesn't want to be in charge of teaching [him] because they're going to waste time…so, 'bring me someone who wants to work.' The [key] word is 'wants to work.[73]'

For Federico, the Yucatecan team-oriented approach to work compelled him and all his co-workers to quit en masse when the owner of an upscale French restaurant in Sausalito began mistreating the kitchen staff:

> Federico: They called me from a restaurant called Jeanty at Jacks. Philippe Jeanty is a very famous chef in France, [and] I opened his restaurant in…Sausalito. So his chef called me and he said, 'you know what, we need people.' That's when I hired all people from Oxkutzcab — I hired cooks from Oxkutzcab, waiters' assistants, waiters from Oxkutzcab, dishwashers from Oxkutzcab. I hired everyone for that restaurant… I was in charge of the kitchen and of making sauces and stuff. Anyway, [Jeanty] got frustrated because we didn't get [a three-star review]. So the boss turned a little racist. He didn't like anything, he humiliated us for any reason… There came a time when, for example, if we had soups, we used these big pots, big bots for chicken stew, beef stew, fish stew, or whatever. And in his rage he'd come and say "this is all bad" and he threw out the soup, he threw it out on us, and [us] having dinner orders, there were customers. So we all quit[74].

Delayed Network Effects

Not everyone who is trying to find a job does so immediately. When Dalia arrived

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[73] *Benicio: En San Francisco se da y se da eso que cuando los restaurantes ponen aplicaciones, porque es conforme a la ley que hay que poner las aplicaciones, no discriminación. Pero en realidad es 'tráeme alguien que me garantize que es trabajador.' Por ejemplo si yo voy a llevar a alguien a trabajar, yo lo voy a enseñar a trabajar, el manager o el chef no quiere encargarse de enseñar, porque va a perder tiempo… entonces, tráeme alguien que quiera trabajar, la palabra es que quiera trabajar.*

[74] *Federico: Me hablaron en un restaurant que se llama Jantie Jazz. El Philippe Giantie es un chef muy famoso en Francia, abrí su restaurant en...Sausalito. Y me habló su chef y me dice —sabes que, necesito gente— allá fue cuando fue [que] metí a pura gente de Oxkutzcab, contraté cocineros de Oxkutzcab, ayudantes de meseros, meseros, meseros de Oxkutzcab, lava platos de Oxkutzcab. Y le puse toda la gente a ese restaurant... Yo era el encargado de cocina y hacer salsas y todo. El caso [es] que se frustró todo porque no obtuvimos lo que quisimos. Y ya el patrón se empezó a volverse un poco racista. Ya no le gustaba, cualquier pretexto nos humillaba. ... Llegó un momento de que por ejemplo si teníamos caldos, allá usamos ollas grandes, big pots para chiken tew, beef stew, fish stew o whatever. Y en su ira venía y [decía] —esta mal esto— y nos tiraba la sopa, nos la tiraba, y teniando tickets, habiendo gente....Y renunciamos todos.*

in San Francisco in 1998, it took her nearly two months to find a job. Despite being "*recomendada*" to stay at Doña Clemencia's house, Dalia's network connections were not nearly as effective as Miguel Suizo's and Juan's in helping her find steady work: "for about two months I didn't have work… My first job I looked after a 5 year old kid, from there they told me about a job here to make tortillas but I didn't make it on time and I lost the job… Then I was looking and looking for work.[75]"

Eventually, however, Doña Clemencia was told about a job opening and brought Dalia along too: "The señora where I was living was *recomendada* for a job and she took me to work too, [at] a *taquería*[76]." In Dalia's case, the flow of information about job prospects in the restaurant industry was slower to make its way through the network.

It is likely, although I cannot make any rigorous empirical claims, that Dalia's gender played a role in limiting the job information available to her when she first arrived: in 1998, the Yucatecan community in San Francisco was overwhelmingly male, and the women who had migrated were largely the wives of first-wave migrants and not working in the wage-labor market. As a single woman who had migrated without a strong family network to care for her, Dalia's access to information about job openings was limited. Nevertheless, the network did eventually yield information, through Doña Clemencia, that enabled Dalia's entry into kitchen work in San Francisco.

Ethnic replacement

In some cases, as the available labor pool of undocumented Yucatecans increased,

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[75] *Dalia: "casi como dos meses no tenía trabajo…mi primer trabajo cuidaba un niño de 5 años, de allá me avisaron que había un trabajo aquí para hacer tortilla pero no alcancé a llegar y perdí ese trabajo…de allá estuve buscando trabajo y trabajo."*

[76] *Dalia: "La señora donde yo vivía fue recomendada de un trabajo y me llevó a trabajar también, una taquería."*

they were hired by restaurant managers to replace native-born workers (as in López-Sanders 2009 and Ribas 2013).

As Miguel Suizo said, when he began working in the kitchen at The Stinking Rose, there were 33 other Oxkutzcabenses working there. Within a few months, however, he recalled that "there ended up being like 70 of us from Oxkutzcab in that place[77]." Later, at a smaller restaurant called Chez Nous, Cristóbal observed the same labor replacement dynamic:

> When I started to work there [at Chez Nous] they were Americans, almost all Americans at that points, [and] the chef was an American also…. So he was working there and then everyone was American, but he said — he was kind of crazy — um, that he didn't like to work with other Americans because they're lazy. So when I started working there were 2 other dishwashers and me, I was the cook, so we were three Latinos. [Chef] Chris wanted more Latinos to work [because] it doesn't matter if they get cut, if they get burned, Latinos keep working.. It's not racism, no… so then every time that someone quit, he would say, bring in a friend. So there came a point when so many Latinos came [to work] at the restaurant that the only Americans were the waiters[78].

Labor Market Incorporation Diversifies Social Networks But Within Limits

These occupational concentrations of Yucatecans exist in the midst of one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the United States. As Yucatecans settled into restaurant jobs in San Francisco, they met migrants from other parts of Yucatán, Mexico, and Central America. These new acquaintances diversified the social networks of Yucatecans, and created more heterogeneous social networks with a great proportion of bridging ties

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[77] *Miguel Suizo: "llegamos a ser como 70 de Oxkutzcab en ese lugar."*

[78] *Miguel Suizo: Cuando yo empecé a trabajar ahí [Chez Nous] eran americanos, casi todos americanos entonces, [y] el chef era un americano igual…Entonces él trabajaba ahí y entonces todos eran americanos, pero él como decía — era medio loco — o sea, de que a él no le gustaba trabajar con otros americanos que porque son flojos, entonces cuando yo empecé a trabajar había otros 2 dishwashers (*people) y yo que era el cocinero, o sea, eramos tres latinos, y [Chef Chris] quería que trabajaran más latinos, que no importa que se corte, que se queme, el latino sigue trabajando…no es nada de racismo, no… entonces, él siempre que había una oportunidad de que alguien renunciaba, él decía, tráete a un amigo. Entonces llegó a un grado que el latino entró tanto en ese restaurante que después los únicos americanos eran solamente los meseros.*

(compared to Yucatecan migrants who arrived in the US but who have not yet or did not ever enter the labor market).

Diversification of social networks through labor market incorporation

Cristóbal recalls getting to know a group of Japanese men, some undocumented, during a stint at a Franco-Japanese restaurant in the Embarcadero:

> I worked at a Japanese restaurant… it's in the Embarcadero, it's Japanese/French…It's a totally French restaurant but it's got a sushi bar. [And] the chef… for the French cuisine is Japanese. Sub chef, cooks, everyone is Japanese. Only the chef was Cuban and at that point I was the only Yucatecan Latino who worked with them[79].

Silvio started working at a Thai restaurant and became friendly with the owner's family; he also described an international cast of co-workers over the fifteen years he spent cooking in Italian, French, and American restaurants:

> Some, like, Arab guy hired me. He's more like Asian, not exactly Arab… I forget the name of his country. … Salvadoran-Americans knew me a lot, they liked me a lot… We were with Filipinos, we were with Americans… Salvadorans, Nicaraguans came to ask for work[80].

Some of these new workplace acquaintances evolved into more lasting relationships. Dalia, for example, met her husband (from Coahuila) at a *taquería* where they both worked. Anita described the diversification of relationships that she observed among Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco:

> What's happening is that some of the women that are here are marrying

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[79] *Cristóbal: "Trabajé en un restaurante japonés…está en el Embarcadero, es japonés-francés…Es un restaurante completamente francés pero tiene su barra de sushi. Pero el chef…de cocina francesa es japonés. Sub chef, cocineros, todos son japoneses. Solamente el chef era cubano y yo esa vez fui el único latino yucateco que fue a trabajar con ellos."*

[80] *Silvio: Un como arabe me contrató...Es como asiatico, no exáctamente arabe… Se me olvido como se llama su país de el. .... Salvadoreños que son americanos me conocieron mucho, me estimaron mucho, ...estuvimos con filipinos, estuvimos con americanos...de salvadoreños, de Nicaragua venían a pedir trabajo.*

> Yucatecans here, some Yucatecan men that have been here, that got here without being married, I've seen that they've gotten together with gringas, with Thai women…there are mixtures that are working. Not a ton, no… [but] we have a lot of marriages between Salvadorans and Yucatecans[81].

The limits of immigrant labor market incorporation: Occupational segregation and limits on upward mobility

Incorporation into a flexible (Adler 2000) and dynamic wage-labor market which does not require English or formal education and which is dominated by people who share a common cultural, linguistic, and migratory background creates opportunities to develop new forms of social relationships (e.g., with people from other parts of Yucatán, Mexico, or Central America). This kind of network diversification is particularly robust in a diverse urban environment with a high level of immigration (Faist 2009; Nee, Sanders, and Sernau 1994). These new network ties reduce the redundancy of the information circulating in social networks by introducing news about job openings, opportunities for skill acquisition, and ideas about economic mobility.

Yet although it might be expected that network diversification increases Yucatecan migrants' opportunities for labor market dispersion through the introduction of new information about job openings in other industries, Yucatecans remain concentrated in the restaurant industry.

The reliance on strong, bonding ties for initial labor market incorporation is one of the explanations of occupational segregation (Nee, Sanders, and Sernau 1994; Xie and Gough 2011). As shown above, Yucatecan migrants find their jobs through their close

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[81] *Anita: Exáctamente, lo que esta pasando es que algunas que están aquí se están casando con Yucas acá, algunos yucatecos hombres que han estado aquí, que llegaron sin estar casados he visto que ellos se han juntado con gringas, con tailandesas… si hay cruces qeu están sucediendo. No muchísimos no …[pero] tenemos mucha mezcla, mucho matrimonio salvadoreño yucateco.*

contacts, and when their close contacts are all in one industry, information about new kinds jobs is limited by the fact that everyone is already working in the same field. To use Uzzi's term (1999), when it comes to labor market mobility, Yucatecans are overembedded in homogenous, co-ethnic networks.

Additionally, since Yucatecans are limited to jobs that accept low-education, non-English-speaking, undocumented migrants, their new, diverse network ties are largely constrained to people who also work in the restaurant kitchens. As a result, even as the composition of Yucatecans' social networks becomes less intensely homogenous, they are still embedded in networks of other restaurant workers, and consequently remain occupationally segregated in the restaurant industry.

Acquisition of Technical Skills Contributes to Occupational Segregation

Another explanation for the concentration of Yucatecans in the restaurant industry is the specific kind of human capital they acquire through work experience. When Yucatecan migrants arrive in the United States, they need to acquire the skills to work in restaurant kitchens. Female migrants are at an advantage relative to their male counterparts, in this task, since most girls in Yucatán learn to cook and make tortillas as early as 5 years old; as such, when they get their first jobs at restaurants they start off as *tortillera*s, salad-makers, or other food-related staff. Men, by contrast, are less likely to arrive in the United States with strong culinary skills, so they start at the very bottom of the kitchen hierarchy (see Adler 2000 for a detailed description of Yucatecans' experience in the hierarchical restaurant kitchens):

> **Lázaro**: I got the chance to be a janitor [at a restaurant]. That meant… sweeping a little, cleaning the tables, the bathrooms sometimes. And then

from there I switched to busboy, from busboy I went to [work in] the kitchen, and that was where I liked it best, and I got along with [the guys] really well. They taught me the kitchen work, how it is, how you should work, my colleagues, I mean[82].

Marcos: I worked as a dishwasher for 4 months and then the owner, who liked me a lot, said to me, 'you know what, I don't want you to be a dishwasher, I want you to learn poultry, grill.' She taught me everything about [working] a kitchen line. … [So] I have experience in kitchens, since I've never worked in anything else but cooking, in restaurants more than anything, you know? Cooking, restaurants[83].

Over time, migrants like Lázaro and Marcos learn how to chop, prep, and cook; these new skills enable them to rise through the ranks of the kitchen. Such gains in human capital are mitigated by the fact that their skills are not transferable from one sector to another. Kitchen skills are transferable from one restaurant to another, even across culinary traditions. For example, an experienced cook can switch from working at a French restaurant to an Italian one, but cannot switch to from restaurant work to construction and keep the same authority or salary.

In addition, new kitchen skills can be grounds for exploitation. When employers or managers see someone who has a lot of experience in the kitchen, they sometimes increase their demands without increasing the employee's pay:

Gregorio: Over where I started working, well, when they see that you've learned something… once I learned to make the pizzas then they want you to learn to make the pastas, to cook on a grill, to cook meat and all that, and they want you to do it all, all that work as one single person and for the same pay, and, well, a lot of people don't like that. And by contrast, the gringos, when they come in to work, they each have their own section and they pay

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[82] *Lázaro: me sale ya la oportunidad de estar de janitor.Por decir… barrer un poco, que limpiar mesas, poquito los baños. Y de ahí ya despues me volví a pasar de busboy, de busboy me pase ya entonces a la cocina y allí fue donde más me gusto ya más la cocina también y me agarré con ellos muy bien. Me enseñaron el trabajo dela cocina, como es, como se debe de trabajar y compañeros como quien dice.*

[83] *Marcos: Trabajaba ahí de dish washer por 4 meses y ahí fue la dueña [que] quizas le simpatize bastante y me dijo —sabes qué, yo no quiero que seas dish washer, quiero que aprendas, Poultry, grill. Me enseño todo lo que es la línea de una cocina....Si, yo tengo la experiencia en cocina pues nunca he trabajado en otra cosa más que en cocina, en restaurant más que nada, no? Cocina, restaurant.*

> them more. But we do all the work on the kitchen line, for the pizzas, for the pastas, cooking on the grill, frying in the deep fryer, even between two people it's a lot[84].

This dynamic demonstrates the mixed-blessing of an ethnic occupational niche (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996). While the concentration of Yucatecans in the restaurant industry enables Yucatecan migrants to find jobs for their friends and relatives, increase their skill and management, and put together teams of co-workers with shared attitudes towards teamwork, the specificity of their experience limits their occupational mobility.

In addition, undocumented immigrant chefs and sous-chefs do not get the recognition that white, native-born or legal immigrant chefs do. When he was working at a Thai restaurant, Silvio had to step aside to let a Thai person be in the most senior position, despite his years of experience:

> **Silvio**: I was supposedly, quote-unquote, the manager, I was the kitchen boss, everyone's boss, but supposedly, because, I say supposedly because in my position, I [had to] give the position to someone else who was Thai, so that the place seemed stronger, [like it had] more energy since there was a Thai person, not just Mexicans. I was senior but I gave my place to her…
> Q: But you were actually doing all the work.
> Silvio: Oh, hell, yeah! A ton, a ton, a ton. I had, I'm telling you, 15 years, I have a history that doesn't let me talk [crap] or boast, no way. It's, ugh! It's long story, I went from dishwasher to prep cook, to cook, to chief of staff, to head of the kitchen, even the boss who paid people. The owner trusted me[85].

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[84] *Gregorio: Ahí donde yo empecé a trabajar pues cuando ven que ya aprendiste una cosa… ya aprendí a hacer las pizzas [luego] quiern que aprendas a hacer las pastas, cocinar en el grill, cocinar las carnes y todo eso y quieren que tu lo hagas todo, todo ese trabajo en una sola persona y con la misma paga y como que a muchos no les gusta eso. Y en cambio los gringos ellos cuando entran ellos a trabajar, ellos cada quien con su sección y les pagan más dinero a ellos. Y nosotros hacemos todo el trabajo de la línea de cocina, de las pizzas, de las pastas, de cocinar en la parrilla, freír así en la freidora también entre dos personas es mucho.*

[85] *Silvio: yo supuestaente entre comillas era yo el manager, era el jefe de cocina, el jefe de todos, supuestamente porque, supuestamente te digo porque en mí puesto yo le brindaba mí puesto a otra persona que es tailandesa, para que el local se sintiera más con fuerza, con más energía de que hay un tailandes, no solo mexicanos. Y yo era el mayor pero yo ponía mí parte a ella...*
Q: Pero en realidad usted hacia el trabajao.
Silvio: oh, hell yeah! si, mucho, mucho , mucho. Yo tengo, te digo quince años, yo tengo una historia que no

Cristóbal related the following story with palpable frustration:

> I like to cook. Cooking is what I've always liked… it's the only thing I've ever done… but I've had moments of frustration. When I was working at Chez Nous, after [Chef] Chris left… I was making my own menu, I mean, the owner said to me, this French guy, he said, 'today I want you to make something for lunch, I want protein, I want two different proteins, I want a starter, I want two salads.' So I had to create something for the owner, the French guy who had two a bunch of different businesses. And he wouldn't talk a French chef, he wouldn't talk to an American chef, he wouldn't talk to anyone but he talked to me and I made food for him and his family, because he said he liked my food.
>
> So then after Chef Chris left, the guy who had been the head of the kitchen, the next year the restaurant [was reviewed] again by Michael Bauer who is the [food critic] for the San Francisco Chronicle. He reviewed the restaurant and he talked really well about the restaurant, [he said] that is has grown and he said it was thanks to Chef Chris… who hadn't been there fore a year. So then I found out about that… I mean, if Chris isn't there, and they did the review just a few days ago? So I said to the owner, 'what happened?' And the owner said to me, 'no, no, forget about it, it was a mistake.'
>
> But then I found out from the manager, he told me, 'no, what happened is that the owner told them to put Chris's name, because if the [Chronicle's readers] see a Latino name, business won't be the same for the owner.' So I said, 'why? Why, since it's my food, I changed the menu, I did things differently? If they reviewed the restaurant, if Michael Bauer came back to eat again and said that the food is a lot better, why don't they give me any credit [for the improvements[86]]?'

---

se me convence ni en hablar ni en presumir, no. Es ¡uh! una historia grande que yo fuí de lavaplatos a preparador a cocinero, a jefe de trabajadores, jefe de cocina, patrón a la vez, que pagaba a la gente. La patrona cofiaba en mí.

[86] *Miguel Suizo: Me gusta cocinar. La cocina es lo que siempre me ha gustado… solamente a eso me dediqué….[pero] tuve los momentos de frustración. [Fue] cuando trabajaba en Chez Nous, después de que [Chef] Chris se fue…Y [yo] ya hacía mi propio menú, o sea, el dueño me decía, el dueño es francés y me decía, 'hoy quiero que me prepares algo para la comida, pero quiero proteína, quiero dos diferentes proteínas, quiero un starter, quiero dos ensaladas.' Entonces yo tenía qu crear algo para…el dueño, este francés tenía varios negocios, y él no le iba a decir a un chef francés, no le iba a decir a un chef americano, a nadie le decía, [pero] él siempre me hablaba y yo le hacía su comida para su familia de él, y dice porque le gustaba mi comida… Después de que este [Chef] Chris se fue, el que era el chef de cocina, al año hicieron el review otra vez por este Michael Bauer, que es el [food critic] del Chronicle de San Francisco,le hizo el review al restaurante y él habló muy bien del restaurante, que ha crecido y le puso gracias al Chef Chris…y ya no estaba ya hace un año, y entonces yo me enteré de eso…pero si Chris ya no está y el review apenas lo hicieron hace unos días? Entonces yo le dije al dueño, '¿qué pasó?' Y me dice el dueño, 'no, no, déjalo, es que fue un error.' Y después me enteré por medio del manager, que me dijo, 'no, lo que pasa es que el dueño dijo que puesieran el nombre de Chris, porque si [los lectores del periódico] ven un nombre latino, el negocio ya no va a ser el mismo para el dueño.' Entonces yo dije, '¿por qué? ¿por qué, si es mi comida, yo*

Another example resulted from a denied opportunity to appear on "Check, Please!" a TV show on San Francisco's public television station which features local residents describing, eating at, and reviewing their favorite Bay Area restaurants[87]. Prior to the show being filmed at the restaurant where Cristóbal was the head chef, the restaurant's owner told him to make sure he looked presentable because the film crew was going to arrive:

> The owner told me, 'you know what? They're going to come…from a TV station, they're going to bring cameras, so make yourself presentable.'…So I went to Economy Restaurant Supply… and I bought a new shirt, new pants, I shined my shoes. The TV channel arrives and they ask for the chef, and I say, 'that's me.' 'OK, where's the owner?' 'The owner is at home.' 'Could you call him?' …
>
> So I called the owner and [he] showed up like always, with his normal shoes, his shorts, and his t-shirt, you know? And the lady from the TV channel, super racist, greeted the owner… they got the cameras ready while they were putting the microphone on the owner and the whole deal… We were cooking… and they interviewed the owner… in the kitchen. At that point, [someone from] a wine company showed up; he opened the door and they asked him to come in [to join] the interview. A little later, the meat company came… and then the container company and made [another] noise, so the owner said to me, 'Juan, go guard the door so that no one comes in.' And I said,'son of a bitch, what the…'
>
> So I had to leave with my new suit, my clean shoes, I stood in the street so that if anyone wanted going to come in I could tell them they couldn't go in, [and] meanwhile the owner was doing the interview. And two weeks later they broadcast the interview on TV… and the owner said, 'thanks to the producers, thanks to [unintelligible] Market, because [we're] serving [their] fresh fruit' and basically what [the restaurant] is offering on the menu. And I started thinking, 'what menu, since has never, ever done nothing?' I always did the menus, I prepared, I ordered [the ingredients]. I would see the owner once a month… he only showed up to check the books, to see the month's earnings and losses[88].

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cambié el menú, yo hice las cosas diferentes? Si al restaurante ya le hicieron un review, si Michael Bauer ya fue a comer otra vez y ya dijo que la comida ya es mucho mejor, ¿por qué no me dan crédito a mi?'

[87] http://blogs.kqed.org/checkplease/2006/11/02/chez-nous-restaurant-info/

[88] *El dueño me dijo, '¿sabes qué? Va ir a tal hora, va a ir el canal de televisión, van a llevar cámaras, así que ponte presentable'…Me fui al Economy Restaurant [Supply]…y me compré mi camisa nueva, mi pantalón nuevo, me limpié mis zapatos. Y llega el canal de televisión y preguntan por el chef y digo, 'soy yo.' 'OK, ¿y el dueño en dónde se encuentra?' 'El dueño está en su casa.' '¿Si le puede llamar?'… y llamé al dueño y el dueño llegó como siempre, sus zapatos así normales, su shorts y su playera, no, y la señora del canal de televisión muy racista saludó al dueño…[prepararon] las cámaras en lo que le ponían su micrófono al dueño*

These two examples are representative of the kinds of discrimination and constraints on labor mobility even within the restaurant industry that undocumented Yucatecan migrants face. In part, restaurant owners may be concerned about attracting attention from ICE or other immigration enforcement agencies if they draw attention to their Mexican-origin workforce; alternatively, Juan's colleague's believed that a clientele seeking authentic or high-end French food would be skeptical of a French restaurant with a Mexican *chef de cuisine.*

Whatever the intentions of Chez Nous' owner may have been by excluding Juan from the TV interview and by giving credit to a departed chef for the restaurant's improved offerings, the status differentiation between Yucatecan and non-Yucatecan workers in San Francisco's restaurants is noticeable in nearly every restaurant I ate in over the course of three years. Yucatecans — typically short and dark skinned — work in the kitchens or as runners or busboys, a job title which is inherently condescending. I rarely if ever observed Yucatecans working as waiters, greeters, or bartenders, except in restaurants which serve Yucatecan food. Such labor segmentation may be due in part to language limitations, but the net effect is that Yucatecans are not *seen* in restaurants in positions of authority, expertise, or skill (see Adler 2000). Instead, in a classic Marxian dynamic, investors, owners, and celebrity chefs accrue acclaim (or derision) for work that their exploitable

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y todo el rollo… Y estamos cosinando y todo, hicieron la interview al dueño…en la cocina. En ese momento llegó una compañía que trajo vinos, abrió la puerta y entonces le dicen que si le entra para el interview… Al poco rato…llegó la compañia de carne…[y después] llegó la compañia de caja y hace el rollo, y me dice el dueño, 'Juan, ve y ponte a cuidar la puerta que nadie entre.' Y [yo] digo, 'hijo de su madre, qué…' Entonces me tuve que ir con mi traje nuevo mis zapatos limpios, me puse en la calle por si alguiern quería entrar decirles que no podían entrar, mientras el dueño estaba haciendo el interview. Y a las dos semanas televisaron el interview en la televisión…Entonces el dueño habló de que gracias a los productores, decía thanks to [unintelligble, maybe Tues?] Market porque están sirviendo la fruta fresca y que casi ellos que su menú que ha estado ofreciendo. Y yo me pongo a pensar, '¿Cuál menú, si él jamás, jamás ha hecho nada?' Yo siempr hago el menú, preparo, ordeno. Al dueño solamente lo veo una vez al mes…sólo llegaba para ver las cuentas, las ganancias y perdidas del mes.

kitchen staff are producing.

As another example, one day while I was eating at a *cocina clandestina* (a restaurant in the informal economy; see chapters 7-8) in the Mission, I met a Yucatecan man named Mario who works in the kitchen of a seafood restaurant owned by a famous Peruvian restauranteur. When Mario told me the name of the restaurant where he worked, La Mar Cebichería, I got excited because I had heard about this restaurant many years ago from a Peruvian acquaintance. Oh, I said to Mario, that's that place with the famous chef! Mario looked at me, paused, and replied firmly, "*Yo soy el chef*" ("I am the chef"). He went on to explain that Gaston Acurio, the restaurant's owner, shows up once a month at most, faxes or emails in any necessary paperwork and menu issues, and gets all the credit for the restaurant's quality. Mario, meanwhile, runs the kitchen, supervises the staff, and is responsible for the daily grind of producing hundreds of expensive plates of Peruvian seafood every night. And of course, Gaston Acurio and the other investors in La Mar Cebichería keep the lion's share of the profits, while Mario earns an hourly wage equivalent to what suburban high schoolers make babysitting.

Discussion and Conclusion

Yucatecan migrants working in San Francisco earn more than they would if they had remained in or returned to Yucatán (Adelson 2002). Yucatecan migrants also develop bridging network ties with non-Yucatecan communities through their jobs, and these relationships do deepen Yucatecans' incorporation into US society.

However, the structured labor market of San Francisco and limited human capital effectively limits Yucatecan migrants' ability to shift from kitchen work to, for instance, a

low-skilled job in the high tech industry or the public sector (as in Hagan 1994).

With regards to the theoretical framework of this project, then, structured flows of international migration created social networks with a large proportion of strong bonding ties among newly arrived migrants. These newly arrived migrants obtain jobs using information from the strong bonding ties within their social networks.

Through meeting new people from different places at these jobs, migrants' social networks expand and diversify. Nevertheless, because of their occupationally and ethnically homogenous networks, occupational segregation continues to characterize the wage labor experiences of Yucatecans in the Bay Area.

Chapter 5: Social Capital and Social Networks

This chapter develops the theoretical framework for the empirical findings in the second half of my dissertation: the dynamics of international migration and settlement in the United States create changes in migrants' social network structure and composition which alter the opportunity structure for network actors' microeconomic behavior.

In chapter 2 I introduced some of the key themes from social network analysis (SNA) into the literature on international migration. Chapters 3 and 4 drew on these themes to explain the dynamics of international migration, settlement in the United States, and labor market incorporation in a receiving society.

In this chapter, I connect the literature on social network structure to the literature on social capital. I argue that the structure and composition of a network shapes the dynamics of resource exchange within it. I also find that a person's need for access to resources can lead to the development of new network substructures. Social capital can be latent or active, and individual or collective. An individual's social capital results from both their structural position within a given network (their degree centrality) and their individual attributes including their other forms of capital (human, economic, legal), their willingness and ability to share these, and their influence or reputation among their network alters.

I also find that a person's need for access to resources can lead to the development of new network substructures. This interdependence (access to various forms capital and network change) results in a virtuous, or self-reinforcing cycle in which adept social capital

cultivators identify opportunities to acquire more through the intentional cultivation of new relationships; in so doing, they increase their own structural and aggregated social capital in a measure I refer to as network topography.

Why are migrants' social networks efficient at connecting resource seekers with resources?

Social capital and social ties are interdependent: the resources you have access to depend on the people you know and how well you know them, and the more resources you are perceived to have, the more people will want to know you. In addition, some network actors are particularly adept at developing relationships with other people, especially when these relationships yield important resources.

As described in the preceding chapters, information about clandestine migration and job opportunities flows efficiently through migrant social networks. In the first part of this chapter I outline the dominant explanations for *why* this information is distributed so efficiently; I next use concepts from social network analysis to explain *how* such information distribution happens within networks. These categories of explanation increase (roughly) in unit of analysis from individual/household to family network to ethnic community

The rational actor explanation

Researchers who approach the study of immigration with a primary focus on the economic rationales for international mobility emphasize the resource-mobilization imperative of migrants' labor market insertion. For example, in both the literature of labor migration (Piore 1979) and the "new" household economics of international migration

(Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor 1993; Stark and Bloom 1985), migrants and their families relocate to new states primarily in search of diversified labor opportunities which will yield the highest economic returns to the household (Borjas 1994). As such, individuals, households, and migrant communities in general are driven to match newly arrived migrants in available jobs as quickly as possible: more time that job seekers are unemployed means lower and slower economic returns to the household.

The family cohesion explanation

Another way of framing the efficiency of migrants' networks in matching aspiring and settled migrants with the resources they need is that family members feel obligated — culturally, morally, or emotionally — compelled to care for one another, and in migrant communities, lending money to aspiring migrants and connecting job seekers with job openings becomes part of a family's repertoire of caretaking.

Like the rational-actor explanation, the family cohesion approach focuses on the need to maximize international migration's economic returns as quickly as possible. However, this view differs from the rational-actor approach because it emphasizes the important role of the seeker's network ties in connecting aspiring workers with the immigration and settlement resources they need (Bashi 2007; Hagan 1998; Menjívar 1997; Pedone 2005; Smith 2006).

Another dimension of the non-economic inducements for connecting job seekers with job openings is the emotional benefit that accrues to a broker who is successfully able to "provide for" a loved one's wellbeing by finding him or her a paying job. Juan, described in chapter 3, experienced an easy insertion into the labor market in San Francisco

when he arrived at 17 in 2000. Juan relied on a cousin who had been working in San Francisco for five years to help him migrate and find a job almost immediately upon arriving. Juan's cousin arranged for him to start working as a dishwasher at a Chinese restaurant when he arrived in San Francisco after a grueling 5-day trek through the Sonoran desert near Agua Prieta and Douglas, Arizona. In Juan's version of the story, his cousin arranged for Juano have a job not because he expected to gain economically from his help, but because of family obligations.

After coming to the US, Juan, it will be recalled, arranged for one of his brothers to join him in San Francisco and to begin working. When the brother left the Bay Area with his wife and moved to the Southeast, Juan described his brother's move as an "escape," which suggests that Juan perceived his brother's decision to move out of the Bay Area as a betrayal. From Juan's perspective, his brother's departure violated the implied norms of ongoing, mutual obligation that accompany Juan's investment in his brother's migration to the United States[89].

The ethnic solidarity explanation

A third category of explanation for why migrant communities prioritize connecting aspiring workers with job opportunities — as part of the broader dynamics of matching

[89] Juan's father, a non-migrant in the small town outside of Oxkutzcab where his family lived, was instrumental in arranging his son's migration to San Francisco: "My dad went to ask [my cousin], he said, 'you know what, my son wants [to migrate], will you take him?' 'Yes, sure, I'll bring him so he can find work." Juan's case again points to the involvement of both migrant and non-migrant actors in facilitating migration, settlement, and labor market incorporation. However, his experience also indicates how the influence of Mexico-based actors is limited to the migration decision, trip north, and — at most — initial settlement arrangements. As a migrant settles into life in the United States and begins looking for work, US-based relatives and friends become more important and influential in their ability and willingness to transmit information about opportunities.
"*Mi papá se lo fue a preguntar [a mi primo], dijo,'sabe qué, mi hijo quiere [migrar], ¿si lo llevas?'sí, está bien, sí lo llevo a que consiga trabajo.}*

aspiring and settled migrants with the resources they need — can be described as the ethnic solidarity explanation. Under this rubric, migrants have a collective interest in protecting and promoting the interests of members of their ethnic or national community. This approach is based on an "us-against-them" mentality in which the interests of a particular immigrant community are pitted against not only native born competitors for jobs but in all likelihood members of other migrant or ethnic communities (Lee 2000).

The structure of migrant networks facilitates the flow of resources within them

The above explanations are all compelling in their own way: migrants and their families do seek to maximize income in the shortest amount of time (Chiquiar and Hanson 2002; Kossoudji and Cobb-Clark 2002); families do acquire new forms of caretaking (Horst 2006; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2009); and ethnic communities look out for the well-being of their members (Gidengil and Stolle 2009).

My project is less invested in identifying which of these perspectives is the best way to understand why migrants acquire the resources they need to enter the United States and find a job than in understanding the social/structural context for the acquisition of these resources. Specifically, looking at the social networks that exist within immigrant communities helps explain *how* resources are efficiently obtained by those who seek them.

In this section, I identify several key structural aspects of migrants' networks that facilitate the flow of resources. In particular, the dense, highly clustered and homophilic network ties among migrants from the same sending community are ideal conditions for maximizing the flow of information and resources within a network.

My use of the term *flow* here is intentional. A flow perspective in network analysis "assumes that actors will use all pathways that connect them, proportionally to the length of the pathways" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:10-24). That is, people seek resources using all available relationships they have, starting with the closest ties and those that are most likely to yield the desired results. Direct pathways are always preferable to going through two or three middlemen to get to a resource provider; however, if the only option is to go through those two or three other people, a resource-seeker will do so. The reason that this perspective is useful in my analysis is that it acknowledges the iterative process of seeking resources: aspiring and settled migrants who are not able to obtain the money or information they are seeking from the first person they ask will continue to ask for it until they acquire it – as happened with Dalia's month-long search for work, or Benicio's search for an associate (chapters 3 and 7, respectively).

