

ROUTLEDGE REVIVALS

Culture and Economy

Contemporary Perspectives

Edited by
Ullrich Kockel



CULTURE AND ECONOMY



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Culture and Economy

Contemporary perspectives

Edited by
ULLRICH KOCKEL
University of the West of England
Bristol

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2002 by Ashgate Publishing

Reissued 2019 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX1 4 4RN

52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © Ullrich Kockel 2002

The Editor has asserted his moral right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the Editor of this Work.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Publisher's Note

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

Disclaimer

The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and welcomes correspondence from those they have been unable to contact.

A Library of Congress record exists under LC control number:

ISBN 13: 978-1-138-71926-2 (hbk)

ISBN 13: 978-1-315-19546-9 (ebk)

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>viii</i>
1 Culture and Economy: A Brief Introduction <i>Ulrich Kockel</i>	1
2 The Social Economy of Food Poverty in Russia <i>Melissa L. Caldwell</i>	11
3 Strategies and Tactics of Economic Survival: De-Industrialisation, Work, and Change in an Alpine Mining Community <i>Johannes Moser</i>	35
4 Social Markets and the Meaning of Work in Eastern Germany <i>Angela Jancius</i>	60
5 Constructing Shareholders: Images of Individual Investors in Stockholm <i>Mónica Lindh de Montoya</i>	71
6 Magic and the Market: A Case Study of Warren Buffett and Shareholders of <i>Berkshire Hathaway</i> <i>Kurt Hartwig</i>	89
7 Tradition in the Market Place: An Ethnographic Study of a Polish Amber Tradeshow <i>Amy Goldenberg</i>	99
8 Traditional Textiles and Economic Development: Lithuanian Groups in Latvia's Border Regions <i>Vida Savoniakaitė</i>	109

9	Transboundary Co-Operation as a Vehicle for Cultural Interchange: A Case Study of Poland <i>Ann Kennard</i>	124
10	Culture, Transactions, and Profitable Meanings: Tourism in Andalusia <i>Antonio Miguel Nogués</i>	147
11	Creating a Cornish Brand: Discourses of 'Traditionality' in Cornish Economic Regeneration Strategies <i>Amy Hale</i>	164
12	'The Tiger No Longer Speaks Celtic': Economic Conditioning and the Irish Language <i>Máiréad Nic Craith</i>	175
13	Language and Equity: A Development Perspective <i>Jane Saville</i>	196
14	The EU as Manufacturer of Tradition and Cultural Heritage <i>Reinhard Johler</i>	221
15	Culture and Economy: Towards an Agenda for Further Research <i>Máiréad Nic Craith and Ulrich Kockel</i>	231
	<i>Index</i>	241

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 8.1	Textile tradition	116
Figure 9.1	Euroregions around Poland's borders	133
Figure 12.1	The Irish <i>Gaeltacht</i> regions	189
Table 12.1	Numbers of emigrants from Ireland, 1851-1920	183
Table 12.2	Estimates of Irish-speaking emigrants from counties with the highest proportion of Irish-speakers in the years 1851-1855	184
Table 12.3	Estimates of Irish-speaking emigrants from counties with the highest proportion of Irish-speakers in the years 1891-1900	185

List of Contributors

Melissa L. Caldwell is Lecturer in Social Studies at Harvard University. She received a PhD in anthropology from Harvard in 2000, and is currently completing a book entitled *Not By Bread Alone: Social Security in the New Russia*. Her research interests include the anthropology of food, the politics of humanitarian aid, and church-state relations in post-socialist societies. She is co-editor, with James L. Watson, of the forthcoming book *Food: Producing and Consuming Cultures*.

Amy Goldenberg is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology at Indiana University. She has a Master's Degree in Slavic Literature and Linguistics from Ohio State University. Currently, she is engaged in research about Polish amber art.

Amy Hale is Visiting Assistant Professor in Humanities at the University of Central Florida. Her research interests include culture and economic regeneration and cultural tourism with a focus on contemporary Celtic identities in Cornwall. She is the co-editor of two books, *New Directions in Celtic Studies* (with Philip Payton) and *Inside Merlin's Cave* (with Tim Saunders and Alan M. Kent).

