



0160-7383(94)00079-4

CRAFTING SELVES

The Lives of Two Mayan Women

Cynthia Abbott Cone
Hamline University, USA

Abstract: An examination of the lives of two Highland Maya craftswomen of Chiapas, Mexico, illustrates how they have responded to opportunities created by tourism—new markets as well as possibilities for encountering outsiders. In their relationships with tourists, both women have followed similar paths in transforming the traditional patron-client role to conform with a modern form of expressive friendship. On the other hand, the differing constraints of their crafts—ceramics and weaving—in conjunction with the nature of their ties to their communities have led them to construct images of themselves that diverge substantially with regard to cultural identification. **Keywords:** indigenous people, Maya, Mexico, ethnicity, women, identity, craft production.

Résumé: L'artisanat de soi-même: la vie de deux femmes mayas. Un examen de la vie de deux femmes artisans des Mayas montagnards de Chiapas, Mexique, montre comment elles ont profité des occasions créées par le tourisme pour trouver de nouveaux marchés et pour rencontrer des étrangers. Dans leurs relations avec les touristes, les deux femmes ont suivi le même chemin pour transformer les rôles traditionnels entre artisan et client et arriver à des rôles qui expriment plutôt de l'amitié. Par contre, les contraintes de leurs métiers dans l'art de la céramique et du tissage les ont amenées à construire des images d'elles-mêmes qui diffèrent de façon significative entre les deux quant à l'identité culturelle. **Mots-clés:** indigènes, Maya, Mexique, ethnicité, identité féminine, artisanat.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of tourism on craftspeople is an illuminating arena in which to examine the intersection of the global and the personal. Giddens argues that one of the distinctive features of modernity is "an increasing interconnection between the two 'extremes' of extensionality and intentionality: globalizing influences on the one hand and personal dispositions on the other" (1991:1).

Tourism, according to van den Berghe, can lead not only to dramatic economic change, it can alter gender relations as well as transform power relations among different class and ethnic groups. The present article specifically addresses an effect of tourism on social relations, a profound change in gender relations, also noted by van den

Cynthia Abbott Cone is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Hamline University (St. Paul, MN 55104, USA. E-mail: ccone@seq.hamline.edu). Her research interests include rural development, life history analysis and the comparative study of art and aesthetics. She has conducted research in rural areas and among indigenous peoples in the United States and Mexico.

Berghe in his earlier work, but not addressed in his recent study of ethnic tourism in San Cristobal (1994).

Craftworkers who once produced for their families, communities, and local markets are thrust into a world economic system (Ehlers 1990; Graburn 1982; Nash 1993; Stephen 1993; Swain 1977). This process not only affects the nature of their craft, it also creates an existential dilemma for their understanding of who they are. Women, especially, face such a dilemma. Their participation in the production of tourism crafts means that they "step outside" their domestic spheres—out onto public squares and thoroughfares, social settings that had previously been closed to them (Friedan 1965). "Stepping outside" requires that women create new *kinds* of relationships and new identities. Changes in the intimate aspects of their personal lives become directly tied to social connections of a wider scope. The self becomes a reflexive project as craftswomen pioneer innovative social forms and in the process critique both the cultural context from which they have emerged and the nature of the Others they encounter (Giddens 1991:32–33; Gossen 1993:462–469; Linde 1993:120–126). In Rosaldo's terms they are engaged in crossing borders (1989:196–217).

This study concerns the life stories of two Highland Mayan (Mexico) craftswomen: a potter and a weaver. Through their encounters with ethnic tourists, they have reshaped their relationships, their crafts, and their perceptions of themselves and how others perceive them. They have transformed the subordinate position in the patron-client relationship that characterized the relations of Indians to Others into a form more closely aligned with expressive friendship (Giddens 1991: 73).

