TAMAGRINGO: CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY CHANGE IN TAMARINDO, COSTA RICA

by

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This thesis explores a relatively new migration pattern of North Americans to Costa Rica and the ways in which these migrants are changing landscapes of belonging and membership in the communities in which they settle. The number of affluent, transnational "amenity migrants" has been growing worldwide in the past decade, yet little is known about their impacts in receiving communities. Through semi-structured interviews with both Costa Ricans and North Americans in Tamarindo, Costa Rica, textual analysis of newspaper publications, and participant observation, I argue that North American amenity migrants are reworking the parameters of citizenship and democracy in Costa Rica. Even though they are not legally entitled to participate in the political process, foreign amenity migrants' economic power radically transforms social and cultural landscapes in Tamarindo. In addition, these affluent amenity migrants influence

political decision-making processes in ways that often marginalize local Costa Ricans economically, politically, and culturally.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF GRAPHS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> *Costa Ricans like to say theirs is the only country in Latin America, and perhaps the world, boasting a greater number of Americans than the number of its own émigrés abroad (Millman 2005).*

Costa Rica, especially in the past two decades, has drawn foreigners, the majority North Americans, with its renowned "pristine" natural landscapes, lack of a military, high literacy rates and a good health care system. All these factors seem to play into people's desire to view Costa Rica as an almost mythical place. One of the authors of many guidebooks on relocating to Costa Rica, Erin VanRheenen (2004) capitalizes on this mythical quality of Costa Rica by opening the introduction to her book with the following description:

> *Picture a place so green you'll need new words to describe all of the different shades. A place with a thousand kinds of butterflies and half again as many types of orchids…Imagine a stable democracy where foreign business is encouraged even as the environment is protected. A country with near-universal health care and one of the highest literacy rates in the Western Hemisphere. A place where you can get away from it all without leaving behind your creature comforts (3).*

Even though Costa Rica is often exalted for its democracy and peaceful nature, commonly referred to as the "Switzerland" of Central America, what is the relationship between this mythical ideal and the lived reality of most Costa Ricans in the context of the increasing migration by relatively wealthy foreigners and a globalized economy?

While living in Costa Rica in 2004 I was quite surprised by the number of North Americans residing in the country and the number of special interest groups formed by the North American community that existed: Associations of Foreign Residents, Democrats and Republicans Abroad groups, and a University of Michigan alumni group, were among over thirty English-speaking groups that advertised in the local English-language newspaper, *The Tico Times*, every week. These privileged migrants are not always welcomed though. Throughout my time living in Costa Rica I heard from Costa Rican friends, taxi cab drivers, hotel owners, and other citizens about the country's ills, for which they often blamed the foreign population, both the economically-privileged North American immigrants as well as the mostly economically-disenfranchised Nicaraguan immigrants, the largest immigrant group in the country. Blaming Americans for the rising cost of living and Nicaraguans for crime was commonplace. Moreover, while doing research in Guanacaste, I heard various comments from Ticos about how the Pacific coast has been lost to foreigners. Even as far back as the 1970s, a Costa Rican man wrote a series of articles for the paper, *Nacion*, warning of the "gringo[1] invasion" due to the lack of government regulation on foreign ownership of land (Kimitch 2006).

Nonetheless, the Costa Rican government enacted specific legislation in an attempt to attract foreign investors and residents in the late 1980s, and I became interested in the North American population residing in the country and its impacts. In what ways had North Americans altered social, economic, and cultural landscapes in the

[1] "Gringo" is a term used liberally to refer to "white" people or those from the "North" (from the U.S., Canada or Northern Europe) in Costa Rica.

communities where they reside? How were Ticos responding to the ever-increasing numbers of more affluent gringos? I was fascinated by ideas of citizenship and belonging in the context of globalization and a new wave of immigration and investment in Costa Rica. How do U.S. expats, many of whom are not necessarily legal residents but who hold economic advantages and sometimes political ones as well (as I will argue later), challenge our ideas about membership and belonging in Costa Rica? In what ways are power structures altered and how do changing power structures affect the formation of community and participation in that community?

This thesis will explore these questions and the ways in which transnational migration by North Americans to Costa Rica complicates traditional understandings of citizenship. In this introductory chapter I present an overview of contemporary global migration, introduce the idea of amenity migration in Costa Rica, and situate this migration within the broader context of relationships between the U.S. and Latin America. Details about the community of Tamarindo follow to provide a general understanding of the research site. Finally, I provide an overview of the political and economic landscapes of Costa Rica that influence and impact this migration stream.

Globalization and Migration

International migration is not a new phenomenon, and it has significantly shaped the development of nation states and their economic, political and cultural factors since the onset of industrial capitalism (Castles 2000). Massey et al (1998) divide

international migration into four historical phases: the mercantile period from the 1500s to the 1800s, the industrial capitalist period, marked by European emigration to New World countries, from the 1800s to the 1900s; a period of limited migration during World Wars I and II and the Great Depression; and post-industrial migration after World War II during which migration truly became international as labor migrants, no longer predominantly from Europe, increasingly originated from countries in the Global South.

Various factors have influenced the formation of contemporary migration streams, but one of the largest has been globalization (Castles 2000). The ease of international capital transfer; economical, fast, and reliable transportation; the loosening of previous trade restrictions; and the opening up of markets that were once protected, have led companies to move many of their operations overseas where costs are cheaper and labor and environmental regulations weaker. This mobile capital in turn has led to new forms of migration in addition to a backlash against immigration in receiving communities and countries. Since capital moves more freely through space and is hidden from the public eye, immigrants become the scapegoat for the less than desirable impacts of globalization like job insecurity and downward pressure on wages (Sassen 1988).

Since the end of the Cold War immigration has become a contested international political issue with many states enacting restrictive legislation in an attempt to quell migration by more marginalized groups (Castles 2002; Kofman 1995). Even with implementation of restrictive policies and rhetoric about border control by the government, this international labor migration has continued to play an important role in the economies of the receiving countries around the world (Massey 1998). Increasingly,

sending countries' economies have been impacted through remittances migrants send back to their home countries (Castels and Miller 1998). Part of the reason migration has become such a sticky issue for policymakers is that while globalization has facilitated both the movement of capital and people around the world it has weakened the power of the nation state to regulate their flows (Castels 2002).

This weakening of the nation state has largely resulted from the implementation of neoliberal policies over the past twenty-five years. Neoliberalism as an economic and political strategy stresses the withdrawal of the state in social and economic affairs and advocates a free market approach to correct socioeconomic disparities both between and within nations as each person, region, and/or country is allowed to compete in a globalized capitalist system (Johnston et al. 2000). Neoliberal strategies like the Structural Adjustment Policies required by International Financial Institutions and the Free Trade Agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement have effectively eroded many protections for local and regional markets and have greatly shaped the unequal relations that exist between countries and regions in the world today. A consequence of these policies is an increase in disparities in wealth both between and within the Global South and North. These unequal relations also prompt rural to urban migration within countries and migration from the Global South to the Global North as livelihoods in the Global South are disrupted (Massey and Taylor 2004; Castles 2002).

The unprecedented mobility of capital and people distinguish migration today from historical types of migration in various ways. Castles and Miller (1998) outline five trends in contemporary migration: "globalization of migration" with the ever more

diverse streams of migration that have affected almost every part of the world; "acceleration of migration," with the great increase in immigrants after the oil crisis of 1973; "differentiation of migration" with the proliferation of new motivations for migration, "feminization of migration" with the increase in international labor migration by women, and "politicization of migration" with the anti-immigrant sentiment of many citizens and restrictive policies enacted by states (8-9).

The mobility of capital, however, has tended to disadvantage the majority of workers and migrants around the world as most industries are able to relocate wherever labor and environmental protections may be weakest. While many workers have been negatively impacted by the job losses occurring with outsourcing labor and the erosion of job protection, there has also been an increase in elite or intellectual migrants who are benefiting from participation in the new economy dominated by financial and technology services. These migrants have high education and specific skill levels which afford them economic opportunities around the world and are largely sheltered from the impacts of globalization that many other blue-collar workers have experienced (Tehranian 2004).

The ways in which global political economic structures affect migration streams and how migration in turn affects the cultural landscapes of both receiving and sending communities has especially intrigued scholars in the past quarter century. Migration scholars not only examine the structural push and pull factors associated with migration, but also the individual experiences of actual migrants themselves and the economic, political, and cultural transformations that occur on scales from the individual to the supranational (Massey 1998; Castles 2002; Mitchell 2004; Silvey and Lawson 1999).

There is no one discipline or theory which adequately addresses the complexities of migration in a global world. Geographers are well positioned to study migration given the need to examine migration from various scales in order to fully understand its causes and consequences. They have made important contributions to the field from how the phenomenon must be examined from scales of the individual and his or her choice to migrate, to the ways in which migration affects the cultural landscape of a community, to political systems' effects on migration and vice versa. Geographers have also called attention to the need for place to be at the core of migration studies. Doreen Massey (2005) argues that place has been employed by both conservative reactionaries to immigration who are in favor of exclusionary policies *and* by marginalized groups in their struggle to claim autonomy over their territories and/or cultures which are often threatened by globalizing forces.

Migration and Citizenship

Heightened mobility, both of people and of capital, has changed the nature of migration and its impacts (Sassen 1998). Traditional scholarship on migration concentrated on two types – permanent, or settlement, migration and temporary migration for labor purposes – neither of which challenged the notion of the nation state: it was assumed that permanent migrants would eventually assimilate into the new society and temporary migrants would eventually return to their place of origin (Castles 1998). Contemporary migration, however, challenges the idea of membership to one nation state

alone (Castles 2000). That most migrants are only legal citizens of one nation state, often not the one in which they reside, complicates how we understand citizenship and provokes questions about membership, belonging and the exercise of rights in society.

Globalization has facilitated new types of migration which in turn beg for more complex theorizations of citizenship. Geographers have been some of those at the forefront of scholarly inquiry into new formations of citizenship in a globalized era. They have examined the ways in which marginalized groups of people experience exclusion to citizenship in both *de facto* and *de jure* forms. For example, geographers and others call attention to the ways in which women and ethnic minorities in the U.S. and the UK, while formally citizens, experience social and/or political exclusion to citizenship through discrimination which prevents them from participating in decision-making processes that affect their communities (Staeheli and Nagel 2006; Painter and Philo 1995; Castles and Davidson 2000). While these scholars examine *de facto* exclusion to citizenship, others like Ehrkamp and Leitner (2003) examine *de jure* exclusion to citizenship and argue that "social practices that individuals engage in beyond the state, through organizations of civil society and civic actions" (5) need to be included in new formulations of citizenship to legitimize undocumented immigrants, who, while not legal citizens, contribute to the dominant society through these informal citizenship processes.

But not all migrants are marginalized and migration by the privileged present challenges to citizenship as well. There exists a growing elite who is benefitting from globalization through ease of investing around the world and who thus has abundant possibilities for relocation. This economically-privileged migrant population has begun

to intrigue scholars and policymakers since its impacts on land use and economic and social landscapes are potentially great. Aiwha Ong (1999) examines the Chinese elite and argues that they have become truly mobile migrants with a "flexible" notion of citizenship that allows them to maintain cultural and economic ties with China while responding opportunistically to capitalist market forces and Western culture. Geographer Katharyne Mitchell (2004) also studies elite migrants from Hong Kong in Vancouver, their ability to "purchase multiple passports," and the ways in which they are altering the built landscapes and social landscapes of the neighborhoods where they reside. But while nation-state boundaries are dissolving for elites like these who are "inventing lifestyles transcending the structures of societies and states" (Geoffrey 2007, 287), those same nation-state boundaries are becoming more, or at least no less, rigid for other types of migrants like those studied by Ehrkamp and Leitner "who cannot afford to live the same fluid lives" and are subjected to ever more restrictive immigration policies (Geoffrey 2007, 287).

One of these new types of migration that challenges traditional understandings of citizenship is that by relatively affluent individuals whose motivations to move include lifestyle change, slower pace of life, cheaper real estate and proximity to natural landscapes and recreation opportunities (Moss 2006a; O'Reilly 2007; Geoffroy 2007). Various terms have been applied to this migration by a middle- to upper- class population who chooses their homes based on cost of living and quality of life factors. These include "amenity migration," "exurban migration," "second home migration," and "lifestyle migration" (Sofranko and Williams 1980; Moss 2006a; O'Reilly 2007).

Chapter II will discuss in detail these terms, their characteristics, and the justification for the use of the term "amenity migration" throughout this thesis. No universal definition of amenity migration exists, but most scholars agree that it describes a relatively affluent population who is attracted to relocate to areas with high natural amenities, intact natural landscapes, opportunities for leisure, and services (Moss 2006a; Nelson 2006; Sofranko and Williams 1980).

Amenity migration is increasingly gaining more attention from scholars (Moss 2006; Nelson 2006; Sofranko and Williams 1980), government agencies such as the United States Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture (Gustafson et al. 2005; McGranahan 1999), research institutes and community development groups (Dixon et al. 2006), and major news media. Several news articles have appeared in the past few years that have investigated this relatively new migration stream, especially the growing number of Americans, Canadians, and Northern Europeans relocating and buying second homes abroad (Lee 2005; Morris 2004; Rogers 2006; Kurtz-Phelan 2006). This international real estate boom and new mobility is attributed to several factors: the baby boomer population who is nearing retirement, young workers who are increasingly able to telecommute from anyplace in the world, families who are looking for slower-paced and safer places in which to raise their children, the ease of buying international real estate online, and improved financing and security for those interested in buying real estate internationally (Hall and Williams 1999; Moss 2006b; O'Reilly 2007).

Based on amenity migration research to date – which largely addresses it on a domestic scale such as within the United States – economically privileged amenity

migrants are altering communities where they reside, often creating rifts between "insiders" and "outsiders" and altering class hierarchies in communities shifting from resource-based to service-based economies (Moss 2006b; SmithKrannich 2000; Hall and Williams 1999). Not surprisingly, amenity migration is linked to tourism as the factors that draw amenity migrants are often found in areas with a tourist economy. Many amenity migrants visit a place several times as a tourist before deciding to buy a home and relocate there permanently or semi-permanently (Hall and Williams 1999; Geoffroy 2007; Mader 2006). However, the relationship between tourism and amenity migration can easily be thrown off balance. Many amenity migrants rely on the tourism industry to maintain their own businesses or rely on the services that the tourism industry provides, yet overdevelopment of the tourism industry often destroys the natural and cultural landscapes that drew the amenity migrants to relocate there in the first place (O'Reilly 2007).

Much as labor migrants play an integral role in a region's economy, so too do amenity migrants play a role in the economies of the places they reside through their investments, purchasing power, and employment of local workers. Amenity migrants have also been enticed and dissuaded by national policies, some of which are designed to attract their investments and ease residency requirements for them. One region that has seen a substantial growth in these amenity migrants from the U.S. is Central America, particularly Costa Rica.

Transnational Amenity Migration in Costa Rica

Costa Rica began offering lenient residency requirements and financial incentives for foreigners to move to and invest in the country in the late 1980s as part of an overall development strategy designed to increase tourism and foreign investment in the country. It has since become a hotspot for real estate investment, and an estimated 83% of all coastal developed property in the country is owned by foreigners (Montoya 2005). Increasingly, the majority of foreigners moving to and investing in the country are Americans with over 60% of foreign investment in residential real estate originating from the U.S. and Canada in 2005 and 2006 (see Figure 1).[2] Estimates of the amenity migrant population in Costa Rica vary widely. Estimates of numbers of U.S. citizens residing in Costa Rica range from a low of 20,000 according to the 2000 Costa Rican Census (InfoCensos 2000) to over 80,000 (Director of the Association of Residents of Costa Rica, personal communication, 8/29/06). Costa Rican census data greatly underreports the numbers of foreign residents that have relocated to Costa Rica as many foreign residents did not participate in the most recent census in 2000 due to immigration concerns (Director of the Association of Residents of Costa Rica, personal communication, 8/29/06). Also, much of the growth in amenity migration in Costa Rica has occurred in the past five years thus estimates from 2000 are quite outdated.