Kurt Hartwig is a doctoral candidate in Folklore at Indiana University, with minors in Slavic Languages and Literature and Performance Studies. He has received several grants, including a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship, under which he spent 2001 studying theatre in the Czech Republic. He works professionally in theatre and film production.

Angela Jancius is completing her doctoral dissertation with the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University, where she is also teaching. She received a scholarship from

the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to support fieldwork in Leipzig. Her research interests include post-socialism, unemployment, the politics of labour, and welfare reform.

Reinhard Johler is Professor of Empirical Cultural Studies at the Ludwig-Uhland-Institut für Empirische Kulturwissenschaften, Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen. His current research interests include migration, comparative European folk customs, and the process of Europeanisation. A regular contributor to journals of European ethnology, his books include *Die Formierung eines Brauches. Der Funken- und Holeyfannsonntag. Studien aus Vorarlberg, Liechtenstein, Tirol, Südtirol und dem Trentino* (2000).

Ann Kennard is Principal Lecturer in German and European Studies in the School of European Studies, University of the West of England, Bristol. Her early research included Polish foreign trade, and relations between the Comecon and the EC. For some years now she has published on cross-border co-operation between Poland and Germany, and more recently has broadened out to include the wider central and east European context in anticipation of EU enlargement.

Ulrich Kockel is Professor of European Studies and Director of the Centre for European Studies, University of the West of England, Bristol. In 2001-03, he is convenor of the ESRC Research Seminar in European Ethnology. His books include *Regional Culture and Economic Development: Explorations in European Ethnology* (2002), and *Borderline Cases: The Ethnic Frontiers of European Integration* (1999).

Mónica Lindh de Montoya is a researcher at the Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University, where she received her PhD. She has carried out research on rural development and is the author of *Progress, Hunger and Envy: Commercial Agriculture, Marketing and Social Transformation in the Venezuelan Andes* (1996). Her research interests centre on the field of economic anthropology, and she is currently researching small investors in the Stockholm stock market.

Johannes Moser is Head of Department for Folk Life Studies (Volkskunde) at the Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde in Dresden. His main research interests include economic anthropology, especially work and unemployment; youth culture, and urban community studies. He is the editor of *Jugendkulturen. Recherchen in Frankfurt am Main und London* (2000).

Antonio Miguel Nogués is Chair of Anthropological Studies and Professor of the Anthropology of Leisure and Tourism, and Political Anthropology at Miguel Hernández University, Spain. He was an associated researcher at the Amsterdamse School voor Sociaal Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (1995), and a Visiting Professor at Escola Superior de Gestão, Hotelaria e Turismo of the Universidade do Algarve (1997).

Máiréad Nic Craith holds the Chair of Irish Culture and Language at the newly established Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages in the University of Ulster. Her research interests include culture and identity politics, European influences on Irish culture, and regional diversity in the context of EU integration. Her many books include *Plural Identities, Singular Narratives: The Case of Northern Ireland* (2002).

Jane Saville is a Senior Lecturer in English and European Studies at the University of the West of England, Bristol. A professional EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher, and co-editor, with G. M. Blue and J. Milton, of *Assessing English for Academic Purposes* (2000), she also has an MSc in Development Studies. Her research interests include political and socio-economic aspects of language teaching and policy.

Vida Savoniakaitė is Senior Researcher in the Department of Ethnology at the Lithuanian Institute of History. Her research interests include ethnic identity of traditional society and migrants communities, local culture, and anthropological perspectives on the multi-medial present. She is the author of *Textiles in Rural Culture* (1998), and, more recently, *Creative Work and Traditions* (2002).