Settlement in the United States Diversifies Migrants' Network Composition

Social network analysis helps us see patterns in relationships which then gives us new questions to ask about the attributes of people in specific structural positions and the "social processes that generated the tie structure" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:4-3). A networks approach lets us ask, for example, how the flow of resources within a set of relationships among people who are very similar differs from the flow of resources within a set of relationships among people who are very different from one another. Shifting the analysis to the structural level yields a new sociological perspective on the nexus between social structures and inequality.

In terms of understanding how resources are disseminated so efficiently within a

migrant network, the first step is to consider who the people within the network are, and their attributes. From there, it is possible to zoom out onto the network structure and consider how the patterns of relationships facilitate or hinder the flow of resources among the actors.

A typical migrant network in the early years of US settlement and labor market incorporation is characterized by ties among exceedingly homogeneous actors (Chapter 4). This is particularly true in communities with high rates of clandestine migration because undocumented entry into the United States depends so heavily on money and information provided by family members (Chapter 3). Likewise, migrants from small hometowns are densely and redundantly connected to one another by virtue of having grown up together, sharing blood or fictive kinship ties, and endogamy (Smith 2006). And even in communities with a lot of legal entry, migrant networks pre-migration and for the first months of settlement are comprised of family members and close friends from “back home.”

A network graph of an ideal type of such a network might look like this:

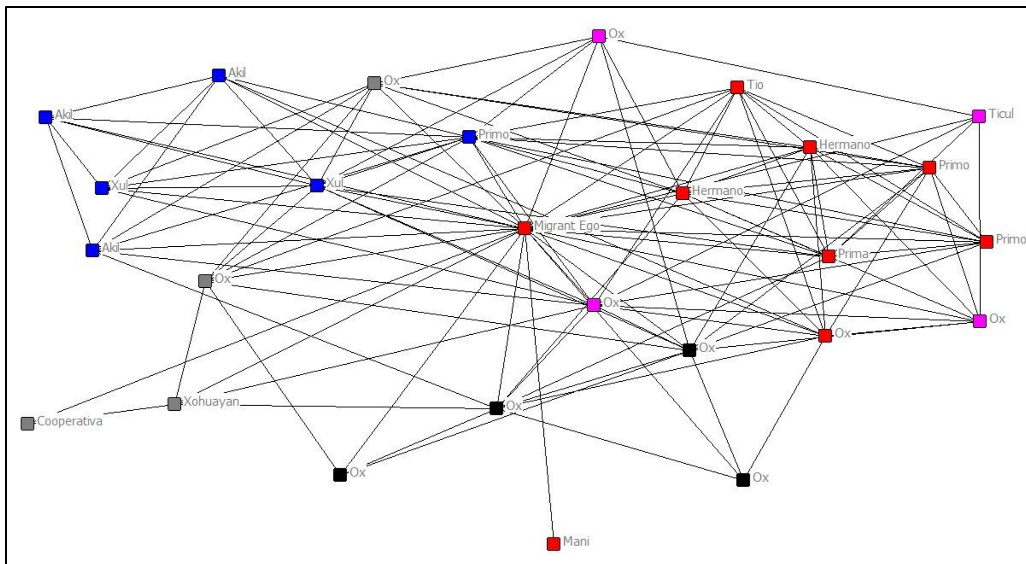

Figure 5.1: "Ideal type" network of US-based relationships of recently arrived Yucatecan migrant in San Francisco.

In this ideal type, migrants are most closely connected to other network actors who are very much like themselves. This homogeneity relates to family ties as well as community of origin.

However, as described in the preceding chapter, as migrants spend more time living in the US and working in the US labor market, they begin to form friendships and relationships with people who are from different ethnic and national communities.

In the Yucatecan community, entrepreneurs' networks became increasingly heterogeneous in three stages:

- 1st stage is knowing only extended family and long-time friends/neighbors to becoming acquainted with people they didn't previously know but who were from the same community or a very similar one (e.g., other Maya speakers, migrants from other parts of Yucatán).

  Fernando: [in the beginning] there were 19 guys [from Oxkutzcab] living in [a place] but they didn't chip in for soap, everyone had their own soap and everything. Anyway, when you get home, I had the closet, I would open the

closet and every time my soap got smaller, my toothpaste was disappearing as if I brushed my teeth seven times a day and not three, and so on. So I didn't like living there, so then I went to live with some guys from other towns, not from my town. I lived with guys from Peto, from Akil…[90]"

- 2nd stage is making connections with people who are from other parts of Mexico or Latin America, but who share key cultural and migration characteristics including Spanish, similar work or family obligations, and an understanding of the experience of being an undocumented immigrant.

  Lázaro: "all of us were from Oxkutzcab and all the rest were from Guanajuato. [Well,] the chef was Filipino, there were two Filipinos working and all the rest from Guanajuato, and even today I'm in touch with them and [with one guy] from El Salvador[91]."

- 3rd stage is connecting with native-born Americans or non-Spanish-speaking migrants.

  Miguel Suizo: The atmosphere was all good. As much with the people from Oxkutzcab as with people from other parts of Mexico, from other parts of the world, because they were around. I got to work with Arabs, Chinese, Hindus, we were even training people from Singapore[92].

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[90] *Fernando: [al principio] en una vivimos entre 19 chavos [de Ox] y allí no daban junta para el jabon, cada quien tenía su jabón y todo. Entonces cuando llegas a tu casa, a mí me tocó el closet, abría yo el closet [y] cada vez quedaba más chico mí jabón, mí pasta [dental] de me gastaba (como que me cepillara yo 7 veces al día y no 3) y así, y así. Entonces ahí no me gustó vivir, entonces yo me fuí a vivir con otros chavos de otros pueblos, no de mí pueblo. Viví con chavos de Peto, de Akíl…*

[91] *Lázaro: "eramos todos de Oxkutzcab y todos los demás eran de Guanajuato." "el chef, [que] era un filipino, eran does filipinos que estaban trabajando y los demás puros de Guanajuato y hasta la fecha tengo contacto con ellos y uno de El Salvador."*

[92] *Miguel Suizo: Era bueno el ambiente con todo. Tanto con los Oxkutzcabeños como con gente de otras partes de México, de otras partes del mundo, porque habían. Me tocó trabajar con arabes, chinos, con hindús, de hecho estuvimos entrenando a gente de Singapur.*

Incorporating these new relationships into a given migrant's network yields this typical network graph:

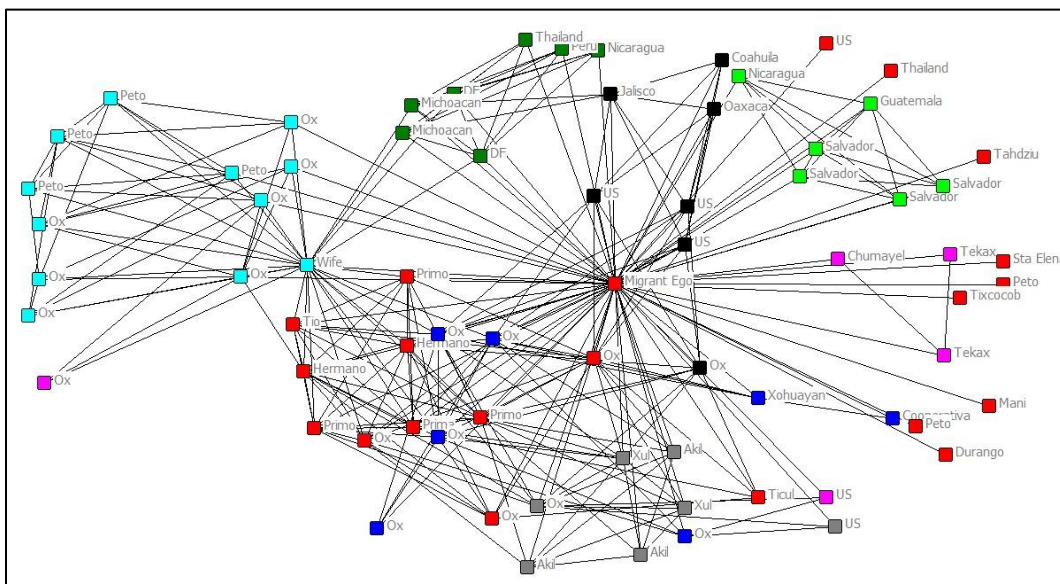

Figure 5.2: "Ideal type" network of US-based relationships of settled Yucatecan migrant in San Francisco

In this network graph, the network is still primarily composed of relationships with homogeneous network alters. There is a growing proportion of un-alike actors within the network, which reflects the diversification of ties through labor market incorporation and the other dynamics of settlement in a receiving community. Despite this increasing heterogeneity, however, the network is still largely homophilic — in other words, the densest concentration of ties is among actors who are the most alike.

Homophily matters in the flow of resources within networks because people who are alike are typically searching for the same kinds of resources ((Granovetter 1973; Hagan 1994; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). Homophily does not necessarily mean that people who have information will share it with their counterparts; indeed, there may be an incentive — as identified by Sandra Susan Smith (2005) and Jennifer Lee (2000) — to

conceal information from network alters perceived to be competitors in an economy of scarcity. Nevertheless, as outlined in the first part of this chapter, there are strong norms in migrant communities that prioritize connecting people with the information and resources they need.

Network Density

Migrant networks are not only characterized by homophily, a concentration of network actors with similar backgrounds; they are also highly dense. Density, in this case, refers to the number of relationships that exist among the actors in a given network. The more people who are connected to each other in one way or another, the denser the network[93].

The density of migrant networks explains the efficient flow of resources because the denser the network, the faster resources travel. More ties means more opportunities for network actors to transmit information or obtain a loan. A network with a high level of density will also have more redundancy, which increases the probability that any given actor will be included in an exchange relationship: "Networks that have few or weak connections, or where some actors are connected only by pathways of great length…display low solidarity, a tendency to fall apart, slow response to stimuli, and the like. Networks that have more and stronger connections with shorter paths among actors…[are] more robust and more able to respond quickly and effectively" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:5-12).

In other words, greater network density reflects greater social cohesion among a set

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[93] A dense network has a small average geodesic distance — in other words, the most efficient path between any two actors through the smallest possible number of other actors. In dense networks, or in networks with small average geodesic distance, information travels quickly.

of actors: "The density of a network may give us insights into such phenomena as the speed at which information disseminates among the nodes, and the extent to which such actors have high levels of social capital and/or social constraint" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-9). This cohesion can yield coordinated efforts — e.g., to ensure that everyone looking for employment gets information about job openings — or constraints on actors' behavior through the rapid diffusion of gossip (Lee 2000).

We know that migrants' networks are highly dense in part because international migration, particularly in its clandestine version, is predicated on support from family members (Bashi 2007; Borger and Muse-Orlinoff 2010; Singer and Massey 1997; Spener 2009). As a result, few migrants arrive in the United States without a handful of relatives already living in the community where they settle. As more and more family members and neighbors arrive, and settled migrants marry other settled migrants, the network in the United States becomes a densely interconnected web of kinship, *compadrazgo*, and extended family relationships.

The flow of resources in networks is most efficient when the networks are dense and homophilic; this is precisely how the Yucatecan migrant network in San Francisco is structured.

As an example, consider the search dynamics among a group of Cristóbal's friends when a young Yucatecan migrant disappeared:

> Cristóbal: About a month and a half ago a friend came to me… he was looking for me through a woman who travels [back and forth between Mexico and the United States] because he didn't have my number… [he asked me] to help him because his little brother disappeared… He was a kid of like 14 when he [migrated]. And now the kid is like nearly 20, but he doesn't have any ID or anything. They heard that the kid had gotten into a fight and but they didn't know anything else about him. So, since I know a

> lot of Yucatecans [in San Francisco], they called the lady who came to find me so I could help to locate the kid. And yeah, after one thing and another, we found him… with two or three phone calls, and also on chat, we got friends talking about it, we know a lot of people. And then they were able to figure out where he was[94].

Cristóbal's story is a very small-scale example of search dynamics in small-world networks. The seeker – Cristóbal's friend – used a tie to get in touch with Cristóbal because he believed that Cristóbal had access to additional ties who would be able to locate his brother. The search involved multiple degrees of connection, but the network's configuration – strong ties among alike actors – prioritized the search activity. As a result, Cristóbal and his friends located the young man within a day of beginning the search.

Social Capital

Information and money are two essential objects of exchange — the resources that flow — within a migrant social network. More broadly, however, the relationships which constitute a migrant social network contain social capital. This section builds a definition of social capital in the context of network structures; I argue that social capital and network structure interact in such a way that network actors with a lot of personal social capital and a lot of connections within the network are more visible, and consequently more influential, within a given network.

Social scientists have come to a general agreement that the resources which inhere in the relationships between people are a form of social capital (Coleman 1988; Lin 2001;

[94] *Cristóbal: si, hace como un mes y medio vino un amigo...me estaba localizando por medio de esta señora que viaja, porque el no tenía mí número de allí de San Francisco...[para que] lo ayude, porque su hermanito desapareció...era un muchachito como de 14 años cuando el se fue. Entonces el muchacho ahora tenía como los 20 casi, [pero] no tiene identificación ni nada. Se enteraron que el muchacho se peleó y no saben nada de el. Entonces como yo conozco mucho yucateco allí, entonces el le habló a la señora de San Francisco y... vino a buscarme aquí para poder ayudarlo a localizar al muchacho. Y si, al fin y al cabo siempre si, si lo localizamos... con 2, 3 llamadas y luego ahí en el chat ahí ven los amigos diciendole a tal persona, conocemos mucho. Entonces ya averiguaron donde estaba.*

Putnam 2000). However, the consensus peters out quickly, since scholars disagree about the analytic level where social capital exists and the kinds of resources that can be included in the definition of social capital. For example, some scholars assert that social capital is a collective good (Putnam) which can only exist within a closed network or system (Coleman). In this view, social capital is a feature of a large social structure rather than a form of capital available to an individual network actor. Other notable work on social capital approaches its analysis from a more microeconomic perspective. In this view, social capital is created, measurable, and used at an individual level (Lin, Granovetter).

I understand social capital to be both. It is created and accessed at an individual level, or more concretely, a dyadic level. However, the amount of and use of social capital within a given community or network accrues to the social structure. This multi-level perspective makes it possible to analyze how different network structures are likely to contain different types of social capital (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001; Woolcock 1998). Likewise, acknowledging the structural contexts of social capital helps clarify how the transfer of social capital among network actors can actually transform network structures.

In this section I offer a definition of social capital that specifically connects with the analysis of social network structures.

Defining Social Capital

I begin my discussion of social capital with Nan Lin's definition of social capital as resources embedded in relationships that can be accessed for purposive action (2001:25). In this definition, Lin offers several criteria to define social capital. First is his use of the

term “resources” which he notes includes both material and symbolic goods. In other words, social capital can include objects as well as information, money as well as advice, and phone numbers as well as encouragement.

Second, Lin focuses on the resources embedded in interpersonal relationships rather than large closed (Coleman) or ill-defined (Putnam) social structures. Third, he notes that these resources “can be accessed,” which tacitly acknowledges that there is intentionality behind a network actor’s effort to obtain a material or symbolic good from a network alter. Fourth, Lin ties the access of social capital to “purposive action,” reinforcing the sense that network actors’ request for and use of social capital is instrumental as well as intentional.

Lin’s definition is a good starting point, but for my analysis I needed to distinguish between the social capital that inheres in the relationships an individual has and the social capital that a given person has available to share with the people he or she knows. The first task is to identify what, exactly, social capital is, and who has it.

Everyone who is aware of being connected to or in a relationship with another person that has access to shareable resources that are different from theirs and attractive to them. For example:

- A kid whose best friend has really permissive parents and lets them play videogames until 2 am
- A teenager whose dorky neighbor has a car and who is willing to tolerate the social stigma of being seen with a social inferior in order to not take the bus to school
- An adult who wants to start a business and asks friend and family to contribute start-up capital through Kickstarter.

Examples from international migration are:

- Asking a relative with clandestine migration experience for a referral to a trustworthy people smuggler
- Being *recomendada* with someone when a migrant first arrives in the receiving community, and having a safe place to land while first getting settled in the US
- Asking friends if they know of any job openings open to undocumented workers with limited English skills

The individual and group-level components of social capital

Lin defines social capital as material and symbolic goods accessed for purposive action (Lin 2001). For the purposes of this dissertation, I wanted a more nuanced definition to explore the limits of social capital — when does money exchanged between acquaintances stop being social capital and become straightforward payment for services rendered?

To that end, I offer the following definition of social capital. I follow Lin inasmuch as I think that social capital includes both material and non-material goods, but my version is broader and more precise.

Table 5.1: Components of Social Capital

Social capital includes:	Social capital excludes:
Money or goods in the form of loans, investments, or gifts[95].	Wages or payment for goods or services; credit or a loan from an institution like a bank or credit union.
Advice, information, or other form of knowledge designed to help another person accomplish a specific goal (i.e., Lin's "purposive action")	Information or instruction conveyed in a formal or institutional setting (e.g., a school, a training program, or a community organization)
Emotional and moral support in the face of difficult or unusual circumstances	Routine emotional intimacy of family members or close friends — the emotional dimension of social capital is based on this but it is more intense, more acutely needed, and provided because of particular circumstances.
Introductions to other people who may be able to provide any of the above *because* they may be able to provide such resources	Introductions to other people without knowing that they are facilitating the exchange of resources
How influential or powerful someone's close connections are	Influential or powerful people someone is only very indirectly connected to

A brief note about emotional and moral support (the third component) in my definition: Reay thinks that emotional capital, as she calls it, is a gendered form of capital which inheres specifically in the relationships among women. I disagree; both men and women offer emotional and moral support to the people in their lives. However, such support takes different forms depending on the cultural and social contexts in which the relationship is embedded. Bagchi (2001), for instance, finds that social capital works differently for women depending on their profession.

[95] This is *social* capital because it comes as a result of a personal relationship, and as such is qualitatively different than money obtained through an institutional relationship such as a bank. For example, when Juan (Chapter 3) took out a loans from Tommy Bermejo first to build his house and then to re-enter the US without authorization, Tommy deducted regular payments from Juan's paycheck. The loan was certainly predicated on a baseline of trust that Juan would not abscond without having worked enough to pay back the loan, but the institutionalized, automated deductions are a much more formalized debt-repayment than money borrowed from friends, relatives, or even loan sharks (see chapter 8).

It is important to include an emotional dimension of interpersonal relationships in the definition of social capital because, as will be discussed in the following chapters, affective dynamics and the nebulous concept of social skills are important parts of the explanation for actors' different economic destinations: while having a high level of emotional capital and (idiosyncratic) social skills do not automatically ensure greater financial success, they play an important role in helping pioneer entrepreneurs manage the multiplex relationships which are critical to starting and running a business.

Social capital (and human capital, for that matter) differ from financial capital in that it does not increase in power if left unused. Just the opposite happens, in fact: if social capital is not requested, the power of network links to provide information and support dwindles (this mirrors certain kinds of human capital like language acquisition - if a language learned later in life is not used, the speaker often feels that his or her speaking ability has diminished). The half-life of social capital is shaped by the intensity of the connection between two individuals and in particular by the length of the relationship between them. In other words, the social capital an actor has access to depends on the network substructure that she or he is embedded in.

Nevertheless, asking how much social capital someone has is not the focus of my analysis; as Portes notes, attempts to measure the impact of social on outcomes are plagues by spuriousness (2000). Instead, it is more helpful to ask whether there is latent or active transfer of social capital between or among network actors and how that exchange alters an existing network tie or creates a new one.

- **Latent social capital** is the unquantifiable amount of resources in the above table that are possessed by everyone a given actor knows well enough to ask for a favor. Latent social capital is unquantifiable because so many of the resources

which comprise it are non-tangible and non-fungible.

- **Active social capital** is the transfer of a resource from one individual to another for "purposive action."

Some actors have a lot of latent social capital because of the number of relationships they have directly or indirectly with other actors in their network. Since social capital resides within the relationships among people, the more relationships an individual has, the more resources he or she can access at any given moment in time. Of course, not all relationships yield social capital: just because two people know each other does not mean that person A is willing to lend person B $1,000, or is willing to provide advice on starting and running a business (a key point overlooked by Portes and Sensenbrenner 1998). Nevertheless, number of alters a given network ego has provides important information about his or her possibilities for converting latent social capital into active social capital.

Individual Social Capital

The above sections outlined the social capital available to an actor through the relationships he or she has with other people. However, network actors also have social capital to provide other alters. Individual social capital is comprised of **structural** social capital and **aggregated** social capital.

Structural social capital is the number and quality of ties an actor has with alters in his or her network, while aggregated social capital includes the actor's other forms of capital (economic, human, legal); their social skills; their status, authority, or influence in a network; and their willingness to share these resources when asked.

Structural Social Capital

The number of network ties someone has – their degree centrality, in the parlance of SNA – is an important part of their structural social capital because the more other people an actor is connected to (directly or indirectly), the more efficiently they can locate a resource for a network alter seeking something within the set of relationships. "Network analysts often describe the way that an actor is embedded in a relational network as imposing constraints on the actor and offering the actor opportunities" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:10-2). Actors who are highly connected within a network have more options when it comes to who to exchange with.

Aggregated Social Capital

Yet just because someone is very well connected within a network does not mean that he or she has valuable social capital to share with other network actors. Social capital must therefore include the set of resources and assets that someone has, along with their willingness or disposition to share them.

Aggregated social capital includes:

1. Forms of capital
    - How much money an actor has available to lend or give someone (economic capital)
    - The amount and kind of information or knowledge an actor has (human capital)
    - The legal status an immigrant has (legal capital)
2. Disposition
    - An actor's willingness and ability to share their forms of capital
    - An actor's willingness and ability to provide emotional or moral
    - An actor's ability and willingness to introduce someone to other people
3. Influence

- An actor's status, authority, or influence within a given network (note: this refers more to someone's gravitas, rather than to whether they are in a structural position of influence within the network)
- An actor's subjective perception of their status, authority, or influence.

I am not the first to incorporate authority, status, reputation, or power into measures of social capital. For instance, Lin (2001) points to Weber's notions of class, status, and power as helpful in understanding why different people have different amounts of social capital to offer.

These resources and assets aggregate into an aspect of social capital that interacts with structural social capital.

Aggregated Social Capital + Structural Social Capital = Network Topography

The way that the structural and subjective components of social capital interact create a topographical effect on a network structure. By topographical I mean that it is helpful to think of networks as existing in three dimensions instead of being flat structures. Some network actors will have a higher "altitude" because of the combination of the number of people they have relationships with (their structural social capital) with high amount of the aggregated social capital they can provide to other people.

Consider the example of two network actors in structurally equivalent positions — in other words, two people who have the same number and kind[96] of ties to others within the network. If one of these individuals has less aggregated social capital than the other, she

[96] In other words, two actors who have structural and relational equivalency (Moran 2005).

or he has a lower altitude in the overall network topography.[97]

Network Topography in the Yucatecan Community

As an example, there is a group of Yucatecan men who are widely recognized as the community's respected elders (in Maya, the *nojoch jalocho'ob*) in San Francisco. They gather daily to drink coffee, watch the community's comings and goings on Mission Street, and gossip in Maya. Among this group is a man who goes by the nickname Platón. Platón seems to know everyone, although it is not possible for me to tell whether he knows everyone because he is part of the group of community elders or if he became part of the group of elders because he already knew everyone. Nevertheless, despite being well connected within the broader network of Yucatecans in San Francisco — having lots of structural social capital, or a high degree centrality, in SNA terms — Platón does not occupy a particularly authoritative position within the network, especially compared to the other men who comprise this group of community leaders.

By contrast, Chente is very respected within the Yucatecan community. He garners this respect for a number of reasons. For one thing, Chente — unlike Platón and many of the other Yucatecans in San Francisco — is documented. He has a good job as a bus driver in San Mateo County, and he has a large house in Yucatán where he throws a lavish, and well-known, New Years Eve party every year. Chente is also respected in the community in San Francisco for having quit drinking and for being a wise, older person.

The examples of Chente and Platón point to the qualitative difference between the

[97] When I talk about network topography, I am sort of referring to multi-dimensional scaling, which is an analytic technique that positions network actors in graph space according to their degree closeness as well as their attribute homogeneity. In my work, the attribute that places network actors in similar multi-dimensional space is an individual's own social capital.

social capital a network actor has by virtue of their network position and the subjective social capital an actor network. Although they have many of the same social connections, and occupy roughly similar structural positions in the broader Yucatecan community, Chente has more aggregated social capital to dispense than Platón. Chente is well-known, well-liked, and influential, while Platón is (merely) well-known and well-liked. Put differently, Chente has a higher elevation in the Yucatecan community's network topography than does Platón.

Network topography matters because it facilitates a multi-level analysis of how someone's individual attributes and their network position constrain and enable social action (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-2). The higher someone's elevation in a network topography, the more visible they are within a given network, not only because there are quantitatively more people who know them, but because other network actors know what kinds of resources they have and how are willing they are to share them.[98] People who occupy high positions in a network topography often have opportunities to exercise their influence within the network: for example, Chente — and not Platón — has been asked to occupy a leadership position in at least three community organizations.

These opportunities have engendered a virtuous cycle in which Chente's aggregated social capital, including his legal presence in the US; his stable, respected job; his gravitas and sobriety; and his willingness to help other people have led to opportunities through which he has met new people (increased his structural social capital) and gained new information and more aggregated social capital. As a result, his elevation within the

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[98] This visibility can also be used to entrench community-wide condemnation; as will be described in the following chapter, there is a Yucatecan con artist who is very well-known (both in terms of numbers of people who know him and the strength of his reputation) and who, because of his repeated fraud, has effectively been excommunicated from the community.

Yucatecan network topography continues to increase, while Platón's remains roughly the same.

As will be described in the following chapter, this notion of network topography is helpful for understanding how entrepreneurs' search for social capital through their relationships — even when these relationships are with individuals outside the Yucatecan community — increases their own network topography.

Different kinds of network ties yield different forms of social capital

The preceding sections built a definitional framework for social capital that includes the experience of a network actor who is seeking resources from people he or she knows, as well as a network actor who has resources to share with others. A seeker's social capital is described as **latent** or **active**, and a provider's social capital is characterized as being both **structural** and **aggregated**. The combination of structural and aggregated social capital yield a measure of an actor's network topography: how visible and influential they are within a network.

Having achieved some clarity on what social capital is, this next section delves more particularly into what happens as network actors search for social capital within their networks. Above and beyond how many ties an individual has, the attributes of those relationships affects the social capital that can be exchanged within them.

This is, in its most basic essence, the whole point of social network analysis: "[a]ctors are described by their relations, not their attributes. And the relations themselves are just as fundamental as the actors they connect" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:1-3). Looking at "the number and kinds of ties that actors have are a basis for similarity or

dissimilarity to other actors — and hence to possible differentiation and stratification" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-5).

In this section, I describe detail how network substructures including multiplex ties, brokerage and structural holes relate to resource exchange. I also begin to build a theory of social capital that takes into account these substructures, as well as measures of relative influence or prestige in networks through degree centrality and betweenness.

Migrants' networks are characterized by a high proportion of multiplex ties

Migrant networks are characterized by highly multiplex ties. Multiplex relationships indicate that network actors are connected to one another across various dimensions of social interaction. Multiplexity can also be understood as the addition of an additional kind of social capital (from the table presented above) onto an existing relationship. For example, as will be described in the following chapter, Camilo and Marcos were *compadres* (co-godparents) who became business partners. Their relationship as *compadres* remained meaningful to them both even when their business partnership was dissolved (see chapter 7).

Multiplexity creates redundancy in network ties, and is one of the reasons why considering both the emotional and the economic nature of ties is critical to understanding how network ties remain resilient even in the face of microeconomic transition. Hanneman and Riddle find that "the 'distance' between two actors is defined as the strength of the weakest path between them" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-16). Here, they are describing the intensity of a tie, in particular, ways to measure ties when there are multiple pathways from one actor to another. But the principle also precisely describes multiplex ties. When

two actors are connected to each other in multiple ways, the strength of the tie can be evaluated as a function of the strongest tie that exists between them. For example, if an economic tie dissolves, a kinship tie continues to exist, even if it is characterized by circumstantial hostility.

The cases in the next chapters indicate that entrepreneurs rely on multiplex ties to start and run their businesses; the cases also emphasize how complex multiplex relationships are to sustain. The Yucatecan entrepreneurs I interviewed and observed suggest that the point at which economic issues acquire precedence over the emotional or kinship content of a relationship is the point at which the tie becomes vulnerable. However, the existence of an emotional tie creates the possibility for re-establishing the tie once the economic transgression is forgiven. The economic aspect to the relationship makes the tie vulnerable, but the emotional aspect to the relationship makes the tie resilient.

Brokerage and Structural Holes

Alternatively, the resource-seeker can seek to develop relationships with people who have important resources but who are not part of their network. Actors who connect two otherwise unconnected network structures are called brokers, and the lack of relationships among actors in network A and network B is known as a structural hole (Burt 2005; Hanneman and Riddle 2005).

Structural holes are gaps between networks or network substructures, including dyads, cliques, or factions. A structural hole results from the absence of a tie between actors who are part of these structures or substructures because they don’t know each other or because creating a tie incurs an unacceptably high transaction cost.

Hanneman and Riddle find that actors at the periphery of a network are more constrained and therefore more predictable (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:10-2). Here periphery refers to low centrality, those network actors who are loosely connected and to only a few other actors. Their behavior is constrained within a network. However, if they are able to close a structural hole and become a broker between two otherwise unconnected networks, their peripheral position suddenly becomes one of tremendous structural advantage because they are able to control the flow of resources between the two networks, an activity known as brokerage (Burt 1997, 2005).

For instance, Cristóbal explained that when he was the head chef at Chez Nous and needed to find someone to work, the demand for jobs was plentiful: "I'd make one call to one or two houses and right away calls would go out and 3, 6, 8 guys would show up fast to ask for work[99]." Cristóbal informed particular groups of friends about jobs at Chez Nous so that he could put together an effective and cohesive team which made it easier for him to run the kitchen. By being selective about *which* houses Cristóbal made those initial calls to, he was trying to ensure that the applicants were as team-oriented as he wanted. This tactic did not change Cristóbal's hourly wage but it help him develop a reputation as someone who had access to job information that was parceled out according to his own criteria. If you heard about a job opening at Chez Nous from Cristóbal, it meant that you meet his criteria for co-workers. If you didn't fit his demands for being team-oriented, you were not among the first round of friends to hear about the jobs.

Although Cristóbal's parceling out of information was not a specifically financial

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[99] *Cristóbal: "yo solamente hacia una llamada a una o dos casas y en seguida se hacían las llamadas y rápidamente venían 3, 6, 8 muchachos a pedir trabajo."*

activity, it was an economic one. Information about job openings in an employment-hungry community is a commodity, and being able to control the flow of economic resources (information, in this case) both results from and reinforces an actor's network position. If a network actor gains a reputation within the community as being a reliable source of information about available jobs or routinely helpful in connecting job seekers with job opportunities, more and more people will turn to the actor with news about openings or with requests for such information. Recall Bernardo's observation that a co-ethnic hirer is like a magnet: "Once they know that someone from Yucatán is in charge, Yucatecans come towards you… It's kind of like a magnet. It's like a magnet, you know, that keeps attracting more[100]." The more people who do so and the greater the success with which the initial actor connects other network actors for job prospects, the greater the degree of network centrality.

Seeking out Opportunities for Brokerage

The analysis of brokerage often picks up *in media res* — that is, once the relationship exists. Yet such relationships do not emerge out of chance: entrepreneurs, for example, intentionally seek out new relationships because of the resources contained in the new alter's network (Ruef, Aldrich, and Carter 2003). The following chapter includes cases of entrepreneurs who figured out how to bridge structural holes by identifying people with high network topography *outside* the network structure or substructure the seeker was initially embedded in. This pattern is of particular importance in a newly settled,

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[100] *Q: Una vez que ya era usted manager, podía ayudar a otros* paisanos *que entraran a trabajar a ese lugar por ejemplo?*
Bernardo: Sí, inclusive… ayudé a bastantes paisanos*, muchos* paisanos*…. una vez sabiendo que una persona de Yucatán está a cargo, los yucatecos van hacia ti…O sea, es como un iman. Es como un iman, o sea, que va atrayendo más.*

predominantly undocumented immigrant community, in which co-ethnic alters with high network topography do not have the kinds of resources and social capital that aspiring entrepreneurs are seeking.

The social contexts of brokerage are one of the key ways that an ethnographic approach to collecting network data can mitigate some of the over-reliance on structural positions to explain behavior. Hanneman and Riddle note that "There may be some danger of 'over-interpreting' the information about individuals' brokerage roles as representing meaningful acts of 'agency.' In any population in which there are connections, partitioning (assigning an network actor to a group based on a given criterion) will produce brokerage — even if the partitions are not meaningful, or even completely random. [How] Can we have any confidence that the patterns we are seeing in real data are actually different from a random result?" (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:9-17). The solution is to obtain deeper, contextual information about the relationship a broker has with his/her alters and the motivations for or against acting as middleman between otherwise unconnected network actors. This project provides this broader perspective by using ethnographic data to contextualize pioneer entrepreneurs' brokerage practices.

Different kinds of relationships yield different kinds of social capital

The introduction of new resources into networks through new ties is one of the areas of network analysis where structural issues inextricably intertwine with social capital. This interconnection is evident in Putnam's notion of bridging and bonding social capital, and Granovetter's description of the strength of weak ties.

One of Putnam's key contributions to the social capital canon is the notion that

relationships among people who share many characteristics yield social capital which is qualitatively different from the social capital that inheres in the relationships between unlike actors. In other words, the social capital contained in homophilic ties is different than the social capital which exists in ties among diverse network actors (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). Putnam terms the social capital among similar actors as "bonding" social capital, and the social capital among dissimilar actors as "bridging" social capital.[101]

Putnam's typology of bonding and bridging social capital has echoes of Granovetter's famous analysis of the utility of information available from people one knows very well as opposed to less-well-known contacts. Granovetter found that job seekers were more likely to obtain more useful information from people with whom they had "weak" ties than from those with whom they shared "strong" ties. This pattern resulted because people who already know each other well (and who are consequently more alike) tend to have access to the same information sources. Information about new job opportunities therefore tends to be highly redundant among close friends. By contrast, people with whom one is less close have access to different kinds and sources of information. Job seekers reported faster (re)employment and higher wages when they asked their casual acquaintances instead of their close friends for job leads.