Those who live in the areas that are current investment "hotspots" are being priced out of their towns as real estate soars above inflation, like the 300% rise in values of coastal properties over the last couple years in Costa Rica (Rogers 2006). However, Costa Rica; in

[2] All maps and graphs in this thesis were created by the author.

addition to many other countries like Dubai, Malaysia and Bulgaria; have promoted foreign investment in real estate as another way to increase overall investment in their countries (Lee 2005). Promotion of real estate is seen as a "clean" development alternative to industries like petroleum and mining, much like tourism development has been viewed and marketed in the past two decades as the "industry without smokestacks" (McLaren 1998). But, just what kind of development is taking place and for whom?

While these foreign migrants have been a revenue source for countries the cultural and social fabric of the society can be negatively impacted as Christine Geoffrey (2007) finds in her research on British amenity migrants to France. She examines the ways in which these highly mobile migrants have quite fixed cultures, finding it difficult or unnecessary to adapt to the cultures of the places where they live, which in turn affects the local population. Geoffrey states,

> *"As these modern 'transmigrants' are changing or exchanging contexts, choosing to settle in their own dreamland, the ideal land to be offered to their children or the ideal land in which to spend their old age, it seems that they often forget about the people who inhabit their dream" (280).*

This sentiment is echoed by the Costa Rican gentleman quoted at the beginning of this chapter. "In many cases foreigners completely surround Costa Ricans who have not wanted to sell their land," he states in an interview with a reporter (Kimitch 2006). He now advises Costa Ricans to halt the increasing concentration of land ownership by foreigners by not selling their property to "the highest bidders" (Kimitch 2006).

Yet investment in Costa Rica by North Americans is not slowing[3] and migration by the economically-privileged from the Global North to the Global South is predicted to continue to increase (Dixon et al. 2006; Moss 2006a). Unfortunately, as scholars who have studied transnational amenity migration contend, little is known about this type of migration on a global scale or about its impacts for communities that become hotspot destinations for real estate investment (Moss 2006; Truly 2002). McMillan (2005), a journalist writing about amenity migration in Central America, asks, "Is courting retirees something poor countries can afford to do?" Given the historical political and economic relations between the United States and Costa Rica, it is questionable whether or not Costa Rica can afford an influx of North American migrants.

Costa Rica: Political and Economic Context

The growth in economically-privileged foreigners in countries like Costa Rica can be traced to the implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1980s that forced many countries in Latin America to dismantle state welfare programs, privatize state industries, and allow foreign direct investment (Robinson 2003; Chase 2002; Honey 1994). During the 1970s world prices for Costa Rica's major exports, coffee and bananas, fell sharply. The OPEC oil crisis and the collapse of the Central American Common Market, which promoted decreased tariffs and industrial development among Central American countries, exacerbated these economic losses for Costa Rica (Honey 1994). These events

[3] In the July 6, 2007 edition of *Nación,* the article "Inversion de foraneos en propiedades casi se triplico este ano" described that property investment by foreigners in Costa Rica had tripled in the first third of 2007 compared to the first third of 2006.

led to a severe economic crisis in Costa Rica during the early 1980s. Subsequently, the country became a major recipient of international aid from the United States, who needed a stable Costa Rica given the Sandinista regime in neighboring Nicaragua. By the mid-1980s Costa Rica was the second-largest recipient (per-capita) of U.S. international aid behind Israel (Honey 1994, 62). And, within one decade (1980-1990), the country had entered into several Structural Adjustment Agreements with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Robinson 2003, 138).

During this period of recession, however, Costa Rica saw the opportunity to attract additional revenue through the promotion of foreign investment in the tourism industry and passed the Tourism Development Incentives Law of 1985 which allowed tourism companies to import goods duty-free and exempted them from some income taxes (No. 6990, Art. 7). But the civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador did little to attract foreign visitors to Central America during the 1980s. Nevertheless, Costa Rica became known as an international tourism destination when president Oscar Arias, upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987, declared tourism to be in Costa Rica's national interest and invited international visitors to explore the country (Honey 1999). Costa Rica's national parks, many founded in the 1970s and modeled after the national parks in the United States, beckoned tourists interested in nature; and the country's 1948 "revolution" that eliminated the army and increased government support of health, education, and social programs gave it the reputation of a peaceful, safe country in which to travel (Robinson 2003, 134-136).

The Tourism Development Incentives law definitely accomplished its purpose, maybe too well, and by 1992 Costa Rica revised it to restrict many of the incentives due to the glut of international investors who had flooded the country. In 1993, for the first time, the country's earnings from tourism had surpassed those of its traditional export industries – coffee and bananas (Minca and Linda 2000, 110). The law had encouraged tourism development during an economically fragile period in Costa Rica, and was one of the first laws to point towards a shift in favoring private industry in the country (Honey 1994). But the Tourism Incentives Law is not the only legislation Costa Rica has developed to promote an investment-friendly climate. Through offering lenient residency status and tax incentives to foreigners beginning in the late 1980s, Costa Rica became a popular destination for retirees and investors whom it hoped would help grow the economy as well.

Up until 2006, applying for residency required $600 monthly income from a pension or investment or a $10,000 deposit into a Costa Rican bank account by an individual, couple, or family (Petersen 1997). The $600 monthly income changed to $1,000 in 2003 but was still relatively easy for most foreign residents to meet. However, beginning in August 2006, the amount required to gain residency changed substantially. Foreign residents must now have a monthly income of $1,000 per person (including children) or deposit $60,000 into a Costa Rican bank account. Given these changes, the numbers of people that went to Costa Rica to apply for residency through the Association of Residents of Costa Rica in June and July of 2006 more than doubled (Association of Residents of Costa Rica staff member, personal communication, 8/29/06). Residency is

just one part of the process of moving to Costa Rica, though, and many foreigners do not even bother with it, preferring instead to just live on a tourist visa and either leave the country every three months for 72 hours or pay a fine of roughly fifty dollars every time they leave the country.

The incentives that Costa Rica implemented to attract both tourism companies and amenity migrants were, by macroeconomic measures, successful. Amenity migration is intricately tied to tourism development and both have become increasingly crucial to Costa Rica's economy over the past twenty years. Central American countries have shown some of the highest tourism growth rates in the world since the late 1980s (McLaren 1998; Robinson 2003) and investment by foreigners in real estate has almost surpassed Costa Rica's earnings from its traditional export, coffee (see Graph 1).

Part of Costa Rica's lure as both a tourist and amenity migrant destination is its reputation for being a safe, democratic country with few class divisions. However William Robinson (2003) argues against the popular notion that the old oligarchies in Costa Rica have disappeared. On the contrary, the transnational elite that formed during the implementation of the neoliberal agenda in the late 1980s have actually exacerbated inequalities in the region. He claims the peace processes throughout Central America just paved the way for the full implementation of capitalism by subsuming social justice movements into a movement that promoted peace but not the structural changes needed to tackle systemic inequalities. Tourism is not often seen as a gentrifying force as visitors stay for short periods of time, but the differences between migrants and tourists are becoming harder to distinguish with the ease of travel and owning multiple homes (Hall

and Williams 1999). Yet governments like Costa Rica are promoting development by amenity migrants much the same way as they promote tourism development which may have negative consequences for its society as these amenity migrants stay permanently, perhaps impacting local communities in more profound ways.

Tamarindo, Costa Rica

In order to explore some of the consequences of amenity migration on citizenship and belonging in the Costa Rican context, I conducted five weeks of research in the community of Tamarindo in the state of Guanacaste on the Pacific Coast (see Figure 2). Located in the northwestern part of the country, Guanacaste's economy has traditionally been based on ranching and agriculture. With its dry climate, abundant land, and long coastline, Guanacaste has been a popular province for tourism development and some of Costa Rica's largest tourism projects, like the contested Proyecto Papagayo, have been built on Guanacaste's coast in the past decade. Not surprisingly, Guanacaste has also been one of the regions in Costa Rica to see the fastest development of real estate geared towards foreign amenity migrants. Beginning in the 1970s foreigners bought up large tracts of ranch land in Guanacaste, divided it into lots, put in a few services like a basic road and electricity, and advertised the lots in North American and European publications (Kimitch 2006). However, Guanacaste was still relatively inaccessible as foreigners had to fly into San Jose, 6 hours away from Liberia, the capital of Guanacaste. Roads in Guanacaste made travel difficult on the peninsula and there were few services to cater to

this foreign population. As a long-time North American resident writes in *The Howler* publication,

> *Guanacaste 40 years ago was almost unknown to foreigners because of its remoteness and lack of infrastructure...Those foreign residents who did make their home along the Guanacaste coast were serious ex-pats (Dodge de Peraza 2006).*

This is not the case today. The real estate boom in the U.S. and the opening of an international airport in Liberia in 2003 has facilitated further investment by North Americans in Guanacaste. Figure 3 provides an example of the dramatic rise in construction permits and value of new residential real estate between the years of 2001 and 2005 in Guanacaste. In addition, property values in the Santa Cruz municipality, where Tamarindo is located, rose more than 400% in this four-year span (see Figure 3). According to real estate agents, over the past five to ten years the foreign population investing in the Tamarindo area has shifted from predominantly Europeans to Americans, with one office's estimate that 90% of buyers in the past few years are from the U.S. (Hidden Coast Realty, personal communication, 8/8/06).

Travel from the U.S. to Guanacaste and buying property in Guanacaste has become considerably faster and easier; therefore, the area is attracting a wider variety of people than before. As the long-term resident quoted above continues to write,

> *The times for international travel have shrunk...Most foreign residents, especially along the Gold Coast, keep closer ties to their home country roots, but there is a down side to this. The same residents want to make their new home more and more like the homes they left behind...The ex-pats made do with what was available here, while the more recent foreign residents want more of what they had back in their other world. (Dodge de Peraza 2006)*

The growing numbers of North Americans in Costa Rica and their ability to keep ties "back in their other world" makes it imperative to examine this migration stream with a critical lens and to situate the growing number of North American migrants in Costa Rica in the larger context of neocolonial relationships between the U.S. and Latin America in order to fully understand the impacts for Costa Rica and its citizens.

Although Central America is often remembered in the U.S. for its wars in the 1980s, valid concern continues today about U.S. influence in Costa Rica and throughout Central America. This concern has been justified recently given the implementation of the Central American Free Trade Agreement pushed through amidst protest by much of civil society in Costa Rica. Not only does the concern about U.S. influence in Costa Rica happen on the political level, but the increasing violence, social ills, and cost of living in the country are often attributed to well-off foreigners living in the country. To explore some of these issues, my research questions included:

1) What are the major motivating factors for U.S. citizens to relocate to Tamarindo, Costa Rica?

2) What do long-term residents of Tamarindo perceive as some of the greatest changes resulting from the increase in the number of new residents and what are their concerns around future real estate development in the Tamarindo area?

3) In what ways are the social and cultural landscapes of Tamarindo altered by this new migration? Is there spatial and/or social segregation between long-term residents and North Americans? If so, what are the impacts of this segregation for community development?

4) In what ways do U.S. amenity migrants in Tamarindo exercise citizenship and how does their economic and political power influence Costa Rican's sense of belonging and membership in the Tamarindo area?

Before I provide an analysis and discussion of the findings of this research, I will explain the theoretical framework that I used for the project in Chapter II. Then, Chapter III will explore the methodology of the project, the ways in which power and my position as a researcher influenced the research data and analysis. In Chapter IV, I use three examples; each one representing the cultural, political, and economic; to explore the question of how this transnational amenity migration impacts local Costa Ricans in Tamarindo and might contribute to more nuanced understandings of citizenship in a globalized world. Finally, in Chapter VI, I discuss the globalized nature of amenity migration, its ties with neoliberal policies, and its implications for formation and enactment of citizenship for different groups of individuals.

CHAPTER II

BELONGING AND MEMBERSHIP IN A GLOBALIZED ERA: CITIZENSHIP AND TRANSNATIONAL AMENITY MIGRATION

> *Migration – transnational and international, voluntary and forced, legal or not – is at the center of the new problematic. It educes the increasing interconnectedness of policies, economies, and societies; many of the ways in which the traditional exclusivity of states' jurisdictions is changing; the 'portability' of individual human rights; the status of resident and transient aliens; relations between citizens and non-citizens; and myriad related issues (Heisler 2005, 667).*

As Heisler describes in the quote above, migration in a globalized era has greatly changed the role of the state and nature of citizenship. This chapter outlines a theoretical framework for analyzing Costa Rica's changing social and political landscapes in the wake of a new migration stream of amenity migrants into the country. Drawing on theories of citizenship, as well as scholarship on amenity migration within the Global North, I raise questions about the politics of belonging and citizenship rights in Costa Rican communities that have transformed into primarily foreign amenity migrant communities.

Citizenship over Time

> *It is clear that a universally shared concept of citizenship is even further away from realization than it ever was. Indeed, the breadth of the concept itself has grown in tandem with the growing complexity of an increasingly global world (Kabeer 2002, 1).*

Formally at least, citizenship is about legal membership in a nation state. Over the past several decades, though, social scientists and political theorists have used the concept of citizenship as a theoretical tool for understanding issues related to political membership, belonging, rights and obligations between citizens and states. Susan Smith (1989) explains citizenship's usefulness as a theoretical tool,

> *Citizenship as critique regards civil, political and social rights as entitlements whose universality – in a* de jure *as well as* de facto *sense – remains to be realized. It offers a comprehensive vehicle through which to explore systematic discrepancies between the obligations required of, and the rights extended to, members of a nation-state (148).*

While citizens' rights and obligations have tended to be situated solely within the scale of the nation state, theorists have questioned this fixed scale of analysis and explored how belonging, rights and obligations operate differently across scales from the sub-national to the transnational. Castles (2002) contends that a nation-state model for citizenship is "no longer appropriate for a world in which flows are replacing places as the key loci of economic and social organization" (1161). As people (at least some) are able to move with greater ease across borders, citizenship theories need reworking in order to interrogate the ways in which increasing numbers of individuals conduct their lives in

various places, exercising their political citizenship in one place while their cultural citizenship in another, for example (Castles 2002).

Citizenship has been understood in a multitude of ways over time, and the formal political criteria for determining citizenship status have evolved throughout history. In ancient Greece, the idea of citizenship *ius sanguinis*, based on blood ties, was used as a way to distinguish who could participate and make laws in society. However, even then this form of citizenship was deemed insufficient as any foreigner would forever be a non-citizen (Castles and Davidson 2000). The other traditional characteristic used to bestow citizenship was *soli,* citizenship based on "soil" or territory. This meant that birthplace, rather than familial history, defined citizenship status. Today, most nation states grant citizenship based on some combination of citizenship *ius sanguinis* and *jus soli,* with the addition of citizenship *jus domicile,* based on residence in a country (Castles 2002, 1162; Heater 1999, 80-81).