According to Giddens, the circumstances of the late modern age have generated a reliance on "pure relationships," relationships that are ones of individual choice rather than anchored in the external conditions of social and economic life (1991:89). A pure relationship is maintained as long as it delivers emotional satisfaction to both parties. The focus of pure relationships is intimacy, which is dependent upon commitment and trust. Since pure relationships are not stabilized by external criteria, by established positions of community and family, commitment and trust cannot be taken as a given—they must be attained. In this process self-identity is negotiated through the development of intimacy with the other. (Giddens 1991:88–98)

The very act of narrating life stories is a component of building the intimacy of pure relationships. Thus this study itself emerged out of the kind of relationship that is its subject. Together the craftswomen and the author were engaged in observing participation (Tedlock 1991). As Hartsock argues (following Gramsci) everyone is an intellectual; each of us has an epistemology; and (following Marx) material life both structures and limits the understanding of social relations (1990:172). Everyone creates their understanding of their life's path, constrained by the social positions they occupy. Before addressing the craftswomen's narratives, it is essential to sketch the "standpoints" of both narrators and author. The opportunities and constraints they have experienced are circumscribed by the structural positions they occupy.

TOURISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SELVES

For centuries the Chiapas highlands has been stratified by social class and segmented by two ethnic groups: ladinos and Indians (Colby and van den Berghe 1961). Though the Indians compose a large majority of the population, they have been dominated politically and economically since the 16th century, first by the Spanish and then by ladinos. The ladino category includes a small elite, some of whom claim pure Spanish ancestry, and a much larger number of people of mixed European and Indian descent. A clear etiquette of inequality has maintained the boundaries between the ladinos and the Indians (van den Berghe 1994:36) Though socially separate, the two groups are economically interdependent. Indians primarily live in scattered hamlets in the mountainous countryside and provide the ladinos with foodstuffs, raw materials, and a source of cheap agricultural labor. Ladinos monopolize the wholesale and retail trade of both manufactured goods and agricultural products. Many own large estates for which they hire migratory Indian labor. Most ladinos live in the market town and government center of San Cristóbal, though there are a few scattered settlements of poor ladino farmers in the countryside. Ladinos of the upper classes control all levels of government except the Indian municipal councils. Ladinos, regardless of the degree of education or amount of wealth, believe they are superior to Indians. Structural and psychological dimensions of Indian-ladino relationships are among the root causes of the recent Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas.

The Indians form the bottom stratum of peasant farmers. They are divided among separate ethnic identities named for the *municipio* or (county) within which they live, each group distinguished by its own costumes, customs, religious rituals, and linguistic differences. These differences have operated as barriers to economic and political integration among the municipios.

The overarching institutional structures of church and state and the economic integration of farmsteads and markets link the Indians and the ladinos. On a personal level Indians and ladinos are connected by patron-client relationships. These take such forms as godparenthood, merchant-customer, employer-servant, teacher-student and office holder-voter. Of the two roles, the ladino patron's contributions to the relationship are typically more tangible, providing economic aid and influence with authorities. The Indian client, in return, gives demonstrations of esteem, political support, and services.

Internally Indian communities, though relatively classless, are governed by a male gerontocracy. The world of Highland Mayan women was and largely continues to be sharply circumscribed by the domestic sphere. Women have had little contact beyond their families and almost none beyond their villages. They have lived their lives entirely among relatives of kin and marriage. As is common where patrilineal residence is the norm, married women are considered to be subordinate to their husbands. Spinsters and widows are entirely dependent on the charity of their extended families. The higher rates of illiteracy and lower rates of bilingualism among women as compared to men reflects their isolation from the larger society (Cone and Miller 1992; Modiano 1973).

Women's craftwork, weaving and ceramics, has served as their sole avenue to community recognition or access to the market place. The craft of weaving is a sacred activity. Clothing possesses extraordinary social and sacred significance. Mayan concepts of time, space, and mythology are woven into both ceremonial and everyday garments. Women weavers offer their skills to the glory of their families, their communities, and their gods (Morris 1987).

Ceramics, on the other hand have long been produced for the market. Before the advent of plastic, every Indian household needed a set of jugs for carrying water and for storage. Today pottery jugs, though more expensive, are still preferred. Unlike weaving, there is no religious significance in the manufacture of ceramics. Women potters, in contrast to weavers, have had considerably more commercial experience because they have participated in marketing their craft.

The picture of the Chiapas Highlands described here has undergone accelerated changes since the 1960s. Rapid growth in population has resulted in massive movement of Indians to the outskirts of San Cristóbal. Road access, trucks, and mini-buses have fostered increased participation of Indians in the San Cristóbal market (van den Berghe 1994: 3-44). Many of these changes were the result of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista's (INI) extensive program of rural development in the 1950s including improved access to roads, schools and clinics, education and public health, and the training of Indian teachers and development workers. These economic options have presented opportunities for assuming new identities—the most common is *revestirse* (to reclothe oneself) as a ladino, a member of Mexican national culture (Gossen 1993:446). Such a shift in identity is only possible because the distinction between ladino and Indian is primarily a cultural one. Nevertheless, it takes substantial economic and social resources, as well as education and cultural knowledge, to make the transition, an array of resources less available to Indian women than to men.