1 Culture and Economy: A Brief Introduction

Ulrich Kockel

Since the mid-1980s – the period leading up to the Maastricht Treaty and the re-invention of the ‘European Economic Community’ (EEC) as ‘European Union’ (EU) – ‘culture’ has become something of a buzzword in European integration and regional planning, and at the same time a kind of battle cry for regions and groups seeking a greater measure of self-determination. For many of the so-called ‘peripheral’ regions, ‘culture’ is considered the only viable resource they have for economic development. Yet the actual concept of ‘culture’, as used in this context, has remained rather oblique. At the same time, neo-liberal economics has become the dominant paradigm across a wide range of cultural contexts, while the cultural contingency of that paradigm itself is being obscured.

Having come to European ethnology from a background in economics, I find this trend particularly fascinating. In much of twentieth century discourse, ‘culture’ and ‘economy’ have been represented in juxtaposition, if not indeed as an outright contradiction of terms. The spectrum of debate ranges from the formalist-substantivist dispute in economic anthropology to the Frankfurt School’s critique of the ‘cultural industry’, to the *fin de siècle* ‘cultural turn’ in practically every humanities and social sciences discipline. Towards the end of the century this debate became increasingly esoteric, as the fashionable constructionist approach to just about everything encouraged the hegemony of literary criticism as the chief epistemology of these disciplines, requiring the textualisation of the practices and phenomena of everyday life for analytical purposes. From the perspective of European ethnology, Orvar Löfgren (2001) and others have criticised this ontologisation of ‘text’ to the

neglect of 'lived experience', which they regard as the proper ontological foundation for cultural inquiry. At the same time, 'culture' at precisely the level of lived experience became more and more instrumentalised and commodified.

The area where these processes attracted most attention initially was probably tourism, as many regions located some distance away from the sun-and-sand mainstays of mass tourism saw the promotion of 'heritage' or 'cultural' tourism as a viable alternative, to make up for a shortfall in industrial development (cf. Kockel 1994). With this type of tourism – together with the increasing affordability of far-flung exotic destinations – reducing the income of traditional sun-and-sand resorts, these have also begun to discover their culture and heritage as a resource for development (see Nogués in this volume).

As research on culture and economy accelerated, it soon became clear that, on the one hand, the instrumentalisation and commodification of 'culture' is by no means restricted to tourism while, on the other hand, there are other, equally if not more complex issues concerning the relationship between culture and economy that needed to be examined, and from different disciplinary perspectives paying greater attention to people's lived experience than to any trendy analytic text (cf. Kockel 2002). The 1990s saw the growth of practical concerns with regard to this problematic, as they found expression, for example, in the conferences organised under the EU's PACTE programme (Kilday 1998). By the end of the decade, research in this field had reached a stage where it seemed necessary to try and survey work in progress with a view to identifying key strands of a research programme. This is mainly being done through workshops and conferences, and first outputs from these are beginning to appear in print (e.g., du Gay and Pryke 2002). The present volume brings together contributions from two such meetings, as well as a number of invited essays.

Culture and Economy in Contemporary Europe

At the 2000 conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) in Kraków, a panel surveyed theories and practices that shape cultural and economic relationships

in Europe at the threshold of the twenty-first century. The contributors investigated the culture/economy nexus within a specifically European context primarily from three angles. Case studies of territorially and non-territorially based groups shed light on the everyday practices associated with the envaluation of culture in the context and for the purposes of economic development. These were complemented by case studies of organisations and institutions involved in the design and implementation of economic strategies and policies at various levels, scrutinising the concepts of 'culture' and 'economy' employed at the level of policy decision making.

A third perspective was offered by theoretical contributions examining aspects of economy, such as the market, or *homo oeconomicus*, as cultural constructs in their historical context, considering 'mainstream' economics as well as 'folk' models of the economy. Critics of neo-liberal economics have often pointed out that it seems to have assumed the role of a secular religion, and this critique of the cultural function of economics led to the theme for a second meeting.