While characteristics used to determine membership in a nation state have been dynamic, one constant have been their exclusionary principle. In order for some people to be citizens it follows that others are not (Castles and Davidson 2000). For instance, most immigrants experience formal exclusion as they are not full citizens in the country in which they reside. If individuals meet the criteria for inclusion as citizens, then it is assumed they are entitled to the rights and will fulfill the obligations associated with the citizenship status conferred to them. Yet citizenship status does not guarantee inclusion. "Exclusions from within" prevent many marginalized groups of people, even though formally citizens, from exercising their full membership in the nation state (Yeatman

1994, 80). While formally included in the nation state as citizens, marginalized groups of people often experience social and/or political exclusion to citizenship through discrimination which prevents them from participating in decision-making processes that affect their communities (StaeheliNagel 2006; PainterPhilo 1995; CastlesDavidson 2000). The ideal of citizenship as promoting equality for all members has yet to be realized, and rights and obligations differ for diverse groups of citizens even within nation state boundaries (Nagel 2004).

Classical approaches to citizenship have tended to emphasize either rights or obligations that are bestowed upon or required of members of the polity. Emphasizing the responsibilities and obligations of being a citizen, the civic republican approach treats "citizenship as practice" (Kabeer 2002) and stresses the collective will and the individual's participation in a community and national culture (Nagel 2004; Kabeer 2002). The civic republican approach to citizenship as practiced in Greece emphasized obligations such as participation in politics and defense of the city state (Falk 2000). Moving away from citizen as member of a city state (or *polis)* as was the case in Greece, citizenship in ancient Rome began to incorporate both civil and personal rights, such as the right to own property. This legal and more inclusive granting of citizenship, the liberal approach, came to influence citizenship traditions in most Western societies (Castles 2000). The liberal approach emphasizes the set of rights conferred to citizens, stresses the individual, and treats "citizenship as status" (Kabeer 2002). Citizenship in Western societies today has been broadly characterized as a melding of both the liberal and civic republican approaches incorporating a set of rights – like the right to vote and

own property – granted by the state and individual citizens' obligations – like military service and payment of taxes – to the national community (Heater 1999; Castles and Davidson 2000; Kabeer 2002)

Another way of thinking about citizenship over time is in its relation to processes of capitalist accumulation. Satoshi Ikeda (2004) details three distinct periods of "political participation/exclusion" related to processes of accumulation in the world since the sixteenth century: "imperial subject," "national citizen," and "corporate subject" (333) and calls attention to the fact that it has only been very recently that most people throughout the world have been considered citizens of a formal polity. In fact, throughout history those at the core of the world system have often benefitted from citizenship rights at the expense of those on the margins (Ikeda 2004).

In his formulation, the imperial subject came to be in the sixteenth century when Europe began to colonize other non-European regions. People in colonized regions were not political subjects with rights, however, but subject to the crown. Eventually, revolutions and independence movements beginning in the late 18th century and continuing on into the 20th century led to the birth of the national citizen. However, not all people in newly-formed nation states were granted citizenship status and the rights and responsibilities associated with it. Not until the mid-1970s did the majority of people in the world hold citizenship as a member of a nation state (Ikeda 2004). Before this time, many groups of people were denied citizenship: women, African Americans, non-literate, and non-landowners were among those in the U.S. who were historically denied citizenship status and/or certain citizenship rights as granted by the state (Heisler 2005,

668). Nevertheless, movements such as the women's movement and the civil rights movements fought for the right to be recognized as citizens deserving of equal rights and freedom from discrimination. This shift in understanding of citizenship as more than just traditional rights associated with membership in a state characterized "a shift towards rights rhetoric and away from obligations in citizenship practice and theory" (Heisler 2005, 668).

T.H. Marshall (1950) explored the expanding set of rights in his compilation of essays called Citizenship and Social Class in which he detailed three types of rights that the state needed to grant its citizens in order to ensure their ability to fully participate in a democratic society. Civil rights included "liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property;" the political meant "right to participate in the exercise of political power;" and the social encompassed "the whole range of right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society (Marshall and Bottomore 1992, 8). Of course the "standards prevailing in the society" have changed over time and are very subjective, one of the many critiques made of Marshall's conceptualization of citizenship. While civil and political rights had long been established by nation states at the time of Marshall's analysis in post-World War II Britain, they had not necessarily been accessible for everyone. Marshall argued that without social rights, individuals may not be able to benefit from their citizenship rights and fulfill their citizenship duties. On the other hand, citizens often used their civil

and/or political rights in order to gain social rights like trade unions' use of collective bargaining to fight for living wages or health benefits (26).

Many scholars have challenged Marshall's analysis of the history of citizenship. Marshall has faced numerous critiques, most notably from feminist citizenship scholars who find fault with his analysis for its failure to incorporate women's experiences of citizenship. Marshall's idea that rights were evolutionary – civil rights leading to political rights leading to social rights – was not the experience for many women. Heater (1999) points out that while women gained the right to vote early in the 20th century it was not until the end of the century that they received certain civil elements of citizenship like the right to be taxed separately from their husbands (20). Marshall has also been challenged by scholars for optimistically equating the increasing emergence of political rights with the growth of the economy and for the power he gave to the state in his theory of citizenship formation (Marston and Mitchell 2004, 98)

The role of the nation state has changed considerably in the sixty years since Marshall's theory. Writing at the time of the growth of the welfare state, he failed to envision that the state may not always provide basic provisions for its society. By the 1980s, with the Reagan and Thatcher administrations and the forceful implementation of neoliberal policies, many social safety nets had been dismantled and individuals were seen to be responsible for their own economic and social wellbeing (Johnston 2000 et al., 547). Marshall's social rights remain quite unattainable for many people today. Nevertheless, Marston and Mitchell (2004) argue that Marshall's conceptualization of citizenship is "still useful with regard to understanding the shifting connections between

capitalism and citizenship and between the state and society (99). Therefore, Marshall's basic premise that people will only be able to participate fully in society when their social rights as well as their civil and political rights are recognized can still inform our thinking about citizenship practices today.

Citizenship in the Context of Neoliberal Globalization

Globalization has facilitated the linkages between regions, economies, peoples, cultures, and societies in an unprecedented scope. Usually conceived primarily in economic terms, globalization facilitated the transfer of capital around the world, challenging nation state boundaries. A nation state's power to protect its citizens has been weakened by global market forces that often force states to protect economic interests over the social interests of its citizens (Falk 2000). As mentioned in Chapter I, structural adjustment policies and free trade agreements often force states to dismantle social programs and open up their economies to competition by larger and more powerful global corporations.

Currently, neoliberal globalization has formed what Ikeda (2004) calls the corporate subject. He describes this type of citizen as dependent on corporations, in the global North because our "livelihood and well-being is dependent on corporations" and in the global South because its citizens "have been increasingly subordinated to global corporations" (334). A host of developments in the global South, from the debt crisis to the growth in neoliberal governance styles, have resulted in the erosion of many social

citizenship rights and the state's prioritization of foreign economic interests over those of its citizenry. Sassen (2003) asserts that nation states' granting of "'rights' to foreign actors, largely and especially economic actors" (56) affects the ability of citizens today to contest "these new concentrations of power and 'legitimacy' that attach to global firms and markets" (57). But, citizens have been finding ways to make claims on the state and contest these global configurations of power which is "a key to the future of democracy" (Sassen 2003, 57).

Traditional understandings of citizenship have been built upon the "geographically bounded ideal of political community" based on the state (Falk 2000, 5); however, globalization challenges the idea of an autonomous nation-state. The ideal of homogenous national cultures that citizenship has historically relied upon is breaking down even further – if it ever existed at all (Castles 2000, 8-9). And, as Brodie (2004) contends, globalization facilitates "new and unique political identities and public spaces beyond the confines of the national state" (324). Thus, globalization is not only challenging traditional notions of citizenship but creating the spaces for new types of citizenship as well.

As Janet Conway (2004) and Richard Falk (2000) have emphasized, people are claiming multiple political, cultural and social affiliations and creating the conditions for new forms of citizenship on diverse scales. The notion that citizenship is no longer bound to the nation-state is often called "post-national citizenship" or "transnational" citizenship (Conway 2004; Falk 2000). For example, corruption and distrust in government, free trade agreements, and improved communications among social

movements and civil society have all led to enactment of citizenship on scales other than the national (Conway 2004, Falk 2000). This new transnational citizenship challenges the idea that the nation state is the primary locus of political membership (Nagel 2004, 232). Individuals keep ties to their homelands while forging new political identities that are often divorced from the places where they reside (Mandaville 1999, Nagel 2004).

Though it is widely accepted that globalization and migration have led to new types of citizenship practices, the idea of a postnational citizenship has been questioned by some scholars (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006; Brodie 2003). As rights are increasingly disassociated from formal membership of a nation state, migrants may be granted rights in multiple places (Soysal 1994; Leitner and Ehrkhamp 2006). Soysal (2000) gives the example of immigrants in Germany who are granted benefits even if they are not granted formal citizenship status of the state. Even if rights are becoming detached from formal membership, some scholars argue that this does not necessarily constitute a post-national citizenship as the nation state remains an important entity for both non-citizens and citizens in their claims for rights, protection, and membership (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006; Brodie 2003). Although it is increasingly more common for the state to privilege global economic forces over its own citizenry, most citizens are still primarily "confined to national institutions." (Brodie 2003, 57). Brodie contends that the national scale may still be the most appropriate through which citizens can "demand" accountability of global economic actors" (57). Moreover, Leitner and Ehrkamp (2006) observe that the nation state continues to remain an important scale as well for claims-making by undocumented immigrants. They argue that more attention needs to be given to

"citizenship as a social practice" (1619) and the ways in which migrants personally experience citizenship practices outside of the national scale; however, they find that formal citizenship continues to be a prominent concern for migrants and is "meaningful in migrants' struggles for equal access to social and political rights" (1629).

The notion of citizenship has transitioned from being understood solely in an institutional legal framework to being understood as a social process characterized by "shared values and the experience of community" (Falk, 2000, p. 5) that transcends national boundaries. Janet Conway (2004) maintains that the shift from citizenship as legal rights to citizenship as cultural practices leads to a "conceptualization of citizenship as a social process, constituted by discourses and practices through which people and groups become political subjects" (369). Undocumented immigrants, for instance, have become political subjects in the United States even if they lack power because of the politicization of migration issues. Saskia Sassen (2003) describes this situation of being an actor without power as "presence" because "disadvantaged people…are not simply marginal; they acquire presence in a broader political process that escapes the boundaries of the formal polity" (64). Moreover, Sassen suggests that the relationship between citizenship and nationality is changing from one of "'allegiance' to one state or exclusively formal nationality" to one of "effective nationality" (41) in which peoples' contributions to a community are recognized as a type of informal citizenship. In this case, undocumented immigrants who have been living in the U.S. for decades, have established homes, have children in school, and have been contributing to the economy of the country would be considered citizens. Indeed, most of the pathways to legal

citizenship for undocumented immigrants involve proving a certain period of residence in the U.S. and "good conduct" (Sassen 2003).

In addition to formulating new citizenships based on social processes as suggested Sassen (2003), theorists also suggest expanding upon traditional rights associated with citizenship. They argue that other rights relevant to contemporary society such as environmental rights (Heater 1999), gender rights, and cultural rights (Castles and Davidson 2000) need to be included in contemporary citizenship definitions. In the realm of the cultural, it has historically been expected that immigrants wishing to enjoy full rights to citizenship would assimilate to the dominant culture (Castles and Davidson 2000). Yet given the diversity of immigrant groups today this is an unrealistic assumption and it is arguable whether or not there is a sole national culture in which to integrate in the first place. What becomes important then for immigrants is the right to their culture, however they define it. Yet formal anti-discrimination laws are not enough to incite full participation in society by culturally marginalized groups. "Active participation," argues Kofman (1995), requires "the recognition by others as legitimate members of the society in question" (122).

One characteristic that serves to legitimize peoples' membership in society is language. Gill Valentine (2007) contends that "individuals or groups who cannot communicate effectively in the State language have difficulties gaining information about or experience of civil practices and institutions and observing the actions of other citizens, and consequently lack the cultural proficiency necessary to exercise citizenship" (125). What happens though when the foreign language becomes the dominant one at the

local scale which citizens of the state need to learn in order to fully participate in the economy and community? It is not always the undocumented or minorities in society whose cultural rights or language rights are challenged, as I will explain in Chapter IV.

Despite citizenship processes (in theory if not in practice) shifting from the legal and national to the social and cultural, and the weakening authority of the nation-state in the context of contemporary globalization, the state's role in regulating legal citizenship is not necessarily any less diminished (Kofman 2002; Massey 1999). Smith (2006) argues that since American citizenship has historically been characterized by discriminatory exclusion of certain groups, the idea of inclusion vs. exclusion continues to influence how we define citizenship in the 21st century. While hierarchical citizenship status as practiced in the past may not exist in the current legal granting of citizenship, the importance of labeling groups of people as those deserving of citizenship rights and those not deserving is an essential component of current debates around immigration and rights of immigrants in the U.S. Even if the roles and responsibilities of citizens can be defined and agreed upon, certain people by virtue of their socioeconomic status or other characteristics still have more privilege to exercise those rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Doreen Massey (1999) argues that although globalization has allowed for the "free" flow of goods, services and people; nation states have increased their power in many respects and have severely limited and regulated the flow of people in the name of national security. This process of securing borders can be seen throughout the U.S. with proposed anti-immigrant legislation in many states and the construction of a wall along the Mexico-U.S. border. Eleonore Kofman (2002) has also called attention to the ways in

which right wing governments and restrictive policies in the EU are further ostracizing immigrants and refugees and complicating their lives.

Throughout this literature on migration and its challenges to citizenship, 'migrant' is often equated with the marginalized. But citizenship scholars have also turned attention to privileged transnational migrants, their role in the global economy and how citizenship for them differs from more economically-disadvantaged migrants (Ong 1999; Mitchell 2004). Aiwha Ong (1999 and 2005) examines transnationality through the elite and argues that these elite migrants have become truly mobile migrants with a "flexible" notion of citizenship that allows them to maintain cultural and economic ties with their home countries while responding opportunistically to capitalist market forces. Ong contends that "rights and entitlements once associated with all citizens are becoming linked to neoliberal criteria, so that some entitlements may be withdrawn from some citizens and given to non-citizens" (Ong 2005, 697). This transfer of rights can lead to disillusionment with the government for its prioritization of global economic actors over its citizenry (Falk 2000; Sassen 2003; Mitchell 2004) and is an issue I will address in the context of amenity migration in Costa Rica in Chapter IV.

The tension that exists for the nation state between providing social provisions for its citizenry and courting foreign investors is explored by Katharyne Mitchell (2004) in her study on elite migrants in Canada. Mitchell juxtaposes the Canadian government's promotion of Canada as a site of investment for wealthy entrepreneurs in the late 1980s and early 90s through its Business Immigration Program with its traditional social liberal governance style that sought to restrain neoliberal capitalist development and retain

social safety nets for its population. Examining the changing notions of liberalism and transnationalism through economically privileged migrants from Hong Kong and their transformation of the physical and cultural landscape in Vancouver, Mitchell, like Ong, reveals the racist rhetoric that the white population employs when forced to deal with being displaced either physically and/or culturally by the new migrants.

Both the transnational elite migrants and the transnational labor migrants complicate traditional understandings of citizenship as these migrants maintain ties to various places at multiple scales given the ease of travel and communication across borders (Baubock 1994) U.S. expats in Costa Rica share characteristics of both the marginalized migrant as well the elite migrant. Like undocumented migrants around the world, American expatriates in Costa Rica are politically disenfranchised. But, they are privileged given their racial, class, and educational status in addition to their status as Global Northerners compared to the majority of Costa Ricans. Most, however, are not the globetrotting elite moving effortlessly between countries as is the case with Ong and Mitchell's subjects, who generally hold multiple passports and control a significant amount of capital that facilitates their movement and allows them to profoundly impact large cities such as Vancouver. Thus, the case of U.S. expats in Costa Rica thus furthers our understanding of how globalization is refining and expanding formal and informal citizenship practices, as well as the impacts of these migrants on social, political, and economic landscapes in immigrant-receiving communities.