Ethnic Tourism

Not the least of the changes in the Chiapas Highlands has been the growth of tourism. Prior to its disruption by the Zapatista rebellion, van den Berghe estimated that in recent years tourism has brought a minimum of \$5 million annually into San Cristóbal's economy, improving the economic status of at least 25% of the city's population (1994: 50-52).

Although the mountainous and forested landscape of the Chiapas Highlands is picturesque, it is no doubt the search for authentic encounters with exotic cultures that attracts tourists (Cohen 1988; Graburn 1989; MacCannell 1984; Swain 1990). For some tourists a stroll through a colorful marketplace meets their interests, others venture forth to village festivals, and still others seek to develop relationships with those exotic Others. Anthropologists number among the latter type, but so do artisans, museum collectors, and expatriate residents. A common interest in the techniques and aesthetics of crafts serves as a nexus for relationships between indigenous artisans and ethnic tourists. Thus, the work of Mayan women is of greater tourism interest than that of men. Ethnic tourists value a well-built pot or a finely

woven textile more highly than a carefully and wisely tended cornfield. They search for locally authentic items produced by hand in contrast to mass-produced internationalized modern objects (Nash 1993:129; Stephen 1993:26-27). The process of collecting can lead to a deeper relationship with the craftswomen themselves.

The author counts herself among such ethnic tourists. She is a woman and an anthropologist who has had some training in weaving and ceramics. The author first encountered the craftswomen, Manuela Moshan and Pasquala Pech, during a field session in 1980. The primary goal of the field session was research on migration and rural development, but a chance encounter with the two women led her to explore the techniques of their crafts. Common interests in weaving and ceramics rapidly unfolded into close friendships.

As Giddens notes, the process of creating "shared histories" binds partners in a pure relationship more tightly than the sharing of a common social position (1994:97). Hearing the two women recount stories of their lives suggested to the author the value of recording more formal narratives to which both women readily agreed. (To what extent this altered the "pure" nature of the relationship belongs to a longer paper.) Pasquala's account was related over a period of months while the author learned to weave with her. Manuela's account was begun during that field session and completed later during an extended visit by Manuela at the author's home in the United States. The author has returned at intervals, most recently in the spring of 1994, to visit with the two women and to continue following new developments in their lives.

The Marketing of Highland Mayan Crafts

The marketing of Indians crafts has responded rapidly to the recent increase in tourism (Cook 1993; Eber and Rosenbaum 1993; Kaplan 1993; Nash 1993). The lives of Manuela and Pasquala have been affected by the changes. There are several major avenues to the formal marketing of crafts: small scale ladino vendors who own shops in the market and along the major tourist streets in San Cristóbal; the weaving cooperative and store of Sna Jolobil; and the stores and marketing operations of government agencies. These last include the Indian Institute (INI); FONART, the national craft agency; and DIF, a federal-state agency for integrated family development. DIF and INI both operate craft stores in San Cristóbal.

The formal avenues that are most relevant to Manuela's and Pasquala's lives have been FONART, the Sna Jolobil and INI cooperatives, and DIF. During the 1970s there were numerous attempts to organize women's craft cooperatives in the Highlands. FONART tried to develop coops so it could directly purchase crafts for its national chain of tourism shops. These efforts failed, largely because FONART tried to exert too much control over the operations of the coops and did not take into sufficient account the local cultural, social, and political dimensions of craft production. The efforts of Sna Jolobil and INI have fared better, though both operations must be subsidized and they maintain substantial unsold inventories of traditional textiles. DIF's

involvement in craft marketing is more recent. It differs from Sna Jolobil and INI in being more market driven. DIF gives weavers designs for nontraditional items such as pillows and tailored blouses, and works closely with them on a piecework basis. Compared to the weavers who sell to Sna Jolobil and INI, the craftswomen who contract with DIF exercise less aesthetic control over their work. The vast majority of pottery continues to be sold in local markets through ladino vendors, though some more specialized items are handled by "upscale" maerchants in the capital city of Tuxtla.