In both Putnam's and Granovetter's analyses, different kinds of network ties yield different forms of social capital (see also Moran 2005). Putnam focuses on the similarity or difference between two individuals, while Granovetter focuses instead on the length of

[101] Although high levels of bridging social capital introduce new kinds of information and perspective into communities, Putnam's analysis also indicates that communities with lots of bridging capital have low levels of social trust.

time two people have known each other and the intensity and continuity of their relationship. Relationships between alike actors contain bonding social capital, while relationships between unalike actors contain bridging social capital. Strong ties exist among people who have known each other for a long time and/or who interact regularly, while weak ties connect casual acquaintances and people who have met more recently.

In other words, the typologies of bonding/bridging and strong/weak are not duplicative: instead, they describe intersecting axes of network ties. These two axes create a matrix of ties between two individuals, in which one dimension indicates how similar the backgrounds of the two individuals are, and the other offers a measure of the intensity of the tie.

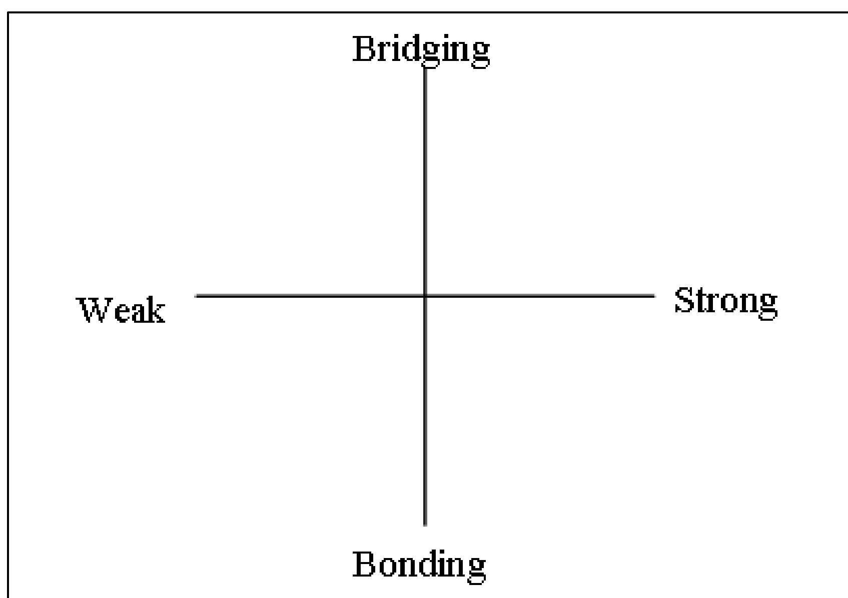

Figure 5.3: Two Dimensions of Relationships: Similarity and Intensity

Juxtaposing Putnam's and Granovetter's typologies against each other underscores the complex ties between network actors. For instance, a tie between two actors who are from putatively similar backgrounds can be weak, because the two individuals do not know

each other that well or do not get along. Such a tie would appear in the bottom left quadrant of the matrix, since it is a relationships that is simultaneously bonding (because of the similar backgrounds) and weak (since the two people are not close). Conversely, in Putnam's hypothetical scenario of a marriage between a British prince and Bengali woman, the tie between the two would belong in the upper right-hand quadrant, since spouses can be assumed to have fairly strong ties with one another despite the differences in their backgrounds.

This matrix is helpful in understanding my data because it offers a systematic way of describing the relationships individuals have with other key actors in their social networks.

For example, the relationship between Dalia and her husband would belong in the right-hand side of the matrix, because the tie between them is intimate and enduring, and has existed for a decade. However, their relationship would fit best in the middle or upper part of the bottom right-hand quadrant: although Dalia and Esteban are both undocumented migrants from Mexico, Dalia grew up in Yucatán and is rooted in Maya language and culture, while Esteban grew up much closer to the US border and grew up in a qualitatively different cultural context. By way of comparison, the relationship between Dalia and Esteban is stronger than the relationship between Dalia and her business's financial backer (who will be introduced in the following chapter). Dalia and her backer, known as "the Italian," come from very different backgrounds. As a result, and relative to the tie between Dalia and Esteban, the tie between Dalia and the Italian (despite its importance for the genesis and early phases of Dalia's business) would be positioned higher on the bridging/bonding axis, reflecting a higher bridging quotient, and further to the left,

indicating a weaker relationship.

Yet as Granovetter identified, "weak" relationships are critical to economic actors because they introduce new information and resources into networks. Putnam, for his part, specifically identified immigrant entrepreneurs as very likely to benefit from bonding network ties: "to realize their full potential, entrepreneurs may have to reach beyond their own ethnic groups or neighborhoods and forge ties to the broader world" (2000:322). The next chapter shows that immigrant entrepreneurs in newly settled communities characterized by low wage labor and high rates of illegality do, in fact, depend on bridging relationships to start and run businesses in the formal sector.

With this finding, I am able to link Lin's and Granovetter's micro-level study of social capital and social networks with Putnam's broader findings about the value of bridging social capital for social cohesion. As chapter 7 shows, pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs rely on bridging ties to non-co-ethnic network alters to start and run their businesses. As they establish these relationships and exchange social capital within them, their network topography increases both within and externally to their co-ethnic networks. As such, pioneer entrepreneurs are the vanguard of social and economic incorporation into US society.

Chapter 6: Why Do Yucatecan Immigrants Become Entrepreneurs?

Abstract: The decision to become self employed[102] comes from the desire to maximize income under constraints, the perception of a market opportunity, and personal motivations including a strong desire for autonomy and an entrepreneurial vocation. In the early stages, entrepreneurial also requires an entrepreneur's household to develop economic strategies capable of mitigating the risks of self-employment. Entrepreneurship requires a good or service to purvey, a market willing to bear the price the entrepreneur sets, and access to necessary the tools and materials. Finally, self-employment in the formal economy requires social capital in the form of information, advice, legal proxies, and financing including credit, loans, etc.

Introduction

Running a small business is not cheap, and in the early years any revenue is required for reinvestment and maintaining a household — there is virtually no profit. An entrepreneur and his or her family running a small business work far more hours a week than they would if they continued in the wage labor market.

So why do Yucatecan immigrants with limited human capital decide to start and run businesses in the competitive small-business sector in San Francisco?

I take as given that a fundamental motivation to start a business is an entrepreneur's desire to maximize income under constraints. However, wage-labor is more stable and

[102] In this analysis I do not distinguish between self-employment and entrepreneurialism – I use the terms interchangeably to refer to include all self-directed economic activity. Attempting to distinguish between "self-employment" and "entrepreneurialism" among Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco (and in Oxkutzcab) was confounding, because of the persistent reliance on wage-labor by fledgling business owners, the consistent, unremunerated involvement of family members in supporting entrepreneurial activity, and the fluctuating need for paid assistance. Instead, I follow Schumpeter (2008) and Baumol (1968) who locate the key contribution of the entrepreneur to be the one who came up with the idea for the firm's activities.

skilled cooks earn an average $27,660 a year in San Francisco[103]. Javier, an undocumented kitchen worker at a mid-range restaurant on Market Street has earned enough over his twelve years in San Francisco to spend $140,000 USD to build his family two houses in Oxkutzcab, neither of which he has actually seen.

The interviews I conducted and the participant observation I engaged in indicate that other factors were more important to the decision to start and run a business: none of the Yucatecan pioneer entrepreneurs I interviewed said they decided to go into business for themselves in order to make as much money as possible.

I begin this chapter with a brief overview of the sociology of entrepreneurship before rejecting a dichotomized distinction between "need-" and "opportunity-" driven entrepreneurship. Instead, self-employment stems from a combination of the desire to maximize income and the perception of a market opportunity for a good or service.

I also argue that entrepreneurialism is a vocation, in the Weberian sense. Despite this vocation, Yucatecan entrepreneurs almost universally attribute the genesis of their business to someone else's idea. This pattern underscores the fact that entrepreneurial activity depends on nested sets of relationships — the household, friends and supporters, and ultimately the broader network of regular and potential consumers. I conclude by describing how the monetization of caretaking in immigrant communities can be the first phase of entrepreneurship.

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[103] This amount is enormous compared to 2012's average salary in Yucatán of 191 pesos a day (about $15, or less than $6,000 a year for 30 days of full-paid work a month). However, it is less than half of the Bay Area's average salary of $62,680. In addition, San Francisco has the most expensive housing in the United States: the average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment is nearly $3,500. This figure helps explain why although Smith (2006) found that restaurant work was a path into the middle class for Pueblan migrants in New York, such a result is unlikely to obtain for Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco. Once housing in the city becomes unaffordable, migrants relocate to the East Bay, and the costs of and limits to late-night trans-bay transportation make kitchen work correspondingly less cost-effective and less desirable.

The sociology of entrepreneurship

The study of entrepreneurship, which is defined by Ruef and Lounsbury as "purposive action leading to the creation of new formal organizations, or…any effort to introduce durable innovations in routines, technologies, organizational forms, or social institutions" (Ruef and Lounsbury 2007:1-2), has been present in sociological research since Weber. Ruef and Lounsbury identify two primary approaches in the sociological study of entrepreneurialism. They characterize these two definitions as, respectively, Schumpeterian and Weberian, arguing that "the Schumpeterian definition focuses on the innovative capacity of the entrepreneur, while the Weberian version emphasizes the entrepreneurial role as a counterbalance to managerial bureaucracy" (2007:15).

Schumpeter, an economist by training, incorporated many questions of sociological import into his research: the development of capitalism, critiques of democracy, and, most crucially to this project, entrepreneurship. Indeed, Schumpeter is credited with originating theories of entrepreneurship, although Ruef and Lounsbury note that Weber's doctoral work on joint partnerships (which pre-dates Schumpeter by several decades) could also be seen as an initial foray into the study of entrepreneurial activity. Schumpeter argued that the creative or innovative projects undertaken by entrepreneurs, particularly large corporations, are responsible for driving macroeconomies (Schumpeter 2008). This formula suggests a Weberian macro/micro/macro cycle: the macroeconomic context of capitalism leads to microeconomic activity by entrepreneurs, which shapes the national economy. Where Schumpeter diverges from Weber, of course, is that the activity is embedded not in social contexts but in economic (and to a lesser degree) political ones. The pioneer entrepreneurs I interviewed exhibited both kinds of entrepreneurship. On the one

hand, they were all excited to purvey a good or service to a market. Even if the object itself is not innovative, its sale in San Francisco's Yucatecan community was. Second, all of the entrepreneurs required managerial and organizational skills to create the actual business: none were absentee founders who had delegated the day-to-day operations to someone else.

One of the first pieces of research on economic sociology in the post-WWII re-emergence of the field was a piece on ethnic entrepreneurship (Ruef & Lounsbury, 2007:10). Lee (1949) argued that Chinese business owners in Butte, Montana, started business strategically on the one hand to avoid direct competition with other arriving ethnic groups and on the other to maximize economic returns. Lee's study, which posits immigrant entrepreneurs as strategic actors in the face of social, political, and economic barriers, marks the beginning of a vibrant branch of research on immigrant entrepreneurship.

One important strand of research on entrepreneurship is the question of "interlocking directorates" – individuals who sit on multiple boards of directors of corporations and who therefore have relatively large amounts of power over whole economic sectors (Davis and Greve 1997). Studies of interlocking directorates (Burris 2005; Mizruchi and Brewster Stearns 1988; Sonquist and Koenig 1975) are among the few to link social networks and analyses of entrepreneurship; indeed, Swedberg argues that there is a "structural hole" in the literature of entrepreneurialism and social networks (Swedberg 2003), which this dissertation seeks to fill.

Rauch and Watson have also offered ways to fill this structural hole (Rauch and Watson 2007). They asked what kind of outcomes entrepreneurs experienced when they

split off from a parent company but remained in the same business community. Analyzing the structures of these nascent entrepreneurs' business networks, Rauch and Watson found that "agents whose links span clusters (i.e., bridges) are more successful than agents whose links remain within clusters" (2007:229). Since clusters are made up of similar firms or actors (homophily), their findings suggest that it is access to un-like information or firms that increases economic returns. Rauch and Watson's conclusion also lends support to sociological work by Granovetter (1973), Burt (1997, 2005), and Uzzi (2001), who find that diversifying network ties leads to more profitable or lucrative outcomes. In other words, economic outcomes which are embedded in a diverse set of social ties have more options for economic configurations.

The problematic dichotomy of need-driven and opportunity-driven entrepreneurialism

Before diving into entrepreneurs' search for social capital (the focus of Chapter 7), I ask what compels an immigrant pioneer entrepreneur go into business for him- or herself?

A branch of research on small-business owners has sought to differentiate between those individuals who become self-employed because they perceive an exploitable market opportunity (Portes 1987; Saxenian 1999) and those who do so because they feel excluded from existing wage-labor opportunities (Blume, Ejrnæs, Nielsen, and Würtz 2009; Constant and Zimmerman 2006; Mata and Pendukar 1999). The latter version, which is often described as need-driven entrepreneurialism (see Tipu 2012), is framed as reactive, and a solution of last resort for economic actors; the former, known as opportunity-driven entrepreneurialism, is proactive and the most appealing choice among multiple

income-generating options (Lofstrom 2004).

Róna-Tas uses the metaphors of the worm and the caterpillar to highlight the differences between need-driven entrepreneurs (NDE's) who respond to push factors, such as the inability to get a job, and opportunity-driven entrepreneurs (ODE's)who respond to pull factors such as a perceived lucrative market opening (Róna-Tas 2001).

Róna-Tas refers to Weber's differentiation between the *oikos* and the firm, and the emergence of the *commenda* system as one of the first examples of a systematic separation between household and entrepreneurial activity. NDE's often do not distinguish the financial aspects of their businesses from overall household expenses, while ODE's create separate accounting procedures for personal or domestic spending and business income and expenditures.

Róna-Tas identifies further differences between the two groups, including a tendency among ODE's to want to expand their business and hire employees - a tendency less often found among ODE's. It is this desire or intention to grow and expand that leads Róna-Tas to call opportunity-driven entrepreneurs "caterpillars;" their initial self-employment is a larval stage en route to a more eye-catching and lepidopteral version of entrepreneurship. Róna-Tas characterized need-driven entrepreneurs as worms because while worms and caterpillars are alike in form, worms operate underground and do not morph into any other form of being.

This metaphor is troubling: it is rarely acceptable to refer to someone as a worm. Moreover, defining "need" as a sociological concept is challenging, because it is fundamentally unfalsifiable. Finally, in creating categories with names from entirely separate parts of the animal kingdom, Róna-Tas obscures the fact that it is not always

possible to distinguish between need-driven entrepreneurialism and opportunity-driven entrepreneurialism.

My interviews with small business owners in a recently-arrived migrant community in the United States reveal that rather than separate categories of entrepreneurship, self-employment occurs as the result of both economic motivations and market opportunities. For instance, many entrepreneurs who might now be included in the opportunity-driven category because they have found a profitable market niche for themselves began by selling a good or service and because they wanted to maximize their income.

Case: Dalia Cauich and the transition from cocina clandestina to El Príncipe

Consider the example of Dalia Cauich, first introduced in chapter 3. Dalia arrived in San Francisco without papers in 1998, in the midst of the large-scale migration from Yucatán to the United States. She describes her first years here as comprised of grueling double shifts, fifteen hour days as a *tortillera* (tortilla-maker) in different *taquería*s. Although work was plentiful, she was driven by personal and family financial pressures to seek out every possible income-generating opportunity.

One day, Dalia's brother wheedled her into making tamales. If you make them, he promised, I'll call my friends to tell them that you have tamales to sell. Dalia agreed, and together she and her brother made 250 pork and chicken tamales steamed in fragrant banana leaves. A few hours and phone calls later, all 250 tamales were gone, sold to friends and friends of friends for a dollar apiece.

Was this an example of need-driven or opportunity-driven economic activity? It is

virtually impossible to draw a line between the sense of financial precariousness that Dalia, like many undocumented migrants, experience in their first years in the United States (e.g., need) and the opportunity to sell a much sought-after good to a willing market.

Over the coming months, Dalia continued cooking and selling food for her brothers' friends. Again, her need for income and the opportunities provided by a market literally hungry for her products worked in sync: "*donde Dalia*" ("at Dalia's place") became one of the most famous and successful clandestine restaurants in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco. She hired a small staff, including a former co-worker named Esteban from one of the *taquería*s that she had worked at. Esteban, who had come to the United States from Coahuila at the same time Dalia arrived from Yucatán, had been pursuing Dalia romantically for some time, and they eventually married. As a husband-and-wife team, Dalia and Esteban and the other women who they paid to wash dishes and make tortillas served meals in their apartment to over a hundred people a day. The demand grew so much that "donde Dalia" soon came to occupy three separate apartments in a building owned by an Italian man who had grown fond of Dalia. This Italian man turned a very blind eye to the restaurant being illegally run out of his property, enabling Dalia and Esteban to operate unfettered.

As a result of her business Dalia occupied an increasingly important and powerful position in the broadly construed Yucatecan network in San Francisco (more will be said about this dynamic in the following chapter). However, her close tie with her Italian landlord, whom she only ever refers to as "*el Italiano,*" and her non-Yucatecan husband gave her social and economic ties to individuals beyond the Yucatecan community. These ties were critical in the next step of Dalia's transition from "worm" to "caterpillar."

Dalia's clandestine restaurant faced a number of challenges. For one thing, a dozen other underground restaurants were operating in the neighborhood, pulling some clients away from Dalia. One of these competitors, located directly across the street, was run by Dalia's parents. Dalia took this competition very personally, and their relationship soured. Again, as described in Chapter 6, when the economic ties (of competition) between Dalia and her parents took precedence over their emotional ties, the tie was sundered. However, the existence of an emotional tie creates the possibility for re-establishing the tie once the economic transgression is forgiven. The economic aspect to the relationship makes the tie vulnerable, but the emotional aspect to the relationship makes the tie resilient. When I first met Dalia in 2008, she and her parents were not on speaking terms, and she refused to tell me how to find them in Yucatán, where they had returned after closing their clandestine restaurant.

Another challenge for Dalia's business was a fire that caused serious damage to the apartment building. Fires are all too common in San Francisco, and often result from overloaded electrical cords. In this instance, the fire started when a mattress caught fire from a candle or cigarette. No one perished, but most of Dalia's kitchen equipment was damaged or destroyed, along with her personal possessions. As an unregistered enterprise, Dalia had no insurance to cover the loss of equipment related to her business, or to cover the period of time before she was able to start working again.

It was during this period of entrepreneurial stillness that Dalia and Esteban decided to transition into the formal economy. After an unsuccessful partnership with a Yucatecan man (the details of which appear in Chapter 7), Dalia and Esteban sought assistance from their landlord, the Italian, in securing premises and processing the paperwork to officially

incorporate. Doing so met a new need that Dalia felt very strongly: to work in a way that was more regulated and had higher overhead, but felt less precarious. Opening a legitimate restaurant also created an opportunity that Dalia and Esteban not previously been able to take advantage of — selling Yucatecan food to non-Yucatecan customers.

Dalia's story exemplifies the way that the businesses and households of many small-scale entrepreneurs are entangled with one another in complicated and lasting ways, an entanglement that Róna-Tas's worm/caterpillar dichotomy obscures. If hiring a staff is a sign of a caterpillar, then Dalia was a caterpillar when she and Esteban were running their clandestine restaurant out of their (and other) apartments, and no formal incorporation. If relying extensively on family members and close (strong, bonding) ties to staff an enterprise is a mark of a worm, then Dalia's restaurant (initially named Uxmal and subsequently renamed El Príncipe) was a worm for at least the first two years after incorporating.

Furthermore, each developmental phase in Dalia's enterprise came as a result of indistinguishable need and opportunity, equal parts pushes and pulls. In this way, entrepreneurial development echoes the difficulty scholars of international migration have with attributing large-scale emigration primarily to "push" or "pull" factors.

Entrepreneurialism is a vocation, but Yucatecan entrepreneurs give other people credit for the original idea

Starting and running a small business is difficult, expensive, and risky. Owners of fledgling businesses work all the time, all day every day, and their families are roped into working all day every day as well. From the perspective of rational economic behavior, or

from the perspective of someone who is trying to live the easiest possible life, there are more reasons not to go into business for one's self than to do so.

Yet thousands of small businesses are created every year by immigrants and native-born Americans. Moreover, entrepreneurs are likely to start more than one business over the course of their life: 620 out of every 100,000 immigrants start a new business per month, while 280 out of every 100,000 non-migrants do so (Fairlie 2012). How can we understand this robustness in the face of the substantial economic and lifestyle challenges that attend new business formation, especially when immigrant entrepreneurs operate in a new legal, cultural, and linguistic context?

The interviews I conducted and the participant observation I did in the field — including my time spent as a kitchen assistant to a small catering business selling food to a specific ethnic community — strongly indicate that entrepreneurialism is not just another means to the end of earning a living. Instead, entrepreneurial activity, which I define as the routine provision of a good or service to a clientele willing to pay set fees for it, appears to be a vocation in the Weberian sense.

Weber introduces the idea of a vocation in the sense of an "inner calling" towards a particular occupation in "Politics as a Vocation" and "Science as a Vocation." In linking vocation, which carried strongly theological connotations, to the professionalization and increasingly systematized approaches to politics and production of scientific knowledge, Weber identified a certain class of individuals who are drawn to a category of social or economic action not because of the salary they earn or the familial or societal pressure they experience to work in a particular kind of job. Instead, a person who experiences an inner calling to politics or to science "enjoys the naked possession of the power he exerts, or

[because] he nourishes his inner balance and self-feeling – the consciousness that his life has *meaning* in the service of a 'cause'" (Weber Essays on Sociology 84).

Such is the case with entrepreneurs: they are motivated not by the prospect of quick, easy money or a calm, comfortable life, but by the promise of prestige and an inner drive to create. It is beyond the scope of the present analysis to identify the source of this inner calling; instead, the following cases exemplify the ways in which entrepreneurs in the Yucatecan community described their commitment to building a business.

Case: Julian Blas, The Yucatecan Tequila Revolutionary

Julian Blas is one of the four children born to Francisco (Paco) and Esme Blas, the owners of Paco's Mexican Restaurant. Paco and Esme were among the very first Yucatecan settlers in San Francisco in the 1960's, and Paco's Mexican Restaurant was a portal into life in the United States for many other Yucatecan migrants (see Chapters 3 and 4).

Julian was raised in San Francisco, and graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in political science. Shortly after graduating, a friend who owned a bar in Berkeley introduced him to tequila. Julian, who was working with his parents managing Paco's Mexican Restaurant, experienced a kind of epiphany:

> A friend of mine owned a bar… in Berkeley and called me to try, at that time, it was in '89, when they brought out [the] El Tesoro de Don Felipe [tequila] and Patrón Añejo to this market in Northern California. And as soon as I tasted those products, my life was changed by tequila… the interest, the attempt to learn more about tequila in general was born in me[104].

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[104] *Julio: Un amigo mío que era cantinero…en Berkeley [y] me llamó a probar, en ese tiempo en el 89 que fue cuando sacaron el tesoro de Don Felipe y patrón añejo a este mercado del norte de California. Y apenas probé esos productos ahí, cambió mí vida por el tequila…nació en mí el interes el intentar de aprendar más*

Following the revelations of Don Felipe, Julian got in touch with various tequila distributors in the Bay Area and began to offer a wide array of tequila at the bar tucked into the left hand side of Paco's Mexican Restaurant. He also began traveling to Jalisco every 6 weeks to visit different distilleries and learn as much as he could about the production process.

Julian's entrepreneurial vision for tequila coincided with what he referred to as a "tequila boom" in the United States, made possible in part by new export opportunities for smaller-scale Mexican distilleries; meanwhile, his connections to the distilleries in Jalisco were facilitated by his wife who is from Arandas, one of the most famous tequila-producing regions in all of Mexico, and whose family has been producing tequila for nearly a century.

Through the 1990's and the 2000's, Julian has been on a quest to educate consumers about tequila. This quest has been enacted by a series of business decisions. Julian began by eliminating all tequilas from the menu that were not 100% agave, and cultivated a reputation for selling products by lesser-known distilleries. He formed a "tequila tasting club" which educates consumers about the properties of tequila from agave grown in different regions and distilled using different techniques. The club, not coincidentally, also requires members to consume tequila at Paco's on a regular basis. Julian and his wife have also built a small distillery — called J&R — the products of which Julian wants to sell internationally: "my first market will be Mexico, G'd willing my second will be Russia, the third will be the US, the fourth China[105]." Julian's vision is of a

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acerca del tequila en general.

[105] *Julio: "mí primer mercado será México, [si] diós quiere mí segundo será Rusia, el tercero será Estados Unidos, cuarto China…"}*

new global approach to tequila consumption[106]: "My goal is to make a revolution in tequila[107]."

Julian's efforts to educate consumers about tequila and sell a lot of it at the bar have also been made much easier by already having a stable, well-known business that supports the family. His commitment to the 'cause' of selling good tequila was facilitated by an accepting marketplace, a reliable source of product, and the social connections in Jalisco to become embedded in the regional network of producers and distributors. Yet Julian's approach to the sale of tequila has a zeal and enthusiasm that go beyond the simple financial calculus of a popular neighborhood restaurant with a well-stocked bar: it is a vocation.

Julian Blas, raised in San Francisco, educated at Berkeley, and building a new branch of the family business on a financially stable foundation, is extraordinarily privileged relative to the other Yucatecan entrepreneurs I interviewed in San Francisco. The small business owners in the Yucatecan community mostly have a middle-school education, many of them are undocumented, and it is extremely unusual for a pioneer entrepreneur to be expanding. Indeed, the more typical pattern is for someone to start a new business shortly after closing another one down because it failed. This persistence, however, is another reflection of the vocation of entrepreneurship.

Case: Benicio

Benicio typifies this vocation. Like most of the other Yucatecans living in the Bay

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[106] Julio's vision may align with new market opportunities for high-volume tequila sales in Chinañ as of the end of 2013, tequila distributors in Mexico were eagerly anticipating enormous sales of tequila to a newly desirous Chinese market (Anon 2013).
[107] *Julio*: "*Mí intención es hacer una revolución en el tequila.*"

Area, Benicio was born and grew up in Oxkutzcab. At fifteen, following the death of his mother, Benicio moved to Chetumal and shortly thereafter to Cancún. In Cancún, Benicio started off working with his father and brother, who were bakers. However, Benicio was frustrated by his father's lack of ambition and motivated by a sense that he wanted to accomplish something bigger and more meaningful in his life:

> Everyone from the family is a baker, but I didn't like baking… because I thought that it was time to break that chain, that the whole family always [did] the same thing, the same, the same. I wanted to learn something else, I didn't want to learn [to be a] baker… My dad was someone who… he only liked to live day to day, he didn't have a vision for his future… So I've always had the need to have something, have more for my kids than I had. To do something by myself, or, I mean, that's the idea[108].

Benicio's drive to build something for himself, to create something for his children, contributes to his vocational approach to entrepreneurship — for Benicio, finding opportunities to sell goods and services has led him to start multiple small firms in Mexico and then as an undocumented migrant in the United States:

> I worked a job in Cancún for like 6 months, but I was actually always self-employed, I always worked for myself and I earned more money… I've always looked for something to do, where I could make money. I've done a lot of stuff and some things haven't worked out… In Cancún I set up a *cocktelería*, which is a restaurant that specializes in seafood. It didn't work out for me, because I didn't have any experience, I was a kid of 17. And [since] I didn't have any experience, it stayed all in dreams… [Then] I started making cochinita [pibil] and I sold it in the streets, on the corners, and that's how I started making money[109].

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[108] *Benicio: Toda la familia son de panaderos, y a mi no me gustaba la panadería…porque pensaba que había que romper esa cadena de que toda la familia siempre lo mismo, lo mismo, lo mismo. Y yo quería aprender otra cosa, no quería yo aprender panadero….Mi papá era una persona que…solamente le gustaba vivir al día, no tenía visión para su futuro… Entonces, [yo] siempre he tenido la necesidad de tener algo, tener más para mis hijos que lo que yo tuve. Hacer algo por mi mismo, o sea, esa es la idea…*

[109] *Benicio: En Cancún trabajé como empleado como 6 meses, pero en realidad siempre fui autoempleado, siempre yo trabajaba por mi cuenta y ganaba yo más dinero… Siempre he estado buscando qué hacer, dónde hacer dinero. He hecho muchas cosas y muchas cosas no se han dado… En Cancún puse una cocktelería, que es un restaurante especiales en mariscos. No me funcionó porque no tenía yo la experiencia, era yo un*

Benicio's inner calling to have his own business is coupled with the need to provide for his family; as a result, in the early days of Restaurante Tulum, the restaurant he opened in the Bay Area, he continued to work as a cook in a large restaurant while his family staffed the new one (for no pay: their economic activity was subsumed into Benicio's entrepreneurial vocation). In this way, and in light of his understanding that new businesses sometimes — often — do not succeed, Benicio exemplifies Weber's model of someone who lives for, and not off of, their vocation. By this, I mean that Benicio's wage labor has always been *in support of* his self-employment ventures; he has used "regular" jobs to subsidize his passion and calling for starting and running his own businesses.

Benicio's vocation for selling contrasts with his wife's ambivalence about doing so. As described below, Mariana has sold *cochinita* and other Yucatecan food in both the informal and the formal economy. She is not always excited about doing so, however; nor is she interested in adding any specialties from Mexico City to their repertoire:

> Q: And you don't sell anything from Mexico, from the DF?
> Mariana: No, I mean, I never had the idea to… well, I always worked as a cleaner. So [Benicio is] the one who… as they say, 'thinks big.' So… when he started, I was even kind of embarrassed, you know? Because he started making the hot pastries… [Benicio] came and said to me, 'ok, go sell them.' And I saw how motivated he was, I said, 'yes,' and I got over my embarrassment. I mean, he motivated me… and I said, 'I've got to sell them, I've got to sell them.' I even sold them out there on 24th (street), outside the bar, I stood there[110].

Mariana's decision to support her husband's entrepreneurial vocation underscores

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muchacho de 17 años. Y no tenía yo la experiencia y se quedó todo en sueños…Me puse a hacer la cochinita [pibil] y la vendía yo en las calles, en las esquinas, y de allí empecé a sacar dinero.

[110] *Q: Y usted no vende cosas de México, del D.F.?*
María: Pues no, o sea no se me daba la idea de… pues yo siempre trabajé de limpieza. Entonces él es que… siempre como dicen 'piensa en grande.' Entonces… cuando él empezó, yo hasta, yo me daba pena, ¿no?, porque cuando empezó a hacer las hojaldras bien calientitas y…él llega y me dice, 'pues ve a venderlas.' Y como lo vi motivado le dije,'sí,' ahí se me quitó mi pena. O sea, él me motivó…y yo dije, 'las tengo que vender, las tengo que vender.' También las llegué a vender ahí en 24…afuera del bar, si me paraba.

the household's role in early entrepreneurial projects, and the complicated, multiplex relationships that entrepreneurs have with their spouses. Multiplex ties are relationships which simultaneously incorporate multiple kinds of connections. Complexity in and of itself is not necessarily a bad thing; many of us have multiplex relationships with people in our lives. For instance, two people can be both cousins and compadres (co-godparents) at the same time. The relationships have different meanings and are predicated on different kinds of kinship and social ties, but the tie is still between the same two individuals. Likewise, someone can be a friend and a colleague, or a sibling and a business partner. Yucatecan immigrant entrepreneurs depend on the involvement of their spouses and family members to get their businesses up and running. As such, they must learn how to convert existing relationships into multiplex ones.

Business development is the "result" of someone else's suggestion

Benicio's insistence that his whole life has been spent looking for ways to realize his entrepreneurial dreams stands in contrast with the consistent narrative among Yucatecan entrepreneurs that the genesis of their business dream is due to someone else's idea. Dalia, described above, started her successful *cocina clandestina* after her brother wheedled her into making tamales for him and his friends; Doña Paty, described below, used similar language to explain how she decided to start her informal restaurant. In fact, only one of the entrepreneurs I interviewed indicated that his decision to go into business for himself (Benicio, whose case is presented in the following chapter. Every other entrepreneur described their decision as having come from someone else's encouragement:

> **Doña Zenaida:** So that's how I started, some families tell me,'so why don't you go, take these things to our kids,' and I started like that, little by little.

Some people bring [things], I arrive [in San Francisco], and then kids there also send stuff [to Oxkutzcab]. I see that it brought in a little for my expenses and so I started asking [for packages and fees].[111]

Silvio:
Q: Ok, so when did you start thinking about opening a restaurant…?
Silvio: No, it was thanks to my friends, …a couple of friends from the Harley (club), they'd eat, they had their motorcycle group, they'd go eat panuchos, they go eat [other places]. And every Friday they'd have their party…their meeting… and there came a time when I made food [for them]… they came and sad, 'Wow! I really like this!'… and they liked it [so] they said to me, 'Why don't you open [a restaurant] of your own? We'll come buy [food] from you, instead of going [other places], we'll eat at your place. There's a lot of us, like 10 or 15. You'll serve us [food], we'll eat it, it'll be great.' So that's how I started, since it gave me hope and I said, 'ok, there's a few [guys], that's pretty good.' So I started.[112]

Chaparro: They were encouraging me to do it for a while, this business of bringing [stuff to San Francisco]… I had left my job, and a few friends told me, 'you can bring me merchandise, you're a [legal] resident, you've got papers, you can do it super easily. If there are other people who only have a visa and they're doing it, you, who is a resident, why don't you, you could do it.' So, I only got roped into it because they saw that a lot of [other] people were doing it. Then they said to me, 'why don't you do it? Why keep going to [work at] restaurants where they yell at you, you can do this business of bringing things [to San Francisco,' they said to me. So I tried it and saw that it worked pretty well, so that's that, and this is what I do.[113]

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[111] *Doña Zenaida: y empecé así y unas familias me dicen —y porque tu no vas, deja estas cosas a nuestros hijos— y lo empecé así poco a poco. Algunos que otros traían, yo llego, y otros muchachos allá también mandan cosas. Veo que si me dejaba un poco para mí gasto así, y pues lo empezé a pedir.*

[112] *Silvio:*
Q: ok, y luego ¿en qué momento usted empezó a pensar en abrir un restaurante…?
Silvio: No, gracias a mis amigos; si los puedo decir aquí: Chito Parra, Miguel Suizo, Pancho, unos amigos de moto de la Harley, ellos comían, tenían su grupo de motocicleta de, iban a comer panuchos, van a comer este, en Tikul, en Tikash, a aquel, en moto y todo. Y cada Viernes tenían su fiesta, su party, su reunión, supuestamente y llego un momento de que hice una comida… vinieron y unos dicen —¡Wow! esto sime gusta, comida, bufette, tailandesa, bueno con pizza— mí hermanita hacía pizzas con camarón, especial y los convencimos y les gusto, me dice —¿por qué no abres el tuyo?, te venimos a comprar, en lugar [de] que vayamos allé a Tikul o a Tekash o aquí cerca y venimos y te consumimos a tí. Somos muchos, somos diéz, quince. Nos sirves, consumimos y todo bien— y así empecé y me abrió la esperanza porque dije —ok, si hay unos cuantos pues está bien— y empecé.