Theoretical concerns raised in the citizenship literature can help tease out these impacts and are useful for understanding the case of amenity migrants in Costa Rica. For

instance, Valentine (Valentine and Skeldon 2007) stresses the importance of language and cultural rights. The cultural rights of formal citizens can be put in jeopardy in the context of transnational amenity migration where the economically privileged population may be carrying with them dominant cultural norms or language that affect the local cultures where they resettle. In the case of amenity migrants in Costa Rica, English has become the *de facto* language in certain communities and local Costa Ricans need to learn English in order to secure jobs servicing the amenity migrants and tourists. Culturally they must adapt to be able to fully participate in community and economic life.

Ong's (2005) exploration of elite migration, neoliberal processes, and the state's prioritization of global economic actors over its own citizenry is useful in analyzing the case of amenity migrants in Costa Rica as well. As tax and residency incentives encourage property investment by foreigners, property values escalate and few affordable housing options exist for local Costa Ricans. The state's shift to neoliberal policies promoting foreign investment leads to feelings of neglect by Costa Ricans as well as a backlash against immigrants as expressed by two young Tico adults: "Our government prioritizes foreigners and not us" (field notes, 8/11/06). "It's time to close our borders" (field notes, 8/13/06). Falk's (1998) argument that individuals who are less mobile may reactively defend against these global economic forces and respond with "stronger senses of territorial citizenship and defensive patriotism" (2), provides a good explanation for the sentiments expressed by many Ticos.

Finally, citizenship theory's treatment of transnational migration elucidates amenity migrants' participation in political processes outside of the nation state realm in

places like Costa Rica. U.S. amenity migrants are part of a process of political transnationalism through their involvement in numerous expat cultural and political groups, like Democrats and Republicans Abroad, environmental organizations and associations of foreign residents that advocate for issues on their behalf. Furthermore, the nation state itself has actively changed formal residency categories in order to attract this group of migrants. This new political transnationalism presents many potential and real challenges for Costa Rican society and will be explored further in Chapter IV.

Yet, with the exception of Ong (1999) and Mitchell (2004), most scholars examining transnational migration and citizenship do so with a focus on marginalized subjects. But, migration by the elite and by middle-class Global Northerners is growing and further complicates our understandings of citizenship and migration. Even though amenity migration scholarship has addressed this group of migrants, there is a lack of research with a specific focus on citizenship issues that are raised when these migrants resettle in communities in the Global South. Nevertheless, amenity migration literature contributes our understandings of motivations of amenity migrants and their impacts in the communities where they reside as I will describe in the next section.

Amenity Migration Scholarship

Migration is too complex a topic to be addressed by just one body of literature (Skeldon 1997). Ronald Skeldon (1997) points out that within migration research there are divisions: historically researchers have studied international or internal migration but

rarely both, or they have studied migration in the Global South or the Global North but rarely both. Often these divisions stem from the availability of data. Unfortunately they lead to difficulty in developing a framework in which to study migration that incorporates the various scales and methods needed to comprehend its causes and consequences (Skeldon 1997). Models attempting to explain migration have historically focused on economic factors, such as lack of employment opportunities and population pressures on agricultural systems in rural communities and the economic opportunities in urban centers, as drivers of migration. But non-economic and less-quantifiable push and pull factors have also been noted. For example, the quality of life of a rural area may be a "pull" while pollution and high cost of living may be "push" factors of large industrial centers (Skeldon 1997).

Researchers have found these less-quantifiable factors like quality of life, natural landscapes, and safety and security to be some of the most influential in shaping the migration of wealthier groups for lifestyle reasons, terming this "amenity migration" (Moss 2006, Geoffrey 2007, O'Reilly 2000). Although only recently gaining more prominence in academic circles, social science researchers have been trying to tease out amenities' role in migration for some time now. Geographer Edward Ullman (1954), researched amenities' role in attracting people to the warmer climates within the United States – like California, Arizona, and Florida – and the mountainous regions of the Pacific Northwest. However, as he notes, at the time nation state boundaries limited the possibilities for relocation:

> *"The continental limits of the United States rather sharply contain the area within which amenities for Americans can operate on a large scale today, not only because of uniformly widespread culture and comfort, but mainly because linkages with the rest of the economy are easiest, and in many cases, only possible, within the continental United States. (Ullman 1954, 130).*

As mentioned previously, this is no longer the case today given globalization and the ease of travel and investing internationally (for some people at least). So, while the locations that are drawing amenity migrants may be new, the concept of migrating for amenities is not.

Twenty years after Ullman's research, Peter Morrison and Judith Wheeler of the Population Reference Bureau (1976) published a report entitled *Rural Renaissance in America?* in which they examined changes in American society and an overall increase in wealth that led to a "floating population" able to relocate wherever it desired. Another widely-cited early research project that examined amenity migration in the U.S. was the work of Andrew Sofranko and James Williams (1980). Their book, Rebirth of Rural America, examined outmigration from metropolitan areas into rural areas with natural landscapes during the late 1970s in the Midwest. They termed these urban to rural migrants "amenity movers" or "quality-of-life movers" (10) because they found that they were motivated by lifestyle factors and amenities in contrast to the economic factors that were the motivations for much of the rural to urban migration.

As well as assessing the demographic and cultural changes of the communities experiencing this urban to rural in-migration, Sofranko and Williams examined the potential of this migration stream to energize declining rural economies (1). They found that most of the migrants were quite affluent and were involved in local affairs and politics, motivated by

a desire to influence decision-making at the local level (148). This involvement can pose a problem when decision-making about local issues is done primarily by newcomers who may have little history with the place and only their self-interests in mind. Sofranko and Williams articulate concerns about amenity migrants and integration as well. As they explain, there is a fine balance between integration and non-integration by new amenity migrants in the smaller communities where they resettle. Migrants may move if they are not able to integrate socially; however, they also caution about "overintegration" where the migrants will "become more heavily involved in organizations and activities than residents of the community" (87). In their research, however, they found that migrants' level of community involvement was less than that of the long-term residents (103), not necessarily the case in Costa Rica as I will detail in Chapter IV.

In addition to these early studies, scholars focusing on tourism, population, and political ecology have been studying this sector of the population who is privileged enough to be able to choose their next home based on factors like cost of living, climate, nature, and services available. Studies within the realm of political ecology have examined exurban migration, its impacts on the landscape, the resulting environmental problems of new residential developments, and conflicts over views of nature and conservation (Walker and Fortmann 2003; Chase 2002; Stonich 2000).

Many of the areas experiencing an increase in amenity migrants around the world have been popular as tourist destinations as well. Geographers are now studying new links between tourism and migration as more people, after visiting a place a few times as a tourist, buy a home and relocate there permanently or semi-permanently (Hall and Williams 1999;

Truly 2002). While scholars have called attention to residential tourism or amenity migration, most have studied it from a traditional economic stream analysis commonly used in tourism studies, examining both the economic reasons people relocate to another country and the economic impacts on the destinations.

Several scholars have called attention to the need for research about other impacts amenity migrants are having on the places where they relocate (Truly 2002; Smith 2002; Mitchell 2001; Hall and Williams 1999). According to geographer David Truly, who has investigated international retirement migration and tourism along Lake Chapala in Mexico, there is a lack of research on the intersections between tourism and international migration and the effects these migrants and their behavior have on the places they inhabit (2002). In addition, geographers Alan Williams and Michael Hall state that "there has been an increase in the scale of tourism-related migration, and an internationalization of the patterns of mobility." They claim that little research has been conducted on the "series of social, cultural, economic and political issues for the individual migrants, for the host communities and for local, national and supra-national states" (1999). Finally, Lawrence Moss (2006) argues that "the cultural dimension needs much greater attention" in amenity migration research (8). He refers primarily to better understanding the cultural amenities that draw migrants to rural places and how increased migration to rural areas may in fact erode the very culture to which they are attracted.

In the case of Costa Rica, I am interested in not only understanding the cultural amenities that draw migrants, but also the impact of the culture they bring with them on the host culture and the tension that results when determining which cultural values and

norms become the governing ones in communities. Christine Geoffrey's (2007) recent research project on British amenity migrants to the Chamonix region of France begins to examine this interplay between cultures as she contrasts the highly mobile individual with the "inmobile" culture. It is difficult for amenity migrants in general (and for her study population in particular) to adapt to the local culture even though their main motivating force to migrate is often cultural.

All of these studies carried out over the past few years (Bozic 2006; Chaverri 2006; Otero 2006; Geoffroy 2007; O'Reilly 2000) have greatly improved the available information about this population of people who migrate internationally for reasons loosely defined as "quality of life." However, it is difficult to measure the factors that are drawing migrants to relocate. Lawrence Moss (2006) found that many migrants "could not distinguish between the cultural and the environmental" using terms such as "quality of life" and "rural attractiveness" when describing motivating factors for their relocation (p. 8). While fields like International Retirement Migration examine a specific subset of the population and exurban migration examines the migration by the economically well-off to a specific place (that between the rural and urban), amenity migration is a term that "fits" the population of U.S. expats in Costa Rica better as not all who are migrating are retired nor are all relocating to the exurbs. One other term that fits well is that of *lifestyle migration*, which, according to Karen O'Reilly (2007) comprises

> *"relatively affluent individuals, moving, en masse, either part or full time, permanently or temporarily, to countries where the cost of living and/or the price of property is cheaper; places which, for various reasons, signify something loosely defined as quality of life."*

In her article introducing the term "lifestyle migration," O'Reilly (2007) describes other terms that have been used to characterize similar migration streams – retirement migration, second-home migration, and seasonal migration – and why they do not adequately fit the new "lifestyle migrant." As she states, lifestyle migrants are not necessarily only retirees, though many are, and they may be buying second homes but many permanently relocate as well. Lifestyle migrants are not "labour migrants or corporate elites" (3). Although they may work in the destinations where they relocate, work is not the primary motivation for migration but a way to fund their new lifestyle. One of the reasons none of the other terms fits the "lifestyle migrant", she claims, is that none of them address migrants' motivations. However, O'Reilly does not engage with the term amenity migration which does address migrants' motivations and which finds very similar motivations to her "lifestyle migrants": quality of life, cost of living, healthy surroundings, and ease of travel being some of them. The main distinction between amenity migration and lifestyle migration is that lifestyle migration specifically focuses on people "who have relatively more economic capital who move to less economically-developed areas, where the cost of living or property is cheaper" (O'Reilly 2007, 1) and usually includes a North-South migration like that of U.S. Americans to Costa Rica or a West-East migration like that of Northern and Western Europeans to Eastern Europe.

While lifestyle migrant implies international migration, amenity migration research, up until this point, has mostly focused on internal domestic migration, especially within the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Moss 2006; Nelson 2006; Hall 2006). Even though lifestyle migrant would seemingly be the best fit for U.S.

migrants in Costa Rica, I am choosing to use the term amenity migration for a couple of reasons. First, within the discipline of geography amenity migration and exurban migration seem to be the two terms most often used. Given the infancy of this field of research, I think it is important to use terms that are easily recognizable by others in the field. Second, amenity migration has a past scholarship, albeit quite limited, while lifestyle migration does not. Finally, other researchers in Latin America studying migration by the economically-privileged have published their research under the realm of "amenity migration" research (Chaverri 2006, Otero 2006).

While political ecologists and others studying amenity migration in North America have documented some of the physical impacts resulting from development geared towards amenity migrants, Laurence Moss (2006) argues that "the cultural dimension needs much greater attention" (8). Even though studies on amenity migration examine the cultural impacts, there are very few that examine cultural impacts where there are language differences between the migrants and the local residents. Paulina Chaverri's (2006) study of amenity migrants in Escazu, Costa Rica and Christine Geoffrey's study (2007) of British amenity migrants in France are a couple of the studies that have treated the cultural dimension and language differences. With this research project I have attempted to continue building upon this amenity migrant literature by examining the cultural impacts for Costa Rican citizens in the wake of amenity migration by North Americans to the country.

Conclusion

Scholars acknowledge that globalization is redefining and expanding traditional notions of citizenship and that its impacts "on citizenship are complex, uneven, and necessarily open to contestation and revision" (Brodie, 324). In the 1990s, after a decade of implementation of neoliberal policies, the ramping up of globalization processes, the end of the Cold War, and increased streams of migration by refugees and undocumented immigrants, scholars began to revisit and question existing citizenship theories and formulate new conceptualizations of citizenship that better fit the present reality. Significant scholarly attention has been given to reworking definitions of citizenship, and geographers have been some of those at the forefront of these citizenship studies in the past decade, examining the ways in which groups of people exercise rights, responsibilities and membership in communities across a variety of scales from the local to the transnational (Painter and Philo 1995; Silvey 1999; Mitchell 2004; Staeheli 2006).

Castles and Davidson (2000) bring attention to the fact that "there are increasing numbers of citizens who *do not belong*" (vii). As marginalized subjects their ability for participation in society is impacted given racial, ethnic, gender and other types of discrimination. Both the fact that citizenship's set of rights has not bestowed the promised equality to all citizens and the fact that these marginalized subjects are increasingly choosing to advocate for their set of rights in realms outside of the nation state have challenged traditional notions of citizenship.

Yet globalization's challenge to citizenship is not always about the marginalized. Increasingly elite migrants are able to choose new residences based on available

amenities, "quality of life" factors, and cost of living. These migrants are indentifying with citizenship categories beyond the nation state as well. Given their mobility, Falk (1998) maintains that many are introducing new categories of citizenship like "citizen pilgrims" or "global citizens" (2). As they maintain ties to various communities throughout the world, perhaps exercising their political citizenship in one community and their economic or cultural citizenship in another, they challenge traditional notions of citizenship as well.

In the case of Costa Rica, the North American migrants simultaneously share characteristics with both the economically privileged subjects and the politically disenfranchised subjects that many geographers have studied (Kofman 2005; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006; Mitchell 2004). Thus they offer a unique opportunity to explore citizenship theory. North Americans arguably exercise more rights and membership in the community of Tamarindo, Costa Rica through their economic power and cultural advantages than the Costa Rican residents who hold formal citizenship rights, as I will argue further in Chapter IV. That many of these amenity migrants are choosing to move to a country that is culturally distinct from their own and economically less advantaged in the global sphere has profound implications for citizenship practices.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three explores the methodological approach undergirding this thesis, from the conceptualization of the research questions, fieldwork strategies, and the analysis and interpretation of the results. I also examine how issues of power and the researcher's position affect the entire research process. I begin with a description of the research project's formation and the logistics of the research site and the methods employed. The rest of the chapter is then devoted to assessing the strengths and limitations of the methods used in this project and a reflection on methodological challenges.

Origins of Research

Research interests do not develop out of thin air; they are developed over time and influenced by personal experience. Particular aspects of my personal history led to an interest in this project and the valuing of the topic as one worthy of investigation. The specific origins of this project began while I was living in Costa Rica in 2004 on a Rotary fellowship. First-hand observation of the rapid changes taking place in Costa Rican society given the influx of foreign amenity migrants and real estate development

provided me with the basis from which to question how this new migration stream was impacting citizenship enactment in communities. But this research project does not solely focus on amenity migration in Costa Rica. Amenity migration is rather the entry point into exploring the larger issues that this research project addresses: cultural change in small communities, relationships of power and inequality, and membership and belonging in a globalized world. And these issues had intrigued me long before my stay in Costa Rica.