Manuela and Pasquala

Manuela and Pasquala, in their 50s, are unmarried and have essentially been so for most of their adult lives. As unmarried women they are outside the defined roles of Mayan life, never able to achieve the full-fledged stature of a mature Mayan woman as wife and mother-in-law in charge of the domestic sphere of the household. But their socially and economically vulnerable position has also given them scope for independent action. Since, until recently, it was impossible for an Indian woman to establish a position within the realm of ladinos other than that of servant, it has been relationships with ethnic tourists that have provided Manuela and Pasquala with an alternative avenue to social status and economic resources. "Here in San Cristóbal," remarks Pasquala, "the Mexicans don't help me at all, only the foreigners."

Despite the similarities in their interaction with foreign friends, Manuela's and Pasquala's self-constructions differ dramatically in the extent to which they identify with outsiders. This difference has its origins, in part, in the interaction between the events of their lives and the nature of their crafts.

Manuela creates a striking figure as she walks along a street in San Cristóbal. Garbed in a traditional indigo skirt and the brightly colored, dramatic *huipil* (traditional blouse) of her *municipio*, she presents a picture of grace and self-assurance. Her slow pace, regal posture, and beneficent smile sharply contrast with the aura of humility and unease that surrounds most Indian women while they are in town.

Manuela grew up in the village of Balamil. Located just off the Pan-American highway, Balamil is easily accessible to visitors. Its inhabitants are corn farmers, cattle raisers, and potters. Balamil pots and water jugs can be found in all the local markets and in tourism craft shops around Mexico. Manuela is an exceptionally skilled potter. Although she has lived in San Cristóbal for years, has traveled elsewhere in Mexico, and has visited the United States five times, Manuela is still firmly centered in the house and community of her birth.

As a child, Manuela attended the village school for one year, mainly, she claims, because she was attracted by free candies. She recalls her childhood as a time of great freedom. She remembers playing with clay, trying to imitate her mother's pots.

I never asked my mother to teach me how to make pottery because it is supposed to come from within one's self . . . so I only asked her if what I was doing was too crooked and she responded I was doing very well . . . that made me feel happy.

Manuela married when she was 14 and went to live with her husband's family. Shortly afterward her husband died. She returned to her parents' home, worked on her pottery, and seized what opportunities to encounter outsiders as came her way. The first of these was babysitting for an anthropologist from the United States. As she learned Spanish, Manuela was able to assume the additional roles of research assistant and linguistic informant for her employer. In these varied capacities she made her first trip to the United States. For a year she helped teach Tzeltal at a university while she cared for the anthropologist's child. Thus began a whole series of relationships with outsiders. At least 20 came to have substantial significance in the story of her life. She aided several social scientists in research and domestic work, worked with people from FONART, and taught ceramics in schools and ceramic workshops in San Cristóbal, Cuernavaca, and Mexico City.

When FONART organized a ceramics cooperative in Balamil, Manuela assisted them and was named president. She felt she conducted her administrative duties honestly and well, but her efforts were foiled by another woman in the coop, who borrowed funds and tried to control membership. Manuela felt exonerated when the woman came to be perceived as a serious trouble-maker by the community, most especially by the male gerontocracy who felt challenged by her growing influence (Nash 1993:127-129). In the meantime, to avoid conflict, Manuela moved to San Cristóbal to begin the first of a series of teaching jobs in private schools and galleries, jobs that continued to provide her with opportunities to meet ethnic tourists. It was, in fact, Pasquala who helped Manuela find her first teaching job. The two of them had developed a friendship through their mutual encounter with expatriate residents in San Cristóbal.

Manuela never married again. After she moved to San Cristóbal, she maintained a long-term liaison with a man from another *municipio* who was already married. Although it is not out of the ordinary for a Highland Mayan man to have more than one wife, Manuela never managed to persuade her lover to build a house for them to share. In time she has come to cherish the independence of living alone. "I'm in charge of all my finances, and eat how I want to eat, because it is *my* money and *my* work." She regrets never having any children, but is aware that they, like a husband, curtail one's freedom. She is very nurturing towards her nieces and nephews. She sees them often, spending weekends in her natal home where her sister continues to live.