Economics as Folklore

Anthropologists and economic historians working with an ethnological perspective have long argued that the economy is culturally contingent. Taking this argument one step further, a panel at the 2001 conference of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) in Budapest examined the premise that economics as we commonly know it – that is, the dominant neo-liberal paradigm that pervades policy making and lays claim to being a universal explanatory framework for all spheres of life – can itself be analysed in much the same way as other oral or literary traditions of everyday life, that is, as folklore. Economics abounds with superstitions and moral imperatives in disguise, affirming the societal code of values and conduct we are supposed to live by. Thus it serves as a quasi-religious belief system in our secularised world. The legitimacy of such systems is maintained either by their congruence with experienced, everyday actuality, or by powerful interests.

Contributions to this session concentrated on two aspects. Case studies of aspects of everyday life investigated how people try to make sense of economic 'imperatives' in their lived experience. How effectively is the code of values and conduct transmitted in everyday practice? How is it adapted and changed in economic interaction? How far, and in what forms, does it penetrate into various non-economic spheres of life? To what extent is the economic belief system congruent with the experienced, everyday actuality at the local level? What contribution does it make to the construction of localities, local identities, or power structures, and to their interaction across local and wider contexts? What are the power structures that maintain or modify the hegemonic view at this level, how do they work, and what determines their success or failure?

Some contributions looked at economic discourse itself in its academic, media and public policy form, analysing a range of economic texts with the tools of folklore study. The purpose of this was to establish whether and to what extent treating economics as folklore can shed light on some of the pressing socio-economic problems of contemporary life. Intended as a critique of ideology, the discussion aimed to highlight the contribution European ethnology might be able to make to a better understanding of issues and processes that will shape our everyday lives in the new century. The session also raised questions regarding the production of ethnological knowledge, and the consequent (potential) role of the ethnologist in the shaping of political processes. This, together with questions raised by contributions on the stock market (de Montoya and Hartwig in this volume), and on heritage-related policy (Hale, Johler, Nic Craith and Nogués in this volume), has led to the theme for a further workshop, on 'Heritage Futures', at the 2002 EASA conference in Copenhagen.

Outline of the Book

The present volume brings together, revised and thematically arranged, contributions to the first two workshops. Several interesting papers could not be included, for various reasons. A number of additional essays were invited, to cover specific

aspects of the overall theme. The volume presents different disciplinary perspectives, with most contributors coming from social/cultural anthropology, European ethnology, folklore, or a combination of these. Other disciplines include economics, geography, history and linguistics.

Social Economy in Transition

The first three essays examine instances of the transition between different economic circumstances. Caldwell's study of food poverty in Russia puts the impact of the celebrated 'end of history' under the ethnographic microscope, looking at a society where the certainty of work with its however limited prospects of life-chances has radically disappeared. Foreign aid policies are shown as being informed by circumstances and models of the economy that are quite removed from the everyday lived experience of local people in Moscow. Thus the food aid issue 'represents a larger debate over the relation between economy and society'.

While the poverty witnessed in Moscow does not (yet) have its parallels in the Austrian town of Eisenerz, Moser's study of a declining Alpine mining community highlights underlying processes of change that are not entirely dissimilar. In both cases, global market forces are seen as having destroyed the certainties that came with an established mode of production and exchange. In the Austrian case, these certainties had a basis in the reliance on a single industrial sector rather than, overtly at least, a particular political system. For people who are struggling to survive economically, the distinction may be purely academic, the point being that, in both cases, they have lost what they regarded as the bedrock of their social economy.

The changing meaning of work as a result of much wider economic transformation is a theme continued by Jancius, who looks at work creation schemes in the context of post-Communism. Her case study of Leipzig shows a society where the unification of political territories into a new German state has not only replaced the political system of the eastern part with that of the western one, but swept away many, if perhaps not all of the remnants of the social market economy that once made West Germany a *Wirtschaftswunderland*. At

the same time, we see individuals and organisations trying to balance a vaguely remembered social ethic that underpinned that economy with the 'rags to riches' folk tales of neo-liberalism, to create an interpretive framework that might help them cope with their changed circumstances.