I first became interested in cultural change in small communities experiencing an influx of privileged foreign residents when I moved overseas as a teenager in 1990. Living in the Marshall Islands I became acutely aware of the confluence of the personal and the political. No longer was I just a girl from small-town Minnesota; I was a "haole," and to many Marshallese I represented the U.S. presence in the Pacific Islands. The fact that the U.S. leases the island of Kwajalein from the Marshallese government complicates ideas of territory and nationality, and many U.S. Americans living there expressed entitlement and feelings of superiority towards the Marshallese. My interest in the ways in which current U.S. influence abroad is predicated on past injustices like the atomic bomb testing in the Marshall Islands or the implementation of NAFTA in Mexico began with this experience in the Marshall Islands. Since then, I have lived in other countries such as Mexico, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. Once again, in these places I was designated a "gringo," associated with my government's policies, and encountered feelings of entitlement by U.S. Americans visiting or residing in these countries.

It was this entitlement and the ways in which U.S. Americans' political, economic and cultural influences affect other regions and people that inspired this research project. Although the fieldwork began in the summer of 2006, it was two years prior that the particular topic of amenity migration by North Americans to Costa Rica began to intrigue me. While living in San Jose, Costa Rica Tico friends and acquaintances would often comment on the impact of North Americans and other foreigners from the Global North. Several newspaper articles appeared in local papers about the influence these foreigners had, their impacts on the cost of living, and the increasing concentration of land ownership by foreigners (Montoya 2005; Villegas 2004). An article about a program to retitle the land cadastral system at the urging of U.S. citizens residing in Costa Rica (Burke 2004) was what specifically piqued my interest in examining how immigrants from the U.S. might be using their economic and political influence as global Northerners to effect change in Costa Rica.

Given my interest in this new populations' effects on land tenure, I wanted to do fieldwork in an area that had historically been agricultural but was now experiencing real estate development geared towards foreign amenity migrants. My original research plan was to go to the area of Arenal, Costa Rica, which has seen much investment by North Americans in the past couple years and is home to a few disputes over land tenure issues and environmental problems. But logistics influenced the choice of Tamarindo as a research site over the Arenal area. First, most of the foreign community around Arenal lives in rural areas, and there is only one bus a day on the main road. It would have been necessary to rent a four-wheel drive vehicle or hire taxis every day to get around to

interview people. I did not have the budget for this. In addition, it would have been difficult to observe peoples' spaces of interaction in community since it is primarily a rural area. Moreover, upon arriving in Costa Rica I learned that the main road in the Arenal region had washed out due to landslides the week before and was shut down. Therefore, I went with my backup plan of Tamarindo as a research site.

Tamarindo proved to be an excellent research site. First, it has seen some of the fastest growth in real estate investment in the country by foreigners (Banco Central 2006). Second, it is easy to get around by bike and/or bus within and around Tamarindo. Given its history and population, however, Tamarindo did not raise the same issues as Arenal. Whereas Arenal was a typical rural, agricultural Costa Rican region and community, Tamarindo has never been an official town and was historically sparsely populated by Costa Ricans, most of whom lived (and still live) farther inland in small towns or on ranches. Nonetheless, the growth in the foreign population is beginning to impact these towns further inland as development spreads away from the coast and the economy moves away from ranching and towards service and construction.

Given these experiences, I wanted to explore the ways North American amenity migrants in Tamarindo are exercising rights typically associated with citizenship – property ownership, voting or participation in political processes, decision-making in communities, and obligations to those communities – even though they themselves do not hold formal citizenship. In what ways were Costa Rican citizens experiencing and enacting citizenship duties like community involvement? Had the economic and cultural influences of the foreign amenity migrant population impacted sense of belonging in

Tamarindo and conceptions of rights and responsibilities? In order to address these multi-layered questions, it was important for me to think carefully about methods and how I would be able to "answer" questions that I raised.

Epistemology

> *"There is never interpretation, understanding, and then knowledge where there is no* interest*" (Said 1981, 157).*

Research is shaped by the researcher's beliefs about how knowledge is produced, known and substantiated. The methods a researcher chooses to employ in a research project depends upon how she or he views the world and the production of knowledge (Graham 1999). Said (1981) contends that interpretation, and thus knowledge, is influenced by one's background, and that power is implicated in the production of knowledge. The interpreter is shaped by existing interpretations and understandings, personal life experiences, beliefs, and the historical and geographical situation in which the interpretation takes place (Said 1981; England 1994). By arguing that "all knowledge is interpretation," Said calls to our attention the fact that knowledge production about human society (which assumedly is the goal of most qualitative research) is not developed in a vacuum and involves emotions, biases, and values that cannot be divorced from the research but nevertheless should be acknowledged (Said 156-157).

I approach research from the standpoint that knowledge is situated (Haraway 1991), and there is no one truth to be measured and/or tested. This epistemological

framework therefore influences my research and its design. I do not seek to "prove" the existence of a certain phenomenon like amenity migration, but rather I am interested in describing the ways in which it plays itself out in the cultural, social and political landscapes in Costa Rica (Alasuutari 1995).

I subscribe to a feminist postcolonial research framework which values the importance of reflexive thought on the research process, including the way that power permeates all aspects of the research process from the conceptualization of the project to the analysis and dissemination of findings (Mullings 1999; England 1994). Postcolonial feminist research on migration seeks to give voice to the migrants themselves and, in so doing, hopes to disrupt the common understandings of migration and place, emphasize the diversity within migrant communities, and highlight how migrants' mobility "is both ideologically and materially produced through Western interventions in non-Western places" (Silvey and Lawson 1999, 123). Whereas Silvey and Lawson draw on scholars whom have traditionally studied marginalized actors who are made mobile through interventions from the Global North, I find this framework useful to explore how migrants from the Global North exercise power in their communities of settlement and are involved in producing Northern interventions in the Global South through their economic and cultural power. For example, a Tico respondent, Alfredo, in the research made the comment that "gringos are like a plague here," referring to the fact that North American migrants have reached a critical mass in Tamarindo to significantly impact the social, cultural, and political landscapes. In what ways might the presence of North American amenity migrants and their practices of citizenship, which I will detail further

in Chapter IV, contribute to the increasing insertion of neoliberal policies in Costa Rica as detailed in Chapter I?

A postcolonial framework with regards to migration research, specifically, seeks to problematize the ways we understand "place" and "migrant" and argues that how these categories have been construed in migration research up until recently has not challenged power relations or development discourses (Silvey and Lawson 1999). In order to explore this issue, it is important to critically examine how Costa Rica's construction as a place has set the stage for not only amenity migration but for the increasing transfer of rights to foreigners at the expense of Costa Rican citizens.

With regards to these unproblematized notions of "place" in migration research, Silvey and Lawson (1999) elaborate that postcolonial theorists "argue that both the specific places and the ways they have been conceptualized have reflected and reinforced power relations" (123). This holds true for Costa Rica and the way it has been conceptualized as the "Switzerland" of Central America, as friendly to U.S. interests, and as a peaceful paradise welcoming of foreign amenity migrants, as described in Chapter 1. These conceptualizations are especially evident in the newspaper advertisements promoting real estate investment opportunities for foreigners and in the reasons amenity migrants give for being attracted to Costa Rica.

Power

Researchers encounter issues with power at every phase of the research from the determination of the research question itself and the decision of what methods to employ

to the analysis and interpretation of the research data and the choice of how to portray the research to the world. Power is implicated in the formulation of the research project as a researcher and her ideas do not exist in a vacuum. Each researcher is part of various "interpretive communities" that influence her ideas and offer methodological and analytical tools for research (Bradshaw and Stratford 2005, 68)

Power is also exercised during the collection of data, particularly if there is a significant power differential (ie. race, class, nationality, gender) between the researcher and the research participants (Dowling 2005). At various times throughout the research process these power dynamics may shift (Mullings 1999). These power shifts occur depending on the subject being interviewed and the situation in which the interview takes place. For instance, Mullings (1999) describes the power dynamics when she interviews young women working in a global assembly plant and then the shift that occurs when she interviews the owners and managers of the plant. Yet just being aware of power differentials does not erase them from the research context (England 1994, 85), so researchers must always be aware of how power plays out in the research.

Much feminist research and participatory action research seeks to give "voice" to the marginalized, and researchers have experimented with various methods of making their research more inclusive and empowering to those whom they research. Ultimately, though, "fieldwork is inherently confrontational in that it is the purposeful disruption of other people's lives" (England 1994, 85). This was one of the hardest issues for me in my recruitment of subjects. Research felt very selfish, and I could not think of concrete ways that my research subjects would benefit from my research. I felt nervous about

asking participants to take time to talk with me even though most were very willing to do so. The interactions I had with research subjects were influenced by power and insider/outsider issues.

Insider/Outsider

Just as certain aspects of my history led me to be interested in this research topic so too my history positioned me as both an insider and an outsider with Gringos and Ticos throughout various stages of the research process. Regarding my position to North American expats, the fact that I had lived in Costa Rica made me more similar to them than perhaps a researcher who had not would have been. However, I moved to Costa Rica for different motives (on a study grant) and temporarily (for one year) whereas the participants in my research study had moved for a change of life and usually more permanently. The fact that I had lived in other Latin American countries and grown up for a few years outside of the U.S. positioned me as someone who was familiar with their experiences of living and adapting to life in another country, especially a Spanish-speaking Latin American country. For instance, when I would ask about cultural differences or adapting to life in Costa Rica, respondents would often start to explain their experiences and then trail off with some comment like, "well, you're aware of this having lived here."

In addition to having lived overseas before, I also shared a common socioeconomic and cultural background with many of the respondents: middle class, college-educated, white, and politically liberal. This made small talk easy and we often

held common thoughts about the U.S. culture, the government, and its state of relations with the rest of the world. I could easily understand many of the respondents' sentiments and motives for relocating.

On the other hand, there were aspects that also made me an outsider with the North American respondents I was interviewing. For one, I am a student and relatively young compared to most respondents I interviewed (80% of North Americans I interviewed were over 40). Many of the respondents I interviewed had grown children my age and were nearing retirement. They, at the end of their careers, and I, just beginning a working career, had little in common in that realm of life. Second, most were property owners, and I have never owned property. Socio-economically, they were all better off than me (or seemingly so) and more settled in their places of residence.

I knew that Tico participants would see me as an "outsider" and that this division would most likely be more prominent in our interactions. Tico respondents generally fell into two groups: there were those with prominent status in the community as business owners and who were all college-educated and there were those who were employees in Tamarindo and had grown up and lived in that area their whole lives. The three business owners and I shared similar education backgrounds. All three had studied in North America, so we shared similarities of studying abroad as well and adapting to new cultures. However, with all Tico respondents we came from different cultural backgrounds and with most we also came from different socio-economic backgrounds. The fact that I was a gringa made me "wealthy" in many Ticos' eyes, regardless of my actual income status. The fact that I have privileges, including mobility, that come with

being white and middle-class in the U.S. differentiated me from many of the Tico respondents who only had lived in their communities in Guanacaste their whole lives and who increasingly have few opportunities for making a living outside of the service sector industry.

However, there were also personal traits of mine that granted me "insider" status with Ticos in Tamarindo. Most importantly, I speak Spanish at a nearly fluent level. Many commented on my Spanish language skills and were surprised at my language skills compared to those of Americans who had been living in Tamarindo for several years. With the exception of perhaps two North American respondents, those U.S. Americans whom I interviewed who said they knew Spanish well or well enough to get by, did not know it well enough to have deep and meaningful conversations in the language. Therefore, the fact that I could converse about anything in Spanish and conduct interviews in Spanish, asking both about technical matters, such as property laws, and about conceptual matters, such as ideas about belonging in a changing society, seemed to grant me more of an insider status with Ticos. In addition, having lived in Costa Rica and being familiar with the culture I was able to ask them questions about issues that I had heard from other Ticos in the country and talk about past political happenings in the country, all of which positioned me as a "knowledgeable" person in their eyes.

Ticos were very interested in my research topic and often saw me as an "expert" on why North Americans were moving to their country. They would ask me about Americans' reasons for moving to the country and if more would be moving down in the

near future. It became fairly obvious that many of them had never had conversations with the Americans in town about their motivations for moving, what factors drew them to Tamarindo, and what their lives were like back in the United States. Similarly, many of the U.S. expats also questioned me about the broader trends of amenity migration and what else I was finding out in my research. Some asked me to please share my results regarding subjects' motivations for moving. Others questioned me about what Ticos' thought. And, similar to Ticos' interests in why Americans were moving to Costa Rica, it became clear that many U.S. Americans had not had meaningful conversations with Ticos about their lives.

Finally, one other personal trait that proved to grant me more "insider" status both with North Americans and with Ticos was the fact that I grew up in small communities of between 1,000 and 5,000 people, the same size of the Tamarindo area. Many of the North Americans I interviewed had come from large cities in the U.S. and many of the cultural adaptations they had to make were as much about adapting to a small-town environment as they were about adapting to a specific "Tico" culture. Invariably interviews would turn to the aspects of small-town life and how they were changing as Tamarindo grew. Some changes were positive – more services, better variety of goods in the markets, more restaurants and cultural activities – while others were not – increased crime, not knowing everyone in the community, and more traffic.

During these conversations respondents would often ask me about the town where I grew up, and they were usually surprised to hear that there were no stoplights or fast food restaurants, that we left our doors unlocked, and that everyone knew one another.

Gringos thought this small, "safe," community-oriented life was harder and harder to come by now in the U.S. and was often one of their motives for moving to Tamarindo. Ticos and gringos alike thought that this sense of community and slower pace of life were slowly disappearing as Tamarindo grew. The fact that I had personal experience living in small communities seemed to give me more "credibility" in their eyes: I was someone who could understand the challenges of change in a small town.

Methodology

Methodology cannot be divorced from a researcher's epistemology (Findlay and Li 1999). The ways in which researchers understand knowledge production in the world will influence the choice of research methods and the analysis of those methods. However, one cannot assume a researcher's epistemology based on the methods they use. Unfortunately, epistemology and methodology are often linked together unproblematically (Silvey and Lawson 1999). For instance, it is often assumed that geographers employing quantitative methods in population research subscribe to a positivist approach and an epistemology of objectivity (Findlay and Li 1999; Silvey and Lawson 1999).

Because I subscribe to the ideas that knowledge is situated (Haraway 1991) and that context is important and will influence the research (Alasuutari 1995), it was important to me to choose a methodological approach that would allow me different types of interactions with subjects and various text sources from which to derive

information about North-South amenity migration. This epistemological standpoint also determined the types of interviews I conducted. For instance, I wanted to make sure my interviews provided enough room for the participants to interact in the interview and decide what was important for them to address. Therefore, I determined that semi-structured interviews were the best fit between this flexibility for the respondent and some type of consistency with the general questions that I asked from which I could compare individuals' responses.

Mason (1996) explains that the goal in using qualitative data is to develop "a sound theoretical analysis" not to "produce a representative sample of the population" (103). Given my theoretical interests in citizenship, my methodology was designed to better understand citizenship enactment by both North American amenity migrants and Costa Rican citizens in Tamarindo and how rapid changes within Tamarindo and Costa Rica were impacting citizenship rights, obligations, and practices for all parties.

My initial interest in this research topic, as stated earlier, was sparked by conversations with Tico friends and reading newspaper articles about the phenomenon of amenity migration in Costa Rica. So, I felt I had a preliminary understanding of Ticos' thoughts on the issues surrounding this migration. However, I had not talked to many North American amenity migrants while living in Costa Rica. In order to get a better idea of their experiences, I conducted a preliminary short email survey with several North Americans residing in Costa Rica in winter 2006. After receiving these six surveys, I found myself wanting more specific information from the respondents. The survey format led to some great information; however, the respondents only answered the

questions I had asked of them and there was not the opportunity to ask for clarification or expansion of ideas. I found out that examining issues of belonging, power, and sense of place was very hard to do through surveys. Thus, I knew that in-person interviews and time spent in the community were needed to interrogate these ideas.