Manuela cultivates a wide network of friendships in San Cristóbal: with Mayan women from other municipios, foreign visitors, craftspeople, and researchers. Maintaining a complement of friendships among often competing artists and ethnic tourists requires tact and skillful negotiation. Manuela's friends are tickets to opportunities. She takes pleasure in their company but she maintains the stance of a detached observer. "I'm happy because of my friends. I'm content. And that's everything."

Now picture Pasquala moving along a San Cristóbal street. Dressed in slacks and sweater, she is urging two small children along while carrying a baby bundled in a shawl on her back. She is in a hurry, flustered because she is inevitably late.

Pasquala was born in the more remote *municipio* of Tashlan. After her father left her mother, Pasquala was adopted into the relatively wealthy family of the president of the *municipio*. There was plenty of food and clothes for Pasquala, but there was also the expectation that she work hard for the family. Household tasks such as carrying water and making tortillas consumed her time. She remembers having no playmates and not being allowed to go to school.

Pasquala began weaving at the age of six or seven, and like Manuela, learned her skills through observation.

I had a powerful urge to weave. I was so excited when I started my first row of a complicated pattern I couldn't sleep that night and I couldn't sleep the night I finished either.

Pasquala rejected suitors the family thought appropriate for her and eloped with a young man from a much poorer family than her own. Neither family would accept the marriage and the couple fled to San Cristóbal. They were not prepared for such a move. The young man could not find work. Pasquala eventually began a series of positions as a servant in the households of foreigners. Although she lived apart from her husband in the homes of her employers, she and her husband had two children. While they were still small, her husband left the Highlands and abandoned the relationship. She gave birth to four more children while involved in two long-term liaisons. Her account of this period in her life is a long litany of frequent illnesses, periodic unemployment and insufficient food for her children.

Pasquala's life eased somewhat when an expatriate built her a small house on his property. In return she functioned as a servant when he was in residence, and cared for his home when he was traveling elsewhere. When a combination language and craft school opened in San Cristóbal, Pasquala's skill as a weaver, her growing facility in Spanish, and her ability to interact with foreigners, landed her a job. She taught weaving at home and at various private schools as they have waxed and waned on the San Cristóbal scene. Then she found a job with a Canadian entrepreneur contracting with craftswomen who were willing to weave and embroider items of clothing to the employer's specifications. She also managed the Canadian's household when she was not in residence. Pasquala now works for DIF as a translator and intermediary between the director of the crafts program and the weavers.

Despite years of poverty and caring for six children, Pasquala has been able to make remarkable changes in her life. When she arrived in San Cristóbal, she could not speak Spanish, she says, "any better than a dog." She learned the cultural patterns of outsiders, their values and interests, and even their preferences in cuisine. "I can cook in five languages." With the aid of her children, she has made improvements in the house where she currently lives; roofing the patio to add an extra room; installing plumbing and a telephone.

After Pasquala eloped, her family disowned her. Today they are suspicious of her ties with outsiders, those people from distant places who are thought to "eat children." Pasquala's perception of outsiders is in direct opposition to her family's. Her compelling desire for herself

and her children is that they emulate her foreign friends. Aided by the sophistication they have acquired through their contact with outsiders, five of her six children have completed *preparatoria* and three are pursuing university degrees. To them their mother's occasional ineptitude appears sometimes comical, sometimes embarrassing. She, in turn, takes pride in their ability to enter a world that she has only partially achieved, and that only through tenacious and often humiliating efforts.

A Comparison of Self Constructions

Mayan women who want to develop relationships with ethnic tourists find themselves in a difficult position. At the same time that they are broadening their abilities to interact with people from other cultures, they are confronted with expectations that they exemplify and personify their own culture (Swain 1977). They are caught in the paradox of authenticity that tourism creates, requiring "tourees" to be attractive to tourists without modifying their behavior (Swain 1977; van den Berghe 1994:9). Pasquala and Manuela have responded differently to this conflict. Manuela embraces her Indian identity while Pasquala aspires to be like her foreign friends.