[113] *Chaparro: Y entonces ya tenía rato que me están animando a hacer este trabajo ese de llevar… [había dejado] mi trabajo y entonces, me dicen unos compañeros —tu puedes llevarme mercancía, tu eres residente, tienes papeles y tu lo puedes hacer muy facil. Si hay otros que nomás tienen visa y lo están haciendo, tu que eres residente porque no, esto lo podrías hacer...No, namás me arrimaron porque vieron que muchos lo hacian. Entonces me volvieron a decir, me dice —¿porque tu no lo haces?, para qué vas a estar iendo en los restaurant para que te regañen. tu mismo puedes hacer el negocio ese que [es de] llevar mercancía— me dicen. Y entonces lo probé y vi que si medio resulta entonces ahí está y me dedique a eso.*

> **Gregorio**: I was thinking [of migrating] again when everyone told me, 'hey, you know how to make pizzas, why don't you open a pizzeria?'
> Q: Who told you that?
> Gregorio: Well, my family, my wife, my kids, because…I used to make pizzas for them to eat. And the said to me, well, if your pizzas taste better than anywhere else's, why don't you do it? They're better then everywhere else, why don't you do it?[114]

It is possible that Yucatecan entrepreneurs frame their self-employment decisions in a way that foregrounds their humility, but it is beyond the scope of this project to ascertain why this narrative is so dominant. What it does reinforce, however, is that Yucatecan entrepreneurs start businesses in part because they are embedded in sets of networks that lead them to believe — one way or another — that there is a demand for the good or service they want to sell (Thornton 1999).

Monetization of care-taking as a first step to entrepreneurship

One response to the economic pressures of life in the United States is the monetization of certain kinds of care-taking activities. For instance, parents may be required to pay grandparents or cousins for childcare: Doña Clemencia watches her grandchildren, for example, and Doña Minerva babysits her nephew's children. Both women receive a daily fee for this service, which, if they were in Mexico, would be part of older women's expected caretaking role and consequently unpaid. Likewise, some migrants begin feeding or doing laundry for friends and neighbors in exchange for

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[114] *Gregorio : ya pensaba yo irme otra vez cuando me dicen todos —pues si sabes hacer las pizzas, porqué no pones una pizzería—*
Q: ¿quién le dijo?
Gregorio : Pues mí familia, mí esposa, mís hijos, pues como cuando yo venía, llegaba así a vacacionar asé con ellos pues yo le hacía pizzas para que coman. Y me dicen —pues si tus pizzas saben mejor de las que venden en otro lado porque no lo haces?— es mejor de lo que venden en otros lado, ¿por qué no lo haces?

payment. In the Yucatecan community in San Francisco, this dynamic is particularly prevalent among women; however, that the community organization described in the subsequent chapter also emerged from an intention to care for the well-being of Mayan migrants in the Bay Area.

Menjívar finds that such financial arrangements can create tremendous stresses on relationships among migrants in communities of reception, and in extreme cases lead to the dissolution of network ties. However, they can also be the first steps of entrepreneurial activity.

Doña Paty, a sprightly woman in her 60's, operates one of the longest-running clandestine restaurants in the Yucatecan community. Working out of her apartment on the top floor of a three-story walk-up apartment building in the Mission, Doña Paty cooks and sells food six days a week to a steady stream of customers. She begins preparing her food between 7 and 8 in the morning, and by 11:30 the first customers arrive. Over the next three hours, Doña Paty serves as maître d', chef, waiter, *tortillera*, and kitchen crew. She moves ceaselessly from the table, positioned by a window overlooking the action on Mission Street, to her cluttered kitchen, serving generous portions of standard Yucatecan food with stacks of warm, hand-patted tortillas and the piquant habanero salsa without which no self-respecting Yucatecan will consent to eat. Doña Paty keeps up a steady stream of chat in Maya and Spanish with her customers, who are mostly men, punctuating her conversations with jokes and double entendres. She feels comfortable being raunchy around these men, she says, because she knows them. And indeed, many of her regular clients began coming to eat "*donde Paty*" because they were friends of her sons or otherwise connected to her personally.

According to Doña Paty, she never intended to start a business per se. She was simply cooking to feed her sons. The way she tells it, the idea came when one of her sons mentioned that his friends would be willing to pay her for food. Sensing both a need and an opportunity, Doña Paty began accepting "*propinas*," or a few dollars at a time for meals. As the demand for her cooking increased, and she gained a sense of the right amount of food to prepare, she also figured out a price that her customers would be willing and able to pay, and that would compensate her sufficiently for her time and the groceries she lugs up three flights of stairs nearly every day. In 2011, this prices was $7 a meal, or $8 with a soda.

Doña Paty's case is not unique; as described above, nearly all the Yucatecan entrepreneurs I interviewed reported that they started their ongoing business ventures after beginning to receive payment for incidental forms of care-taking or doing occasional favors for friends. Yet in many ways, Doña Paty's success at balancing the tension between wanting to earn a living and charging people she knows for a basic service is evidence of her skill at balancing the social and economic aspects of multiplex relationships.

When prices are introduced into care-taking, the relationship between two actors undergoes a qualitative shift. Ties become more complex — more multiplex, to use social network terminology. Doña Paty, like Clemencia, Ana, Dalia, Minerva, and others were successful in adding an economic dimension — of paid service-provider — to pre-existing social and kinship ties.

Yet as Menjívar so gracefully shows, refusing to incorporate an economic dimension into such ties creates its own tension and repercussions. Doña Paty refuses to watch her grandchildren, even though her sons are willing to pay her to do so. She refuses for a number of reasons; for one thing, her approach to running her *cocina clandestina* is

highly labor intensive and she does not employee an assistant. By contrast, her sister Doña Minerva runs a much less involved *cocina clandestina* which specializes in carry-out rather than eat-in food, and she pays a young woman named Isabela to help her in the kitchen with dishes and deliveries. Doña Paty also claims that she has no patience whatsoever for small children (she averred that she would just "*darles su nalgada*" [give them a spanking] if she had to care for them all day). Her refusal to watch her grandchildren led to awkwardness with her children, who are annoyed with her steadfast refusal to fulfill this role that they expect from her. Yet in another suggestion that the emotional ties that underlie economic ones create resiliency in the relationship – and a reflection of Paty's adept relationship management – the mutual frustration between Paty and her children has not ruptured the tie.

Conclusion

This chapter has framed the decision to go into business for one's self as a combination of the desire to maximize income under constraints, the perception of a market opportunity, and a personal vocation or calling which leads entrepreneurs to risk the uncertainty and hard-work of starting a new firm. The way that Yucatecan pioneer migrants describe their decision, however, underscores the fact that these decisions are not undertaken by solitary actors in a social vacuum. Entrepreneurs depend on their households and community members to validate the decision to launch a new business and to be the good or service's first consumers. Firm development is an intensely social, as well as economic, activity. The next chapter examines the relationships that pioneer entrepreneurs in a first-generation, low-resource immigrant community develop as they

build their businesses.

Chapter 7: Relationships and Business-Building Among Pioneer Entrepreneurs

Introduction

In this chapter, I draw on cases from interviews and participant observation I conducted with 10[115] pioneer entrepreneurs in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco to show that the search for and use of alters' (external) social capital transforms the network substructures the entrepreneur is embedded in. These changes include the simple ties becoming multiplex; the bridging of structural holes through brokerage; and increasing degree centrality. I find that entrepreneurs from newly arrived immigrant communities characterized by low levels of human capital and which are primarily undocumented draw on and cultivate relationships with network actors from outside the entrepreneur's own community in order to gain access to the social capital non-co-ethnic network actors have.

Entrepreneurs who are particularly adept at managing relationships are in a better structural position to access such money, information, and support. While access to these resources does not guarantee that a business will flourish, lack of access to them hinders business activity. In this way, adept social capital cultivators experience a virtuous cycle of strategic network development, increased access to social capital, and greater influence within the network.

I begin with a brief overview of immigrant entrepreneurship, noting that many studies focus on high-resource and/or long-settled communities. This focus leaves open the

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[115] This includes the owners and their spouses, and includes one non-Yucatecan owner of a Yucatecan restaurant. Two Yucatecan entrepreneurs did not participate in the project.

question of how pioneer entrepreneurs, the first business owners from a newly-settled, low-income community without co-ethnic resources or investable capital from the sending community get started as entrepreneurs. I then present cases of Yucatecan immigrant entrepreneurs in San Francisco who were able to start their businesses by transforming existing co-ethnic ties and cultivating relationships with non-co-ethnic network actors. I conclude by noting that through the process of network formation and transformation, pioneer entrepreneurs are at the vanguard of social and economic incorporation.

The sociology of immigrant entrepreneurship

Studies of migrant entrepreneurialism abound(Cobas and DeOllos 1989; Kyle 1999; Logan, Alba, and Stults 2003; Masurel and Nijkamp 2009). Many of them are descriptive, detailing the emergence of a particular ethnic enclave or ethnic economy[116] in a given receiving community (Min and Bozorgmehr 2000; Raijman and Tienda 2000). Those that try to theorize ethnic or migrant entrepreneurship typically emphasize the mobilization of resources within the ethnic community as the *sine qua non* of migrant enterprises.

For instance, Light (1972), Light and Bonacich (1988), Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), Waldinger, Aldrich, and Ward (2006), and Logan, Alba, and Stults (2003) demonstrate that immigrant entrepreneurs raise capital, find suitable locations, and identify distributors within co-ethnic and co-national communities in their country of reception.

[116] Portes and Shafer (2007) stress the difference between an ethnic enclave and an ethnic economy; in both, individuals from a particular ethnic or national community own a critical mass of businesses which primarily serve co-ethnics. The fundamental difference between an ethnic economy and an ethnic enclave is that an ethnic economy is vertically integrated and largely isolated from the broader market forces in which it is situated, while ethnic enclaves are not necessarily part of the same production system. The difference is, to my mind, inconsequential, given that they acknowledge the extreme rarity of ethnic economies.

According to these and other studies, resources are made available through social relationships based on common origins, religion, or language, and the shared experience of marginalization (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Tsukashima 1998; Valdez 2008).

Yet in San Francisco, such resources do not exist. There is not a swath of experienced business owners who provide guidance or suggestions, and there are no community resources for financing or vertical integration. Given the agricultural backgrounds of Yucatecan migrants to the Bay Area, capital imported from "back home" is not an option for aspiring entrepreneurs. Because the Yucatecan entrepreneurs profiled in this dissertation are the first from their community to open formal businesses, I refer to them as pioneer entrepreneurs.

This project not only highlights the emergence of a network of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, it adds to our limited sociological understanding of Mexican immigrant entrepreneurship. We know very little about the networks of Mexican migrant entrepreneurs; much of the literature on migrant or transnational entrepreneurs focuses on actors from other ethnic communities (Light and Bonacich 1988; Light, Sabagh, Bozorgmehr, and Der-Martirosian 1994; Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller 2002). As Raijman and Tienda explain, the reasons for this omission are complex (2000:440), but the large and growing Mexican community in the United States demands a closer study of the social dynamics of Mexican migrant business ventures.[117]

Other studies of immigrant entrepreneurship explore the connections between

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[117] Ramirez and Hondagneu-Sotelo (2009) find that Mexicans start small firms in the traditional Mexican service sector niches of domestic work and jardinería, or yardwork. They note that these firms are entrepreneurial but the Mexican entrepreneurs who own the firm are still working in dirty/dangerous/demeaning jobs. Yucatecans in San Francisco entrepreneurs remain in the service sector – as a result of their limited human capital and the Bay Area's occupational stratification – but opening firms in the restaurant sector is predicated on a higher-status set of skills.

networks, entrepreneurialism and migration. For instance, Granovetter argues that social cohesion or group solidarity is critical for the emergence of entrepreneurship among migrant communities or ethnic minorities (Granovetter 1995). Light and Bonacich (1988), Janjuha-Jivraj (2003) and Tolciu (2009) likewise find that entrepreneurs' relationships within their ethnic communities are critical for obtaining the capital and resources necessary to start a business. On the other hand, Granovetter's earlier work on the strength of weak ties (1973) would suggest that the migrant entrepreneurial projects which are most likely to succeed are the ones in which the entrepreneur is able to establish successful relationships with actors outside his or her organic network, a point which Putnam also makes (2000:322). This dissertation aims at disentangling this paradox.

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) link embeddedness[118] to the study of immigrant entrepreneurship by asking how different social structures help or hinder entrepreneurial activity[119]. Portes and Sensenbrenner operationalize social structures with a four-part typology of social capital. They find that in-group "enforceable trust" and "bounded solidarity" are necessary (if not sufficient) for the development of immigrant-owned enterprises. But in their discussion they do not explain *how* entrepreneurs evaluate the trustworthiness of potential business partners and ensure the enforceability of this trust. Likewise, they do not consider the mobilization of resources outside the co-ethnic or co-national community, relationships for which bounded (group) solidarity is less important than the personal reputations of the actors. Waldinger, Aldrich, and Ward do acknowledge that "large networks with a range of assorted links are an essential part of the

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[118] Embeddedness is the notion that economic transactions occur within the context of social networks (Granovetter 1985, Uzzi, 2001).

[119] They also contend – accurately – that embeddedness and other key concepts from economic sociology have been underutilized in the study of immigrant entrepreneurship.

assets of successful networks" (2006:131), but focus on the intra-ethnic mechanisms by which entrepreneurs establish trust and exchange capital.

Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller use migrant entrepreneurial projects as a way to understand the ways in which transnational ties are created and sustained (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003). They argue that transnational business networks represent an alternative path to economic incorporation in receiving societies. Yet Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller overprivilege the entrepreneur as the main factor of a business' success. They find that most transnational migrant entrepreneurs are married men. However, these entrepreneurs are not solitary actors. Rather, they are members of family units, and rely heavily on the cooperation of their wives and children. In other words, Portes, Guarnizo and Haller overlook the importance of migrant entrepreneurs' strong, bonding network ties in creating successful entrepreneurial projects. My dissertation acknowledges the central role that entrepreneurs play in assembling the people and resources needed to start a business, but I also draw attention to the vital role that entrepreneurs' spouses and children play in getting things up and running and the day-to-day operations of the firm.

Lee (2000) identifies access to credit as a key ingredient in immigrant entrepreneurship, and notes that "coethnic vertical integration increases the probability that merchants will receive credit from their suppliers" (2000:332). My findings coincide with Lee's in that access to capital is crucial for aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs to start and run their businesses. However, in a first-generation Hispanic immigrant community, co-ethnic vertical integration is impossible, and start-up capital is limited (Fairlie 2012). As a result, immigrants who want to build a business search for other forms of network ties through which they can obtain the information and resources they need.

Resource mobilization benefits from searching outside the co-ethnic network

Yet not all community or co-ethnic ties are created equal: some will yield economic resources and some will not. Entrepreneurs actively build their business networks by searching for and creating social relationships in which to embed economic ties. The process by which social ties yield resources has not been explained; entrepreneurs are simply said to "have" networks within which they mobilize resources.

These cases show that access to outside resources is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for a pioneer entrepreneur in a first generation immigrant community to start a business: such ties are also necessary but not sufficient to explain firms' operational continuity.

The cases presented below suggest that it access to external resources through strong, bonding network ties by a savvy social capital cultivator with an entrepreneurial vocation explains entrepreneurial success, when success is (1) being able to choose if/when to close the business and/or (2) being able start a new iteration of the business or a new business altogether if desired.

Case: Agustín P. and Grupo Mesoamericano

The first case which demonstrates the challenges and opportunities for pioneer entrepreneurs in a first-generation, low-resource immigrant community is the development of Grupo Mesoamericano under its first executive director, a Yucatecan migrant named Agustín P.. I include a non-profit community organization in my discussion of pioneer entrepreneurs and their firms because the social and economic dynamics of starting a 501(c)3 organization mirror those of starting a business almost exactly. The primary

difference is that the revenue the organization brings in is not intended to create a profit; on the other hand, most of the small businesses Yucatecan entrepreneurs started were also not profitable at first. More importantly, however, the process and resource mobilization practices are the same: someone has an idea, figures out how to mobilize resources to create some systems, an entity emerges which is to a certain extent dependent on the continuing involvement of the entrepreneur, but which is also an entity unto itself. The entity exists in order to bring in revenue, which is accomplished through a variety of activities including selling things (e.g., tickets to an event) and making a profit.

In many migrant communities, hometown or co-ethnic organizations emerge from a desire to act collectively in order to promote the welfare and well-being of community members in the United States and Mexico (FitzGerald 2008; Smith 2006; Thomas and Znaniecki 1996). In the case of the Yucatecan community in San Francisco, this desire cohered around the destruction wrought by a hugely destructive storm. In September 2002, Hurricane Isidoro whirled furiously through the Caribbean, stormed ashore in Mexico, and swept the Yucatán peninsula clean over a nightmarish 36 hours. Strong rain and winds ravaged the houses and fields of thousands of families in and around Oxkutzcab. The first major hurricane to hit the northern part of the Yucatán Peninsula, Isidoro destroyed or damaged close to 120,000 houses, killed 70% of the state's livestock and poultry, and decimated the season's crops.

The storm's destruction was extreme. However, Hurricane Isidoro occurred several years into the decade of large-scale migration from Oxkutzcab to San Francisco. As a result, there were hundreds of Yucatecans living in the Bay Area who wanted to help their community of origin rebuild. While many continued to send money in the form of

remittances to their families in Oxkutzcab, a handful of community members gathered to discuss how they might work together to collect money for the hurricane's victims.

One of the individuals involved in the early phases of fundraising among the Yucatecan community in San Francisco was Agustín P.. Agustín was born in Mérida to Maya-speaking, educated Yucatecan parents. His father was born in Yaxcabá, his mother in Tixcocob. Agustín's father, a medical doctor, moved the family to Mexico City when Agustín was an infant. In Mexico, Agustín's mother obtained a degree from INAH while raising Agustín and his 9 brothers and sisters. When Agustín finished his medical degree at UNAM, his father helped him get a job at a clinic in Chetumal, Campeche, a city on the western coast of the Yucatán Peninsula. After two years of working in Chetumal, Agustín and his American wife Anita moved to San Francisco. Anita was raised in San Francisco's Richmond District and recalled visiting Paco's Mexican Restaurant with her family when she was a child.

When Agustín and Anita arrived in San Francisco in 2001, they were astonished to discover an entire community of Yucatecans living in the Mission District, the Tenderloin, and the Richmond District. However, Agustín was focused on learning English and completing a master's degree at San Francisco State University, and did not become involved with the community until the hurricane:

> Agustín: To me it was super obvious that there were a lot of Yucatecans [in San Francisco]. My radar doesn't miss Yucatecans. Just walking in the Mission I immediately realized that there were… more Yucatecans than in any other community or any other place I had been outside of Yucatán… At the beginning… I was busy, I guess, with other things: with my master's degree, with learning English and getting used to the place and all that stuff. What really got me connected with the group was the famous hurricane (Isidoro), and the fact that this group of Yucatecans got together to try and

do some fundraising[120].

The first gathering to discuss how to raise money to support reconstruction and relief efforts in Yucatán happened shortly after the hurricane. A handful of highly connected community members gathered in an office offered by a non-profit organization in San Francisco. The group came together through word of mouth: according to Agustín, "I knew one of them really well, Jose Luis Uicab… he gave me a call and said… 'we're organizing a group because we want to do some fundraising because we heard what happened in Yucatán.' And as the result of that is that I got to the first meeting… we showed up: Julia, Julia brought Violeta, me, and Jose Luis. That was the four of us who started[121].'

Agustín discovered although everyone was motivated to raise money, they had little idea of where to start: "even from the first strategy session, and sooner rather than later, I realized that part of the problem is that this group didn't have any capacity to fundraise because they didn't know where to start. How to make their strategy[122]."

Agustín made this diagnosis more than six years after the first fundraising meeting, so it is impossible to know whether he would have described the situation in precisely the

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[120] *Alberto: Para mi fue muy evidente que había muchos yucatecos [en San Francisco]. A mi no se me escapan los yucatecos del radar. Entonces caminando en la Mision inmediatamente me di cuenta que había…más yucatecos que ninguna otra comunidad y en ninguna otro lugar que yo había ido fuera de Yucatán….Al principio…estaba ocupado yo creo con otras cosas: con la maestría, y con aprender inglés y adaptarme al lugar y todo ese tipo de cosas. Realmento lo que eventualmente me conectó con el grupo fue el huracán famoso. Y el hecho de ue este grupo de yucatecos se juntaron para tratar de hacer una pequeña recuadación de fondos.*

[121] *Alberto*: "*Yo conocía muy bien a uno de ellos que es Pedro Tuyub…me echó la llamada y me dijo… 'estamos organizando un grupo porque queremos hacer un poco de recaudación de porque escuchamos lo que pasó en Yucatán.' Y como resultado de eso fue que llegué a la primera junta…llegamos: Juanita, Juanita se trajo a Rosy, yo, y Pedro. Esos fuimos los cuatro que empezamos."*

[122] *Alberto: "Ya la primera sesión de hacer estrategia y más pronto que tarde me di cuenta que parte del problema es que este grupo no tenía la capacidad de hacer la recaudación de fondos porque no sabían por dónde empezar. Cómo hacer su estrategia."*

same terms at the time. However, Agustín's educational background (part of his aggregated social capital) and connections with individuals and institutions outside of the Yucatecan community (his structural social capital) combined with his desire to become involved with the hurricane disaster relief efforts. He began dedicating time and energy to community work, researching fundraising approaches, developing strategic partnerships with other organizations, and eventually leading the organization when it registered officially as a 501(c)3 organization in the state of California.

This process of formalization included selecting a name and electing a board of directors. The name chosen by the group was the Grupo Mesoamericano, in reference to the part of Meso-America where the Maya civilization flourished. The individuals most involved in Grupo Mesoamericano's early years represent an unusually high-human capital sample of the Yucatecan community in the United States:

- Agustín, a man in his mid-twenties, who had been born into a Yucatecan family in Mexico-city, trained as a medical doctor, and moved with his American wife to San Francisco. Working in public health. Equally comfortable in English and Spanish, also speaks Maya. US citizen, married to an American woman.
- Julia, a woman in her late fifties who was one of the small cohort of migrants to come after the Bracero program but before the mass migration in the late 1990's. US citizen. Worked as a social worker. Equally comfortable in English and Spanish, also speaks Maya.
- Daniel Pech, also from the post-Bracero cohort of migrants, but undocumented. The binational Yucatecan community's primary keeper of knowledge about their Mayan cultural heritage. Most comfortable in Spanish and Maya.
- Chente, another member of the post-Bracero cohort. LPR. Worked as a bus driver. One of the best-known members of the community because of his gregariousness and sociability. Most comfortable in Maya.
- Lázaro, mid-twenties. Undocumented. Came to the United States in the height of the mass-migration from Oxkutzcab. Leader in the Asociación Guadalupana at the Basilica. Works in restaurants. Jose Luis Uicab. Worked for a local media organization. Legal migrant.

- Violeta, Julia's cousin. Worked as a CPA. Legal migrant.
- Samuel and Nancy, from the Yucatecan community in Marin County and representatives of the Gran Jarana dance troupe.
- Anita, Agustín's wife. American.
- Manuel, leader in the Yucatecan baseball league in San Francisco. Undocumented.
- Juan Pablo. Jarana teacher.

Two things are striking about the founders and board members of the Grupo Mesoamericano. First, there are a disproportionately high number of migrants who arrived time after the Bracero program ended but before the mass-migration of Yucatecans to the United States began in the mid 1990's. Second, there is a disproportionately low number of Yucatecan migrants who work in restaurant kitchens, which (as described in chapter 4) is the primary labor sector for Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco. Instead, the board members of Grupo Mesoamericano include a doctor, a social worker, a CPA, a county employee, a newspaper editor, and a self-educated historian. In other words, the aggregated social capital of the average member of the GM board is substantially higher than the aggregated social capital of the average member of the Yucatecan community.

The group of people who ended up on Grupo Mesoamericano's board each provided the organization to a closely connected sub-network faction within the Yucatecan community in San Francisco. Julia and Violeta are integrated into the network of Yucatecan woman, and serve as a conduit between the organization and women who may not otherwise get connected to it. Manuel is active in the baseball league, Samuel and his wife were leaders in the Peto community in San Rafael, and Lázaro was one of the leaders of the Asociación Guadalupana, a key group at the local Catholic church. In other words, the board members' structural social capital is also higher than the average Yucatecan

migrant in San Francisco.

A number of factors differentiate Grupo Mesoamericano from the traditional model of the Mexican migrant hometown association (HTA). For instance, and irrespective of the predominance of migrants from Oxkutzcab and its environs in San Francisco, organizational leaders were disinclined to focus exclusively on Oxkutzcab. Grupo Mesoamericano, or GM, was never intended to be a solely one-town association, nor a hometown association in the strictest sense. Rather, Grupo Mesoamericano has tried to create a sense of community among all Yucatecan (and eventually Chiapanecan and Guatemalan) migrants living in San Francisco; to support families and individuals from Maya-speaking communities on both sides of the border; and to provide programs and training to improve the physical and psychological health of Mayan migrants in the United States. The decision to broaden the geographic scope of the clientele served by Grupo Mesoamericano's programs to all migrants from Maya-speaking communities has diversified the network of people connected to GM in San Francisco across regional as well as national lines.

Another feature of GM that distinguishes it from traditional HTAs is the organization's focus on programs that support US-based migrants' public health, rather than raising money for discrete projects in the sending communities, such as a new bell for a church, a basketball field, or a celebration honoring a patron saint. This focus reflects, I believe, the deep involvement and specific background of Agustín, a medical doctor with a master's degree in public health, and Julia Quintero, who spent several decades as a social worker in San Francisco. Their influence speaks to the way that individuals who are able to mobilize resources — much as an entrepreneur does — can be particularly influential in

community organizations.

This repertoire of services has turned Grupo Mesoamericano into a cross between a community center and a consulate. Migrants come to Grupo Mesoamericano's offices to participate in hammock-weaving classes, students take Maya language classes, and staff provide translators for monolingual Maya speaking migrants who get arrested or, with heartbreaking regularity, arrange for bodies to be transported back to Mexico when a migrant dies *in extremis*.

Grupo Mesoamericano's projects are supported by a combination of direct fundraising, large dance events known as Vaquerías, and grants from local philanthropic and public funding. It is in this last fact that one of the most interesting features of Grupo Mesoamericano's position in the Yucatecan migrant networks of San Francisco emerges.

The board of directors of Grupo Mesoamericano, and Agustín in particular, have partnered with other community organizations in the Bay Area in order to obtain grants. In its early days, a well-known pan-Latino organization served as GM's fiscal sponsor and provided material and management support. This partnership enabled Grupo Mesoamericano to submit funding proposals with the institutional backing of a well-known and trusted organization, which made local philanthropic entities more comfortable granting to a fledgling community group.

Grupo Mesoamericano also engaged in strategic partnerships with Native American-serving organizations in San Francisco. In 2009, for instance, they partnered with the Native American Health Center to apply for funding geared at improving community health programs of the Bay Area's Native American population. However, as

one of GM's board members explained, "there are only a few hundred Native Americans[123] here in the city, but we Maya, there are thousands of us. And we're Native American too! We're all indigenous, or at least that's the argument we made to those *gueyes* [guys]! And they liked that, so they gave us the money."

The partnership between Grupo Mesoamericano and the Native American Health Center was a strategic invoking of a putative essential indigeneity shared by Native Americans and Mayan migrants. But it was also a savvy way to bring in a large grant. In claiming a numeric disparity between Native Americans and Yucatecans the GM board member was not arguing that the need for services is less acute among Native Americans than Mayan migrants. Instead, he argued that the needs in both communities were similar, and that working together was advantageous for both organizations: the Native American organization could accurately claim that they were providing services to a substantially larger pool of recipients than they had previously worked with, the reputation and stature of the Native American organization made it easier to get the funding. As a subgrantee, Grupo Mesoamericano was more easily able to use the funding to serve a primarily undocumented clientele.

Grupo Mesoamericano's strategic partnerships are a direct result of the relatively high level of human capital of the organization's founders and board of directors. As described above, these individuals are in many ways unlike their Yucatecan counterparts in

[123] According to 2010 Census data, .9% of San Francisco's population is Native American or Alaskan Native; an additional .5% is Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. .9% of 805,325 (2010 Census estimate) is 7,248; 1.4% is 11275. So in fact, the Census suggests that the numbers of Native Americans and Yucatecans living in San Francisco are not that different (http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06075.html). However, ACS data puts the number of American Indians and Alaska Natives at .4% of the population (3,733 out of 797,983; data is from 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates at http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk).

terms of their educational achievement, occupations, and length of time spent in the United States. These forms of capital have an effect on the network position of the individuals involved in Grupo Mesoamericano. Through their work and their time in the United States they are connected to people and organizations outside the Yucatecan community. Individually and collectively, they have high aggregated and structural social capital. As a result, they also have access to different kinds of social capital, or relationships that can yield resources, in the region. These relationships, for example, with the Pan-Latino health organization, translated directly into economic and organization resources for Grupo Mesoamericano.

The case of Grupo Mesoamericano starts to show how network actors who have high structural and aggregated social capital have an easier time obtaining more resources and creating new network ties. This is an example of the interdependent relationship between social network and social capital: you need individual social capital (both aggregated and structural) to become embedded in a given network substructure. Your position within that network substructure then shapes how much latent social capital you have access to and the transaction costs for converting it to active social capital.

More broadly, the implication is that although an organization may purport to be “community” wide the reality is that the way things operate is usually due to a handful of particularly influential actors within the organization’s network — their ability to connect the organization with the resources they need both demonstrates and reinforces these actors’ network positions; the dynamic is a virtuous cycle in that their influence helps them

become more influential.[124] Agustín was initially successful in obtaining funding for Grupo Mesoamericano because he had relationships from his time at the Instituto. As Agustín sought resources for Grupo Mesoamericano, he used his pre-existing relationships to become more deeply embedded in San Francisco's philanthropic networks. These new relationships yielded additional network connections with city and county agencies. The process of resource-seeking, in other words, elevated Agustín's network topography both within the Yucatecan community and externally to it.

What is of particular interest from a migration perspective is that Grupo Mesoamericano, by forging ties with non-co-ethnic communities (for instance, Native American groups, other Meso-American indigenous communities, and Hispanic-oriented social service organizations), is catalyzing the settlement of Yucatecans into the US. The key resources for founding and growing a migrant-serving community organization required partnerships with actors *outside* the migrant community. If Grupo Mesoamericano's board of directors had opted to maintain their initial focus on sending money to their communities of origin in Yucatán, they probably would have been able to continue doing so, with occasional community events and fundraisers. Indeed, a group of migrants from Oxkutzcab did precisely this, developing a 3x1 program with town officials and raising enough money to build a softball field in Oxkutzcab (interview with Lázaro Pech). But the organization fizzled after the 3x1 project's completion: migrants preferred to send money to Oxkutzcab in the form of remittances rather than community programs.

[124] However, the creation of a formal institution which has, for example, bylaws, puts limits on this influence. In the case of malfeasance, for example Lázaro's misuse of GM's credit cards, the tie between the resource-mobilizing actor and the institution is severed. In other words, a point is reached at which the institution is more damaged than helped by the tie with the actor, and the institution is legally empowered to break the tie.

And meanwhile, Grupo Mesoamericano was nurturing ties with people and organizations outside of the Yucatecan community in order to provide services within it.

Case: El Príncipe's Fraud, Debt, and Foreign Supporters

Dalia Cauich, introduced in the previous chapter's discussion of need-driven and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship, began her career as a small-business owner with a popular *cocina clandestina* in the Mission. After a fire destroyed the apartment building where Dalia and her family were living and running their underground restaurant, she and her husband decided to open a legitimate business.

Dalia and her husband decided to invest the savings they had accrued from their *cocina clandestina* — tens of thousands of dollars — in both starting a new restaurant and buying a home. In both projects, the purchase of the house and the establishment of the restaurant then called Hombre de Maíz, they partnered with a man named Rufino who came from Oxkutzcab, the same community as Dalia. Rufino, however, turned out to be a con artist. After nine months, Rufino absconded with $15,000 of Dalia and Esteban' savings and after having forged Esteban's name on paperwork related to the mortgage of the house they had bought in Bayview. As a result of Rufino's forgeries, the mortgage for the house was tens of thousands of dollars more than Dalia and Esteban knew, they quickly went into default on their mortgage payments, and the house was foreclosed in early 2008.

In addition to defrauding Dalia and Esteban on personal financial issues, Rufino embezzled tens of thousands of dollars from the restaurant. The lease and utilities for Popul Vuh were all in Rufino's name, so Dalia and Esteban gave him money every month to cover half of the restaurant's operating expenses. However, Rufino never paid the rent or

any of the utilities. The first Dalia and Esteban knew of Rufino's malfeasance was when they arrived at the restaurant one morning to find that they had been evicted and that Rufino was nowhere to be found.[125] In addition to losing their house — a circumstance which led Dalia, Esteban, and their son to live out of their car for several weeks — Dalia estimates that Rufino left them $70,000 in debt, just as they were trying to start a business.

Dalia, who has an unmistakable vocation for entrepreneurship, was undeterred. She was, on the other hand, now unwilling to partner with other Yucatecans for the resources she needed to open her restaurant. Instead, she turned to three non-Yucatecan supporters, who made it possible for Dalia and Esteban to re-open the restaurant in the same location just a few days after Rufino vanished.