Participant Observation

As stated previously, Alasuutari (1995) argues that "different types of interaction situations yield different types of research material." I wanted to not only interview people but also participate, if possible, in their daily activities in order to experience different interaction situations with them. As Kearns (2005) contends, the goal of participant observation is "to acknowledge difference and, through immersion in a situation, to 'become the other', however provisionally" (205). Through participating in peoples' daily activities, one gains an understanding that is not possible through interviews. This is because the interview, however informal and relaxed it may be, is still usually removed from other social settings and relations (Kearns 2005, 195). In participating in people's daily activities there is a greater chance that the observer is not the central focus. Thus, with careful observation, the participant observer may be able to glean information from participants that is not available through the interview process. For example, while out with a group of expat women, they began talking about how they would be able to support candidates and influence local municipal elections without they themselves having the right to vote. The information I gained from their concerns allowed me to

shift the way I asked questions in subsequent interviews and ask other U.S. Americans about alternative ways they might have thought to participate in or influence local political decisions.

A common misconception is that participant observation is just being in the space which one wants to observe. Far from reality, observation is not a passive approach to research nor does it focus solely on "seeing" (Kearns 2005). As Kearns (20005) argues, participation includes other senses than the visual. In my research, auditory observation and careful listening proved valuable to understand the role of language in the community. In which places was Spanish or English spoken and by whom? Topics that were addressed and spaces that were primarily dominated by one language informed me about community interactions and decision-making processes in Tamarindo. For example, the local coffee shop, "Olga's", was a meeting point for many community members to discuss happenings in the community. I often sat there compiling my field notes and observing the interactions among the expat community. Almost all conversations were in English and there were a couple impromptu community meetings that occurred at the shop during the time I was in Tamarindo. The fact that these meetings took place in English and not in Spanish meant that a significant portion of the population was excluded and speaks to the nature of participation in citizenship processes.

While participant observation offers a different lens into the research material, we as researchers still need to keep in mind that participants' actions and what we observe is shaped by our "insider" or "outsider" status (Kearns 2005).

Textual Analysis

The other method on which I relied for information was textual analysis. Much as geographers have historically "read" landscapes, whether physical or cultural, to understand interactions between "humans and the built and natural environment" (Forbes 2000, 124), geographers can also read texts in much the same way, searching for the multiple meanings found within them. Textual analysis can be used as a method in and of itself, but many human geographers use it as part of a multi-method approach and as a way to triangulate data gained from other approaches. The goal of textual analysis is not to "find" the correct answer or interpretation but to examine how issues —in this case understandings of belonging, citizenship, and identities among expats and Ticos - are constructed and the meanings attributed to them. Textual analysis helps identify "the power relations which those meanings reinforce" (Forbes 2000, 141). Therefore, Forbes argues that what is *not* stated in a text is as important as what *is* stated. So, the fact that that very few articles which I reviewed ever addressed Ticos' thoughts about amenity migration processes or any of the social, environmental, economic, or cultural impacts for the country and the people is important to note and to question why these issues are not addressed and who benefits from them not being addressed.

While not reporting on controversial issues associated with amenity migration, newspaper articles from U.S. publications like the *New York Times* have been eager to highlight the growing numbers of North Americans relocating to Central America and the real estate and tourism booms associated with this migration (Lee 2005; Brown 2006). I

reviewed many of these articles from October 2005 until March 2008 to analyze how international amenity migration and the destination countries were being portrayed and idealized.

I also reviewed *The Tico Times*, the foremost English language publication in Costa Rica, on a weekly basis between February 2006 and May 2008. *The Tico Times* publishes articles of relevance to North Americans in Costa Rica, such as a recent article in the April 4, 2008 edition about a community trying to implement a moratorium on all new building given the overdevelopment in their town. *The Tico Times* also published weekly short columns by regional correspondents. Through these columns I was able to keep current on issues in Tamarindo and other towns in Costa Rica with large foreign U.S. expat populations. Besides reviewing *The Tico Times,* I also gained information from news articles and letters to the editor in the various local English-language publications like the Tamarindo-based *The Howler* (run by a British expat), the Tamarindo-based *Flyswatter* (run by U.S. American expats) and the Guanacaste-based *Guanacaste Journal* and *The Beach Times,* both run by a few foreign expats. Personal accounts on webpages, blogs, and listserves provided other means of staying current on issues of concern to North Americans residing in Costa Rica. It was more difficult to gain perspective via internet and print media about Costa Ricans' perspectives (itself an analytically significant finding) although I also reviewed "La Nacion" newspaper monthly and did searches related to residency and investment laws and the foreign population.

Forbes (2000) states that reading texts is about more than just picking out phrases that represent our claims. We must critically examine the multiple meanings that can be found in texts, paying particular attention to how writers are able to "naturalize" certain phenomena by the choices they make in what to emphasize or omit in the text (Forbes 2000, 128). This critical examination is what I attempted to employ not only with the newspaper articles and first-person accounts that I reviewed but also with the review of my own interview texts.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews allowed me to explore issues of belonging and power in a more substantial way than the earlier surveys I had conducted. As mentioned previously, I chose the semi-structured format for its balance between flexibility and structure. I recorded most interviews, but some of the interviews did not lend themselves to being recorded, and two participants specifically asked not to be recorded. In total, I interviewed 18 people and recorded fifteen of them; however, three of these interviews did not record properly on my recording device, so I had to rely on my notes from those interviews rather than the recording. Fortunately, I noticed soon after the interviews that they had not recorded properly, so I was able to record myself recounting the interview right afterwards. In addition to the 15 recorded interviews, I conducted another two interviews without the use of a recorder (at the request of interviewees), and I conducted several "mini-interviews" (about 15 total) which consisted of conversations anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes each with local residents. About two-thirds of these were with

Tico residents and employees about their experiences in Tamarindo while the third were with North Americans and included real estate agents and business owners.

Interviews and conversations with gringo residents were conducted in English and those with Tico residents were conducted in Spanish. Two of the Tico interviewees also knew English and would at times say a phrase in English, but the majority of the interview was conducted in Spanish. The conversations, or "mini-interviews", occurred rather spontaneously and only one was recorded. Usually they came about as I was inquiring into setting up an interview with someone. As I would explain my research topic residents would start to share their thoughts on the increase in foreign residents, especially North Americans, in the area and the impacts this population was having on cost of living, language, culture, environmental degradation and protection, community involvement, and sense of place. Some of the best information I received was from these spontaneous conversations.

I was surprised by the differences in reactions to my research from Ticos and from North Americans. I received opposite reactions at different stages in the research from the two groups. First, when I would approach North Americans about my research they would be a bit suspicious asking me questions such as "*what* are you researching?" and "why would you research *us*?" Even given their skepticism, once I sat down to interview North Americans they all opened up and were willing to share their experiences of living in Costa Rica.

Almost the opposite scenario occurred with Ticos whom I approached about my project. Upon meeting them and explaining my research, most Ticos would become

animated and express their interest in the subject matter and its importance for Costa Rica and Ticos in general. Immediately they would start sharing their opinions with me about the influx of North Americans, and other foreigners, in the country. Some of the comments were reactionary while others just expressed the changes they had seen or their concerns for the future. Examples of comments I received were: "Our government needs to close the borders," "our government prioritizes foreigners over us" (field notes 8/11/06 and 8/13/06).

At first I was astounded by their frankness and willingness to talk with me about this topic, especially as these interactions usually happened in public spaces or in their places of employment. Yet when I asked for a more formal interview they were usually quite hesitant. In the few interviews that I did record the participants were much more careful in what they shared and treated the interview quite formally. This was different from many of the North American interviewees who treated the interview more like a casual conversation. In addition, I experienced several failed attempts to interview a few Ticos in town. At first, I didn't think much of the missed appointments and rescheduled them. However, after a couple of no-shows and vague responses about when to stop by for the interview, I began to think they may be uncomfortable with the idea of a formal interview. Culturally it is not always appropriate to tell someone "no" in Costa Rica; often it is preferred to be vague rather than reject someone outright (Biesanz 1999). Even though I knew this, it took a couple of missed interviews for me to realize the cultural element and acknowledge that perhaps participants were not comfortable with the idea of an interview.

Since I had originally proposed to do seven to ten interviews each with Ticos and with U.S. Americans, I had to find a way around the obstacle of some Ticos' unwillingness to participate in formal interviews. Had I had more time in the community, I may have been able to set up more interviews and gain trust. However, given the short time I was actually in Tamarindo (three and a half weeks), I did not have time to keep trying to reschedule missed appointments and risk not getting any information from local Tico residents. Therefore, instead of forcing the idea of a certain number of formal interviews as I had originally proposed, I chose instead a more informal tactic with many Tico residents and with certain North American residents with whom it was hard to find an agreeable time to conduct an interview. I chose to stop by their businesses or places of employment, where I originally had made contact and received such willingness to talk about the subject matter, and just chat with them informally. I seemed to get much richer information this way from Tico respondents and often the questions took on the format of my original interview questions. Given the laid-back nature of the town and workplace this did not seem to be an issue for anyone with whom I talked although at times they would ask me to stop by the next day or later in the day to continue our chat. If anything, they seemed to welcome the interaction as a break from the workday. The downside of this approach was that I could not record these conversations as it would have interrupted the informal nature of the interactions, and the participants had already expressed reluctance to a formal interview. While at times I took notes during these conversations, the most effective approach was to treat the interaction as an informal conversation and

record myself afterwards recounting the conversation in order to remember it and be able to analyze it later.

Ideally I would have been able to gain the trust of local Tico residents and interviewed them outside of public or work spaces, but this would have required much more time in the community and very personal connections. In Costa Rican society the public and private is more demarcated than in other Latin American cultures. It is rare to be invited into someone's home for coffee, which may be quite common in Mexico or Colombia for instance, if one does not have very personal or familial connections (Biesanz 1999). Thus, even if more Ticos had agreed to formal interviews, the interviews most likely would still have taken place in public spaces or businesses (where those formal interviews I did conduct with Ticos took place). The few Ticos I was able to interview and record were quite outspoken and had lived abroad or at least lived in San Jose for numerous years during their lives. They were familiar with North American culture and obviously felt more comfortable talking with me about their experiences. This comfort most likely came from their experience interacting with gringos in a North American context while studying or working in the U.S. or Canada.

In addition to the cultural dynamics, the small community and the fact that most Ticos work in the service sector, either as business owners who service the foreign community or as employees for foreigners, it is not surprising that they were unwilling to commit to formal interviews. Yet the fact that most responded enthusiastically when I explained my research and were open to sharing their feelings on Tamarindo's

development as an amenity migrant destination, even if only through informal conversations, was a good indicator of the importance of this topic for the community.

While I was surprised by Ticos' openness when talking informally with me about my research, I was duly surprised by the suspicious or reserved nature of many U.S. expats when initially talking to them about my research. However, as I sat down to formally interview U.S. respondents, they all were open about their experiences, generous with their time, and helpful in pointing me to other resources. Similar to interviews with Ticos, most of my interviews with gringo residents occurred at businesses or coffee shops and some at people's homes. However, this is not an easy distinction as five of the respondents had home businesses, so the interviews were actually conducted at their residence as well.

Even though U.S. participants were open, some were careful about how they portrayed their experiences in Tamarindo. Soon after arriving I learned that a divide exists in the community regarding development in Tamarindo. On the one hand, there are those residents who think things are fine the way they are in Tamarindo, want more growth, and downplay the crime and negative impacts of development because they think that the negative press is bad for the community and tourism. This segment of the population gets upset with publications like "The Flyswatter," a publication started in 2005 by U.S. expats that calls attention to the unspoken corruption and greed found in Tamarindo with the onslaught of new real estate developments. The folks on the other side of the development debate think that issues like crime, environmental destruction, and illegal development need attention and want to organize to "fix" Tamarindo. Most

respondents I interviewed made clear which side of the development continuum they were on, but were reluctant to express it too outwardly with the exception of a couple of them. For example, Steve, who had recently moved to Tamarindo and is affiliated with the real estate industry, stated,

> *The people who decided that they don't want to share it and they should have shut their mouths, what they are is they are starting newspapers like the Flyswatter and keeping people from coming here, they're saying it's bad, it's not bad, the place is great, you just have to find the greatness…*

While Mel, a long-time gringo resident, claimed that many of the residents in Tamarindo were "takers" and didn't contribute to helping stop development or promote a livable community. He further elaborated about his distaste for these "takers" by saying,

> *And some of the real estate agents that have made tons of money, they're some of the worst. You can quote that if you want…everyone knows where I stand.*

Interviews proved to be a great entry into examining questions of belonging and membership in Tamarindo, but I also wanted to gain an idea about amenity migration on a larger scale within Costa Rica: where were these migrants settling, what places were seeing the greatest impacts with real estate development or housing shortages? While most of the participants I interviewed thought Tamarindo was probably one of the areas most badly affected by rampant development, I was curious if there was any quantitative data that further validated respondents' claims about the nature of growth in Tamarindo.

Census Data

Although the majority of my analysis is based on interviews and textual materials, I also used a couple datasets from the Census (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos de Costa Rica) and from Migration (Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería) to try and better understand these broader trends. The best data I found was through the Census, although not the population census. The last Census of the population was taken in 2000 and it is assumed that it greatly undercounted the numbers of North Americans living in Costa Rica at the time for a couple of reasons: 1) It was carried out in September, a month when many U.S. residents choose to return to the U.S. to visit family and friends since flights are cheaper and it is the start of the rainy season in Costa Rica, 2) It was carried out right after a supposed "crack-down" on immigration and many foreigners saw the census as an attempt by the government to find those who were living without official residency status (Director of the Association of Residents of Costa Rica, personal communication, 8/29/06). More importantly, though, the majority of growth in U.S. immigrants to Costa Rica has occurred since 2000, so the numbers from the 2000 census do little good in trying to understand this recent phenomenon.

However, the Census does have other data that prove more useful and informative: new residential construction data, construction permit data, and value of residential real estate. These data illustrate which areas of the country have experienced the greatest growth in construction of new housing and largest spikes in housing prices

(see Figure 3). In addition to this Census data, the Central Bank of Costa Rica, using data compiled in 2005 and 2006 on the amount of investment in real estate by foreigners in the country, found that 58% of the investment originated from the U.S. (see Figure 1). Tamarindo is located in the municipality with the fastest growth of real estate development (see Figure 3) and in the province with the greatest amount of investment in real estate by foreigners (see Graph 2). Given these findings, Tamarindo proves even more to be an ideal research site. Additionally, while the choice of U.S. amenity migrant as a category was chosen primarily for other reasons (see discussion at end of this chapter), these data highlight the importance that U.S. amenity migrants have in the overall foreign investment in real estate in Costa Rica.

Analysis of Data

As England (1994) contends, "fieldwork *is* personal," and "different personal characteristics allow for certain insights" (85). Therefore, my background and characteristics, described briefly in the introduction to this chapter, will influence the types of insights I have while analyzing my data. As Said (1981) argues, "facts get their importance from what is made of them in interpretation," (154). Thus, the role of the interpreter is a powerful one. The concept of critical reflexivity emphasized in feminist frameworks should be carried through to all stages of the research (England 1994). Thus, the researcher should be thinking about the interactions she had with subjects, how her presence may have changed social interactions in participant observation, how her decisions throughout the research process have influenced the data gained, and how her

interests and biases affected data gathering as well as how they will affect the analysis of the data (Dowling 2005).