In order to create relationships with outsiders, Manuela and Pasquala had to surmount two barriers, a strange language and the lack of a model for social interaction. They resolved the first by acquiring sufficient fluency in Spanish through their work as household servants. They resolved the second through their transformation of the traditional patron-client relationship. They assumed the role of culture broker, typically assigned to the patron, and diminished the asymmetry of power. Rather than the patron offering access to government bureaucracies and ladino economic resources, Manuela and Pasquala provide ethnic tourists with entre into Mayan culture. They are the teachers and the interpreters. They perform their roles in Mayan style. They do not lecture or instruct, but convey skills through demonstration and with patient encouragement. They have become expert at putting foreigners at ease. They act as equals, sharing the joys and sorrows of their lives with affection and humor. Their relationships with foreigners take on the character of expressive friendship. Manuela and Pasquala have become adept in the conversational give-and-take of exchanging life stories, building trust through self-revelation. They have extended their skills at developing "pure relationships" to also create valued friendships both between themselves and with Mayan women from other *municipios*.

Manuela recalls a secure and happy childhood, whereas Pasquala felt exploited, more servant than child. As young women the two came to San Cristóbal under very different conditions. Pasquala left home precipitously, under emotional strain and without familial support. Manuela came under the sponsorship of a trusted, though unusual employer.

As a child, Manuela traveled with her parents as far as the state capital to sell truck loads of her mother's pots. As a young woman she marketed her mother's and sister's work as well as her own. Conse-

quently, Manuela went to San Cristóbal much more familiar with the ways of the outside world than was Pasquala.

The secular craft of ceramics has been more open to innovation than the sacred skill of weaving. When FONART was active in the Highlands, the agency asked that designs of flowers and animals be used to decorate the pots, rather than the traditional geometric forms, and sent someone to Balamil to instruct the craftswomen in painting them. Potters created new forms to respond to new market opportunities: pots suitable for houseplants and gardens in middle class homes, plaques to hang on patio walls, and spectacular ceramic fireplaces. As in Acatlán, a pottery town in central Mexico, the new forms were acceptable to the craftswomen as long as the techniques of manufacture did not depart from the old ways (Lackey 1982). Manuela readily experimented with innovative forms and won prizes for her work. She could earn her living both through selling her work and teaching.

Trained in the sacred art of weaving, Pasquala had fewer options. Teaching was the only way for her to support herself as a craftswoman. Until the government programs began in the 1970s, the market for textiles was limited. Innovation in textile design was proscribed because textiles continued to be deeply embedded in religious meaning and cultural identity. When organized groups of weavers burgeoned in the 70s, membership was tied to kinship and *municipio* affiliation, in which Pasquala could not and would not participate. She could not because she had been rejected by her family and community over her elopement and subsequent relationships with outsiders. She would not because she had achieved an unusual degree of individual self-sufficiency for a Mayan woman. Her valued independence as well as her ambivalence about her cultural identity (King 1974; MacCannell 1984) limited her interest in becoming involved.

Manuela's and Pasquala's relationship to their communities has also influenced their ties with foreign friends. For many years, Manuela lived in San Cristóbal while maintaining a homebase in Balamil. Currently, because of illness, she is back in Balamil. She participates regularly in fiestas and her sister is willing to host Manuela's foreign friends as long as their demands are not too intrusive. Her sister's house and yard have been the scene of various media projects on the processes of pottery production and on children's games. Pasquala has little to offer in this regard.

Since Pasquala's elopement over 30 years ago, every return to her native village has been traumatic. Her family, she says, fears she is after their land for her children. They are suspicious of her contacts with outsiders and angered that she has brought her children up "to be ladinos." Having never lived as an adult in her *municipio*, Pasquala never acquired the ritual knowledge that is so important to Manuela.

Pasquala cannot provide the entre to Maya culture that Manuela can. The most visible expression of Pasquala's dilemma is in her style of dress. She wears her native *traje* (costume) for her work at DIF and when giving weaving demonstrations but ordinarily she prefers the style of dress of her foreign friends. A recent telling moment was when she wanted to wear her *traje* while accompanying the author to visit a mutual Mayan friend in a rural village. Pasquala's son urged her not

to. This was during the height of the Zapatista rebellion and he wanted her to avoid any confrontation at the Mexican military checkpoints. She could not appear Indian on one of the few occasions she wanted to.

In contrast to Pasquala, there is no ambiguity about Manuela's cultural identity. Her work in ceramics and with anthropologists and her prize winning participation in ceramic contests have reinforced for her the values of Mayan culture. Her life-style is simple. She gives away what she does not use. Also Mayan is her conviction that her life is her work. Pasquala sees hers more as "a career." "The only secure careers are in government," Pasquala says, "and even then you never know when the people in power are going to change."