El Árabe

The first of these supporters was the owner of the building where the restaurant was located. Dalia explained Marcos's misdoings to the landlord and pleaded with him to reverse the eviction. Dalia refers to the building's owner as *el Árabe*, and describes his attitude during the ordeal as "very supportive." The landlord agreed to let Dalia and Esteban retain the restaurant's premises, worked out a payment plan for the unpaid rent, and eventually let them move into the apartment located above the restaurant. From Dalia's perspective, the landlord's decision to maintain his economic tie with Dalia and Esteban (on behalf of the firm) was the result of a mutual feeling of goodwill and support: the landlord liked Dalia and Esteban, and therefore sustained an economic tie that a landlord

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[125] Marcos's felonious activity was not limited to defrauding Dalia and Esteban: he also trafficked in fake liquor licenses, mortgaged his mother's house without telling her, which the community views as the cause of her fatal heart attack, and sold black-market alcohol at both Hombre de Maíz and another well-known restaurant in San Francisco. His nefarious ways eventually caught up to him; however, he was ultimately jailed and has been effectively excommunicated from the Oxkutzcabense community.

with “only” a financial relationship with renters might have decided to break.

For their part, Dalia and Esteban liked the landlord as a person, in addition to liking the restaurant’s location, and consequently sought to persuade him to maintain the economic tie on the basis of the warm relationship between them. The landlord’s willingness to let Dalia and Esteban re-open their restaurant four days after evicting them is an example of an economic relationship making a network tie vulnerable but the social/emotional/affective aspect relationship making it resilient. This dynamic exemplifies the difference in forging economic relationships based on personal ties rather than institutional ones: economic relationships based on underlying social ties rely on trust rather than institutional obligation to minimize uncertainty (Guseva and Róna-Tas 2001; Stack 1974). In social relationships with deep trust, however, there are greater opportunities to re-negotiate economic arrangements.

El Italiano

The second person Dalia turned to for support of her restaurant was *el Italiano*, the owner of the apartment complex where she had been running her informal restaurant. *El Italiano* had become very attached to Dalia, and had provided some seed funding when she and Rufino were first getting started with Hombre de Maíz; however, *el Italiano* mistrusted Rufino (despite Dalia vouching for him and claiming that Rufino was actually her cousin) and limited his investment to $10,000. After uncovering Rufino’s fraud, Dalia asked *el Italiano* for more help. This time, *el Italiano* offered more than simply money; the entire business was re-established in his name. *El Italiano* also served as a source of moral support to Dalia, and any time she had a question about running a business, she called *el Italiano* for advice.

El Italiano's economic support for Dalia's restaurant resulted from the emotional relationship between the two. Put differently, their economic relationship was embedded in a social one, and the addition of a lender/borrower relationship transformed the simple (if nuanced) affective relationship into a multiplex one. The first evidence of this emotional relationship was when *el Italiano* asked Dalia to collect her neighbor's rent on his behalf: this arrangement indicates that *el Italiano* had a high level of trust for Dalia. The second indication of *el Italiano's* affection for Dalia was that he acted as *padrino* (literally, godfather, but it means sponsor in this case) for Dalia's wedding to Esteban; this is a role usually undertaken by someone who is very close to the bride and/or groom.

The third indication of *el Italiano*'s esteem for Dalia is that he keeps proposing to her: for years, he has been trying to persuade Dalia to divorce Esteban and marry him instead. *El Italiano* argues that this re-arrangement is a net benefit to the whole family; *el Italiano* believes that if Dalia marries him, she will be able to legalize her status[126]. Irrespective of whether or not *el Italiano* is attached to Dalia in a specifically romantic way, his repeated marriage proposals indicate that he wants to be involved with her and her family in a deep and emotionally intimate way. And indeed, their relationship is enduring: they have been close since before Dalia started dating Esteban, and they continue to be close even though the restaurant is now officially in Dalia and Esteban's name and he is no longer underwriting the business.

As of 2013, Dalia had not taken *el Italiano* up on his offer of matrimony. She has, however, considered it — to the extent of twice trying to file divorce papers, which were

[126] Since Dalia initially entered the United States without passing through a legal port of entry and without any form of documentation, it is highly unlikely that if she did marry *el Italiano* she would be able to obtain a spousal visa and subsequently a greencard. It is unclear whether or not *el Italiano* is aware of this fact, but Dalia is.

twice rejected because of clerical errors. In our last formal interview, Dalia indicated that she did not intend to leave her husband for *el Italiano* anytime soon: "What am I going to do, if I go to Mexico I have to close [the restaurant], and [then] what am I going to do? And anyway, I'm married, it would be a trauma for my son, even if I explained everything to him. So with papers or without papers, here I am[127]."

The relationships among Dalia, her husband, and *el Italiano* continue to have both emotional and economic aspects. The relationship between Dalia and her husband is simultaneously contractual, emotional, and economic: they are legally married, they are spouses and parents to a son, and they are co-owners of a relatively stable business in San Francisco. The relationship between Dalia and *el Italiano* is one of long-standing mutual affection and of repeated economic transfers. For close to a decade, Dalia has been able to maintain an emotional relationship with each man while also being close with the other. Both relationships incorporate an economic element, although this aspect of the tie between Dalia and Esteban is more balanced than the relatively dependent relationship between Dalia and *el Italiano*.

Dalia is positioned as a broker in the network substructure that consists of her, Esteban, and *el Italiano.* Since she is tied to two other network actors who are not directly connected to each other, Dalia is able to control the flow of information between the two men.

Los Chilangos

The third source where Dalia obtained economic support for her business was from

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[127] *Dalia:* "*Y qué voy a hacer, si voy a México, tengo que cerrar, y qué voy a hacer? Y además estoy casada, sería un trauma para mi niño, aunque lo explicara todo, así que con papeles o sin papeles aquí estoy*."

a man from Mexico City who produced counterfeit greencards. She had gotten to know this man because he came to eat at her *cocina clandestina* every day. When Rufino absconded with Dalia and Esteban' savings and with the money they had given him for Hombre de Maíz's bills, Dalia asked *el Chilango* for a cash loan of $15,000. Unlike *el Italiano*, who did not charge Dalia any interest on his $10,000 loan, *el Chilango* assessed a 4% interest rate, payable when the loan was due.

Two and a half years after she took out the loan from *el Chilango*, the whole thing, $15,000 in principal plus $7,000 in interest, was called in immediately. Dalia was required to pay the entire $22,000 in cash, because *el Chilango* had been arrested and needed the money. However, neither Dalia nor Esteban had $22,000 in liquid assets at that time, since the restaurant — now called El Príncipe — was stable, but not profitable. In order to repay the full loan as quickly as *el Chilango* demanded, Dalia took out another $20,000 loan, putting up her parents' house in Mexico as collateral. Dalia's former partner Rufino had done the same thing during his spree of financial misconduct; the difference for Dalia's situation was that she asked her father for approval beforehand. The urgency that Dalia felt about repaying *el Chilango* supports my finding that when economic relationships are built on social there are greater opportunities to re-negotiate economic arrangements. As Ben-Porath notes, "investment in resources specific to a relationship between identified parties [saves] transaction costs" (1980:1). While with the *Arabe* Dalia asked for more time to repay her debts, *el Chilango* asked her to repay them ahead of schedule. In both cases, Dalia's personal tie with the other actor in the exchange relationship made it possible to

reconfigure the financial deal.[128]

The increasing diversity of El Príncipe's clientele

By 2012, Dalia had repaid the $20,000 loan against her father's house in Mexico; she had repaid the $22,000 loan plus interest to *el Chilango*, she had repaid *el Italiano* his $10,000, and she had repaid $70,000 to *el Árabe* and the various other creditors Rufino had defrauded. In the course of less than a decade, in other words, Dalia Cauich had worked her way out of more than $100,000 of debt she had acquired through her network connections.

The money to repay her creditors came from the revenue of the restaurant that Dalia and her husband run. The restaurant is a block off the main pedestrian and commercial artery of the Mission District. The door and the sign are partially obscured by a large shade tree, so Dalia and Esteban put a chalkboard sign advertising their "Mayan Dishes" on the sidewalk every day; they also park their minGregorio, which is covered with a large image of the restaurant's logo, as close to the restaurant as possible. These low-tech efforts to attract clients work together with other forms of marketing including a website, reviews in local newspapers and online, and regular participation in community events.

For the most part, Dalia focuses on attracting and retaining a non-Yucatecan clientele: not because she does not want Yucatecan consumers, but because she has them already. Her prices are described as unreasonably high by some community members, but she has a steady daytime stream of Yucatecan customers looking for a couple of panuchos or a plate of grilled meat.

Dalia is very well known in the Yucatecan community, from the time when she ran

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[128] This flexibility mirrors the dynamic social and economic ties of the firms Uzzi looked at (1999, 2001), when he found that a combination of personal ties and institutional ties was ideal for production and sales in New York's garment district and the informal but binding arbitration systems described by Bernstein (1992).

her *cocina clandestina*, and from the community's gossip about the strained relationship between Dalia and her mother, who ran a popular *cocina clandestina* across the street from Dalia's. There is a persistent rumor in the Yucatecan community that Dalia and her mother reported each others' *cocinas* to city health inspectors. This dynamic speaks to the sometimes pernicious side of dense, homophilic networks: the rapid dissemination of information designed to control the behavior of network actors who do not conform to the group's standards.

At dinnertime, on the other hand, the restaurant caters primarily to non-Yucatecan consumers. There are several explanations for this demographic shift in customers. The first is that since so many Yucatecans work in restaurants themselves, they are not able to patronize other restaurants during evening shifts. The second is that Dalia has identified a nuanced middle-ground between commoditizing authenticity — selling food she describes as "Maya" — and adopting many of the signifiers of "taste" and "design" that dominate the cultural landscape in San Francisco. For instance, Dalia's menu is very similar to a menu a consumer might encounter in Izamal, Mérida, or Maní: notebook-sized swaths of grilled pork; turkey stewed in a delicate, aromatic broth and piled with pickled onions; the iridescent, inky blackness of relleno negro; the rainbow hues of a salbute piled with shredded turkey, cabbage, tomato, and avocado. Yet Dalia also includes vegetarian and even vegan dishes in her menu, options which are obligatory in San Francisco and essentially unheard of in Yucatán.

Likewise, the restaurant's design reflects Dalia's efforts to convey a sense of Mayan-ness, of Yucatecan-ness, while trying to adopt a vaguely minimalist design aesthetic. The restaurant is painted in saturated maroon and marigold, and decorated with

pre-Columbian figurines and images of Mayan motifs. Dalia has not, however, incorporated the enormous murals or the promotional posters for Uxmal that grace the walls of the other Yucatecan restaurants in San Francisco. Instead, Dalia's design choices suggest that she is trying to convey a sense of exoticism and authenticity within a cultural framework adopted from the city's social and economic elite.

In both the menu's offerings and the establishment's decor, Dalia's restaurant occupies an economic and cultural space between San Francisco's Yucatecan community and its ethnically diverse technocratic and managerial class. This latter, the socioeconomic elite of Sassen's global city, has global palates and disposable income, and Dalia's restaurant benefits from both.

In opening her formal restaurant, Dalia has sought to remain part of the Yucatecan community while making business connections (in terms of her contractors and service providers as well as her clientele) with the broader and more diverse consumer base of non-Yucatecan San Franciscans.

The case described above, and in particular the complex emotional and economic ties among Dalia, her husband, and *el Italiano*, are unique in their particulars. On the other hand, the situation exemplifies the pattern I found through my research: fledgling entrepreneurs in low-resource immigrant communities mobilize resources through strong ties with people who have access to different forms of social capital than those within the entrepreneur's co-ethnic community.

Case: La Cocina and the three lives of Restaurante Tulum

The next case, Benicio and his efforts to start Restaurante Tulum, has many of the

same dynamics as Dalia; however, Benicio's story also demonstrates that institutions — as opposed to individuals — can provide concentrated forms of social capital to aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs.

Benicio was introduced in the preceding chapter in the discussion of entrepreneurialism as a vocation. In his late teens, Benicio moved to Cancún where he started a series of small businesses including a *cockteleria* and the informal sale of Yucatecan specialties like *cochinita pibil*. However, he remained employed as a wage laborer in order to subsidize his entrepreneurial activity.

Benicio married a woman from Yucatán and had three children. They eventually divorced and Benicio migrated to the United States without papers in 1998, the same years as Dalia and during the height of the mass Yucatecan migration to San Francisco. With his experience as a baker, Benicio found work in a Mexican bakery in the Mission district. Benicio recalls that he was able to find work by himself, without being "recomendado" to the bakery; his experience suggests that aspiring employees with specialized skills are relatively less dependent on their social connections for help getting a new job.

Benicio worked at the bakery for 9 months, at which point he started to feel that the bakery's owners were taking advantage of his naiveté with regards to working conditions in the United States. When he was hired, the owners told Juanhat he would be paid by shift, as happens in Mexico, instead of hourly, as is the rule in California. As a result, he was paid a flat fee of $50/night for 10 or 12 hour shifts. At the time, the minimum wage in California was $5.75, so if Benicio had been paid hourly he would have earned $57.50 for a 10 hour shift or $69 for a 12 hour shift, minus taxes. Benicio experienced his payment arrangements as exploitative, however, and consequently sought new employment.

Benicio found his new job through his social network: "A friend recommended me [for the job] where I'm working now in the mornings. It's a restaurant, [I'm working] as a baker, and when I started there everything was different and I saw that with a only a few hours I earned more[129]." In his new position, Benicio felt that he was being paid "*conforme a la ley"*(in accordance with the law) — an important experiential distinction for him from his job at the bakery — and he was able to earn more and work less.

By 2005, Benicio had married a woman from Mexico City and they had two small children. Around that time, his first wife, who was living in Cancún with his three older children, died. Benicio decided to bring his kids to San Francisco to join his US-based family. Deeply concerned about the prospect of crossing the desert with three children, Benicio asked his friends for recommendations on how and where to enter the US clandestinely. He was directed to a group of people smugglers who work on one of the trans-border Indian reservations and who specialize in the clandestine migration of children. Benicio and his three kids entered the United States through this reservation in late 2005 or early 2006.

The timing of Benicio's family reunification is important, because it coincided almost exactly with his decision to open a small business. Over the years, Benicio had taught his Mexico City-born wife how to make *cochinita pibil* and other Yucatecan specialties, and she sold them from a cooler and by special request to their neighbors in the Tenderloin. This approach helped Benicio and Mariana cover their monthly bills, but the arrival of three more members of the family meant higher monthly expenses. Benicio had

[129] *Benicio*: "*Un amigo me recomendó en el lugar donde ahora estoy trabajando ahora en las mañanas. Es un restaurant, como panadero, y allí cuando entré fue todo diferente y vi que con pocas horas ganaba más de lo que yo trabajaba."*

also had to come up with $10,000 to pay the people-smugglers who brought him and his children across the border. In short, 2007 was an economically precarious time for the family, and (unbeknownst to them) the economy was about to collapse.

Given this precariousness, it may seem like an economically irrational decision for Juano decide to open a restaurant: their savings were gone and they had more mouths to feed, and opening a small business is expensive and risky (Wu and Knott 2006). However, there were several other factors that played into their decision to open Restaurante Tulum.

First, they had an increased supply of labor — Benicio's oldest daughter and Mariana's nephew were both out of school and available to staff the restaurant as needed. Second, Benicio continued working full time at the restaurant where he had been employed since 1999 in order to ensure a baseline income for the family. Third, and perhaps most importantly, in 2007 Benicio heard about La Cocina, a restaurant incubator for aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs in San Francisco.

La Cocina provides a combination of access to industrial kitchen facilities, business development consulting, and managerial training to immigrant women who want to sell food. Most of the clients of La Cocina come from the informal economy; the organization specializes in assisting aspiring entrepreneurs with the transition from the informal to the formal economy. However, the clients of La Cocina are almost exclusively women. Benicio recalled learning about La Cocina this way:

> A colleague, who was my Chef at that time at my job, basically I had mentioned to her that I wanted to have a business some day, something with food. [And] then the information showed up [in an English language newspaper] and it said that San Francisco was going to open an organization called La Cocina where they where going to help immigrant and Hispanic people, it was going to focus on them. Like if they want to start a business. So she showed me, she said, 'look, just what you need,' she

> said, 'just for Latinos.'… So I wrote down the phone number. Then they told me it was just for women, and I said, 'uyy, they already discriminated [against] me! I'm going to send my wife.' [But] my wife said, 'no, I don't want to go, what do you mean, are you crazy?' 'No, I'm not crazy, we're going to do something there, we've got to get something out of there,' I told her, 'because through you they can help me.' 'And what am I going to say?''say this, say that we want to start a food business or something like that.' So we went, obviously with her, but they realized that the one who really wanted to join was me….
>
> So they told me, 'ok, we're going to do this, your wife, there's an organization that helps women and it's called Alas, and through them you can join the La Cocina program, and since we're an organization that doesn't discriminate [against] anyone we're going to accept you, but through your wife. And at that point I was the only male among the women there cooking and everything[130].

Even as Benicio's depiction of his lifelong dream to run a successful restaurant is initially framed in individualistic terms, his ability to achieve it is predicated on information and support from a variety of network ties. Benicio's entrepreneurial project was activated by information he received through his social network. As such, Benicio follows the model identified by Garmaise and Moskowitz (2003), Gilbertson and Singer (2000), and Röper, Völker, and Flap (2009), who all find that actors rely on people they know well in order to get connected to key institutions (banks, US immigration agencies, and mortgage lenders, respectively). In addition, Benicio' participation with La Cocina was contingent on the relationship with his spouse: if she had flat-out refused to participate,

[130] *Benicio: Una compañera, la que era mi Chef en ese momento en el trabajo, como a ella le había comentado que yo quisiera algún día poner un negocio, algo de comida, entonces salió la información [en un periódico en inglés] donde dice que San Francisco se va a inaugurar una organización que se llama La Cocina a la cual van a apoyar a la gente inmigrante y hispana, enfocados en ellos. Para si quieren poner un negocio, y ella me enseñó, me dice, 'mira, lo que necesitas,' me dice,'solamente para latinos'…Y me apunté el teléfono. Entonces allí decía solamente para mujeres, y yo dije, 'uy, ¡ya me discriminaron! Voy a mandar a mi esposa, y mi esposa y mi esposa dice, 'no, yo no quiero ir, cómo, ¿tú estás loco?' 'No estoy loco, ahí vamos a hacer algo, algo uno tiene que sacar de ahí,' le digo, 'porque por medio de ti me pueden ayudar.' 'Y qué voy a decir?' 'Pues di esto, di ue queremos poner un negocio de comida o algo por el estilo.' Entonces fuimos, claro con ella pero se dieron cuenta de que el que intentaba de entrar realmente era yo…Entonces ellos me digeron, 'ok, vamos a hacer esto, que tu mujer, hay una organización que ayuda a las mujeres que es* Alas*, y por medio de ellos te puedes inscribir al programa de la cocina y aquí como somos una organización que no discrimina a nadie te vamos a aceptar, pero por medio de tu mujer. Y en ese momento fui el único varón que estuvo entre las mujeres ahí cocinando y todo….*

Benicio would have had even higher barriers to entry to entrepreneurship in the formal economy.

When Benicio and Mariana first joined La Cocina, Benicio wanted to set up a taco truck from which he could sell *cochinita* and other Yucatecan foods. The staff at La Cocina advised against doing so, however, warning Juanhat the health permits were complicated and that acquiring a truck would be expensive. Instead, they suggested that Benicio start a catering business, using the industrial kitchen facilities at La Cocina's building in the Mission. This approach, they explained, would enable Benicio and Mariana to build their business slowly without the high overhead costs of a truck or storefront restaurant.

Benicio and Mariana followed the advice from La Cocina. Benicio continued to work at the restaurant while he and Mariana cooked for banquets and events; he described this period of double shifts as exhausting: "There came a point when I said, you know what, I can't [do this] any more, I'm exhausted from working so much. And at time jobs come through and I have to work parties, and it's a lot at night and I have to be at work in the morning, and it was killer[131]."

After a year or so of running Restaurante Tulum as a catering company while working elsewhere, Benicio was worn out. He took a few months off, while he considered what to do next. In early 2008, however, he decided to re-start the business, but in a different capacity: a fully-functioning restaurant. Benicio and Mariana had relocated their family to Oakland, and one day on his way to the BART station, Benicio saw a sign that a deli near the Fruitvale BART station was available for lease:

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[131] Benicio: "*Llega un momento que digo, sabes qué, ya no puedo más, de tanto trabajo estoy agotado. Y a veces salen los trabajos y hay que llevar las fiestas y es muy de noche y yo tengo que entrar en la mañana a trabajar y era mortal.*"

> I had a little capital, it wasn't much, I had $5,000. Then I saw a sign that this place was for lease, it said, "cafe in good conditions for lease." … The owner [is] from Puebla, Mexico… and what he had wasn't anything huge, but… So I said, 'well, I think this is the moment to go back and try to accomplish my dream, go back to [the] fight.' So I told [the owner], 'you know what, I have this much, how much do you want?' 'I want this much.' 'Ok,' I told him, 'I'll take it and we'll see what happens.'
>
> The stuff from La Cocina helped a lot because they gave a lot of information about how to apply for credit, where to get loans, and I had gotten informed about it and I had gotten to know a cooperative and become a member… I [was thinking] some day that it would help me out. I was a member for four years, then I went, I said it was for a [line of] credit and they gave me a [line of *credit]*[132].

Again for Benicio, his access to resources including advice and money through institutions was important for him to be able to reconstitute Restaurante Tulum as a restaurant. For a few months, his access to formal credit and the tools and skills he had acquired through La Cocina were enough to sustain the restaurant. However, foot traffic to Restaurante Tulum was lighter than Benicio had anticipated, and the US economy was starting to collapse. Even an event designed organized with Grupo Mesoamericano to promote the restaurant — it was called an *Inauguración*, or Grand Opening, even though it took place 9 months after Restaurante Tulum first opened its doors — did not generate much demand for Benicio's *cochinita*, *brazo de reina*, and *tamales*.

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[132] *Benicio: Yo tenía un poquito de capital, no era mucho, tenía yo $5,000. Y entonces vi un letrero que este lugar se traspasaba, decía'se traspasa un café en buenas condiciones.'…El dueño [era] poblano, mexicano…y lo que tenía que no era gran cosa, pero…Entonces dije, 'bueno, creo que es el momento de volver a realizar mi sueño, volver a luchar.' Y le dije [al dueño],'sabes qué, tengo tanto, cuánto quieres?' 'Quiero tanto.' 'Ok,' le digo, lo voy a conseguir y vamos a ver qué pasa. Y cosa de La Cocina me sirvió mucho porque daban mucha información sobre como aplicar para crédito donde agarrar préstamos, entonces yo ya me había informado sobre esto y ya había yo conocido una cooperativa la cual yo me había hecho miembro para, digo, algún día me va a servir. Me hice miembre hace cuatro años, entonces fui, dije que era para un crédito y me dieron un crédito.*

Benicio decided he needed a partner, and began looking for a financial backer who would infuse capital into Restaurante Tulum until sales picked up:

> The money I had I used it all buying [ingredients]. I was totally broke, incredible, not even [enough] to get a flyer printed… The first three months here were so terrible… At the worst moment, that day I didn't even have enough to pay rent, I said… "I can't keep asking for more credit because since I don't have good sales, all my [credit] cards are maxed out, so my credit history is really low. And the banks can't tell me, "hey, you've got good credit, we're going to give you money." So I said, 'either I let it go or I form a partnership."
>
> I mentioned it… not to a lot of people, to about three people I mentioned the partnership, but like, really, like, sincere, [saying] that the business right now isn't a business. And there's a great projection, but I need capital… And nothing doing, so I left it alone… when [Beatriz] even without wanting to found out about it… when she asked me about my economic situation I told her, 'no, if you only know, I'm totally strangled right now.' 'But why?,' she said. 'Because of the business, that isn't a business yet, I don't even have enough to cover expenses.' 'Do you need a partner?' she says. 'Well, actually, yes.' 'Well, here I am, let's do this,' she says[133].

The relationship between Beatriz and Benicio was socially or emotionally close enough for:

(1) Beatriz to ask Benicio straightforwardly about the state of Restaurante Tulum's finances,

(2) Juano be honest with Beatriz about the difficult situation he was in, and

(3) Beatriz to offer to subsidize the restaurant's operating expenses until Benicio and Mariana started earning a profit.

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[133] *Benicio: El dinero que yo tenía lo utilicé todo para la compra. Estaba descapitalizado para todo, increíble, ni para mandar a imprimir un volante….Los primeros tres meses aquí fueron los más terribles…En el momento más apretado, aquel día que ya no tenía para pagar la renta, digo, 'o sigo, no puedo seguir pidiendo más crédito porque por no tener buenas ventas todas mis tarjetas están al limite, entonces mi historia de crédito está muy bajo. Entonces los bancos ya no me pueden decir, 'oye, tienes buen crédito, te voy a dar dinero.' Entonces yo digo, 'o lo dejo ir o me asocio.' Y le comenté…no a muchas personas, a tres personas les comenté la socidad, pero como muy yo muy soy sincero el negocio ahorita no es negocio. Pues hay una gran proyección pero necesito capital… Vi que nada y lo dejé así...cuando [Beatriz] sin querer se enteró…cuando me preguntó por mi situación económica le dije, 'no, si supieras, ahorita estoy ahorcado.' '¿Pero, por qué?' me dice, 'porque por el negocio, que no es negocio todavía, no tengo para saciar los gastos.' 'Necesitas un socio?' dice, 'Pues la verdad, sí.' 'Pues aquí estoy, vamos a entrarle,' dice.*

Benicio and Beatriz agreed that for the foreseeable future, Beatriz would cover the rent and utilities of the restaurant, and Beatriz would provide an extra, unpaid set of hands to help Mariana, Alejandro (her nephew), and Cristal (Benicio's oldest daughter) staff the kitchen and wait tables while Benicio worked at The Stinking Rose to bring in as much cash as possible.

As happened with Dalia, Esteban, and *el Italiano*, Restaurante Tulum's underwriter came from a relationship that the entrepreneur had with a member of the opposite sex who came from outside their ethnic community: Beatriz and Teresa, the friend she seconded Restaurante Tulum, are both from El Salvador.

In both cases, the entrepreneur's spouse was faced with the choice to accept the investment and the implied or intimacy of the relationship between their spouse and a third party, or to watch the business collapse before even really getting started. And in both cases, the entrepreneur's spouse accepted the help, although in the case of Restaurante Tulum the help introduced a new actor into the set of relationships involved with running the restaurant. Given that Teresa had no experience with Yucatecan food, it is possible that she was sent to supervise Beatriz's investment; everyone involved, however, described Teresa's presence as "*un apoyo*" (a support) to the family: "Practically [speaking], since [Beatriz] works, I'm here as a representative for her, you could say. There has to be someone [here] giving him a hand[134]."

Teresa's investment in Restaurante Tulum was supposed to help the business reach a state where she would receive 50% of the profits; in order to increase business, the plan

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[134] *Teresa: "Practicamente, [Beatriz] como trabaja, entonces estoy en representación, digamoslo así, de ella. Tiene que haber alguien pues, o sea, echándole la mano a él.*

was to do more marketing and to incorporate Salvadoran food into the restaurant's menu. However, despite everyone's efforts, the restaurant could not be sustained and it closed at some point in 2009 or 2010.

After the storefront version of Restaurante Tulum folded, Benicio and Mariana went back to La Cocina for advice on how to move forward. In 2010, they opened the fourth iteration of the business: a taco truck that sells *tacos de cochinita* and participates in San Francisco's popular street-food gatherings, Off The Grid. In 2011, they received permission to bring the Restaurante Tulum truck into Dolores Park several days a week, in order to sell tacos to the inebriated hordes that inhabit the park's slopes during the afternoon.

La Cocina's connections and advice were key to helping Benicio and Mariana pass the city's health inspections and get permits to vend food in public. As of the writing of this dissertation, they have built a stable enough business with the truck that Benicio has been able to quit his job at the other restaurant and spend his time cooking (which still [technically, again] happens at the La Cocina facilities in the Mission) and selling his food.

The staff at La Cocina see Benicio and Mariana as a successful business.[135] La Cocina has promoted them at the SF Street Food Festival and Benicio and Mariana were featured in promotional videos and materials for La Cocina's fundraising efforts[136].

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[135] The success of La Cocina in helping entrepreneurs like Benicio and Mariana transition from the informal to the formal economy suggests that the organization has created a model which might be replicable in other contexts. It is important to note, however, that La Cocina is based in San Francisco and is consequently embedded in a series of local and regional philanthropic networks which have contributed money and capacity to its growth. For his part, Caleb Zigas, La Cocina's executive director, attributes the organization's effectiveness to the extensive informal restaurant sector in San Francisco: he believes a similar progam set up in a community without one would have a harder time helping aspiring restaurant owners get started in the formal economy.

[136] In an example of social networks running amok, I was asked by a friend who is completely unconnected to the San Francisco restaurant world, much less to the Yucatecan community, to provide translated captions

However, the “success” of Restaurante Tulum comes after three different versions of the business “failed.” In addition, consumers in San Francisco are unpredictable and easily seduced away from the familiar and towards a new trendy offering. The current version of Restaurante Tulum is economically stable, but stability today is no guarantee of future profitability.

Nevertheless, the case of Restaurante Tulum points to the importance of access to resources found outside the entrepreneur’s own ethnic community. Like Dalia and Agustín, Benicio is a savvy social capital cultivator who is able to cultivate social relationships — with La Cocina, with Beatriz, with Teresa — that bring in money and information. Also like Dalia, Benicio has been able to build these ties without sundering the tie to his wife: as of the writing of this dissertation, Mariana remains co-owner of the enterprise, Benicio’s daily co-worker, and his spouse.

Case: Friendship, Fictive Kinship, and Los Paisanos

The last case in this section starts with Camilo, who is not Yucatecan, falling in love with a Yucatecan woman. Camilo, who is from Cuernavaca, arrived in the US in 1982, and obtained a greencard through IRCA. After settling in the Bay Area, Camilo began working and ultimately managing a series of *taquerías* and “international” food restaurants in San Francisco and the East Bay. Camilo’s history of opening and closing businesses speaks to his entrepreneurial vocation. He became friendly with an Asian man who hired him to start up a restaurant in Berkeley. Camilo credits this opportunity, and in particular the relationship he had with the restaurant’s owner, with teaching him how to run a

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for a video she was editing for a large foundation in San Francisco that provided substantial funding to La Cocina. To my delight, the video featured Benicio and Mariana.

business: “I learned a lot from him… how to manage a business. How to keep it going. Where to go for permits. Where to get other permits. I learned a lot from him[137].”

In the late 1990’s, Camilo was offered the chance to buy a small taco stand in downtown San Francisco. Pleased by the prospect of having his own business, Camilo started selling burritos to the lunchtime crowd near Union Square. Working alongside the Yucatecan woman he was living withat that point, Camilo was able to cover the high rent of a downtown-SF establishment and to earn a modest profit. Two years into the business, friends of the owner of another taco stand — who knew Camilo by reputation — contacted Camilo to see if he would be interested in taking over the lease and operations of their *taquería* in Berkeley. Camilo accepted the offer, and began running both his downtown shop and the one in the East Bay. Running both by himself, however, was overly taxing, and in the meanwhile he had separated from his Yucatecan girlfriend and married a Nicaraguan woman.

Camilo had become close with other Yucatecans and fallen in love with Yucatecan food, however. The ingredients were familiar but the flavors were new. He started dreaming of opening a Yucatecan restaurant, but thought that for it to be successful, he would need to find a space closer to where the Yucatecan community was concentrated. In 2002, when the Thai woman from whom he had bought the taco shop contacted Camilo to see if he would be interested in taking over the lease and operations of a restaurant she owned in the Mission, he was delighted:

> This lady called me. The one who owned the first taquería… The Thai woman. She said to me, ‘Camilo, I have a spot in [the Mission].’ And I

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[137] *Camilo*: “*Yo aprendí mucho de él…Cómo sobrellevar un negocio. Cómo mantenerlo. Dónde ir a sacar un permiso. Dónde conseguir otro permiso. Aprendí mucho de él.”*

> always — always, always, always — wanted to open a Yucatecan restaurant… because I was living with a Yucatecan girl…. So [with] her, I liked her food, and I said, 'why not do something, you know? Some day [someone] is going to do it.' So… yeah, it was planned. It wasn't handed to me, not at all. It was something that I wanted to do. So when I had the taco shop and then ran into the [Thai] woman… [and] what I was waiting for [to open] this place was that it was close to the Yucatecan community[138].

Camilo's enthusiasm for opening a Yucatecan restaurant was tempered by a sense — perceptible in his defensiveness about his long-term desire to do it — that to succeed as a restauranteur *within*, in addition to *near* the Yucatecan community, he would need Yucatecans who could vouch for him. Camilo consequently asked his *compadre* Marcos if he would be interested in becoming Camilo's partner in the new restaurant.

For his part, Marcos had come to San Francisco from Oxkutzcab in the early 1980's, one of the relatively few Yucatecans to settle in the Bay Area during that decade (see Chapter 3). Like Camilo, Marcos was able to legalize his status in the United States during IRCA; his wife migrated to the US legally and their children were born in San Francisco. For basically the entire time that he was in San Francisco, Marcos worked in restaurants, but like Cristóbal (whose experience I outlined in chapter 4) he experienced the glass ceiling that caps the upward mobility of Yucatecan restaurant workers:

> 14 years I worked [at Julie's Supper Club]… I [never made it] to manager, the chef trusted me but they never named me sub-chef, but they trusted me enough that when he wasn't around, I was the one who was in charge of the kitchen, filling order, managing the [staff]… so in that way, yeah, you could

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[138] *Camilo: Me habló una señora. La que fue dueña de la taquería primero…. La Thailandesa. Me dijo, 'Camilo, tengo un lugar en [la Mision].' Pero yo siempre — siempre, siempre, siempre— quise abrir un restaurant yucateco…porque estaba viviendo con una muchacha de Yucatán…'Tons ella de por si me gustaba su comida y yo decía, 'por qué no hacer algo, no? Algún día lo van a hacer.' Esto…si fue planeado. Esto no fue algo así que me lo pasaron, nada. Fue algo que yo tenía ganas de hacerlo. 'Tons cuando tenía la taquería y después me encontré a la señora… Pero lo que esperaba para este lugar era cerca de la comunidad yucateca.*

say I was the manager[139].

After a decade and a half of being *de facto* but not *de jure* in charge of the kitchen, Marcos left Julie's Supper Club for a series of mid-price restaurants where he worked double shifts, 16 or 17 hours a day, six days a week. Marcos was eventually made manager at a restaurant in Hayes Valley, where he supervised a team of Yucatecan kitchen workers. One day, Marcos's compadre Camilo proposed that they go into business together.