How do we legitimate the knowledge produced in qualitative methodologies? This is a question I grappled with during the design, implementation, and analysis of this research. As Alasuutari (1995) describes, results become "legitimate" with consistency. The researcher reaches a period of "saturation" in the process of collecting data where the same themes start to come up in all or most interviews or focus groups and the researcher begins to feel that no new knowledge will necessarily be gained by continuing to interview greater numbers of respondents (Cameron 2005, 122). There is no fixed number of interviews, focus groups, or surveys, for example, that will tell a researcher when they have collected enough data, rather it is a subjective process that requires the conscious reflections and decisions of the researcher given their research questions, methods, subjects, and time.

In qualitative research a fine line exists between data gathering techniques and analysis techniques. There is a constant analysis process happening during data gathering that informs the continued research. For example, the information I gained about influencing the political process from the group of women in Tamarindo made me reflect on the ways in which foreigners were enacting practices of citizenship that we consider traditional (voting and involvement in the formal political realm) and in turn allowed me to ask slightly revised questions of interviewees that brought up issues of representation without formal citizenship.

However, the formal analysis process does require several steps. First, I transcribed all of the interviews and typed up my field notes that I had either written by hand or digitally recorded. For the most part I did full transcriptions of the interviews, but I left out sections that were tangential and just made a note about what the conversation was about in case I later needed to reference it. These tangents usually were the respondents asking me about my background or us talking about a topic not relevant to the research. Often U.S. Americans wanted to talk about U.S. politics, the state of the country and the current president. After transcribing the interview data, I then read through the interviews in print form to try and get an idea for the themes in the interviews and come up with a preliminary set of codes. Next, I used a software program called Atlas.ti to code the interviews.

The benefits of coding data are threefold: "data reduction, organization and the creation of searching aids, and analysis" (Cope 2005, 225). Applying codes to the data helps to reduce it from pages of text into smaller groupings, often arranged by topic (Cope 2005, 225). Coding is far from a simple process and is part of the analysis phase of research. The researcher must think carefully about what codes to employ, and there are various types of coding methods from which to choose. My codes generally fell into the two types of codes that Cope defines as "descriptive" or "analytic" (224). Some examples of my descriptive codes included "security," "crime," "early Tamarindo" and "current Tamarindo." For instance, "early Tamarindo" is applied to any text where a person was describing what Tamarindo used to be like before the current development boom. "Current Tamarindo" is applied to text where a respondent is describing

Tamarindo's current condition. Analytic codes are not as straightforward as descriptive codes and often refer to the overarching theoretical structure of the project. For instance, because my research is concerned with the ways in which citizenship is being redefined in Tamarindo, some of my analytic codes were: Tico difference and gringo difference. These codes referred to the ways in which Ticos or gringos constructed themselves as different in relation to an "other."

While it takes much time to develop the first round of codes, coding is an iterative process and codes will change over the analysis phase (Cope 2005, 230). Therefore, the next step after I had developed my first pass at codes (which resulted in more than 50 codes) was to refine the codes into a more manageable number and group them by category creating an overarching "coding structure" (Cope 2005, 231). Atlas.ti makes searching the coded data very easy. Each interview document can be grouped with others to form "families." For instance, I have families of Ticos and Gringos and of residents who have been in Tamarindo over five years and those who have been there less than five years. Once this coding structure and grouping of documents was in place I could then begin to search my data by these specific variables.

As in all steps of the research process, the analysis phase is loaded with power as well. Scholars warn us to … look up something about just seeing what the researcher is looking for…being flexible allowing the research to shift depending on the answers gained, acknowledging that knowledge is situated and not looking to find the "truth", representative, ability to "scale up" qualitative research.

Terminology

The choice of categories to use in this research was difficult. I do not wish to essentialize the populations that fall into the categories of "gringo" and "Tico." Researchers studying issues in Latin America have advised us to problematize categories such as "foreigner" and "local" and consider people as actors responding to and embedded in transnational processes (Robinson 2003; García Canclini 2004). The research subjects whom I interviewed were all embedded in these transnational processes in various ways. Indeed, there was much diversity within the North American expat population and within the local Tico population. However, all the North Americans whom I interviewed in Tamarindo had relocated there as a choice. Many chose Costa Rica over areas in the United States given the cost of living. Most mentioned Costa Rica's natural beauty, safety, and laid-back nature as factors drawing them to relocate. Even though they had various reasons for moving, their motivations fell within the same general realm of wanting a different lifestyle from their lifestyle in the United States. It was a deliberate choice for all of the amenity migrants.

There was perhaps even greater diversity within the Tico population as a couple of the respondents were from other areas of Costa Rica but had chosen to move to Tamarindo twenty years ago. The three business owners, all of whom had spent some time in college, obviously had privilege via their educational and professional status as business owners. However, the majority of Ticos with whom I talked did not have such privilege or choice. Being from the Tamarindo area or Guanacaste region, they did not

necessarily have the means or the desire to move someplace else. If they became upset with the trajectory of Tamarindo's development and wanted to move to another area of the country as many expats have done, it would not be as simple as selling property and picking up and moving. For them, their families, homes, and livelihoods were all rooted in place in much different ways than those of amenity migrants who were all much more mobile.

Conclusion

As England (1994) asserts, "research is a *process* not just a product" (82). Therefore, my own history, participants' histories, and the research interaction itself all shape the research data produced in this project. In addition, issues of power affected all aspects of the research process from the initial design to the analysis of the results. Given that I adopted a postcolonial research framework for this project, I sought to let the "voices" of my research subjects speak for themselves, especially the Tico subjects whom have had little opportunity to voice their concerns over the growing changes in their communities given the influx of foreign amenity migrants. However, in qualitative research that seeks to give "voice" to subjects, there is the potential to harm the subjects and all precautions have been taken to ensure confidentiality of the research subjects. Confidentiality and sensitivity was especially crucial in this project given the small community of Tamarindo, the fact that many North American residents do not have

official residency, and the fact that Tico respondents feel uneasy voicing their feelings because they rely on the jobs provided by foreign amenity migrants and companies.

Doing a study of this nature with just five weeks of fieldwork is a difficult undertaking, and I acknowledge that the subject matter is complex, and I have undoubtedly missed important components. However, designing a multi-method study which included interviews, participant observation, GIS analysis of Census data, and textual analysis of various publications from the New York Times to expat community online forums contributes to the rigor of the project. I can only hope that the design of my research and the careful and thoughtful nature with which I approached research with subjects, allows me to adequately portray their experiences. For, as Bradshaw and Stratford remind us, "it is no frivolous thing to share, interpret, and represent others' experiences" (73) as I will do in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL AGENCY WITHOUT CITIZENSHIP: THE CASE OF TAMAGRINGO

> *You hear endless success stories of foreigners finding their little piece of the beach to get away from it all. Costa Ricans are forced to adhere to this newly enforced power structure that preaches speed and efficiency…Costa Rica is the newest land of opportunity – for anyone born outside its borders.*

As Claire Saylor notes in the article entitled "Are Costa Ricans losing their voice?" in the *Guanacaste Journal* on July 5, 2006, power structures in Costa Rica are being altered by a new foreign population looking to find their piece of paradise in a small country. While Costa Rica is "the newest land of opportunity" for foreign amenity migrants, what are the repercussions of this new power structure for the many Costa Rican citizens of the area? The empirical material found in Chapter IV will help to explain these new power structures emerging on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica and their impacts for local residents and citizenship practices. The material in this chapter will ground theorizations of citizenship through concrete examples from the field work that highlight expats' and Ticos' political involvement and experiences of belonging and membership in Tamarindo, Costa Rica over the past two decades.

Tamagringo: Change in a Coastal Town

The increasing number of foreigners and their impacts on the landscape and society in Guanacaste, Costa Rica were called to my attention by a local Tica business owner upon my arrival in Tamarindo. While walking around looking for a place to rent my first day in Tamarindo, I came upon a business on the outskirts of town. As I approached the office, I met the owner who was talking with a couple of her friends from San Jose. She asked me what I was doing in Tamarindo, and I explained my research project to her. Immediately she exclaimed, "Well, hasn't anyone informed you? This is no longer called Tamarindo, it's called Tamagringo!" (paraphrased from conversation 8/7/06). She and her friends excitedly talked with me about my research topic, commenting on the changes they've seen in Tamarindo over the past two decades and the increasing number of foreigners who are coming that do not seem to care about adapting to the culture, learning the language, or keeping the coast accessible to Ticos.

The population growth in Tamarindo is difficult to quantify. Because Tamarindo is not an official city its exact population remains unknown, but estimates are that the community has grown from roughly 500 year-round residents in 2000 to an estimated 4,000 year-round residents today. And, according to real estate agents in Tamarindo, 80 to 90% of those who have been buying property in Tamarindo in the last few years are North American, either U.S. American or Canadian (field notes, 8/18/06). The numbers of foreign residents moving to Tamarindo in such a short period of time has greatly influenced the sense of community and place in this small coastal town.

Construction growth is much easier to quantify in Tamarindo than population growth. In July 2006, there were over eight new real estate development projects actively in the construction phase and many more planned (Andrew, personal communication). Throughout my research I learned that many Tamarindo residents, both Tico and foreign, were very concerned with the rapid, uncontrolled growth of real estate projects the area and its consequences for the community and the environment. The situation in Tamarindo in 2006 was becoming dire. Interviewees talked of needing urgent action to take care of the environmental problems stemming from overdevelopment: a wastewater treatment plant was long overdue, water shutoffs during the dry season were becoming more common, the main road (gravel and filled with huge potholes) was in great need of repair and pavement, and crime had seemed to increase considerably. Ticos and U.S. expats alike expressed the need for change, and most expressed frustration with the municipal government of Santa Cruz for its corruption and complicity in allowing development to take place unchecked.[4] But interviewees' comments varied widely about the roles of the Costa Rican government, the community, and private businesses in helping to regulate this growth and whether or not regulation was the appropriate solution.

These differences in opinion regarding the rights and obligations of government and citizens in Tamarindo's development sheds light on citizenship formation and enactment in this case of transnational amenity migration by privileged Northerners to a

[4] In the August 15, 2006 issue of *Nacion,* Santa Cruz was highlighted as one of the more corrupt municipalities in the country.

Costa Rica. In the U.S. transnational citizenship theories have been applied to marginalized groups like undocumented immigrants to understand belonging and membership by groups of residents who are not necessarily legal citizens of the country in which they live. But this case study explores the reverse scenario in which those community members who have the legal status of citizens (Costa Ricans) often lack the power to fulfill the potential of that status and those residents who lack formal citizenship (U.S. amenity migrants) can actually exercise rights and membership in the community through their more privileged economic and educational status. In this chapter I will be drawing on Eleonore Kofman's argument that "recognition by others as legitimate members of society" is as important as "resources obtained through the state, market or other social bodies" for "active participation in society" (Kofman 1995, 122). After a more detailed description of recent changes in Tamarindo, I will use three examples – each one exploring the cultural, political and economic influence of U.S. amenity migrants – to consider how Costa Rican citizens are often not recognized as "legitimate members of society" by the majority-foreign population of Tamarindo and the implications of this for community involvement, sense of belonging, and the town's future development.

Motivations for Moving

Like other amenity migration scholarship, I found that the majority of migrants whom I interviewed had moved to Costa Rica for a change of lifestyle (Moss 2006; Chaverri 2006; Geoffrey 2007). Many mentioned the fast pace of life in large U.S. cities,

the rising cost of living and loss of community in many areas in the United States, the reelection of George Bush and a conservative political system, and the attacks on September 11 and increasing threats of terrorism as reasons for their decision to leave the U.S. As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, Costa Rica has a certain mythical quality for many people, including my research subjects. They mentioned the country's natural environment, lack of an army, and its stable political system as reasons why they chose to relocate to Costa Rica.

One of the more interesting reasons why many amenity migrants listed being attracted to Costa Rica, either before or after their move, was the lack of strict rules and regulations governing all aspects of life that they often felt in the United States. As one gringo business owner, Paul, stated,

> *No central authority exists in Tamarindo. Most people who come down here from the U.S. or Canada are looking to get away from that central authority there, yet then they want it here when it comes to construction and planning.*

Similarly, another U.S. expat who does community work was commenting on how nice it was to not have to deal with all of the rules and regulations of donating things to schools or doing volunteer work in public schools in Costa Rica like you have to do in the U.S. While Brenda enjoys the lack of rules and regulations in some aspects of Costa Rican society, she wishes there would be more regulations in other areas as she describes below.

> *In the States there are so many regulations and rules and laws, you cannot do a lot...down here, unfortunately I do want rules, regulations and laws when it comes to destroying the environment.*

Steve, who is a newer full-time resident in Tamarindo finds distaste for regulations among other expats in a residential association to which he belongs:

> *It's a lawless place, nobody wants to form any rules, people come down here with their own ideas...I'm in an association that's like the worst thing in the whole world, and the association is a group of individuals that don't want to be controlled. And it's very, very difficult.*

Many foreign expats find themselves in this contradictory situation of being attracted to a place with very few rules governing how people live their lives, but at the same time wanting the government, or some type of authority, to step in and regulate development. A rift exists in the amenity migrant community between those who think that Tamarindo's current phase of development will work itself out in the end, and those whom believe that drastic change needs to be taken in order to reverse the pattern of development the town has embarked upon. Tourism business owners, real estate agents, developers, and some newer amenity migrants tend to be on the "do nothing" side, while long-time residents are working to organize to confront the problems, primarily resulting from unchecked development, that they see affecting their community.

Yet who gets to decide what happens in a town where there is no formal authority? Unfortunately, according to local residents and news reporters, up until this point it has been the developers who are able to bribe local municipal officials. Understandably, many long-term residents who have property in Tamarindo are concerned about the direction the area is heading and want to do something about it. But it is not only the foreign amenity migrants in disagreement over what Tamarindo should be, but Tico residents in the area are frustrated as well and often left out of the discussion

altogether. One U.S. expat, Karen, explains how things have shifted so quickly for many Ticos: in less than one generation they've gone from living a very rural lifestyle with no electricity or outdoor plumbing to mega-development and wealth in their region. And she explained that "a lot of them get frustrated because they see they don't have any control over it, everything is happening so quickly."

Formation of Tamagringo

Tamarindo has morphed from a small community of foreigners and ticos with few services in the 1980s to a cosmopolitan town of today. Comments from residents in Tamarindo reflect this shift of identification from a small beach community to a "global" town.

> *another main factor that attracted me here to this area was the influx and the colorfulness of all the different countries and all the different people that live near here (Jolene).*

> *and it was a lot of English-speaking people here and a lot of different nationalities which made it kind of attractive...it seemed very cosmopolitan for being this small of a town (Rebecca).*

These interviewees highlight the international character of Tamarindo and the fact that the presence of English-speaking people made the town an attractive relocation destination.

As stated in Chapter I, Tamarindo is primarily made up of foreign amenity migrants, and it is the foreign amenity migrant population who is responsible for the

town's rapid growth over the past several years. However, the overwhelming presence of foreigners should not negate Costa Ricans' ties to Tamarindo. Yet throughout my research I found that when I asked foreign residents about access for Ticos, whether for Ticos who have traditionally camped on the beaches in Tamarindo over Christmas week and Holy week or whether for Ticos who permanently live in the area, I received the same response over and over: 'well, this was never really a Tico town.' Residents explained that Ticos used Tamarindo as an access point for fishing and often lived in neighboring communities but had not settled in significant numbers in Tamarindo. This is true by all accounts from both Tico and foreign residents in town; however, this conceptualization of Tamarindo as an "unsettled" place waiting to be "settled" and "developed" is problematic for it has allowed the foreign population to claim ownership of Tamarindo as they identify themselves as the ones who have developed the town.