It has not been entirely easy for Manuela to maintain her relationship with her village. Anyone who has had so many relationships with outsiders and has obtained from them so many opportunities is bound to inspire envy. Manuela cannot flaunt her success. She cannot ask too much from her community in the way of access for visitors. As long as she treads this line carefully, deviating from traditional women's roles but avoiding the label of deviant, Manuela can function more effectively as a culture broker than can Pasquala. Since the conflict she experienced as president of the now defunct pottery cooperative, she has been able to avoid serious confrontations. In Mayan terms, she is "one of heart," honest, generous and humble (Nash 1970).

Ethnic tourists find appeal in the picturesque settings and processes of ceramic production, but the products themselves, though handsome in form, lack deeper symbolic meaning. Manuela's teaching jobs have been primarily with children. Furthermore, she cannot operate in an autonomous entrepreneurial fashion without severing her ties to the community. In contrast, Pasquala's independence has been a source of frustration for her because she cannot perform the role of culture broker in the way that Manuela can. At the same time she has been able to shape an entrepreneurial role, helping to introduce dramatically new forms, severing weaving from its religious and social functions. But the weaving motifs, though now applied to pillows and tailored blouses, still retain elements of Mayan symbolism. The symbolic significance of weaving has led to a greater interest in learning the craft among ethnic tourists than has ceramics. As a result all of Pasquala's students have been adults, who, like the author, have apprenticed themselves to her. Pasquala's independence from community ties also positions her to assist in contracting out textile work for government and private employers.

Pasquala seeks a closer cultural identity with her ethnic tourist friends than does Manuela, but she is less knowledgeable about the nature of their lives "at home." Manuela, having visited the United States with several of her friends, has a broader understanding. She has an uncanny ability to anticipate what her tourist friends want to convey, often filling in the words for which they seem to be groping. Though Manuela professes not to know English, at a party the author was startled to witness her spontaneously chuckling over an English pun. Pasquala excels at anticipating emotional needs. A collector from a United States museum related to the author that during a recent

sojourn in San Cristóbal, "Pasquala was the one person I could talk to and confide in. She offered me such sympathy when I was lonely. She was a better friend than anyone I met from the United States."

CONCLUSIONS

In their pioneering efforts, Manuela and Pasquala have developed relationships with outsiders that have paved their way to relative economic independence and to their role as innovators in transforming local craft objects into items suitable in the world market (Stephen 1993:27). Both have functioned as artisans, as teachers, and for a time, as intermediaries to merchants. Both have experienced ethnicity as "contested terrain"; but because of the particular constraints and opportunities of their lives, they have resolved the contest differently (Stephen 1993:27). Manuela presents herself as wholly Mayan. She is pleased with her accomplishments and expresses contentment with her life. She knows her value and is no longer hesitant to negotiate higher prices for her ceramics. She chuckles with good humor about how far she has come and the misadventures she has encountered along the way.

To the extent Pasquala has rejected her Mayan heritage, she has increased her freedom to operate as an entrepreneur and to aspire to a more middle-class life. Pasquala perceives herself in dramatic terms as a survivor. She has lived by her wits, accommodating herself to a series of foreigners with whom she has intensely identified. "Thank God for strangers!" she exclaims.

Despite the costs that each has experienced, both women vigorously reject the traditional Mayan woman's role for themselves. They have constructed their lives, their identities, their life stories, with a sense of adventure and of increasing confidence in their abilities to rise to new occasions and encounters. They are an example of why, as Hartsock maintains in her critique of Foucault, one needs theories that give attention to how women use "their capacities, abilities and strengths . . . as guides for a potential transformation of power relationships" (1990:158). Through their existence at the further reaches of the international craft market, Manuela and Pasquala have not only "stepped outside" the subordinate place of women in Mayan culture, they have negotiated an unusual degree of equality in the tourist-"touree" relationship (van den Berghe 1992, 1994). In their willingness to risk the vulnerability of crossing wide linguistic and cultural barriers, in their skillful abilities to create intimacy through shared histories, they have become expert at not only crossing borders, but dissolving them. In the words of Paulo Freire (1973) they have become subjects rather than objects of history. □ □

Acknowledgments—The author would like to thank the following people for their assistance in preparing this article: Berta Pérez for her help in collecting and transcribing Manuela's life story; Louis Casagrande and Walter Morris for the information they shared on the marketing of crafts in Highland Chiapas; Frank C. Miller, Emily Cone-Miller, Greta Friedemann Sánchez, and Ann Kakaliouras for their thoughtful reading of the manuscript; and especially the two remarkable women who are the subject of this article, both for their generosity and the pleasure of their company. Pseudonyms have been used for them and for their villages.