Images of the Market

The next three chapters draw our attention from the changing fortunes of individuals in a transitory social economy more to the market itself. Elevated to the status of a divine principle by economic ideologues who persistently misread the moral philosophy of Adam Smith as gospel, the market is presented both in textbooks and in political broadcasts as the panacea for all (or most) that is considered wrong in modern society. Good examples of how markets are supposed to function are found in regular marketing events, such as trade fairs, and in more regular activities, such as the daily trading at the stock exchange.

Montoya discusses how culture affects perceptions of financial markets among shareholders in Sweden, and how this influences shareholders' actions within these markets. Visions of a 'society of shareholders' clash with other ideals of society, including those of the contemporary radical critics of global capitalism, but also the concept, strongly developed in Sweden, of a socially responsible economy. In her conclusion, the author refers to the same ideological balancing act earlier contributors identify, between communal and individual goals of economic activity.

Hartwig's ethnography of shareholders in one particular US stock market company reveals some of the superstitions with which people approach trading in this particular market. Given that the stock market has considerably more bearing on people's life-chances than the average spring bazaar at a community centre (which otherwise may also serve as a good example of how markets may function), this chapter serves as a salutary reminder that there is more than one kind of rationality, and that *homo oeconomicus* does not become 'irrational' economic man (or woman) just because he or she relies on a bit of magic to deliver the goods.

After the lofty heights of financial markets, Goldenberg's essay takes us back to the former Eastern Bloc, and to trade in material objects, in this case art and craft products using precious stone. Her study of a trade fair casts light on how the Polish amber industry tries to continue its craft tradition in a globalising economy, while illustrating the construction of place with reference to a particular combination of culture and economy, a theme that is picked up again in the next group of essays.

Constructing Places and Spaces by Culture Contact

Keeping the focus on craft traditions in a globalising economy – in this case textile production – and remaining in the former Eastern Bloc, Savoniakaitė takes the case of emigrants to examine how, in situations of culture contact conditioned by economic change, the interplay of economy and culture can erode and, at the same time, protect cultural traditions by creating in-between spaces where, in this instance, emigrants produce 'heritage' goods to meet a demand in their homeland. While this helps to preserve certain traditional styles, it lets migrants engage creatively with the host society. Textile styles and patterns become signs of belonging elsewhere in space and time, but, if one follows the author's argument, this rooted-ness is looking forward at least as much as backward. Migrants can thus live quasi with one foot in each of two cultural worlds. In the first decade after the end of the Soviet Union, this diversity may have been especially appreciated. Whether the utopian vision of a postmodern identikit as a solution to problems of assimilation and acculturation will survive the resurgence of xenophobia across Europe remains to be seen.

Fear of the Other, as xenophobia may be translated, has characterised intercultural relations in many border regions for a long time, and the Polish borders are no exception here. Kennard examines the Euroregions that have been created along these borders in preparation for Poland's accession to the EU to assess how co-operation across a state border, inspired if not exactly forced by economic benefits expected from EU membership, is used to support cultural interchange in areas marked by a long and violent history of ethnic and

political conflict. It is worth considering, in this context, the similarities and differences between those regions straddling the border with Germany, and those that connect with other Slavonic countries.

Culture contact of a different kind is the subject of Nogués' discussion of tourism-related policies in Andalusia. Once one of the sun-spots of international tourism, the region has been trying in recent years to re-invent itself as a cultural tourism product. The study explores how the Andalusian territory is being converted into spaces and places where the tourist and the local negotiate new Andalusias, which are a commodified version of the region, but at the same time have the potential for being more than that. To utilise this potential creatively is, Nogués suggests, one of the key challenges for policy makers.

'Branding' Culture

As culture is being turned into a commodity for consumption, regions trying to capitalise on their culture and heritage are concerned with developing their specific brand for marketing their product globally. Hale considers the case of Cornwall, a region on the 'Celtic Fringe' of northwest Europe. Tradition in Cornwall means the Celtic past, but also includes an image of the region as a cradle of the industrial revolution. In popular perception, the two images are not easily reconciled. To some extent, this has to do with a different kind of 'branding' – the stigmatising of the Celtic regions and their traditional culture as 'backward', and associated with poverty.