> Q: How did you get the idea to open this [restaurant]?
> Well, go figure, it wasn't my idea. At that time I was working in the restaurant I told you about… in the French [one]. So I have a compadre who is from, he's Mexican but he's not from Yucatán, and he came and told me, well actually, he came to my house and he said, 'Compadre, I want to talk to you.' And I said,'sure, about what?' He says to me, 'let me take you out for dinner and we'll chat.' I say to him, 'what's this all about?' He says to me, 'Let's open a restaurant!' 'Huh,' I tell him, 'that doesn't sound bad,' I say, 'but what [kind of food] are we going to sell?' And he tells me, 'the food that they make in Yucatán, I know you know how to cook [it],' he says to me, 'and my wife knows how to cook, so let's set up a restaurant.' I told him, 'ok' and as it turns out that the place he took me [for dinner] was the place where we opened the restaurant because the owner knew him for many years and they were giving [him] that restaurant so he could work but he didn't know what to do there[140].

In Camilo's version of the origin story of the restaurant they opened, he approached Marcos for help cooking, and Marcos actually suggested the partnership:

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[139] *Marcos*: *14 años trabajé [en Julie's Supper Club] ...No [llegué a ser] manager sino que el chef me daba la confianza, mas nunca me nombraron sub-chef, pero me daba la confianza de cuando él no estaba, yo era el que llevaba el control de la cocina, hacer pedidos, manejar a los [staff] ...y así, como manager sí se podría decir.*

[140] *Q: ¿Cómo fue que a usted se le ocurrió abrir éste lugar?*
Marcos: Pues fíjese que no fue una idea mía. Yo trabajaba (cuando eso en) el restaurant que les dije… en el francés. Entonces, tengo un compadre que es de, es mexicano mas no es de Yucatán, entonces vino y me dijo una vez, bueno, fue a visitarme en la casa y me dice, 'Compadre, quiero hablar contigo.' Y le digo,'sí, de qué?' Me dice, 'te invito a un restaurant a cenar y lo platicamos.' Y fuimos a un restaurant y entonces ahí me dice,'sabes qué? Quiero hacer un negocio contigo.' Le digo, '¿de qué se trata?' Me dice, '¡Vamos a abrir un restaurant!' No, le digo, 'no suena mal,' le digo, 'pero qué vamos a vender?' Y me dice, 'la comida que hacen en Yucatán, yo sé que tu sabes cocinar,' me dice, 'y mi esposa sabe cocinar, vamos a poner un restaurant.' Le digo, 'OK,' y resulta que el lugar donde él me llevó fue el lugar donde abrimos el restaurant porque la dueña lo conoce por muchos años y estaban dando ése restaurant para que trabaje, mas él no sabía que hacer allá.}

> I called my compadre who is Yucatecan. And I [asked] him if he'd help me cook. I say to him… 'hey, I have a business [space] that they're renting to me.' And he says to me, 'well, instead of helping you, why don't we become partners and open it between the two of us?' I say to him, 'that seems good to me, let's open it[141].'

Note that both men give the other one credit for the initial idea to open — or at least to do so in partnership — El Paisano. These versions of the restaurant's origin story follow the same narrative pattern described in the previous chapter, of business owners who approach entrepreneurialism as a vocation, or a calling, yet attribute the original idea to someone else.

On September 16, 2002, Mexican Independence Day, Camilo, Marcos, and their wives opened El Paisano, on a quiet block in the northwest Mission District. Among the four of them, two Yucatecans, a Nicaraguan and a Moreliano, they transformed what had been a Thai restaurant into the only restaurant in the Bay Area that served Yucatecan food. They created a menu which included many of the classic Yucatecan dishes, and jointly lamented their inability to obtain certain products, like a particular kind of pumpkin seed used to make a Yucatecan dish called papadzules (tortillas rolled around chopped diced hard-boiled eggs and smothered in a creamy sauce made with ground pumpkin seeds). They hired an artist to cover every inch of the walls — including the bathroom — with Mayan-inspired murals.

Camilo described the first months of El Paisano as being hard work but relatively calm:

> At the beginning, no, it wasn't hard. Because a lot of people were helping us. For example, we don't know how to write perfect English, we didn't

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[141] *Camilo: Le hablé a mi compadre que es yucateco. Y le dije que si me ayudaba a cocinar. Le digo… 'venga, tengo un negocio que me rentan.' Y él me dijo, 'bueno, y porque en lugar de ayudarle, porque no nos asociamos y lo abrimos los dos?' Le digo, 'me parece bien, vamos a abrirlo.'*

> know how to speak English perfectly. So we wrote [stuff] in Spanish, we gave it to some people, and they translated it[142].

Marcos was, characteristically, more effusive in his description:

> His idea was really good. You know why? Because when we opened that spot here in San Francisco there weren't any Yucatecan restaurants, we were the first to open [one]… We [did it], the restaurant that I opened, you can say that I opened it because I made the menu of Yucatecan food. Everything that was sold in that restaurant was 100% Yucatecan, purely Yucatecan food, purely Yucatecan snacks, because it was in the heart of the Mission and [it's] purely Latin people, there are purely Yucatecans over there. He [Camilo] had the idea and it was really good because it was something that took off like you can't even imagine… From the beginning, it really took off, and from that we got [some] capital to open another one and stuff.[143]

Eight months into the lifespan of El Paisano, a customer approached Camilo and Marcos about taking over the lease and operations of another locale, in a more affluent neighborhood about 20 blocks southeast of the first one. Each man contributed $10,000 towards the cost of opening the new branch of the restaurant, and El Paisano 2 opened for business on May 5, 2003.

What had been an apparently congenial working relationship among the four principals took a turn for the complicated shortly after the two couples started El Paisano 2.

According to Camilo:

> We didn't have any problems. Except that sometimes, when you have a partnership… When there are four people, they are four people that think differently. Different ideas and then they don't… We talked sometimes, one

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[142] *Camilo*: "*Para comenzar, no, no fue difícil. Porque nos estuvieron ayudando muchas personas. Por ejemplo, no sabemos escribir perfecto inglés, no sabíamos hablar perfectamente inglés. Entonces lo escribíamos en español, se lo dimos a unas personas, y ellos lo tradujieron.*"

[143] *Marcos: La idea de él fue muy buena. ¿Sabe por qué? Porque cuando nosotros abrimos ese local aquí en San Francisco no existía ningun restauranto yucateco, fuimos los primeros en abrirlo…. Nosotros, el [restaurant] que yo abrí, porque se puede decir que yo lo abrí en el sentido de que yo puse el menú de comida yucateca. Todo lo que se vendía en ese restaurant era 100% yucateco, pura comida yucateca, puros antojitos yucaecos porque estaba en la manzana de lo que es la Mission y pura gente latina, puros yucatecos hay por ahí. El tuvo esa idea y fue muy buena porque algo que pegó como no se imagina… Desde el principio, pegó bastante, y de allí agarramos capital para abrir otro y toda la cosa.*

> day he would come, or I would, [saying] I've got a different idea, or he would bring something different[144].

Marcos's explanation was, again, more detailed:

> Well, the case is that after two months we had a talk, without fighting or nothing, but he was always saying to me, 'hey, compadre, I want to take a month of vacation, you stay [here] as the boss of the two [restaurants], when I come back, you take off and I'll stay here as the boss of the two [restaurants]. 'But,' I say, 'what am I going to do [for] a month? Nothing, and [then] I'm going to get mad if I have to come back to work[145].'

At that point, the two men decided to separate the restaurants into two separate business entities:

> Marcos: I said to him, 'I have another option, we have two [restaurants], why don't you keep one and I'll keep one?' We were in discussions about it and everything, he stayed there and I stayed here. And since then, he's the guy at his spot and I'm the guy at my own spot[146].
> Camilo: So one day I told him, 'You know what? Let's do something: let's split up the businesses — you keep one and I'll keep the other one. We'll flip a coin. Total chance. And I got this one and… he kept the other one[147].

Again, each man gave the other credit for the idea to split the restaurants. The arrangements that Camilo and Marcos made were a little unorthodox. For one thing, they decided who got which branch of El Paisano by flipping a coin: Camilo got the original location in the Mission and Marcos got the branch in Noe Valley. For another thing, it was decided — although it is unclear whether this was a mutual decision — that both

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[144] *Camilo*: "*No tuvimos problemas. Nada más que aveces, cuando tienes una sociedad… Cuándo hay cuatro personas: son cuatro personas que piensan diferente. Ideas diferentes y ya no… a veces platicabamos aquí algo y al otro día venía el o venía yo, y yo traigo una idea diferente, o el trae otra diferente.*"

[145] *Marcos*: *"Bueno el caso fue de que a los dos meses despues tuvimos una charla sin pleitos sin nada, entonces el siempre me decía, 'oye compdre yo quiero agarrar un mes de vacaciones, quedate como dueño en los dos, cuando yo regreze, tu sales y yo me quedo de dueño con los dos. 'Pero,' digo yo, '¿qué voy a hacer un mes? Nada, [y] me voy a fastidiar [si] tengo que volver a trabajar".*

[146] *Marcos: [Yo] le dije, 'tengo otra opción, tenemos dos, por qué no te quedas con uno y yo me quedo con otro?' Estuvimos en plática y todo, y el se quedó allí y yo me quedé aquí. Y desde eso el es muy propio de su propio local y yo soy muy propio de mí propio local.*

[147] *Camilo: "'tons un día le dije,'sabe qué?, vamos a hacer una cosa: vamos a dividirnos los negocios — usted se queda con uno y yo me quedo con uno. Vamos a echar un volado. A la suerte. Y yo me quedé con éste y… el se quedó con aquel."*

restaurants would keep the same name. As a result, El Paisano and El Paisano 2 operated simultaneously for five years without any actual business relationship between the owners.

Although the names remained the same, the clientele at the two branches differed substantially. The original location, situated close to the Yucatecan community, continued to specialize in more typical Yucatecan dishes. Camilo continued to be involved in the Yucatecan community, contributing food to fundraising events and maintaining a Yucatecan staff. Because of the neighborhood's demographics — and despite Camilo not being Yucatecan — the restaurant's customers were more likely to be Yucatecan or Latino; Camilo estimated that 65% of his customers were Latino, but noted that publicity, including a favorable review in the San Francisco Chronicle, had increased the number of "American" customers.

For his part, Marcos was operating El Paisano 2 in a predominantly white neighborhood, and serving a clientele that, according to him, rejected many of the heavier or greasier Yucatecan dishes. As a result, Marcos altered his menu to suit what he perceived his customers' tastes to be: drawing on his experience at the French restaurants where he had been a chef before opening El Paisano, he began to create appetizers which had Mayan-inspired names but used non-Yucatecan ingredients like smoked salmon. He was also not involved in Yucatecan community life to the same extent as his non-Yucatecan former partner. Business was slow for Marcos, however, and he had to return to wage-labor in order to pay the mortgage on the house he and his wife had bought in the early 1990's. His wife and a few employees staffed the restaurant, and his children helped out from time to time.

By the fall of 2010, both El Paisano and El Paisano 2 had closed. Neither Camilo

nor Marcos made it through the beginnings of the second tech boom in San Francisco, which has led to hugely increased rents and displaced the middle- and working-class communities in the Mission and Noe Valley. When El Paisano 2 closed, Marcos and his wife lost their house; they remain in San Francisco, however. Camilo was nowhere to be found, however, when I returned to the field in November 2010, so I was unable to confirm the specific circumstances behind the closure of El Paisano.

Based on the definition of success offered above, the cases of Los Paisanos seem to be unsuccessful. However, Camilo, the owner of El Paisano (the first one) has started and closed a string of restaurants and other small businesses over thirty years in the United States. He has done so in large part by cultivating strong relationships with people from other ethnic communities, including the Asian man, the Thai woman, and Marcos, his Yucatecan compadre.

By contrast, Marcos was less adept at forging relationships with people from outside the Yucatecan community; he drew neither an outside investor nor an “American” clientele dependable enough to sustain his business.

Success, however, entails more than just fiscal outcomes. Both Camilo and Marcos spoke warmly about their ex-partner, and the two men remained friendly even after their business relationship dissolved. Their relationship, in other words, transformed over the course of a decade:

- from co-workers to friends
- friends plus compadres
- compadres plus business partners
- compadres plus competitors (albeit with different clienteles)
- compadres

Camilo and Marcos's ability to create, change, and retain social relationships in different economic or entrepreneurial circumstances speaks to their skill as social actors. Both men managed to keep their network ties as they transformed from simple to multiplex back to simple.

When ties fail

The limitations of my data make it hard to "prove" that relationships with non-co-ethnic partners are necessary to explain how first-generation entrepreneurs whose ethnic communities do not have extensive sharable resources to support entrepreneurial activity start and maintain their businesses. However, the following case illustrates the relatively greater constraints on aspiring entrepreneurs when such relationships falter.

> Federico: My restaurant, the one where they gave me two stars… [you want to know] why I didn't keep going? My boss got cancer. His plan was that he was going to split the restaurant with me…50/50. He said to me, 'I'm giving you the restaurant, you give me 50% of the earnings [because] I want you to succeed.' He said to me, 'you've got skills.' … [A few months later] they called me, 'your boss [Walter] is sick, he has cancer…. I didn't see him for six months, and I was going crazy, he wouldn't let [anyone] see him, his hair fell out, he got all skinny…
>
> Anyway, what happened is that before my boss died, this [other] waiter offered him money. He said, put your restaurant in my name and I'll look out for your family, and here's $50,000 for your family.' It's what I was supposed to do, but what could I do? I earned, I think, $50,000 a year. But that was my shot, I was supposed to be the partner in the restaurant, [but] I couldn't do it, he beat me. When I found out [it was because he said to me] 'you know what, I'm the new owner here and you [need to] find work somewhere else.' He fired all of us[148].

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[148] *Federico: Mí restaurant, donde me dieron dos estrellas ¿por qué no seguí?… [a] mí patrón le dió cancer, su propuesta de él era dejarme el restaurant a mi cargo 50%, 50/50 me dice —te dejo el restaurant, me das 50% de las ganancias y quiero que te vayas pa´rriba— me dice, tienes la capacidad. … desafortunadamente me hablan —tu patrón esta enfermo, tiene cancer… No lo vi durante 6 meses y me desesperaba, no se dejaba ver, se le cayó el pelo, quedó flaco… El caso de que antes de que se muera mí patrón, este mesero le ofreció dinero, y le dijo, 'dame tu restaurant a mí nombre y voy a ver por tu familia y todo, y toma 50mil dolares pa´tu familia'. O sea, que lo que yo iba a hacer, lo que yo debí hacer, porque yo ganaba creo que 50mil dolares al año. Que esa era mi tirada, que yo sea socio de ese restaurant, no pude, se adelantó él, cuando*

Federico's experience demonstrates the vulnerability of depending on a single tie in order to support a firm's activities (Dodds, Sheridan, and Sabel, 2003). When his boss died, the tie – and Federico's access to the social capital it contained – evaporated. Federico's entrepreneurial vocation remained vibrant, however, and he decided to open a restaurant in Oxkutzcab where the barriers to entry are lower.

Discussion

Bashi observes that most contemporary studies of international migration are, at their core, asking, "what defines and enables social success?" (2007:xiii). This study fits squarely within the scope of her questions, by teasing out several key elements of immigrant entrepreneurs' experiences of social and economic incorporation. But more broadly, Bashi's observation begs the question of whether immigrant entrepreneurs are privileged relative to their immigrant counterparts before starting their businesses, and whether their businesses yield positive economic and/or social dividends.

The answer to the first is that privilege is, of course, relative. Certainly, the tendency of entrepreneurs to start businesses only when their nuclear family is living together is a form of relative privilege compared to the thousands of Yucatecan migrants who have not brought their loved ones to the United States. Likewise, it is a form of privilege relative to other Yucatecan migrants to have acquired several decades' worth of knowledge about the way things work in the US (not to mention earnings) from having arrived in California twenty or thirty years before the massive international migration of the late 1990's and early 2000's. And certainly, there are a very few entrepreneurs from the

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supe —sabes qué, yo soy el nuevo dueño de acá y ya puedes buscar trabajo en otro lado— y nos despidió a todos.

Yucatecan community who prospered enough in their wage-labor experiences that they were able to buy property, which Fairlie (2012) identifies as one of the key forms of access to financial capital among immigrant entrepreneurs.

In other ways, however, Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco are not that different from their counterparts. There is no substantial difference in their educational background, for example; little difference in occupational trajectory in either Mexico or the US; and a roughly equal preponderance of legal and illegal status.

Where privilege does seem to enter the equation, however, is in the richness of aspiring migrant entrepreneurs' social capital. Aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs have — and cultivate — relationships specifically in order to support their business dreams. In this process, they do not differ at all from native-born aspiring entrepreneurs. However, the ties that are most useful in supporting immigrant entrepreneurs' businesses are the connections they make with contacts outside their ethnic community. This fact — that entrepreneurs' networks are intentionally diverse — does reflect a kind of privilege relative to immigrants who desire such ties yet remain immured within their own ethnic community. However, it is not fair to characterize the choice to remain tied exclusively to co-ethnics as necessarily a negative one: many people prefer to remain safely ensconced in a group of friends and family very much like themselves. The diversity of entrepreneurs' networks privileges them relative to those who seek yet cannot establish such ties.

The cases presented above speak to the importance of wage-labor as a first step to small-business ownership. All of the Yucatecan entrepreneurs in the formal economy in San Francisco had worked for other people before launching their own operations. The skills – and more importantly the network connections – they acquired through their

experience were critical in preparing them to start their own firms.

In addition, wage labor is an important form of financial supplement during early self-employment. This approach to minimizing a household's economic risk has received relatively less attention than the related strategy of an entrepreneur requiring family members to staff the new business without paying them wages (Light and Bonacich 1988). Both methods are used by entrepreneurs in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco in order to maximize income while minimizing the staff costs of running a small business.

Indeed, all the Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco rely on family members to staff their businesses, a pattern consistent with the findings of Sanders and Nee (1996).[149] Dalia and Esteban, Marcos and his wife, Benicio and Mariana, even Agustín and Anita approached their entrepreneurial projects as a duo, and Marcos's and Benicio's children were also responsible for covering shifts at their restaurants. Dalia's son is still in elementary school, but does his part at El Príncipe by setting tables and bringing customers their menus.

These patterns are not unique to the Yucatecan community in San Francisco. Indeed, entrepreneurship, in a first-generation immigrant community, is not an individual activity, but a household project (Dallafar 1994; Light and Bonacich 1988). This finding is one of the reasons why "self-employment" and "entrepreneurship" were not helpful analytic distinctions: in the cases I presented, it becomes clear that some "entrepreneurs" – in the sense of the person whose vocation is the basis of the enterprise -- remain in the wage-labor economy while their "non-entrepreneur" spouses manage the new business.

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[149] Be-Porath notes that the family is the "most important institution for non-market transactions" (1980:23); Yucatecan entrepreneurs' family members are involved in the formal labor market but instead act as unpaid actors in promoting market transactions.

Conversely, when an entrepreneur's spouse is working alongside him or her at the business and all of the business's proceeds go to the household, the notion of "self-employment" does not fit.

What my analysis highlights is that this new tie, of spouse and coworker, compadre and colleague, is additive. In other words, it does not replace the pre-existing emotional or familial relationship but instead adds a new dimension to it.

As happens with international migration, entrepreneurship leads to the development of new network substructures within existing real and fictive kinship networks (see chapter 3). Indeed, the cases in this chapter demonstrate that immigrant entrepreneurs are highly adept social capital cultuvators who are skilled at maintaining multiplex relationships in order to further their economic ambitions and their social ties.

Successful immigrant entrepreneurs are also highly adept social capital cultivators when they intentionally[150] nurture relationships with actors who occupy high positions in a network topography. These ties enable cultivators to transform latent social capital into active social capital. This ability, and in particular being able to build relationships with people outside an immigrant's own ethnic or national community — to convert weak, bridging ties into close, fruitful, multiplex social and economic ties — is key to pioneer immigrant entrepreneurship in the formal sector.

All of the Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco relied on weak, bridging non-co-ethnic ties to obtain the resources they needed to start their businesses. Moreover,

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[150] I am speaking here of intentionality, not instrumentality. I understand the difference to be one of reciprocity and continuity. Someone who cultivates a relationship intentionally does so because they perceive the opportunity for an ongoing reciprocal exchange of social capital: the exchange relationship goes both ways. Someone who instrumentally develops relationships does so in order to extract resources over the short term and without care for the reciprocity of exchange. Instead of *hoy por ti, mañana por mi,* the dynamic is *hoy por mi, mañana por mi, and then we're done.*

two thirds of the entrepreneurs in the formal economy were married to non-co-ethnic spouses with whom they had strong bridging ties: Agustín (Yucatecan) and Anita (American), Dalia (Yucatecan) and Esteban (Coahuilense), Benicio (Yucatecan) and Mariana (chilanga), Camilo (Moreliano) and his Yucatecan girlfriend/Nicaraguan wife, and Julian (Yucatecan) and Lidia (Jaliscience). Marcos's wife Carlota is Yucatecan, as is Paco's wife Esme. All these spouses participated with their husbands (and wife, in Dalia and Esteban's case) in support of the entrepreneur's vocation to open a Yucatecan restaurant.

Nonetheless, the non-co-ethnic support that the entrepreneurs report many other non-Mexican sources were critical in their business plans: ties with Native American groups and local philanthropies for Grupo Mesoamericano, Dalia's *Italiano*, La Cocina, Federico's Chinese boss Walter. These heterogeneous relationships reflect the new modes of incorporation or assimilation into diversity identified in the US and other Western migrant-receiving contexts (Faist 2009; Nee, Sanders, and Sernau 1994; Nee and Sanders 2001).

Through their search for social capital in support of their businesses, in other words, relationships transform existing network substructures and create new ones with people from outside their ethnic community. Different kinds of ties yield different forms of aggregated and structural social capital, all of which are necessary for pioneer entrepreneurs to start and run their businesses. As they cultivate these relationships and exchange resources within their networks, pioneer entrepreneurs increase their network topography both within their co-ethnic community and in the broader society in which they live. In so doing, pioneer entrepreneurs in a first-generation immigrant community are at

the vanguard of social and economic incorporation into US society.

Chapter 8: Social Networks, the Informal Economy, and Entrepreneurs' Use of Illicit Capital

Introduction

The decision to become self-employed is only one of a number of choices an aspiring entrepreneur makes. Others include whether to register the business and operate it within the regulatory frameworks that govern a given economic sector, or to operate in a clandestine manner, outside any official structures. Another involves the sources of capital and investment necessary to start and run the business. Some aspiring entrepreneurs choose to utilize money or resources obtained from illicit sources, while others forgo such capital.

This chapter outlines the way that these decisions shape entrepreneurs' social networks. Entrepreneurs who operate in the informal economy intentionally maintain homogeneous social networks dominated by strong and weak bonding ties. On the other hand, entrepreneurs who operate in the formal economy cultivate networks with strong and weak bonding and bridging ties in order to maintain flows of new information and access otherwise unavailable resources and capital.

These social network dynamics have implications for the incorporation of migrant entrepreneurs into US society. Business owners who operate in the formal sector, regardless of their documentation status, experience deep and rapid incorporation into US society. This incorporation brings benefits to the entrepreneur, but also to his/her ethnic community in the United States (and to a lesser extent, to the diverse foreign-born and native-born community at large). Entrepreneurs in the informal sector experience

continuing economic and social segregation from US society, but achieve influential positions within the social fabric of their ethnic community.

The Yucatecan Informal Economy and the Illicit Economy

Although economists usually lump all unregulated economic activity into the category of "black market," it is helpful to distinguish the informal economy from the illicit economy. The informal economy is comprised by firms that are selling goods or services that would be legal to provide if they followed relevant regulatory guidelines and were formally incorporated as a business (Bruton, Ireland, and Ketchen Jr. 2012; Sassen 2000), and sells these goods for prices consistent with a market economy (as in Carruthers and Stinchcombe 1999). An illicit business involves activity which is specifically illegal.

Within the Yucatecan community in San Francisco the informal economy and the illicit economy are focused around the following activities:

Informal economy:

- Services (childcare, sobadora, transportation, mechanic)
- Prepared food sales (restaurants, by order, at events, occasional sales)
- Import/export businesses (by or for cars, via airplane)

Illicit economy:

- prostitution
- selling drugs
- manufacture and sale of counterfeit documents

While entrepreneurs in the formal economy want to have social and business networks that are as broad and diverse as possible, entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy want their networks to be much more restricted.

Entrepreneurs in the formal economy seek to maximize their network topography

and to be active social capital cultivators in as many network factions and with as extensive, heterogeneous degree connectivity as possible. Entrepreneurs in the informal economy want to maximize their network topography within very specific limits (e.g., homogeneous alters and minimal degree connectivity). These restrictions are due to (1) the fact that their social capital cultivator behavior is more specifically directed at personal, rather than firm, recognition and (2) their desire to remain out of sight of regulatory agencies.

The following cases exemplify the socioeconomic and network dynamics of informal enterprises in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco.

Cocinas clandestinas

When customers walk into Antonio Rodriguez's Yucatecan restaurant, a young woman greets them politely at the door and directs them to an unoccupied table tucked into a bay window looking out over a busy street in San Francisco's Mission District. A moment later, Antonio, the proprietor, bustles out of the kitchen in the back. He greets his customers while wiping off the immaculate table with a kitchen rag, and runs down the list of items on the day's menu. After the customers order, the young woman carries out bowls of fragrant *menudo* and glistening *cochinita pibil,* with a stack of dense tortillas and the ubiquitous habanero chiles to cut the grease. Voices and the sound of pots and dishes and cutlery echo faintly from the kitchen, but a curious eavesdropper is stymied by the musical tones of rapid Maya.

At the end of the meal, Antonio swings by the table to chat with his patrons. He collects payment for the meal — $7 per plate, an extra dollar for a soda — and urges them

to return again soon, handing a new customer a business card with his name, address, and phone number on it. So far, nothing in this story is out of the ordinary for a casual lunchtime meal on a winter afternoon in San Francisco, except that the restaurant exists in Antonio's living room.

In every part of the diner's experience, eating "*donde Don Antonio*" resembles eating at a restaurant in the formal economy. But Antonio's restaurant is one of the *cocinas clandestinas* that flourished in the Yucatecan informal economy.

Cocinas clandestinas — secret kitchens — like Don Antonio's dotted the neighborhoods where Yucatecans settled in San Francisco for roughly a decade, during the height of the community's migration to the Bay Area. Although they were run without any licensing or regulatory oversight, the proprietors of the informal restaurants treated them as "real" businesses with set hours and fixed prices.

For many new migrants, the *cocinas clandestinas* were a touchstone, offering not just familiar food but a familiar ambience:

> Anita: [These guys] are really used to getting home and [finding] that there's food made by the women of the house. So I think that the growth of the comida clandestina… is connected to the arrival of thousands of [men]. So they, yeah, the food is important for them, but what is interesting is that [the owners] also talk to them[151].

Doña Paty, for example, offers her customers more than an inexpensive meal: she operates as a stand-in relative for homesick migrant men who want a taste of home life. Going to eat *donde Doña Paty* requires being buzzed in from the street below; Paty or someone at the table peers down from the top floor of a non-descript rowhouse to see who

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[151] *Anita: Pero están muy acostumbrados a llegar a su casa y si hay comida en la casa está hecho por las mujeres de la casa. Entonces creo que el auge de la comida clandestina…tiene que ver con la llegada de miles de [hombres]. Entonces ellos sí, la comida es importante para ellos, pero lo también interesante es que también si [platican] con ellos.*

is asking for entry. If they are a known quantity, they haul open the wrought-iron security door and trek up three steep flights of stairs. When you walk in, unlike at Don Antonio's establishment, you are immediately aware that you are entering someone's home: the apartment door opens into the living room, which has a low slung sofa, a large screen TV, and airbrushed pictures of Marco Antonio Solis (El Buki) and La Virgen de Guadalupe gazing down beatifically. A small, tidy bathroom is to the left, and to the right, through the living room, a small table with 5 or 6 chairs.

Doña Paty prepares three or four offerings every day, and pats out anywhere from 100 to 300 tortillas to accompany them. On one typical weekday, she used her oven to make *pollo asado*, her stove to simmer pork and lentils and for the large griddle where she cooks the tortillas, and an additional electric eye on a table next to her galley kitchen to heat up *frijol con puerco* and *carne molida*. While she daubed the chicken with vibrant orange *achiote* paste (which she stores in the dishwasher), she explained her daily routine to me.

In many ways, Doña Paty's day begins in the late afternoon, when she decides what to cook the next day and takes stock of what ingredients she has. She changes out of her flip flops into heels, bundles up against the perpetually chilly San Francisco wind, and heads off to buy meat. She usually takes a styrofoam container with one of the day's dishes to the Yucatecan kid who works at the Chinese-owned grocery store where she shops. She buys meat — between ten and forty pounds, depending on the day — as well as vegetables, *masa*, and sodas. She carries the ingredients home and hauls them up the three flights of stairs to her apartment, sometimes with help, sometimes without. She often has to make multiple trips up and down the stairs to get everything into the kitchen; she says the worst is when she has buy sodas on days when she also does laundry, because she ends up making

dozens of trips.

Doña Paty starts cooking around 9 am, leaving the tortillas until the end so they are warm when her customers show up. The first eaters arrive around 11 in the morning, and sometimes have to wait for their food to be ready. By 12 or 12:30, several rounds of customers have come and gone, and almost all the food is sold out by 1:30 pm. Her customers — I only ever saw men — interact with Doña Paty in a way that suggests both respect and ribaldry. She enacts the role of a slightly bawdy aunt, teasing the men in English and Spanish, and making dirty jokes, usually at their expense. The men, in turn, laugh and tease her back, not infrequently about her predilection for much younger lovers: when I was in the field, Paty, who was in her early 60's, was dating a man in his 30's.

As her customers eat, Paty keeps an eye on the pile of tortillas on the table. When it dwindles, she replenishes it with another stack from the styrofoam cooler where she keeps them warm. After eating, the men give Paty $7 ($8 with a soda), and she tucks the cash first into her pocket and then discreetly into a kitchen drawer. She rinses their plates off and tucks them into the precarious mass balanced on the drying rack next to the sink.

By 2 pm, Paty has usually sold out of whatever dishes she made that day, and sits down to rest for a moment before washing the dishes, cooking dinner for her grown son, and making her plans for the next day. She also regularly makes large orders (150-200) of *salbutes* or *panuchos* for an AA group, which happens after she has finished the lunch shift.

If it weren't for the stack of dollar bills in Paty's kitchen drawer, a casual observer might think that she was, in fact, a popular aunty who encouraged her nephews to drop by for lunch. The domestic feeling of the establishment contrasts markedly with the formality and sparseness of Antonio's, even though both Antonio and Paty are running informal

restaurants from their kitchens and serving customers in their living rooms[152].

The business dynamics of these informal restaurants are puzzling: if Doña Paty works at full capacity, serving 15 customers Monday through Saturday and 30 on Sunday, she earns around $850 a week. Depending on what she makes, she spends somewhere between $300 and $400 a week on groceries, leaving $450 - $550 to cover her rent, utilities, medicine, and other expenses. While every dollar of this profit is hers — exactly why, she says, that she is not interested in hiring an assistant — the effort that goes into earning this money seems disproportionate to her earnings[153]. On the other hand, $1800 - $2200 a month, tax free, is a pretty solid middle class living for a Yucatecan migrant living in San Francisco.

If she wanted to, Doña Paty could get a "real" job with a salary and benefits. She is an LPR, and although she does not speak English, in San Francisco lack of English proficiency does not prevent someone from finding work. But for a woman in her 60's, the prospect of standing in someone *else's* kitchen all day, making tortillas or chopping vegetables, is unappealing. In Doña Paty's case, the autonomy that comes from being able to make her own rules, set her own schedule — as grueling as it is — and decide what and how to cook, are non-financial benefits of running a low-margin, high-effort business.

There are other non-financial benefits for Doña Paty, too: through her restaurant, Doña Paty has acquired an extremely high elevation in the Yucatecan community's network topography. She is highly connected, through the relationships she has with her

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[152] Despite its domesticity, Doña Paty's cocina clandestina does not encourage lingering. Customers are in and out in about 45 minutes, because there are only a few chairs, and in repeated visits I only once saw someone hang out on the couch after eating.

[153] Doña Paty's sister, Doña Minerva, also runs a *cocina clandestina* a few blocks away, and earns even less than Doña Paty, somewhere in the vicinity of $750 a week.

customers and her family (see the Pacheco family network graph in chapter 5)[154].

She also exemplifies the power dynamics of information-receivers within a network (see Muse-Orlinoff, Matus Ruiz, Ambort, and Cárdenas 2009). Hanneman and Riddle (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-8) point out that actors that receive information from many sources within a network are often prestigious; they are considered to be "in the know." Through her banter and gossiping with the men that come to eat *donde Doña Paty,* she is one of the best-informed members of the Yucatecan community. Doña Paty relishes this role, but is also cautious to not repeat gossip too abundantly. In this way — by acquiring information but parsing it out with discretion — Doña Paty is able to maintain a position of authority and influence within the network without becoming known as a gossip, which would diminish that influence.

Likewise, the proprietors of *cocinas clandestinas* have had to learn how to attract a clientele — to spread information about their operations within the Yucatecan network — without drawing regulatory enforcement attention to themselves. Doña Paty's restaurant produces some of the most delicious food I tasted while in San Francisco, while violating nearly every health code on the books. Private residences are not zoned for commercial use, and Doña Paty's landlords would be within their rights to evict her if they discovered that she was effectively running a restaurant from a third floor apartment. As a result, Doña Paty, Doña Minerva, Antonio Rodriguez, and all the other informal restauranteurs are faced with the contradictory task of making sure that their restaurants are well-known, but not *too* well known:

[154] Several of her siblings are also well-known in the community; her brother, Don Tito, was one of the first Yucatecan migrants to the US in the post-Bracero years and now runs an informal import/export business, her sister Doña Minerva runs another *cocina clandestina*, and her sister Carlota is the wife of Marcos , who ran El Paisano 2.

> Lázaro: [We found out about the restaurants] through friends, through friends who told us, 'go here, there's a Yucatecan lady and she cooks really well.' 'Oh yeah?' I said. 'YEAH!' they told me, so let's go check it out right now. So that's how it was, we got the phone number, we called, she told us her address, and we went over there to eat[155].

In other words, unlike owners of restaurants in the formal economy, owners of restaurants in the informal economy try to keep the information about their business strictly within the co-ethnic network.

> Ruben: There were people who… moms who immigrated [to San Francisco] too. They cooked at homes, and they'd tell you, 'hey, we've got cochinita, we've got panuchos, we've got salbutes… what do you think, you want some?' 'Yeah, yeah, give me some.' There was that, but it's like they say, only among us, let's say… you know where they live, it's not a restaurant, it's just a house where they cook[156].