REFERENCES

- Casagrande, Louis B.
1987 The Five Nations of Mexico. *Focus* 37:2-9.
- Cohen, Erik
1988 Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 15:371-386.
- Colby, Benjamin N. and Pierre van den Berghe
1961 Ethnic Relations in Southeastern Mexico. *American Anthropologist* 63:772-792.
- Cone, Cynthia A. and Frank C. Miller
1992 Peasantry, Protestantism and Professionalization Among the Highland Maya. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco.
- Cook, Scott
1993 Craft Commodity Production Market Diversity and Differential Rewards in Mexican Capitalism Today. In *Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans*, June Nash, ed., pp. 59-83. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Eber, Christine and Brenda Rosenbaum
1993 "That we may serve beneath your hands and feet": Women Weavers in Highland Chiapas, Mexico. In *Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans*, June Nash, ed., pp. 155-179. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Ehlers, Tracy Bachrach
1990 *Silent Looms: Women and Production in a Guatemalan Town*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Freire, Paulo
1973 *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Friedan, Betty
1963 *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Giddens, Anthony
1991 *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gossen, Gary H.
1993 The Other in Chamula Tzotzil Cosmology and History: Reflections of a Kansan in Chiapas. *Cultural Anthropology* 8:443-475.
- Graburn, Nelson H. H.
1976 The Arts of the Fourth World. In *Ethnic and Tourist Arts*, N. H. H. Graburn, ed., pp. 1-32. Berkeley: University of California Press.
1982 The Dynamics of Change in Tourist Arts. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 6(4):7-11.
1989 Tourism the Sacred Journey. In *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, Valene L. Smith, ed., pp. 17-32. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hartsock, Nancy
1990 Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women? In *Feminism and Postmodernism*, Linda Nicholson, ed., pp. 157-175. London: Routledge.
- Kaplan, Flora
1993 Mexican Museums in the Creation of a National Image in World Tourism. In *Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans*, June Nash, ed., pp. 163-165. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- King, Arden R.
1974 A Stratification of Labyrinths: The Acquisition and Retention of Cultural Identity in Modern Culture. In *Social and Cultural Identity in Modern Culture*, Thomas K. Fitzgerald, ed., pp. 106-117. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Lackey, Louana M.
1982 *The Pottery of Acatlán*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Linde, Charlotte
1993 *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- MacCannell, Dean
1984 Reconstructed Ethnicity, Tourism and Cultural Identity in Third World Communities. *Annals of Tourism Research* 11:375-392.
- Modiano, Nancy
1973 Indian Education in the Chiapas Highlands. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Morris, Walter F.
1987 *Living Maya*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.
- Nash, June
1970 *In the Eyes of the Ancestors: Belief and Behavior in a Mayan Community*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
1993 Maya Household Production in the World Market: The Potters of Amatenango del Valle, Chiapas, Mexico. *In Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans*, June Nash, ed, pp. 127-153. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Ortiz, Andrés
1986 Mercados y Artesanías Indígenas: Construcción de la Identidad Nacional: Entrevista a Enrique Valencia. *Mexico Indigena* 12:17-21.
- Rosaldo, Renato
1989 *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Stephen, Lynn
1993 Weaving in the Fast Lane: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in Zapotec Craft Commercialization. *In Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans*, June Nash, ed., pp. 25-57. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Swain, Margaret Byrne
1977 Cuna Women and Ethnic Tourism: A Way to Persist and an Avenue to Change. *In Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, Valene Smith, ed., pp. 71-81. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
1990 Commoditizing Ethnicity in Southwest China. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 14(1):26-29.
- Tedlock, Barbara
1991 From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation: The Emergence of Narrative Ethnography. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 47:29-94.
- van den Berghe, Pierre L.
1992 Tourism and the Ethnic Division of Labor: A Mexican Case Study. *Annals of Tourism Research* 19:234-249.
1994 *The Quest for the Other: Ethnic Tourism in San Cristobal, Mexico*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Submitted 31 January 1994
Resubmitted 12 July 1994
Accepted 19 September 1994
Refereed anonymously