Nic Craith demonstrates this type of branding with specific reference to another Celtic region, Ireland. Her essay shows how stigmatisation of the language in particular went hand in hand with the depopulation of the island through famine and emigration. Whereas 'Irish culture' as a brand has been doing very well in the global market place for some time, this does not extend to 'Irish' as a language. Given the global success of 'Irish' as a brand, the author makes a case for including the language more proactively. Her conclusion highlights what is perhaps the greatest impediment to such a strategy – the everyday use of English, with its connotations of modernity and prosperity, in preference to Irish, associated with poverty and backwardness. Disregard for its linguistic heritage makes

Ireland, in the author's view, merely an island off the shore of its cultural 'mainland', that is, Great Britain.

From a development studies perspective, Saville examines the global association of indigenous languages with poverty in contrast to the perceived link between English and prosperity. She reviews the situation in a number of developing countries with regard to language policies and elite attitudes, and looks in detail at the representation of English as a source of social and economic advancement. The language issue, both in the Irish/European and in the Third World context, emphasises a point already indicated by other essays – that the utilisation of any aspect of culture as a resource for development is decisively shaped by prevailing power relationships. This in itself is nothing new, and various campaigns for indigenous languages have used a vocabulary of 'empowerment' for a long time. What is new, however, is that 'culture' has become an economic commodity of considerable earning power, as well as a key political issue.

Recognition of linguistic rights may help to promote social and economic equity, as Saville argues. Moreover, language holds the key to culture. In this sense, the more proactive use of lesser-used languages like Irish may indeed unearth a treasure. In economist-speak, treasure hunts are described as 'futures markets', and there may well be such 'futures markets' for culture and heritage in which people invest heavily despite considerable risk because the prospect of a major pay-off makes it all seem worthwhile.

Heritage Futures

In recent years, the EU has been one of the main investors in such 'futures', largely in pursuit of a European identity rooted in a common cultural heritage. Taking the EXPO in Hanover as his starting point, Johler questions contemporary identity politics and the role of the EU in the production of cultural heritage and traditions, which he describes as 'scarce goods in the field of global economy'. This leads him to postulate 'a more dynamic concept of cultural heritage', and call for 'new thoughts and ideas from us European ethnologists'. In many ways, the signposts for the way ahead point back towards the disciplinary history of European ethnology and its as good as

forgotten connection with political economy and governance (Kockel 2002). In the final chapter, Nic Craith and Kockel outline an agenda for interdisciplinary research in the field of culture and economy, drawing from the discussion in this volume and other work. A key item on this agenda is the detailed examination of 'heritage futures', which provides the theme for a panel at the 2002 EASA conference. The panel is addressing questions such as whether and how culture may be utilised as a resource for the twenty-first century; whether this necessarily means commodification; who will win in the gamble, who will lose, and what implications all that may have for economy, society and – not least of all – culture itself.

References

- du Gay, P. and Pryke, M. (eds) (2002), *Cultural Economy: Cultural Analysis and Commercial Life*, Sage.
- Kilday, A. (ed.) (1998), *Culture and Economic Development in the Regions of Europe*, Ectarc.
- Kiss, R. and Paládi-Kovács, A. (eds) (2001), *Times – Places – Passages: Ethnological Approaches in the New Millennium*, Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Kockel, U. (ed.) (1994), *Culture, Tourism and Development: The Case of Ireland*, Liverpool.
- Kockel, U. (2002), *Regional Culture and Economic Development: Explorations in European Ethnology*, Ashgate.
- Löfgren, O. (2001), 'European Ethnology in the Jungles of "The New Economy"', in Kiss and Paládi-Kovács, 11-23.