There is virtually no publicity for the *cocinas clandestinas* (Antonio Rodriguez's business cards notwithstanding), and customers must arrive with someone who is known to the entrepreneur. Word of mouth is the only way that word gets around, and mouths that reveal too much are not welcome back.

This balancing act is complicated, and subject to multiple forms of risk. One of the most popular *cocinas clandestinas* had a close call with health inspectors in the early 2000's: an anonymous call was placed to the San Francisco health department indicating that someone was running a restaurant out of an apartment building in the Mission. When the inspectors arrived, they found no evidence of a restaurant, but only because the proprietors of the *cocina clandestina* in question had prepared for the inspection by swiftly

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[155] *Lázaro: Por medio también de amistades, por amigos nos decían — aquí ve, hay una señora yucateca y cocinan muy rico.' 'Oh si? le digo,'sI!', 'tons ahorita vamos a ir a probar. Y entonces fue así como conseguimos el numero de teléfono, le hablamos y nos decía su dirección y entonce allí fuimos a comer.*

[156] *Ruben: había personas de que… mamás que emigraron tambien allá, de que si cocinaban también enla casa, entonces pues te [dicen] —oye, tenmos cochinita, tenemos los panuchos, tenemos los salbutes… ¿qué te parece? ¿quieres?— si, si dame. Había también eso, pero es como le dicen, solo entre nosotros digamos… sabes de dónde vive, no es restaurant, es una casa nomás donde se cocinaba.*

moving all of their cooking equipment and dishware to an apartment one floor up.

It is widely assumed in the Yucatecan community that the person who placed the anonymous call to the health inspectors was the proprietor of another *cocina clandestina* across the street, which was run by a close relative of the woman whose informal restaurant nearly got busted. The suspicion caused a multi-year rupture in the relationship, although by 2012 the two parties had resumed communications — which again supports my claim from chapter 5 that economic ties make relationships vulnerable but emotional ties make relationships resilient.

Similarly, when a fire destroyed the building that housed the *cocina clandestina* that Dalia and Esteban ran prior to opening El Príncipe, one of the policemen grew suspicious at the number of stoves, refrigerators, pots, pans and dishes that they had in their apartment:

> Esteban: They investigated us both, her and me, mostly because when the fire happened, the tables were [there], the benches that we had, all the restaurant's stuff. There were two stoves, two refrigerators, a lot of plates. So the police came and started to see what [there was]. And, like, I had my job in the afternoon, and they knew what else I was doing. Even the manager know that that I also cooked at home. They also helped me a lot.
>
> [So] the investigator came and says to me, 'where do you live?' I tell him, 'there in number 12, number 13.' 'And what's up, are you doing business, are you running a business over there, are you selling food, what is it, a restaurant?' 'No,' I said, 'why?' 'Because of all the stuff that's there.' 'No, what happens is that I live there, and my wife, but everyone who lives in the building knows each other,' I tell him. 'We're all related, so we come down here, we cook, we hang out, and [then] everyone goes to their [own] house.' [But] they began to question me: 'Where do you work during the day?' 'I work over there, I've been working there for 8 years.' And they called my job and they told him, 'yeah, he's been working here for that amount of time.' And then they didn't keep going with the questions[157].

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[157] *Esteban: Nos investigaron mas que nada a mí tambíen y a ella porque pues cuando hubo el incendio se quedaron las mesas asi, los banquitos que teníamos, todo lo del restaurante. Había dos estufas, dos refrigeradores, muchos platos. Entonces llegó la policia y empezó a ver qué. Y como yo tenía mí trabajo en la*

Unlike the example above, the suspicion about Esteban and Dalia's underground economic activities were occasioned by mischance, not a tip from a jealous network alter. However, network ties (Esteban's co-workers) were critical in protecting Esteban and Dalia from further investigation.

Transportistas

Another major sector of the informal economy in the Yucatecan community is comprised by four dozen small-scale import/export businesses. The informal import and export of goods between migrants in the United States and their hometowns is not specific to the Yucatecans; it exists in numerous other immigration contexts including Mexican, Central American, South American, and West African communities and is part of a larger series of "transnational" economic or entrepreneurial activities (Guarnizo 2003; Hernández León 2008; Levitt 1998; Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller 2002; Smith 2006).

Unlike the restaurant owners, some of the *transportistas* are based in Mexico, but most split their time equally between San Francisco and Yucatán. Also unlike the informal restaurants, the *transportistas* are subject to some regulatory oversight. However, the bulk of the import/export business occurs outside of the formal economy, and the transportistas expend a substantial amount of energy trying to minimize interactions with the USFDA and regulatory agents on either side of the border.

As far as network dynamics, transportistas are also similar to the owners of the

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tarde, y como en el trabajo sabían lo que hacía yo tambíen. Los mabager tambíen ya sabían que cocinaba en mí casa. Ellos me ayudaban tambíen mucho. Cuando me vino un investigador y me dice '¿tu donde vives?' Le digo, 'ahí en el número 12, número 13.' '¿Y qué, ahí hacen busines, hay negocio, venden comida, qué es, un restaurante?' 'No,' le digo, 'por qué?' 'Por las cosas que hay allá.' 'No, lo que pasa es que allí yo vivo, y mí esposa, pero todos los del edificio nos conocemos,' le digo.'somos familiares, bajamos aquí, cocinamos, convivimos y cada quien se va a su casa.' Y me empezó a investigar: '¿y dónde trabajas de día?' 'Ahí trabajo, yo tengo 8 años trabajando ahí.' Y habló allá al trabajo, y le dijeron,'sí, él tiene tanto tiempo trabajando acá.' Y ya no nos siguieron con preguntas.

cocinas clandestinas in that they have a specifically co-ethnic clientele and do not prioritize making connections with people from non-co-ethnic networks.

Finally, the transportistas' work exemplifies the social inequalities that can result from individual attributes (legal status) and structural position within a network: because they are among the few and relatively privileged Yucatecans who have legal status and the means to travel back and forth between the US and Mexico two to three times a month. This travel increases their network topography in the binational Yucatecan network, because they are able to see and interact with family members on both sides of the border who have been separated for years by restrictive US immigration policies and whose entire relationship must now be conducted over the phone.

The following two cases exemplify the socioeconomic and network dynamics of the Yucatecan transportistas.

Don Tito — first introduced in Chapter 3 — is a US-based migrant with US citizenship who drives the 6,400 miles round-trip between San Francisco and Oxkutzcab twice a month. The southbound trip takes him five days, he spends a week in Yucatán unloading and re-loading his pickup truck and visiting friends, and then spends four days on the northbound trip. Don Tito, whose real name is Ariel Pacheco, explained that the reason it takes longer to get to Yucatán than to get back into the United States — despite the wait at the US/Mexican border crossing in Reynosa — is the terrible condition of the Mexican roads and the number of checkpoints he passes through in Nuevo Leon, Veracruz, and Tabasco.

Don Tito is unusual among the transportistas because of his decision to drive rather than fly. Driving takes longer and is more expensive; between bribes and the cost of his

trip, Don Tito estimates that the journey south costs him about $2,300 each time: 3,000 pesos to the state police in Nuevo Leon, 2,000 pesos to the *federales*, $400 to the Zetas, and $1,500 in gas, food, and lodging.

Not only is the trip expensive, it is exceptionally risky. During the first year he was hauling goods between Oxkutzcab and San Francisco, Don Tito's pickup and all of its contents were confiscated by *federales.* In 2007 all of his merchandise was stolen after his truck was destroyed in an accident in Saltillo and he stored the goods in a barn while he tried to make alternate arrangements. That theft left Don Tito in debt to his customers to the tune of $30,000 which he spent the next year repaying.

Don Tito's southbound cargo consists of bundles of US-bought clothes, shoes, backpacks, school supplies, electronics, blankets, and other objects that Yucatecan migrants send as non-financial remittances to their non-migrant family members in Oxkutzcab. On occasion Don Tito will drive a vehicle from California to Mexico for a migrant who is flying back or who is sending a new *troca* to their family; once in a while he will also bring someone with him who is returning to Yucatán[158]. His northbound cargo consists of small bundles of photos, videos, embroidered clothes, documents, jewelry, and medicine: the *objets d'amour* that family members send to loved ones who are geographically far away but remain part of the family network.

Don Tito, like the other transportistas, also brings certain foodstuffs from Yucatán to San Francisco, including the dense bricks of paste made from blackened chiles that are used to make *recado negro*, discs of coarse unsweetened chocolate (something the Maya

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[158] In those cases, Don Tito's route changes in order to spend as much time as possible as far away from the US/Mexico border as possible; no undocumented migrant who has decided to return to their community of origin wants to get deported on their way back to Mexico.

first figured out how to consume three and a half millennia ago), and, it is rumored, *xix*, a kind of Yucatecan beef *chicharron.*

On both the northbound and the southbound trips, Don Tito has to go through a customs inspection. Like the other *transportistas*, Don Tito is required to inform the Mexican customs agents of the total consumer value of the goods he is bringing in and pay taxes on those goods. He estimates that he pays 7,000 pesos (about $580 USD) each southbound trip, but based on his and other *transportistas'* explanations of what people send, this figure is likely a substantial underestimate of the cargo's total value. On the northbound trip, his cargo is considered much less valuable, but he reported paying around $250 in tariffs or import taxes to US customs inspectors on each northbound trip.

The financial motivation for this risky, expensive business is that Don Tito charges his clients transportation fees. To drive someone's truck to Yucatán, for example, can cost $1,500. The cost of sending a box from San Francisco to Mexico varies depending on its size, but start at $30 for a medium sized box (18 inches square) and go up proportionately as the box gets bigger. While Don Tito would not provide a precise figure for how much revenue he earned from each trip, it is enough to cover the estimated $9,200 he spends each month on gas, bribes, hotel rooms, and taxes, and to leave enough for him to live on and cover his own expenses.

The non-financial motivations for Don Tito's business are similar to Doña Paty's; he is in his sixties, and although he could get a job in San Francisco, he likes the uncertainty and the stimulation of the drives, the interactions with the cartels, and the chance to — allegedly — visit his numerous girlfriends along the route. For Don Tito, the autonomy of running his own business combines with the financial realities of doing so in a way that

makes the financial and physical risks acceptable.

Two important reasons that Don Tito has been able to make a living as a *transportista* are (1) his legal status and (2) his position within the Yucatecan network in San Francisco. Don Tito was part of the small cohort of Yucatecan migrants to the US to between the Bracero era and the IRCA amnesty in 1986. Don Tito obtained a greencard under IRCA and became a US citizen in 2008; his status first as an LPR and then as a citizen means that Don Tito can go back and forth between the US and Mexico as frequently and for as long as he wants. In this ability, Don Tito is part of a small, privileged cohort of Yucatecan migrants who settled in the US in time to legalize their status under IRCA. These men were all the sons of men who had been Braceros; their fathers' experience in the US and connections to non-Yucatecan migrants introduced enough information within their family networks that their sons were able migrate to and settle in the United States during a time of very little Yucatecan emigration.

Don Tito's migration history has also led to him being one of the actors with the highest network topography in the Yucatecan migrant network in San Francisco. He has been in the US much longer than most other migrants and therefore acquired information that more recent arrivals need to know when they first arrive. Indeed, it was to his house that Dalia was *recomendada* when she entered the US clandestinely in 1998. Don Tito (and his ex-wife Clemencia) were willing and able to assist these new migrants with the transition to life into the US, which often engenders a sense of obligation from the new arrival that resembles the patronage system. To this day, fifteen years after arriving in the US, Dalia still exclusively uses Don Tito's transportation system to import the *recado negro* she uses at El Príncipe.

It is substantially due to this visibility and prestige within the Yucatecan network in San Francisco — his network topography, in other words — that Don Tito is able to sustain his import/export business. He is well-known, in terms of the simple number of people who know him; his willingness to provide social capital to others has created a set of network alters who feel obligated to use his services instead of someone else's; and he has been careful to cultivate a reputation as a responsible custodian of his customers' shipments. This last fact contrasts with another *transportista* called Ulises who is infamous within the community for losing people's belongings every time he travels.

Don Tito is a good example of the difference between the Freeman and Bonacich measures of network centrality and — by implication — influence. Freeman proposes to measure centrality strictly as a function of the number of direct ties that an ego has to alters, while Bonacich advocates for a measurement that includes the number of ties that the ego's alters have (in other words, the ego's second-degree connections). Using Bonacich's measurement over Freeman's when thinking about Don Tito in particular would mean including his sisters' connections in his network centrality score and vice versa. Because Don Tito's sisters (Paty, Minerva, and Carlota) are themselves highly central within the Yucatecan network in San Francisco as a result of their own entrepreneurial activity, Don Tito's network centrality score would be even higher than it would be if Freeman's measurement were used (see also Burt 1997). Being able to decide which analytical approaches best fit the reality of a network depends on having a deep understanding of the interpersonal and social dynamics among the human beings within a given network, and underscore the importance of qualitative data as a complement to structural network analysis.

Doña Ana was a Mexico-based transportista who flew between Yucatán and San Francisco every two or three weeks between 1999 and 2011. Doña Ana's story demonstrates the risks that non-US citizens face when running a semi-regulated or unregulated business: as of 2011, she is no longer able to work as a *transportista* because her tourist visa was rescinded in Houston when US customs agents discovered some illicit fruit tucked into one of her San Francisco-bound bundles.

Doña Ana's self-employment started with a small convenience store she ran from the front of her house in Oxkutzcab; her husband was a teacher in one of the town's schools and she wanted to earn a little extra money for the family. As the wife of a teacher, Doña Ana is part of Oxkutzcab's middle class, which is comprised of doctors, owners of mid-size businesses and larger tracts of land, government officials, and teachers. This cohort of middle-aged Oxkutzcabenses earned enough in Mexico that they opted against migration. In addition, they came of age during the nadir of Yucatecan migration to the US, so the social systems and social networks which made clandestine migration economically plausible did not yet exist.

However, all three of Doña Ana's children have lived in the US as clandestine migrants: they experienced their generation's opportunities in Mexico as more constrained than those in the United States. In addition, many more resources for clandestine migration were available by the time Doña Ana's sons headed for San Francisco in 1997.

In 1999, Doña Ana decided to visit her sons in California, so she applied for a tourist visa. Although her sons were in the US without authorization, her husband's teaching job and her own position as an entrepreneur made her a credible candidate, and she received a 10 year unlimited entry visa. From that first trip, she recalled, people asked

her to bring things for their loved ones in San Francisco. She filled an extra suitcase with bundles wrapped tightly in the colorful plastic bags ubiquitous in Mexico, and jotted down the phone numbers of the bundles' recipients in San Francisco. When she got to the United States, she began calling around to let people know that their loved ones in Oxkutzcab had sent a little something; grateful US migrants came to retrieve their packages, gave Doña Ana a little "*propina*" (tip) for her efforts, and told her that they would be back in a few days with a package of their own to send back to Mexico with her. By the end of that trip, Doña Ana had earned enough in tips (in reality, the standard fees that Don Tito, Doña Zenaida, Maricela, and the other transportistas were already charging) to cover the cost of her plane ticket. She standardized her fees, and in the process transitioned from the gift-adjacent *propina* system to a more straightforward compensation model (as in Zelizer 2008). In so doing, she became the center of a new set of network ties: customer and proprietor.

Doña Ana was thrilled to discover that she could earn more money than she made running her convenience store by traveling back and forth between her home in Oxkutzcab and her children's homes in San Francisco. She learned how to get the best airfares (buy tickets in bulk, months in advance, be sure to accumulate frequent flyer miles), which airports had the most lenient customs agents (Cancún, not Mérida), how to attract a clientele (be sure never to lose a package or someone's phone number; start advertising 10 days before a trip), which family members preferred to do their business in Maya and which were desperate for gossip about their far-away loved ones; and, most importantly, what was legal and what was not legal for import into the United States.

Don Concepcion, who spent 20 years as a high school math teacher in Ox, shared a

similar story about his clients trying to sneak agricultural products into cheese and mayonnaise in an effort to sneak them into the US:

> Don Concepcion: It happened to me once, they brought [cheese]… and a huge plastic mayonnaise jar. They have it to me, and said, 'this is for my sister.' But when I checked it, when I opened it I found two guayas (a type of lime) in it. They had even prepared them with chile and lime. I shook [the jar] and found nance (sort of like an apricot). So there was guaya, nance, and then suddenly I see plums…. So what I did, I said, 'I'm going to empty [the container].' I put it on a Minervah and I emptied everything out. There were squash seeds, pepitas. Peanuts, right? So I separated out all the fruit into a bag and I told them, 'this [stuff] doesn't go through.' There was another tupper[ware container]… I said, 'this [the tupperware] and the cheese [can go].' I grabbed the cheese, it was in a Minervah. I broke the seal, I sealed it again. But that cheese gave me problems arriving [in the US]. Because they said to me, 'there's fruit, look at it.' Yeah, it's true, what I took out there [was] more… inside the cheese[159].

The biggest issue, she said, was that family members were constantly trying to sneak fruits, vegetables, seeds, or meat into the US-bound bundles they entrusted her with, but all of those items were strictly forbidden by US border agents. Doña Ana knew the regulations, and tried to enforce a "no agricultural products" policy with her customers based on trust alone. After one experience when she was fined and her merchandise confiscated because of some plums hidden inside a large *queso de bola*, however, she decided that she needed to add "…but verify" to her trust policy.

Doña Ana began inspecting the packages her Mexico-based customers gave her, but in early February 2011, customs inspectors in Houston discovered some fruit tucked into one of the packages she was bringing to San Francisco. Since Doña Ana had already

[159] *Don Rafael: A mí me paso una vez que trajeron… queso… [y] un recipiente con las mayonesas grandes de plástico. Me lo dió y me dice 'es para mí hermana tal' pero al checarlo. al Abrir yo veo que el frasco tiene dos guayas. Que hasta se preparan con chile y su limón. Sacudo y encuentro Nance. Tons hay huaya, nace y de pronto veo ciruelas…. Entonces lo que hice, dije, pues eso lo voy a vaciar. Lo puse en una tela y ahí lo vacié todo. Y había semillas de calabaza, la pepita. Cacahuate verdad. ´tons este, separé toda la fruta en una bolsa y le dije, 'ésto no pasa.' Y había un tupper más… Le digo, 'ésto y el queso.' Agarré el queso, tenía tela. le rompí el teclo, lo voltee a sellar. Pues ése queso me dió problemas llegando en Portland… Porque me dice 'hay frutas, vélo,' me dicen. Si es cierto, lo que yo quite no era todo, hay más…. Adentro del queso.*

been fined once for the importation of unauthorized agricultural products, this was her second strike. US Customs agents revoked her visa was revoked and terminated her import/export business operations.

Doña Ana's *transportista* business ended because one of her customers violated the trust that she depended on. Although the act was not malicious, as the anonymous tip to the SF health department about the *cocina clandestina* described above may have been, the consequences of a network tie violating the rules of an informal, non-contractual business were grave. Not only is Doña Ana not able to continue running her business, but her visa was canceled about six weeks before she planned to travel to San Francisco to help her son and daughter-in-law prepare for the birth of their second child. The loss of the business is upsetting for Doña Ana, but the prospect of an indefinite separation from her US-based children and grandchildren was devastating.

Doña Ana's story not only demonstrates the vulnerability of entrepreneurs working in the informal economy, it also points to the ways that individual attributes intersect with structural positions within networks to perpetuate inequality. As mentioned above, Doña Ana is part of the Oxkutzcabense middle class. Her entrepreneurial activity was additive to her household: she ran the business as a way to supplement her husband's teaching salary and to visit her children in the US as often as possible. She was able to do so because she was part of that middle class, and had financial capital and human capital required to obtain a tourist visa. Had she not already owned a business, or had she not been married to someone with a stable, professional job, it is unlikely that Doña Ana would have been granted a tourist visa in the first place. As more customers began using Doña Ana's services, the more money she earned, and the more solidly she and her husband to fit into

Oxkutzcab's petite bourgeoisie.

Additionally, over the twelve years that Doña Ana ran her import/export business, her network topography increased in conjunction with her financial returns. Her frequent trips to the United States gave her access to new information and relationships which increased her degree centrality in the binational migrant network that links Oxkutzcab with San Francisco. Doña Ana, like Doña Paty, became privy to gossip and family information that gave her a reputation as someone who was both "in the know" and discreet — when she found out that a migrant in San Francisco was cheating on his Mexico-based wife, she wouldn't say anything about it.

Doña Zenaida, another *transportista*, had the same experience:

> Doña Zenaida: Even if I see something I can't say [anything], even if I see a guy with another girl, you know? [laughs]. I'm not going to say anything [about it] because they'll drag me into problems.
> Q: Has that happened, seeing a guy with a girl that, well, isn't his wife?
> Doña Zenaida: Of course, [but] or if her husband is already with another woman, am I going to accuse him [of infidelity]? No, no way, it's dangerous, [and] it's ugly too. What if I make them abandon her or something, it's not my problem[160].

Doña Ana's reputation, her social capital, and her network position all changed as a result of her business operations. As I am writing this dissertation, I am not certain what the long-term implications of Doña Ana's visa revocation will be on her network topography. Like many other network heuristics, network topography is a dynamic and relative measure. Not being able to travel back and forth between Oxkutzcab and San Francisco will diminish Doña Ana's network topography in the binational Yucatecan network, but

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[160] *Doña Zenaida: Aunque yo vea no lo puedo decir… aunque yo vea otro chavo con otra chava verdad? [risas] No lo voy a ir a decir porque ellos te menten en problemas.*
Q: ¿Eso le ha pasado, ver a un chavo con una chava que, pues no era su esposa?
Doña Zenaida: Claro, si no ya su esposo está con otra lo voy a acusar? no. No, eso así no, es peligroso porque está feo tambien. que tal si hago que la abandonen o algo, no es mí problema.

her socioeconomic position in the local petite bourgeoisie will likely remain solid.

Legal status and economic position

In the four cases presented above — Antonio Rodriguez, Doña Paty, Don Tito, and Doña Ana — all operated in the informal economy, or at the very fringes of the formal economy. None paid income tax on their earnings, all operate on a strictly cash basis, none held business licenses, and all tried to avoid or minimize interactions with regulatory agencies. Yet all four entrepreneurs were in the US legally.

Conversely, the cases presented in the previous chapter on businesses in the formal economy include both documented and undocumented migrants. These cases show that it is possible for a business to be undocumented but the owner to be documented, and it is possible for a business to be documented and the owner to be undocumented.

Table 8.1: Legal status and position in formal/informal economy of US-based pioneer entrepreneurs in San Francisco's Yucatecan community (includes both operational and closed firms) (*indicates non-Yucatecan)

	Informal Economy	**Formal Economy**
Documented	8	7
Undocumented	4	4

Although you might expect that legal status would have a strong predictive relationship on whether an entrepreneur ends up in the formal or informal economy (with undocumented business owners being more likely to operate in the informal economy), my research shows that for entrepreneurs who are primarily based in the United States, legal status is not the most salient predictor of economic position. Instead, economic position in the formal or informal economy depends on an entrepreneur's desire for autonomy,

willingness to engage with bureaucratic entities, and access to multiple forms of capital through network ties.

Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Illicit Capital

My research on entrepreneurship in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco revealed that not only are there businesses which operate in the informal economy, there are businesses which are, to varying degrees, reliant on money gained through illegal means. I refer to this kind of money as illicit capital: the use the money is being put to may not in and of itself be illegal, but it was obtained through activities which, if discovered, would result in criminal prosecution.

My research further suggests that the use of illicit capital by first generation, low resource immigrant entrepreneurs is a choice made under particular constraints that have a lot to do with the composition of an actor's network and the way he or she perceives the financial opportunities that the network provides. In particular, entrepreneurs with a *perceived* inability or unwillingness to develop network ties with institutions like banks and community development organizations rely more on illicit capital than their counterparts who have unconstrained access to capital, investment, or loans.

The use of illicit capital depends on pre-existing ties to individuals involved with illegal activity; it also embeds entrepreneurs in relationships with actors involved with multiple kinds of criminal activity. These ties can lead to complicated social, economic, and legal outcomes including fraud, drug trafficking, arrests, and deportation.

The following cases demonstrate the range of dependence on illicit capital among Yucatecan entrepreneurs.

As described in Chapter 3, **Paco Blas** imported undocumented workers from Oxkutzcab. According to these reports, Paco would cover the cost of the clandestine border crossing for the migrant. Upon arriving in San Francisco, new arrivals would be put to work in the kitchen of Paco's Mexican Restaurant; however, their wages would be withheld in recompense for their travel and border crossing expenses.

The involvement of Paco's in migration from Yucatán to the United States can be described as an exploitative system of labor importation by a powerful employer who preys on an economically vulnerable population.

Doña Elvira's description exemplifies the perception of Paco's business practices among Yucatecans who do not work for the Blass:

> Doña Elvira: That man [Paco Blas] has his restaurant over there, since he's been a resident for a long time. But I understand that the Yucatecans have stopped going there because they say that he is [pause], you know? [laughs] Yucatecans stopped going there to work because [the Blass] take advantage of their relatives [who worked there]… So they complain and they don't hardly go there, they go other places[161].

Facilitating workers' migration, offering loans (with the employees' salaries as collateral), and even providing free or low-cost housing for workers (which Paco's used to do, in an apartment situated above the restaurant) can lead to a workforce that is perpetually indebted to the employer and therefore unable or unwilling to seek other employment. This pattern of migration assistance in exchange for compulsory labor has its counterparts in the system of indentured service which enabled the migration of British colonists to the colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries; in the labor exchanges of Chinese

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[161] *Doña Elvira: Ese señor [Tommy Bermejo] tiene su restaurante allá el pues es residente de hace mucho años, pero yo tengo entendido que dejaron de ir los yucatecos allá porque dice que es "…" verdad. [risas] Dejaron de ir allá los yucatecos a trabajar en ese lugar porque se aprovechaban [los Bermejo] mucho de sus familiares…y se quejan y allá casi no van, se quedan en otros lugares.*

restaurant workers in the United States, and in the importation of labor from south Asia to the Gulf States. In all of these contexts, transportation and often lodging were paid for by a party who benefited economically from the labor of the migrant (and who, it stands to reason, earned some kind of profit from the exchange of labor for travel/lodging costs). Such arrangements are often deeply unscrupulous, particularly when migrants have been brought illicitly. Undocumented migrants who have sold their labor to a broker or an employer in exchange for transportation and lodging have few recourses in the face of abusive behavior.

Nevertheless, in the case of Paco's restaurant, the system of indentured service in exchange for migration assistance was finite. Paco and his wife Esme had four children. One, Julian, took over responsibility for the restaurant and bar, and was responsible for transforming it from a low-key neighborhood restaurant to a destination for tequila aficionados (see chapter 6). Another son became an investment banker, and the third is a dentist. Paco and Esme's daughter, also named Esme Blas, entered politics.

As the younger Esme rose in the ranks of California political activity, her father's labor arrangements became a liability. She and her siblings confronted Paco, and obliged him to end his practice of not paying — although providing lodging for — his workers. In later years, when I was conducting interviews for this project, Paco's workers were being paid and years had passed since Paco's children had required him to always pay his workers; nevertheless, Paco and Julian declined to discuss the stories of labor in exchange for migration assistance, and Paco still provided loans to his employees against their future paychecks until he passed away in 2011 (see Juan's case in chapter 3).

Dalia Cauich, as described in the preceding chapter, took out a $15,000 loan from

some men in San Francisco who counterfeit greencards and other documents for migrants. She needed the money because she was trying to get her restaurant in the formal economy up and running after its first iteration had failed due to her erstwhile partner's embezzlement. Although Dalia had opened a bank account and gotten a credit card, at the time that she sought the loan, her card was maxed out and she and Esteban needed cash to sustain their operations. The terms of the loan were such that when the loan was recalled in full thirty months after she got the cash, she was required to pay the full principal plus 50% in accrued interest: a total of $22,000. In order to come up with this amount, Dalia mortgaged her parent's house in Oxkutzcab for $20,000.

Dalia's story raises two important questions. First, why didn't she try to mortgage her family's house in the first instance, instead of going to a loan shark whose cash came from making fake legal papers? Second, why did she rush to mobilize the $22,000 immediately upon the loan being recalled, when the lender was in jail for the very activities which enabled him to lend her the cash to begin with?

There are several answers to the first question. At the time that Dalia needed the infusion of cash, it was to start a business, which had no guarantee of succeeding. In order to protect her family from the possibility that her need for money would bankrupt them, she sought a source of capital that only she (and ultimately her husband) would be accountable for should the business fail. Her decision to go to a loanshark instead of a bank for a line of credit was also the result of being advised by the bank where she had her business account that, due to her business being in its nascence, and also because she is undocumented, that she would not qualify for a formal loan. Finally, and most saliently, the short-term transaction cost of obtaining the $15,000 was the lowest of her various options: she knew

the loan shark relatively well, in part because he had been a daily customer at her *cocina clandestina* for years. Because they had a social relationship, as well as a buyer/seller relationship, she knew that she would be able to get the money she was asking for with the speed she needed it.

This last reason — the social relationship which pre-dated their relationship of lender/borrower — is the crux of the reason why she felt compelled to come up with the full amount of the loan when it was called in. Although an unguaranteed loan carries the risk of non-compliance with the lender's terms, loan sharks minimize their risk by lending to borrowers they feel reasonably sure will comply. Dalia felt a sense of social obligation to the lender that goes beyond the fact that he is connected to illicit activity and could arrange for unpleasant enforcement mechanisms if she dawdled. In order to preserve that relationship and to demonstrate to other potential lenders that she can be trusted with a loan, Dalia scrambled to repay the full loan and principal within a matter of days of it being recalled.

Antonio Rodriguez, described in the section above, ran a *cocina clandestina* on and off for a number of years until he closed up shop in 2011 to focus on his drug smuggling business. This situation is unusual inasmuch as normally restaurants which operate in conjunction with illicit activities are used as fronts for money laundering. Antonio Rodriguez, on the other hand, ran his illicit drug business and his informal *cocina clandestina* out of the same row house, and to date, has not been prosecuted for either.

Antonio Rodriguez did not depend on illicit capital in order to support a formal business, so it is not accurate to claim that his involvement with illegal activity was the result of a perception of exclusion from licit sources of capital. Instead, Antonio

Rodriguez's illicit activity stems relationships with other family members.

Antonio Rodriguez is not the only member of his family to be involved with drug smuggling; one of his close relatives, Don Grande, is reported to be Oxkutzcab's primary point of connection to the cartels that use Yucatán as a transit point for South American cocaine en route to the United States. Don Grande, who lives in the biggest house in Oxkutzcab, was married for many years to Ady Fajardo[162].

Ady Fajardo was one of the first Yucatecans to open a restaurant in the formal economy in San Francisco. Lol-Tun, which was a taco and burrito shop, opened in 2000 or 2002 on a quiet block in the eastern part of the Mission. The restaurant acquired a reputation for always being empty, always having very loud music, and always being available for Grupo Mesoamericano to host meetings and events (see chapter 7). As Agustín explained:

> The first two or three official meetings of Grupo Mesoamericano happened at the restaurant [called] Loltun. Ady lent us her restaurant after it closed, because it closed at 7 in the evening. And she let us use it for the meeting[s]… We had a couple of events there. We organized, well, she organized a couple of parties and we were invited to Doña Ady's parties. [She was] really cooperative, she helped us with everything. She gave us food, she gave us money… We couldn't complain about Doña Ady, but, honestly, it ended really badly[163].

Agustín's comment that the Ady and the restaurant "ended badly" is an understatement: in mid-August, 2007, an undercover operation by San Francisco and San

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[162] Don Grande and Ady's son had a child with Don Tito's niece Karina; Don Grande is also a close cousin of Doña Ana's husband. I mention these relations to underscore how interconnected the family networks of Yucatecan migrants in San Francisco are.

[163] *Alberto: Las primeras dos o tres reuniones oficiales de Grupo Mesoamericano sucedieron en el restaurante Loltún. Adi nos presto su restaurante despues de que cerro; porque a las 7 de la noche lo cerraba. Y nos dejaba usarlo para la junta….Hicimos un par de eventos nosotros allá. Organizamos, bueno, ella ha organizado un par de fiestas y nosotros estabamos invitados a las fiestas con Doña Adi. Muy coperadora para todo nos ayudaba.Nos daba comida, nos daba dinero, nos daba… No nos podíamos quejar de Doña Adi, la verdad pero acabó bien mal la verdad.*

Mateo cops ended in Ady Fajardo and the restaurant's chef — allegedly also her lover — being arrested for having nearly 4 pounds of heroin, five ounces of meth, and an ounce of cocaine, which together carried an estimated street value of $170,000. Ady was eventually sentenced to 12 years in federal prison, where she remains at the time of this writing.

According to reports in the local press, the cops believed that Loltun was used as a holding venue for mid-level drug distributors. In this way, the business relationship between Lol-Tun and the illicit activity was much more conventional than Antonio's illicit activity/informal enterprise combination. It is unclear from these reports, however, whether the local police were aware of Ady's familial ties to the drug business (Eskenazi 2007; SFist 2007).

Economic Position and Illicit Capital

Just as there are documented entrepreneurs with undocumented businesses and vice versa, there are formal businesses that depend on illicit capital and informal ones that do not (to the extent that I was able to determine this).

Table 8.2: Legal status and position in formal/informal economy of US-based pioneer entrepreneurs in San Francisco's Yucatecan community (includes both operational and closed firms) (*indicates undocumented)

	Informal Economy	Formal Economy
Reliance on illicit capital	3	3
No reliance on illicit capital	10	5

The absence of undocumented migrants in the informal/illicit sphere does not mean that there are no undocumented migrants involved with illicit activity. Instead, it means that none of the Yucatecan migrants who operated firm-like enterprises in the informal

economy, were undocumented.

It is beyond the scope of this project to try and specify why some entrepreneurs decide to become involved with illicit activity. I can, however, offer some thoughts on why some immigrant business owners depend on illicit capital to support their businesses and others do not. As with the discussion of the informal economy above, the composition of an entrepreneur's network, and his/her perceived position within that network structure, strongly suggest the kind of actors who are likely to depend on illicit capital.

Specifically, those with:

- Pre-existing strong, bonding relationships with individuals engaged in illicit activity *and*
- Perception that access to legitimate forms of financing are constrained because of legal status, inadequate credit, or bad advice

…are more likely, relative to their counterparts without both of these criteria, to depend in some way on illicit capital.