2 The Social Economy of Food Poverty in Russia

Melissa L. Caldwell

In spring 1998, an elderly man hobbled along a sidewalk in downtown Moscow, not far from Red Square and the Kremlin. Dressed in a dark, well-worn overcoat and black fedora, the man slowly picked his way along the uneven pavement in front of brightly lit cafés and elite fashion boutiques. As pedestrians rushed past, he turned his stooped body to face them, extending his trembling hand beseechingly for spare coins. A piece of cardboard hung at the end of a string looped around his neck; the hand-lettered sign read simply, *Golodnyi*, or 'hungry' (also, 'the hungry one'). On the other side of the street stood McDonald's, an American pizza restaurant, and sleek buildings housing the main offices for a number of large international corporations. In their shadows several children slept at the feet of a woman who held up a small sign on which she had written a short blessing for those who might donate a few rubles to help feed her children.

During the transition from state socialism to market capitalism that has marked the last ten years since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, one of the most fundamental changes affecting daily life has been the way in which economic practices have been transformed from a system marked by shortages to one with supermarkets and automated banking machines on every corner. At the same time, economic-based disparities have increased, and juxtapositions of poverty and commercial wealth – such as those mentioned above – have become even more visible. Such contrasts were only heightened in the months following Russia's financial crisis in August 1998, when federal

authorities devalued the rouble, a move that sparked plunging exchange rates (the rouble to US\$ exchange rate plummeted from approximately 6:1 to 15:1 within hours; by June 2000, the value was 25:1), bankruptcies, inflation, and the continued withholding of salaries and pensions by the federal bank.

In this chapter I explore the ways in which food poverty in Russia today has been theorised, both by foreign observers, policy makers, aid workers, and scholars, as well as by Russians themselves. This inquiry gets at the heart of larger questions concerning the intersections of society and economy in post-socialist Russia. Specifically, what distinguishes social and economic practices from each other? How do they in turn inform and constitute each other? And to what extent are such fundamental economic activities as procuring food intrinsically dependent on community articulation and legitimation? By comparing the experiences and narratives of Muscovite food aid participants with the observations of foreign media and policy analysts, I describe how the 'economy of discourses' (Foucault 1990: 11) and 'economy of practices' (Bourdieu 1990: 122) produced by these perspectives reflect competing models about the nature of food poverty in Russia today. At the same time that outsiders more generally associate poverty and food aid with economic conditions, Russian recipients and domestic aid workers approach them as social markers. The dialectic that emerges from these rhetorical conflicts frames a larger debate over the relationship between the economic and the social.

I begin with a discussion of the ways in which food poverty, among other forms of material hardship, has been theorised in the social science literature. From this I delve into the specific issue of how food poverty is variously represented and contested by Russians and non-Russians. First, I outline how outside analysts have detailed the correlation between food aid and economic conditions in Russia. This is followed by a description of Muscovites' interpretations of their involvement with food aid programs. Drawing from these competing discourses, I illustrate the intersections of the social and the economic. The data on which this inquiry is based derive from fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Moscow between fall 1997 and summer 1999.

Supplemental materials are drawn from newspaper and journal articles, as well as public debates administered on 'Johnson's Russia List', a list-serve and Internet discussion group for Russian studies.

My primary field site was a soup kitchen program administered by the Christian Church of Moscow (CCM), an international Protestant congregation in Moscow. I have given pseudonyms to the Christian Church of Moscow and to members of this community in an effort to protect their privacy. It is important to note that CCM staff maintain that their intent is to provide food, not religious instruction, to recipients.

The congregation's 300 members include North American and European diplomats, corporate executives, and their families; African diplomats, students, and refugees; and a small group of Russian participants. Church members run four daily soup kitchens that provide hot meals to 1,500 Muscovites. CCM staff have contracted with private cafeterias to provide the necessary space, cooks, dishes, and other facilities. Meals generally consist of a bowl of soup, meat, potatoes, bread, and tea. On special holidays and over long breaks when the cafeterias are closed (e.g., New Year), CCM soup kitchen clients receive supplemental packages of cereal grains, sugar, flour, oil, and other staples. CCM volunteers serve meals, clear tables, and solicit outside donations for the program. Although several volunteers are Muscovites who are also program recipients, most are foreigners who live in Moscow. Approximately one-half of the volunteers are North American and western European expatriates and their families; the rest are students and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa. Members of the CCM congregation estimate that there are approximately 3,000 Africans currently living in Moscow. Owing to recent racial tensions against people with dark skin (including people from the Caucasus, Central Asia, Africa, and East Asia), the position of these students and refugees in Russian society is precarious.

The daily routines, administrative procedures, and community profile of the CCM program closely resemble those at other food programs I have visited in Moscow, including soup kitchens organised by local church groups, a Red Cross

after-school soup kitchen for children, a regional senior citizen centre, and a soup kitchen for the homeless.

Like their counterparts in other food aid programs, CCM staff collaborate with social workers from regional welfare agencies and veterans' councils to identify individuals with the most constrained economic resources – generally people receiving government stipends. In Russia's current subsidy system, which has been continued from the Soviet period, people are assigned status within a graduated hierarchy based on social experience: for instance, retiree (pensioner), veteran of labour or war, survivor of the blockade of Leningrad during World War II, invalid with a certain class of disability, and so on. Varying pension amounts are then assigned to these categories. CCM clients are representative of aid recipients throughout Moscow as most have status as pensioners, invalids, or veterans, and receive the smallest monthly pension amounts, typically sums of 500-600 rubles (approximately US\$83-100 in June 1998, US\$25-30 in June 1999, US\$18-21 in June 2000).

Imagining Food Poverty

For the most part, the social sciences literature on food poverty (including scarcity, hunger, malnutrition, starvation, and famine) has provided external analyses of either materialist causes (Drèze and Sen 1989; Kates 1995) or the biomedical effects on the victims (Scheper-Hughes cites a specific example of this in 1992: 548 n.8). Most case studies are drawn from Third World nations, although the contributors to *First World Hunger* (Riches 1997) have explored the relationships between the politics of welfare reform and hunger in First World nations. As an important corrective to theories such as these, anthropologist Johan Pottier (1999: 10) has argued for the necessity of including the perspectives of those directly involved in and affected by food shortages: 'How does expert opinion compare with the perceptions and strategies of vulnerable groups and individuals?' Ethnographic attention to local social actors thus has not only provided a bottom-up approach, but has also complicated our understandings of food poverty by

combining material concerns with experiential, symbolic, and practice-oriented approaches (see, for example, Aretxaga 1997; Brownell 1995; Glasser 1988; Prindle 1979; Scheper-Hughes 1992; Yan 1996).

Nevertheless, despite the plethora of research on aspects of food poverty throughout the world (for extensive overviews of this literature, see Dirks 1980; Pottier 1999; Scheper-Hughes 1992), the specific intersections of economic capital and social relations remain understudied. Most work addressing these issues focuses on their causal relationships: social relations alternately compensate for a lack of economic capital or redistribute what little capital exists in a community (Prindle 1979; Yan 1996); or a lack of economic capital disrupts social relations (Hastrup 1993). What has been omitted is the following question: to what extent are economic capital and social relations convergent? In the rest of this article I explore this question by comparing the competing narratives about food poverty that have emerged in Russia during the last several years.

The Politics of Scarcity in Russia

In both popular and academic discourses, much of Russian and Soviet social history during the twentieth century has been closely linked with themes of shortage. Several scholars explicitly situated the events of the revolutionary periods of the early 1900s with shortages of bread, among other foodstuffs. Representative book titles include: *The Fight for Bread* (*Bor'ba za khleb*) (Davydov 1971); *War, Bread, and Revolution* (*Voina, Khleb i Revoliutsiia*) (Kitanina 1985); *Bread and Authority, 1914-1921* (Lih 1990); and *Bread and Justice: State and Society in Petrograd, 1917-1922* (McAuley 1991). The 1920s and early 1930s were characterised by severe agricultural losses, widespread famine, and social aid programs. Although natural environmental conditions certainly factored into these problems, Robert Conquest (1986) has argued that the poor harvests were caused by Communist Party policies on collectivisation. Meanwhile, Kingsbury and Fairchild (1935) suggested that shortages of