These findings matter because immigrant entrepreneurs, especially those from low-wage communities, are vulnerable to the predations of unscrupulous lenders and susceptible to the allure of illicitly obtained money. The use of illicit capital perpetuates a cycle of vulnerability and hinders incorporation.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented cases which suggest that the structure and composition of entrepreneurs' networks contribute to entrepreneurs' decisions about whether to operate in the formal or the informal economy, and whether or not to use illicit capital. In other words, network structure and composition inform actors' economic location, and their

economic location shapes their network development. It has also drawn attention to the juxtaposition of an individual's legal status and the legality of their business operations: legal migrants engage in informal or illicit business, and undocumented migrants operate licensed businesses in the formal economy.

Immigrant entrepreneurs in the informal economy are also slower to incorporate socially and economically, because they transact primarily with family and community ties (Gaughan and Ferman 1987). The cases presented above support that finding, as Yucatecan entrepreneurs working in the informal economy provide goods and services almost exclusively to their *paisanos*. Yet even informal economic activity is part of the incorporation process for new immigrant communities in the United States, since running an underground business requires entrepreneurs to learn from their *paisanos* and other migrants about the various regulatory agencies that they must avoid interacting with.

Finally, this chapter has presented evidence that network topography is sensitive to an actor's ability to continue operating his or her firm. When a binational entrepreneur loses the ability to enter the United States, she loses both her social and her economic ties to migrants in the receiving community. The next chapter offers a deeper reflection on how legal status connects to microeconomic activity, but the cases included here suggest that (in a receiving context with permissive policies towards immigrant integration) being undocumented is not an barrier to formal entrepreneurship, and being a legal migrant does not lower the chances of operating in the informal or illicit economy. Indeed, documented migrants are safer relative to their undocumented counterparts who engage in unauthorized economic practices, because their risk for removal if caught is lower.

Chapter 9: Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurship, Social Networks, and Legal Capital

Social Networks and the Immigration/Settlement Life-Cycle

I began this dissertation by turning to two classical sociological theorists — Weber and Sombart — for insights on how one social force affects another through the mechanism of microeconomic exchanges among actors embedded in sets of relationships. I then presented evidence that international migration, labor market incorporation, and entrepreneurship shape the microeconomic behaviors and social network structures over a migration and settlement "life-cycle" of pioneer entrepreneurs in a low-resources, first-generation immigrant community.

As aspiring migrants and their family members search for the money, connections and information necessary for clandestine migration, existing relationships acquire a new component of instrumental resource exchange. This resource-acquisition for purposive social action occurs primarily within existing social relationships; the search process couples a new identity, that of "migration network" to the kinship, friendship, and paisanaje ties that predate a migrant's border crossing (as in White 1992).

Once in the United States, migrants typically find jobs through close network ties. This matching process, of job-seekers to job openings, again occurs through existing social network ties, with the difference being that the labor market insertion networks are primarily based in the United States. In other words, while migration-oriented exchanges

occur among network actors on both sides of a border, information about employment opportunities is typically transmitted among a set of individuals who are only in the receiving community. However, just as the search for money and a *coyote* couples a "migration" identity to existing relationships, the process of looking for a job couples a "labor market insertion" identity to the job seeker's network ties.

As settled migrants continue to build their lives in the United States, they retain their relationships with non-migrant kin in the sending community. However, the U.S.-based migrant is now in the position of being a contributor to, rather than a beneficiary of, the "migration network" that connects sending and and receiving communities. This coupling and de-coupling of the migration-network identity helps explain the continuities in Mexican clandestine migration through time and regardless of changes in the political and economic climate in the United States (as in Borger and Muse-Orlinoff 2010; Jiménez 2005).

The continuing importance of relationships with non-migrant family members in the sending community is a key explanation for return migration. Long-term settlement in the United States is made more difficult by the indefinite separation from loved ones, and many migrants whose wives and children remain in Mexico opt to return to their communities of origin: Federico, Miguel Suizo, and Cristóbal, for example, had all given up well-paying jobs as chefs in the San Francisco in order to be reunited with their wives and young children in Oxkutzcab. However, when they, like Juan, Fernando, and Javier and many other young men from Oxkutzcab decided migrate back to the United States to earn some more money, they were able to re-couple the "migration network" identity to their relationships with migrants in both the U.S. and Mexico, and to use that new

instrumental resource-acquisition identity to obtain the money necessary to hire a skilled people smuggler. The ability to couple and de-couple identities to sets of relationships, in other words, illustrates the multiplexity and the dynamism of the social networks that undergird the social processes of international migration and settlement.

Social Networks and and Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Settled migrants who decide to pursue self-employment must learn to couple yet another identity to relationships when they go into business for themselves: that of purveyor of goods or services for profit. An entrepreneur's decision to operate in the formal or the informal economy shapes the extent to which he or she focuses attention on coupling this identity to existing, co-ethnic relationships (necessary and often sufficient for those in the informal economy) or cultivating new, heterogeneous relationships with consumers and partners outside the ethnic community (necessary but not sufficient for those in the formal economy).

As immigrant entrepreneurs seek the social capital and relationships they need to start their business, they create ties with non-co-ethnic actors and transform existing ties with immigrants from their own ethnic community. The process of building relationships to build a business, processes which are shaped by aspiring entrepreneurs' existing social networks and individual social capital, puts pioneer entrepreneurs at the vanguard of social and economic incorporation into US society.

Incorporation is not the aim of pioneer entrepreneurs' business activities; it is an "unanticipated gain," like the social networks that cohered around day care centers studied by Mario Small (2009). Yet it is sociologically useful to apply a dynamic networks

approach how the question of how migration, settlement, and entrepreneurship reorganizes social and economic dynamics among migrants and their non-migrant counterparts. Focusing on sets of relationships as both the site of exchange behavior and a dependent variable, sensitive to shifts in social and economic contexts, yields a nuanced understanding of the interactions between individual actors and the relationships they are embedded in.

Applying a networks approach to the study of immigrant entrepreneurship gives lie to the notion that immigrant entrepreneurs in the US — particularly when they are in low-resources, early-generation communities — epitomize pulling one's self up by bootstraps. As this dissertation shows, no entrepreneur is an island. Entrepreneurial success is predicated on the participation of and support from many other people, from within and from outside the entrepreneur's co-ethnic community. The relationships among household members, community organizations, investors, and regulatory agencies all play a part in constraining and enabling pioneer entrepreneurs' economic choices.

Entrepreneurship is one process in the longer life-cycle of migration and settlement: not all immigrants will become entrepreneurs, and not all immigrant entrepreneurs will experience incorporation in the same way. Nevertheless, as members of new migrant communities in the US find ways to work around restrictive legalization regimes and carve out economic niches in stratified global cities, they show us that of a small number of charismatic leaders (a la Weber) and their enthusiastic followers, "have a disproportionate [effect] on collective life and on the less active members of a community" (Suttles in Smith 2006:8).

Pioneer Immigrant Entrepreneurs in a Sassenian Global City

Observing the process of incorporation through the transformations of pioneer entrepreneurs' social networks suggests that global cities offer particular opportunities and challenges to their immigrant communities.

Sassen depicts a global city as an urban environment with an inverted bell curve of occupational distribution: a small technocratic, managerial elite controls the wealth and owns the means of production which shape global economic sectors, while a teeming mass of migrants and minorities are immured in service sector jobs. In Sassen's model, and the haves and the have nots interact only to the extent that the elite are willing to pay for services and the service sector workers willing to provide them.

Yet the elite in global cities have global palates, and discretionary income to spend on "authentic" or "exotic" food. This fact opens up a market opportunity to migrants from the service sector who can acquire enough cultural capital to make their establishments acceptable to the elite consumers, and who can mobilize the resources needed to open a restaurant in the formal sector.

Optimistic implications

My findings suggest that when migrants develop formal-sector businesses that appeal to the global palates of the gentrifying class, they can serve as a broker between the networks among the two classes and thereby catalyze the transmission of cultural capital from the upper class to the working class.

This brokerage happens through ongoing exchange of social or economic capital to support fledgling businesses, as in the cases of Grupo Mesoamericano, La Cocina's support for Restaurante Tulum, and the relationships between *el Italiano* and *el Árabe* and

Dalia. It also happens, however, through the transmission of cultural capital. For instance, Dalia wants to attract a diverse clientele to El Príncipe; as a result, she has decorated the space according to her understanding of what kind of aesthetics appeal to San Francisco's elite. Across town, the Yucatecan bartenders that make margaritas and serve Julian Blas's vast tequila collection at Paco's sport stylish haircuts, sleeve tattoos, and jewelry, all of which signify their participation in San Francisco's cultural processes. El Príncipe and Paco's, in other words, create spaces where Yucatecans and non-Yucatecans interact as consumers of food and culture; it is through the social and economic relationships that Yucatecan entrepreneurs have with Yucatecan and non-Yucatecan counterparts that they are able to do so.

Less optimistic implications

In a metropolis which is is increasingly "coordinated" along the lines Sassen identifies, the informal and/or illicit economies may be increasingly attractive to economic actors who reject or feel unequipped to participate in the highly bureaucratized nature of formal entrepreneurship.

Likewise, the autonomy and chance for recognition — if not infamy, like Loltun — that come from being a big-shot bad guy in a densely connected migrant network may have strong appeal for actors who (1) have strong ties to individuals already operating in the illicit economy and (2) insufficient human or social capital to find licit opportunities to run a small business. This is the case, for example, of the crack dealers in Philippe Bourgeois's *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*.

Returned Migrant Entrepreneurs

Migrant entrepreneurs who are driven to start and run a small business by an entrepreneurial vocation sometimes decide to do so in their community of origin. This decision is not necessarily the result of any specific desire to further "development" initiatives in their hometowns; rather, it is an economically and socially rational decision for aspiring entrepreneurs who have a vision of the firm they want to build but who perceive the opportunity costs to starting up such a business in the receiving community to be unacceptably high. This is the most common model for Yucatecan migrants to San Francisco: in 2009, there were more than twice as many restaurants owned by returned migrants in Oxkutzcab than there were restaurants owned by Yucatecan migrants in the Bay Area.

The returned migrants who have opened businesses in their communities of origin are all men in their 30's and 40's who first got to San Francisco between 1990 and 1997. This pattern reflects the demographics of Yucatecan migration to California: migrants are most likely to be young men unaccompanied by wives. More poignantly, the Yucatán-based entrepreneurs were also all in the United States without authorization, and yearned to reunite with their families.

As a result of their precarious legal status they had to choose between trying to start a firm in the United States during an indefinite separation from their wives and children, or rejoining their family and opening a business in a small agricultural city whose consumer base consists of a small local bourgeoisie, truckers picking up citrus at the wholesale distribution center, and the occasional visiting sociologist or anthropologist.

Legal Capital

Yet there are undocumented Yucatecan migrant entrepreneurs in San Francisco: Dalia and Esteban, for example, and Benicio and Mariana run successful, legitimate businesses despite being in the United States without authorization. In other words, the businesses are legal while the owners are not. Conversely, there are documented entrepreneurs operating firms in the informal or illicit economies; in their cases, the people are legal while the enterprise is not.

Finally, there are the transportistas, whose businesses depend on their legal ability to travel between the US and Mexico: they represent a spectrum of legality, in which US citizens and greencard holders can operate their businesses with more security than Mexican nationals with US travel visas, but all are subject to the same scrutiny by US Customs and Border Patrol.

These paradoxes suggest that legality is not a dichotomous status that is on or off, legal or illegal. Instead, the data in this dissertation point to the value of understanding legal status as a form of capital. I define legal status as a nation-state’s limits on a foreigner’s membership in the polity, authorization to enter a delimited national territory from abroad, and access to economic opportunities including jobs, leases, permits, and credit. Throughout this discussion, I refer specifically to legal status vis a vis the citizenship regime and social and economic institutions of the United States.

Legal status is a form of capital first because it is a spectrum along which individuals occupy different positions depending on what kind of “papers” they have and the authenticity of those papers. At one end of the spectrum is the *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* citizenship of people born in the United States and who have never been incarcerated for a

felony: their citizenship can never be revoked, and the US has no system of political exile. As a result, non-felonious native-born Americans or people born to American parents abroad are definitively and permanently members of the polity. They can enter and exit the country as often and for as long as they wish, participate in all elections and political processes, compete for all kinds of jobs including federal ones, receive any kind of means-tested benefits they economically qualify for, and obtain any kind of business license or permit they desire, contingent on adhering to the issuing agency's regulatory framework.

Another gradation of legal status is that of native-born US citizens (whether by parentage or by location by birth) who have been convicted of felonies and incarcerated. All but two states deny incarcerated felons the right to vote (Maine and Vermont being the exceptions), and these 48 sub-national entities enforce varying degrees of political disenfranchisement for felons following their release from prison, ranging from reinstatement of voting rights after the period of incarceration to an effective life-long ban on political participation. Despite these restrictions, felons born into US citizenship retain their official membership in the polity irrespective of their criminal activity, and have the right to live within the national territory of the United States in perpetuity. Nevertheless, convicted felons in 48 out of 50 states have less legal capital than non-felon native-born US citizens.

Foreign-born residents of the United States have different amounts of legal capital depending on the kind of immigration documents they have and the authenticity of those documents. Naturalized US citizens have the right to live permanently in the United States and participate in all forms of US political life; their membership in the polity and almost

nothing abrogates their access to social and economic institutions. In nearly every way, naturalized US citizens have the same amount of legal capital as native born US citizens. One of — if not the only condition — under which US citizenship can be revoked is when a foreign-born citizen is found to have lied on their N-400 (the application for US citizenship), either about the details of their background or, in the case of terrorists, Communists, or Nazis, their efforts to violently overthrow the US government. They do not lose their citizenship if convicted of a felony (although they are subject to the same kinds of disenfranchisement as native-born felonies), and they retain their right to live permanently inside or outside the territory of the US without relinquishing their membership in the polity.

Legal permanent residents, also known as greencard holders, have the right, subject to routine renewal, to live permanently in the United States. LPRs cannot participate in electoral politics or sit on juries, and their access to certain kinds of federal jobs is limited as is their access to some means-tested benefits. In most ways, the legal capital that LPRs have grants them access to the social and economic institutions of the United States.

Yet legal permanent residency is not as permanent as US citizenship, and the legal capital of LPRs is correspondingly lower than that of their naturalized counterparts. If convicted of a felony, for example, greencard holders lose their LPR status and are deported. Similarly, attorneys recommend that LPRs who desire US citizenship but who have a criminal record refrain from applying for naturalization, since the application process can trigger an investigation of the applicant's right to maintain their LPR status and potentially lead to the greencard being revoked and the immigrant being deported. In short,

LPRs with no criminal records have less legal capital than naturalized citizens but more legal capital than LPRs with a series of misdemeanors or other criminal convictions.

The next gradation on the spectrum of legal capital are foreign-born visa holders. It is beyond the scope of this project to delineate the precise placement on the spectrum of each of the dozens of US visa categories; instead, I focus on the difference between H-visas which are tied to a visa-holder's occupational status in the United States and B-visas, which are granted to people who enter for a temporary visit but guarantee they will not take a job in the US. Visa holders have legal capital to the extent that they have been given permission to enter the United States through a legal port of entry and remain within the country as long as their visa permits. While here, holders of H-visas are legally allowed to work, to rent an apartment, open a bank account, and avail themselves of the judicial system if they are the victims of a crime. B-visa holders, by contrast, are not allowed to work, and in the absence of a social security number or tax ID number from an employer, cannot open a bank account or establish credit with an issuing agency. They are, however, allowed to use the court system, and to transact business on behalf of a firm.

Because their presence in the United States is predicated on a contract with an employer, the legal capital of H-visa holders is lower than that of LPRs. However, it is higher than that of B-visa holders, who are not permitted to work in the United States and must leave the country within an allotted amount of time (3-6 months, depending on the visa's particulars). In addition, H-visa holders are able to enter and exit the US as often as their employer requires or their travel schedule permits. B-visa holders — depending on the kind of visa issued — may be allowed to enter and exit the US at will, or they may be restricted to a single-entry visa. In the case of the Mexico-based *transportistas* described in

Chapter 8 of this dissertation, they received multiple entry visas, which made it possible for them to make the Oxkutzcab - San Francisco - Oxkutzcab round trip every two to three weeks.

The legal capital of visa holders is less than that of LPRs because the revocation process is faster and, in principle, unconnected to the United States judicial system. Particularly for B-visa holders, Department of Homeland Security personnel at legal ports of entry (airport inspection stations, for instance), are empowered to cancel an entry visa without the involvement of a judge or a legal process. If an employer terminates an H-visa holder's job, they also cancel the visa-holder's right to work (and live) in the United States. As a result, and particularly relative to greencard holders, immigrants in the US with visas are more susceptible to removal from the country and their access to social and economic institutions while here are constrained based on their occupational status and type of visa.

Yet visa holders still have more legal capital than do undocumented immigrants, who reside in the United States without official sanction. *De jure*, undocumented immigrants are prohibited both from working and from living in the United States; this contrasts with countries like Spain which distinguish between residential legality and occupational eligibility. *De facto*, however, between 11 and 12 million undocumented migrants live and work in the United States. Although they have very little formal legal capital, undocumented migrants participate in many social and economic institutions — more, in fact, than most B-visa holders whose presence in the United States has been authorized but who are not authorized work or open bank accounts. Undocumented migrants use their employee-issued tax identification numbers (TIN's) to open accounts, sign leases, and establish credit. They sign leases (in most jurisdictions, at any rate),

receive health insurance, pay income taxes, and contribute through automatic withholdings to social security and unemployment funds that they are ineligible to receive through their lack of legal status. And, as described in this dissertation, undocumented entrepreneurs open businesses and transact with other people from across the legal capital spectrum.

In order to gain access to some kinds of social and economic systems in the United States, especially higher paying jobs, undocumented migrants sometimes try to persuade employers that they have more legal capital than they do. They acquire counterfeit greencards or borrow identification (green cards, passports, drivers' licenses) from contacts with more legal capital. Federico, an undocumented aspiring entrepreneur who returned to Yucatán to start his business rather than remain separated from his wife and two children, described his access to *papeles chuecos* (fake papers) in San Francisco:

> Federico: I'm going to show you something, I shouldn't but I'm going to show you. This is a fake green card, let's see, I don't know the date, look at the date over there. It's one of the first ones I had.
> Q: The birthdate is 1973.
> Federico: That's the real one, it's my real [birthdate].
> Q: And it says that you entered the United States in 1978.
> Federico: That green card cost me… We bought it in the Mission… all my [other] fake green cards are there in the US, in case I go back, with that I [can] work, [even though] the boss knows it's illegal.
> Q: Even so, even if you have the card…
> Federico: That's the way we have to do [things].
> Q: Do you plan on using it to cross [the border]?
> Federico: No, we can't, that's not possible.
> Q: But you can [use it] to work?
> Federico: To work, yeah, to cross [the border] no, because if they catch you with that, you go to jail.
> Q: How much is a [fake] greencard like this now?
> Federico: Here [in Yucatán] there aren't any, this one cost me 70 dollars, I think.
> Q: Pretty cheap, no?
> Federico: Yeah, now I think it costs 150 dollars, they give you a social security number and your pink card [note: the actual color of a greencard], all pink and everything. And that's it, off to work. And another thing, in the

> restaurant… that day, [the] chef grabbed it like this [and said], 'dude, it's still hot, [what's up with] this shit,' joking like that. [He] knows that we went to the Mission to get it… He was from Michoacan… a resident [note: it's unclear whether the Michoacano was an LPR or a US citizen]. He did have papers, and he even wanted me to stay at the restaurant [so] he told me, 'I'm going to give you my kids' papers,' because his kids are American and at that time you could [swap papers]. So he told me, 'I have two kids that are the same age [as you], I'm going to give you my kids papers, bring your wife too, so you can earn more money, asshole, you know [what I'm talking about].'[164]

In this account, Federico acknowledges that even fake papers carry different amounts of legal capital: a fake greencard bought — possibly from the Chilango *miquero* (document counterfeiter) that lent Dalia $15,000, as described in Chapter 7 — in the Mission might provide enough to get a job with a knowing boss, but not enough to withstand border agents' scrutiny at a legal port of entry.

A fake greencard, even if it has a real birthdate, offers the holder less legal capital than real papers issued to someone else. But the risks of using these fake documents also

[164] Federico: Te voy a mostrar algo pero, no debería pero se los voy a mostrar. This is a fake green card, a ver, no se la fecha, vea la fecha allá. Es uno de los primeros que tuve.
Q: Una fecha de nacimiento del 73.
Federico: That's the real one, es mí verdadero.
Q: y dice que usted entró ahí a Estados Unidos en el 78.
Federico: Esa green card me costó… Eso lo compramos en la Mission… todos mís fake green cards están allá en Estados Unidos, por si algún día llego y con eso trabajo, el patrón ya sabe que es ilegal.
Q: Pero de por si, si tienen su tarjeta…
Federico: Así tenemos que hacer.
Q: ¿pero no piensa usarla para cruzar?
Federico: No, no podemos, no se puede.
Q: ¿pero para trabajar sí?
Federico: Para trabajar sí, para cruzar no porque si te pescan con eso, te vas a la carcel.
Q: ¿a cuánto sale ahora una mica así?
Federico: La mica acá no hay, esta me costó creo que 70 dolares.
Q: A pues económico no?
Federico: Sí, ahorita cuesta creo que 150 dolares, te dan un social security number y tu pink card, así como rosado y ya. A trabajar, inlcuso [en] el restaurant... ese día, [el] chef, la agarraba así, 'ah cabrón, todavía está caliente, esta madre,' así bromeando. [Él] sabe que en la Mission lo fuimos a sacar.... Era un michoacano.... era residente. El sí [tenía papeles], inclusive el quería que me quede en el restaurant y me dijo, te doy los papeles de mís hijos, porque sus hijos son americanos, en esa época se podía. Y me dijo, tengo dos niños que son de la misma edad, te doy los papeles de mís hijos, traete a tu esposa también, para que ganes más dinero cabrón, tu sabes.

increase in concert with the enforcement agency that examines them, so simply having access to borrowed papers does not mean that an undocumented migrant will use it. And in fact, Federico declined his boss's offer to let Federico and his wife enter the US with his children's papers, and remained in the US without authorization until he returned to Yucatán in 2008.

Legality is a form of capital because, like with other forms of capital such as economic, human, and social, more is better: having more and better legal capital than someone else give an immigrant proportionally more access to means-tested benefits, participation in politics, jobs, and access to social and economic institutions. However, Federico's story also encapsulates the way that legal capital is fungible. It can be exchanged for money, like for fake or borrowed papers, or the visas granted to foreign-born entrepreneurs who promise to invest $1 million and hire at least 10 employees.

Aspiring undocumented entrepreneurs from low-resource communities do not have access to millions of dollars of investment capital. In the absence of opportunities to legalize their status in the United States, they are restricted to searching for legal capital through their social networks. For Dalia, this search yielded *el Italiano* who acted as a proxy for her and Esteban when they opened what is now El Príncipe. The business license was in his name, and he was, for the first two years of the business, the firm's titular owner.

The cases of El Príncipe and Restaurante Tulum suggest that lack of legal capital constrains opportunities for undocumented migrants but does not prevent them from running successful, registered businesses. Nevertheless, in the Yucatecan migrant community, documented entrepreneurs outnumber undocumented entrepreneurs in the

formal economy two to one. This proportion suggests that greater legal capital lowers the barriers to entry for aspiring migrant entrepreneurs in the United States.[165]

A majority of the Yucatecan entrepreneurs in San Francisco's informal economy are documented, a pattern which I attribute to the relatively older demographics of entrepreneurs in the informal economy and the availability of jobs for undocumented workers in San Francisco. Age matters because the informal entrepreneurs who were active in the informal economy were among the small cohort of Yucatecan migrants who arrived in the United States in time to benefit from the IRCA legalization program. Now in their sixties, these men and women operate tax-free businesses which — while routinized and revenue-oriented — are unregulated and unregistered. Their informal economic activity, can be abandoned at any time, and continue only to the extent that the entrepreneurs want to subsidize their monthly social security payments.

These transfers are another benefit of the relatively higher legal capital of documented migrants relative to their undocumented counterparts. Legal capital, like human and social capital, increases actors' ability to create economic capital. As mentioned above, undocumented workers contribute towards benefit programs but are currently ineligible to receive means-tested benefits or social security. Immigrants who are citizens have greater access to these transfers than LPRs who have greater access to them than immigrants with visas and especially undocumented migrants. Legal capital, in other words, does not just provide membership in the political polity, it also grants greater access to economic systems and financial safety nets.

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[165] Similarly, access to legal capital makes it safer for documented business owners (relative to their undocumented counterparts) to run illicit businesses because the consequences of detection do not include their removal from the United States.

The value and vulnerability of high network topography

In chapter 5, I included legal capital as one of the components of an individual's aggregated social capital. Legal capital can not only be acquired, it can be shared, through spousal visas and sponsorship. More saliently, however, legal capital raises the status (in a Weberian sense) of documented migrants in an undocumented community. In so doing, legal capital contributes to the higher network topography of actors with both high degree centrality (structural social capital) and high aggregated social capital (see chapter 5).

Another way to describe actors with high network topography is to say that they are visible within the network. Actors who have a lot of relationships with other people and who are willing to share the resources they have attract attention from resource seekers within the network and from actors who are embedded in other networks and who are seeking opportunities for brokerage. Having a high network topography engenders a self-reinforcing cycle in which the combination of resources and connections yields more connections and thereby more resources.

When legal capital collapses, however, an actor's network topography declines — this was the case with Doña Ana when her B-2 visa was revoked in 2011. Losing her visa eliminated her ability to travel to the United States and ended her binational import/export business. As a result, she no longer occupies a high position in the binational Yucatecan network.

Having high altitude in a given network's topography can also attract negative attention, from jealous competitors for example: recall the anonymous tip called in to the San Francisco health inspectors about Doña Teresa's *cocina clandestina*, or the rumors that Dalia's success came from sleeping around. In other words, when you're high up in the

network topography, you can get to everyone and have access to the kinds of resources you need. On the other hand, when you're high up in the network topography, everyone can see you, and will talk about you behind your back.

Nevertheless, more ties means more opportunities to acquire goods and services, money and information. As Hanneman and Riddle note, “[m]ore connected populations may be better able to mobilize their resources, and may be able to bring more and diverse perspectives to bear to solve problems” (Hanneman and Riddle 2005:7-2). Having lots of connections and being able to mobilize resources efficiently is a critical aspect of successful entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurs who are unable to position themselves effectively in the network topography, and in particular those who are unable to parlay that altitude into brokerage opportunities with non-co-ethnic alters report bigger obstacles to building their businesses (e.g., the cases of Marcos and Federico from Chapter 7).

Developing new relationships is a time-consuming and complex social endeavor. Doing so is especially challenging, and occasionally risky, for undocumented migrants who risk their illegal status being exposed by getting close to unscrupulous people or being defrauded and having no legal recourse (as happened to Dalia and Esteban in the early days of El Príncipe).

Creating new ties is only one part of what entrepreneurs do in their search for the social capital they need to start and run their businesses: another transformation of network substructures comes from the conversion of simple ties to multiplex ones.

Multiplexity

Multiplexity involves adding an economic tie to an existing social tie (or vice versa), or, as described above, coupling a new identity to an existing relationship. Marcos and Camilo, it will be recalled, established their entrepreneurial relationship on the basis of an existing tie of *compadrazgo*, or shared god-parenting. Dalia and Esteban and Benicio and Mariana converted their existing ties as spouses and parents into multiplex ties that consist of spouse, parent, co-owner, and co-worker.

The dynamic nature of entrepreneurship changes entrepreneurs' need for social and economic capital. At times, the economic tie takes precedence over the social tie, as when Dalia and her mother severed ties because of the competition between their *cocinas clandestinas*. At other times, the social tie is more important, as was the case when the social relationship between the owners of *Los Paisanos 1* and *2*: they chose to sever their business tie in the interest of preserving the social and affective relationship that predated their economic connections. The interviews and participant observation I conducted in the Yucatecan community in San Francisco suggest that the point at which economic issues acquire precedence over the emotional or kinship content of a relationship is the point at which the tie becomes vulnerable. However, the existence of an emotional tie creates the possibility for re-establishing the tie once the economic transgression is forgiven. In other words, the economic aspect to the relationship makes the tie vulnerable, but the emotional aspect to the relationship makes the tie resilient.

This dynamic matters for first-generation immigrant entrepreneurship and incorporation. Ties with people from outside the entrepreneur's co-ethnic community are vital for business incorporation and operations, and these ties contain more than simple

economic exchanges: they are built on a scaffolding of social and affective relationships. As such, the failure of an economic tie between an aspiring entrepreneur and a non-co-ethnic investor does not necessarily destroy the social relationship; ties among immigrant entrepreneurs and the diverse communities they live in can continue.

The ties that emerge between pioneer entrepreneurs and non-co-ethnic supporters are a key finding from this project. In a low-resource, first-generation, largely undocumented immigrant community, the resources which are described as key to entrepreneurial success (ethnic and class resources, capital from the sending company, participation in high-value ROSCAS) do not exist. Aspiring entrepreneurs seek information and investment from people who come from other immigrant communities or who are native born; connections with community organizations that support immigrant entrepreneurs can also provide a concentrated input of support via training, advice, promotion, and connections.

These findings challenge the notion that immigrant entrepreneurs operate in a bounded ethnic community. Although later-stage ethnic economies with high levels of internal resources may be able to operate independently of extra-ethnic support, newly-settled, low-resource, and predominantly undocumented immigrant entrepreneurs rely on strong, bonding social and economic ties with people both inside and outside their ethnic community, and as such are at the vanguard of social and economic incorporation.

This is especially the case for entrepreneurs who operate in the formal sector without relying on illicit sources of capital. Entrepreneurs who rely on illicit forms of capital run the risk that discovery could lead to the loss of their legal capital, which would imperil both their microeconomic activity and their incorporation outcomes.

Entrepreneurs in the informal economy are on the whole less responsible for fomenting the incorporation of their co-ethnics through the cultivation of relationships with people from other parts of the world. Indeed, the continuity of their businesses depend on their co-ethnic customers and network alters staying quiet about their entrepreneurial practices, or they become vulnerable to enforcement by regulatory agencies. The dependence of entrepreneurs in the informal economy on co-ethnic network alters, in other words, aligns much more closely with the patterns of inter-ethnic resource exchange among entrepreneurs from longer-standing, higher-resource, more predominantly documented immigrant communities.

Conclusion

This dissertation has offered a new analytical lens to understand the role of migrants' social networks in the "life-cycle" of international mobility and settlement: not as static structures which channel people from sending to receiving communities, but as sets of relationships among microeconomic actors, relationships which respond to changing social and economic forces and which in turn enable and constrain microeconomic behavior. This dynamic, processual view highlights the resilience and complexity of relationships among migrants and their non-migrant family members, and the importance of non-co-ethnic ties in supporting pioneer entrepreneurs' efforts to start and run businesses.

Theoretical Contributions

I also propose a new way to think about social capital – as an individual aggregated measure of shareable resources and their degree centrality within a given social network,

and the latent resources which inhere in the ties an actor has with network alters. This framing makes it possible to think of social capital as an individual resource and a social good, and links concepts of social capital and social network structures into a measure of network topography. Individuals who have high altitudes in a given network topography are more visible within the network, which makes them vulnerable to gossip and internal social constraints, but which also enables them to efficiently acquire resources through their network ties. High measures of network topography also position actors to enter into brokerage relationships with actors in otherwise unconnected network structures.

Pioneer immigrant entrepreneurs need access to resources in order to start and run their businesses. In order to acquire them, these entrepreneurs look to existing relationships with their family members and contacts from other communities. The relationships entrepreneurs rely on to support their business activities are both structured by social forces and change as a result of actors' microeconomic behavior. It is through these transformations and exchange practices that the social forces of immigration policy, labor market incorporation, and business formation intensify pioneer entrepreneurs' social and economic incorporation into US society and – by extension – the incorporation of their *paisanos*.

Areas of future research

The political, social, and economic contexts of San Francisco are unique in the United States. San Francisco is one of – if not the most – liberal cities in the country, and its local policies reflect residents' pro-immigrant sentiments. The city's police department is debarred from enforcing immigration actions through its status as a sanctuary city, and

dozens of non-profit and community organizations advocate for and provide services to the Bay Area's Asian, Hispanic, African-American, Native-American, and indigent communities.

San Francisco is also a global city. The region's growing dominance in the tech sector and the firms which control the means of production for many of the hardware and software products Americans use on a daily basis are stratifying the area's occupational, residential, and economic distribution. Undocumented migrants with limited education and English are bottled up in the service sector. Yucatecan migrants in particular have found a welcoming niche in the restaurant industry, where their backgrounds in consumer-oriented agriculture, their Spanish and Maya dominance, and their low legal capital do not matter. On the other hand, Yucatecans restaurant workers occupy the lowest rungs of the kitchen hierarchies, and even when put in nominal charge, are subordinate in fame and earnings to native-born and documented counterparts.

The human capital Yucatecan migrants acquire in restaurants is not transferable to other sectors. Moreover, San Francisco's industrial base is so heavily oriented towards high-human-capital firms (tech and banking, for instance), that few other sectors are available to undocumented Yucatecan migrants who tire of their limited upward mobility. The solution for the migrants interviewed for this dissertation was entrepreneurship, either in the United States or in Mexico.

But what of other cities and states, with less stratified industrial bases, more restrictive immigrant policies, and a weaker network of immigrant advocacy organizations? A comparative study in, for example, Charlotte, North Teresa, Birmingham, Alabama, or Denver, Colorado would provide a useful comparative

framework for the network transformations of aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs. Another comparative study could look at the network formation practices of documented and undocumented Mexican migrant entrepreneurs in these cities, or entrepreneurs from other newly-settled immigrant communities.

Likewise, other cases of aspiring immigrant business owners who do not have access to co-ethnic resources would allow for a more thorough depiction of the causal mechanisms through which aspiring pioneer entrepreneurs acquire the resources they need to start and run businesses. Possible options include the Mongolians in San Francisco, Somalis in Lewiston, Maine, and Tibetans in New York City.

A continuing study of Yucatecan business owners in San Francisco would reveal the changes in pioneer entrepreneurs´ multiplex family ties and non-co-ethnic relationships over time, and the longer-term impact of these relationships on entrepreneurs' household earnings and firms' viability. Finally, it is hoped that a nationwide legalization of undocumented migrants would make it possible to do a comparative study of the experiences of undocumented immigrant entrepreneurs in the formal economy before and after their legal capital increases.

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