Feelings of ownership and membership in the community are not necessarily negative aspects as the foreign amenity migrant community has contributed to the development of Tamarindo. However, it becomes problematic when this idea of an "unsettled" place is what is marketed to foreigners and what draws people to invest in the area. For example, one of advertisements found in the August 16, 2006 edition of the *Guanacaste Journal* for a new real estate development in town states, "come and discover a world that has no owner yet." This same development, called Tamarindo Heights, uses the following description on its website: "A land of unimaginable beauty still relatively untouched, undeveloped and unexplored…A country whose people welcome you and genuinely enjoy your company" (www.tamarindoheights.com). When

foreign amenity migrants believe in these messages it creates unrealistic expectations as well as a sense of entitlement that they have somehow "developed" the area and are welcomed to do so.

Yet it is this sense of entitlement that comes with being the "first" settlers in a place that is worrisome for community formation and citizenship practices in Tamarindo. One expat describes her concerns over what she calls "competing paradises," where all the foreigners who have been drawn to Tamarindo have their own ideals of what they would like in their little "paradise," and often times these ideals conflict. Those who feel they "discovered" Tamarindo or were some of the first property owners there didn't necessarily care to be involved to confront development at first. As David, one U.S. business owner in Tamarindo, describes the long-time residents in town, "people were hypocritical, it's the old 'I got mine, fuck you' attitude about development and it wasn't fair" (David). But Tamarindo has grown so rapidly over the past several years, often in ways that the foreign community does not like, that everyone has been affected. Neil, a U.S. expat, explains,

> *I guess we should be careful what we wish for. I was coming here for several years and finally I just said if I want to buy I have to do it now because Tamarindo is going to explode. But I had no idea that growth also meant Burger King and Pizza Hut, you know, that's what I came here to get away from.*

Because many of the foreign amenity migrants moved to Tamarindo for their "little piece of paradise," growth directly threatens the place they "found" and fell in love with. For some, this growth is a reason to leave and move elsewhere. For others, it is the reason

they choose to move to Tamarindo. And still for others, it is a motivation to organize and take a stand against development.

For those foreign amenity migrants who do choose to organize and take action, their construction of place influences their practices of citizenship in their new home. One business owner, Paul, referring to those who want to organize states,

> *"They always say 'let's organize. If we all get organized and come together as a community, we could do something about this.' But they don't realize that it doesn't work like that here. They don't understand how things work in a Third World country."*

This idea about "how things work" in the Third World is problematic as foreign amenity migrants feel justified in working around the formal political system, often by underhanded means. For example, Marsha states that "everything had to be done by bribe" as that's the "way things work" in Costa Rica. Many respondents mentioned how they simply needed to pay a small bribe in order to expedite their residency papers or be able to build before receiving all of the official clearances and permits. Most of the time this is reality, and many Ticos engage in these same practices to navigate the bureaucracy of the government system. However, this belief that things inherently work differently in Costa Rica's democratic system in comparison to the U.S.'s system also creates a process by which American expats use different methods to make sure their voices are heard. While perhaps not a serious problem in the granting of residency papers, which can be a notoriously slow process, it could be problematic in realms that affect other community members such as construction the Maritime Zone.

Not everyone views Costa Rica as the "Third World." Just like the belief that things work differently in Costa Rica given its "Third World" status, the thought that Costa Rica is different from other "Third World" countries becomes problematic as well when it is tied up with neoliberal ideals as it often is. As Mel, a U.S. expat, explained, "Costa Rica is not really 'Third World' it's more like 'Second and a half world.' That Costa Rica was substantially different from other Central American countries was a comment I heard from many of my interview subjects, both foreign and Tico. For example, Steve mentions during his interview that "Well, I think Costa Ricans in general are different than other people from Central America..." He then goes on to explain that the foreigners who come down to Costa Rica are not just going to sit around and relax but that they will open businesses and "young, upwardly mobile Costa Ricans are going to jump aboard and grow with them..." and that "the Costa Ricans...are not going to allow their country to be overrun (by foreigners and rampant development)..." Many U.S. expats saw themselves as helping Costa Rica's economy by employing local workers and felt that Costa Ricans could benefit from the growth in tourism and amenity migration as well.

This idea that Costa Ricans, with enough initiative, will be able to benefit from the economic growth spurred by foreign investment is a very neoliberal ideal and one that is unrealistic without major structural changes. It is only a small class of Ticos who are able to enter into upwardly mobile jobs. For the majority, who do not know English well enough or have not had formal training, they are relegated to service sector positions with little opportunity for growth. As Alfredo states, the educational advantage of foreigners

is great. Not only do they have the money to open up businesses but also the knowledge of how to and how to market those businesses to tourists.

So, the idea that foreigners will provide the economic growth that will allow all to benefit is far from reality, and many foreigners do not see Ticos as part of the growth in Tamarindo given their identities as the ones who have settled the area. However, how would Tamarindo have developed without the thousands of Ticos of nearby areas who work in Tamarindo as service sector employees and construction laborers? It is not only the foreign population that has contributed to Tamarindo's development. As one Tica, Magdalena, described her thoughts about foreign amenity migrants, "I know that they are prejudiced against the Guanacastecans, against Latinos, even though they are a cheap source of labor for them." Indeed, without the Tico labor force, Tamarindo would not be what it is today.

It has been easy to erase Ticos from Tamarindo's history since many Ticos who previously lived in and around Tamarindo have been selling land or moving out of Tamarindo, especially in the last five years. One town, Villarreal, just about 5 km outside of Tamarindo, is a town where many of the Ticos who work in Tamarindo live. Rosa, a worker at a local hotel in town, mentioned that she had lived in Tamarindo until about five years ago when she and her children moved to Villarreal because Tamarindo had grown too big and too expensive for her. Meanwhile, Alfredo, a long-time resident in Tamarindo, had recently moved to Villarreal given the high cost of living in Tamarindo. He explained that Tamarindo is a "double-edged sword" for most Ticos: they do not desire, nor can they afford, to live in Tamarindo, but all the jobs are located

there. Even though some are selling land and moving away, there are those who refuse to move even if they don't like the growth. One young Tica, Ana, commented that her father-in-law refuses to sell his property even after numerous offers.

Likewise, foreign expats do not want to leave the community they have been creating and living in for years, but many of them are similarly being priced out of Tamarindo or simply feel frustrated with the town's development trajectory. Nonetheless, the difference between foreign expats and Ticos is that foreign expats have the privilege of their mobility. Most foreigners who have moved away from Tamarindo have moved to other places in Costa Rica or Central America. The fact that Tamarindo has become too big or expensive for them has not prevented them from moving to similar amenity migrant communities elsewhere. This is not a possibility for most Ticos from Guanacaste though. The increasing inability of many Ticos near Tamarindo to access affordable land and the changing economy of the area from ranching, agriculture and fishing to the service industry is profoundly shaping Costa Ricans' relationship to land as I will describe in the next section.

Property

Land in Latin America has been inextricable from power. Historically, land distribution and ownership has been more equitable in Costa Rica than in other Latin American countries given its democratic traditions (Seligson 1980). Costa Rica has implemented legislation over the past half century that has aimed to prevent the

consolidation of land, encourage equitable distribution of land, and protect certain lands like the coast as public property. However, this equitable distribution has been jeopardized by the government's promotion of foreign investment in Costa Rica. The resulting inequity in land holdings is most notable on the coasts where it is now estimated that 83% of all concessions are held by foreigners (Montoya 2005). As Eduardo, a Tico respondent, comments,

> *All the coasts, but especially the Pacific coast, belong to foreigners now, there are no longer Tico landowners on the coasts in Costa Rica.*

The ability of foreign amenity migrants to settle in Costa Rica is predicated on a long history of inequality related to land ownership in Latin American societies. Latin America's history of land concentration in the hands of the wealthy and privileged has greatly affected social structures. In order to relieve these gross inequities in land ownership and quell peasant uprisings, countries throughout Latin America implemented agrarian reform measures during the 1940s, 50s and 60s (de Janvry 1981; Seligson 1980). Many of these reform measures, like the 1942 Land Squatters Act in Costa Rica, secured legal title for landless peasants who would put to use unpopulated land. Subsequently, squatting land to gain ownership has been a strategy of the landless throughout Latin America to this day, creating a patchwork of legal and semi-legal tenure structures (Carter 2000; Dekker 2003).

The inequities in land distribution concerned Costa Rican leaders who were aggravated by the consolidation of wealth and land that the coffee and banana industries had produced in the first half of the twentieth century. Encouraged by Cuba's land

reforms and by Kennedy's implementation of the Alliance for Progress, Costa Rica created the Institute for Land and Colonization (ICTO) in 1961 to oversee the implementation of agrarian reform measures. (Seligson 1980, 125 and Lauderdale 1993, 218)) The agrarian reforms fell under legislation called the Law for Land and Colonization and encouraged settlement on "tierras baldias," or wastelands. Similar to the Homestead Act in the United States, this legislation aimed to better the socioeconomic conditions of landless peasants, encourage settlement and productive use of land in remote regions, promote resource conservation and prevent the concentration of land ownership by those who would buy land for speculative purposes. (Seligson 1980, 126)

While the Law of Land and Colonization failed to achieve any major structural change in land tenure systems and distribution of resources in the country, many rural areas, Guanacaste included, did receive a substantial increase in settlers to the region due to the ICTO policy (Dodge de Peraza 2006). Given its agricultural history, Costa Rica is still a relatively rural country and culture, and it is only in the past few decades have cities begun to grow substantially with in-migrants from rural areas. Therefore, many Costa Ricans still have ranches and coffee farms in their families and land is not only property but cultural patrimony as well. A Costa Rican gentleman who wrote a series of articles about foreign investment advises fellow Costa Ricans, "Not selling your property is the best business you can have...Every day it is worth more... and sometimes it is a richness beyond price" (Kimitch 2006). But Costa Ricans are selling their land, and the

increasing ownership of land by foreign residents, especially along the Guanacaste coast, alters the social and cultural landscapes of the region.

Costa Rica had sought to protect its coast from private ownership through the passage of the Maritime Zoning Law. Enacted in 1977, the law declares the first 200 meters of coastline to be "of national patrimony, belongs to the State, is inalienable and imprescriptible" (Petersen 1997). No individual, with the exception of a few who were granted land from the Spanish crown, can own the first 50 meters of coastline, and the next 150 meters cannot be owned outright, only through a concession to lease it. According to the law, foreigners who have resided less than five years in the country are not allowed to apply for a concession. But most foreign investors get around the law by purchasing the land in the name of a Costa Rican. The Costa Rican citizen then transfers their rights and passes them on to the foreigner through a process called "Cesión de Derechos," or cessation of rights (Lantz 2001). Unfortunately, given the ease with which foreigners can get around this law designed to protect Costa Rica's coastline as public land, much of this land is now being developed into private residences and tourist hotels, decreasing access for the public.

Further complicating the law is that each municipality is responsible for enforcing it. The Municipal Code of 1970 gave municipalities greater autonomy and regional planning power, but without the means to finance any of their new responsibilities – collection of property taxes, enforcement of conservation laws and legislation such as the Maritime Zoning Law (Dorn 1989). Unfortunately, this set up a situation where municipalities, who did not necessarily have the staff to enforce building codes, were

easily corrupted by large developers and individuals wanting to construct on the coastlines. The problems associated with the lack of state control over the coastline have been addressed at the national level, and President Oscar Arias has used Tamarindo as an example for the need for state-sponsored development projects. In a speech last year, he stated that "Tamarindo has been lost," referring to the fact that development has gone place unchecked with no municipal or national controls.

This unchecked development has affected local residents', especially Ticos', sense of belonging in Tamarindo and access to the coast. As Magdalena, a long time Tica resident stated, "we are invisible," referring to Ticos in Tamarindo. And Rosa, a Tica worker in town, commented that she never goes to the beach in Langosta (right outside of Tamarindo) anymore. She stated that it used to be gorgeous with just a couple houses and she and other Ticos would camp there during Holy week. "But now they don't want us anymore" referring to all the development of condos and of the hotel Barcelo, which has restricted access to the beach for many locals even though it is illegal to do so.

Given the rapidity of growth and change in Tamarindo, social structures and access to public space are being redefined. Geographers Painter and Philo (1995) write "sociocultural citizenship" that they define as the "informal rules and norms shared by 'local majorities,' which create a sense of who can be included and who cannot" (115). Painter and Philo go on to state that "if people cannot be present in public spaces without feeling uncomfortable, victimized and basically 'out of place', then it must be questionable whether or not these people can be regarded as citizens at all" (115). Both

Costa Rican citizens and long-term U.S. citizens who have resided in the area shared stories about not feeling comfortable in Tamarindo, not belonging, and lack of public space. There is a sense of powerlessness among long-term residents in face of the economic power of the new migrants and developers. As Mariana states,

> *They are trying to change our culture. Every time I go to the beach there is new construction. I love going to the beach but I get so angry when I go. It's not possible to stay at the beach. Almost all the owners are foreigners and they don't care if their places are accessible to ticos.*

This inaccessibility was also a concern of the expats whom I interviewed. Almost every amenity migrant I interviewed commented on the rapid increase in housing costs and rising cost of living overall as one of the most negative aspects of the growth in Tamarindo. They felt that this most seriously hurt the local Costa Ricans who are being priced out of the coastal areas but who rely on the jobs in those areas.

Tico subjects, concerned about their growing inability to access land on the coast, felt that there were inherent differences in foreigners' mentalities and their mentalities around land and property ownership. "Within 9 or 10 km of Tamarindo you cannot buy land. Who are we if we cannot have our land?" questions a young Tica, Teresa. When Ticos see foreigners profiting off of land in their country and their government inviting investment through incentives and accepting bribes by developers, feelings can easily turn sour towards foreigners. Alfredo describes how he feels about the situation,

> *Anytime someone comes up and tells me, 'oh, I just bought this piece of property or this piece of land' it's like a slap in the face every time I hear that because someone else (a foreigner) is getting rich off of that.*

And, like many other Ticos and long-time residents of all nationalities in Tamarindo, Magdalena feels that the foreign community would like to take over Tamarindo altogether without regard for Costa Ricans or their culture.

> *I think they (the gringos) would like it if we sold even more (land). We don't matter to them (Magdalena).*

> *The foreigners have another mentality when buying land: they want to make Money. They buy something for $50,000 and ten months later sell it at $100,000. Everyone who buys here are foreigners and they sell property in dollars. We can't buy, the dollar keeps going up" (paraphrased, Ana).*

In addition to these interviewees, I also heard a few stories about family members resisting selling their land even though receiving multiple offers. Unfortunately, even if a Tico would like to keep their piece of land, they often feel pressured to sell given the rate of development around them. For instance, one of my interviewees, Eduardo, told me about his uncle and the house he had in the hills inland a few km from the coast. He was holding onto it to pass it on to his children. However, he felt so pressured to sell because all around him large houses and developments were going up. Paulina Chaverri (2006) found similar scenarios in her research on amenity migration and development in Escazu, a formerly agricultural area outside of San Jose that has become a popular destination for North American amenity migrants. As she explains,

> *"The natural beauty and cultural traditions are being converted into commodities. Local landowners and their families are torn between preserving traditions and selling their land for high prices and moving elsewhere" (187).*

The growth in foreign residents and businesses on the coast has made it increasingly difficult for people with modest incomes to reside there. This could be any typical gentrification story and has many similar aspects to development taking place in many places in the United States, but what distinguishes this case from U.S. cases is the intersection of class, race and coloniality. Not only does development challenge the neighborhood or town culture, but the influx of North Americans threatens Costa Ricans' cultural patrimony which is intimately tied to land given the country's history of land distribution and Guanacaste's identity as a ranching and agricultural region. Moreover, linguistic rights are also intimately tied to cultural patrimony and the practice of citizenship.

Language

Gil Valentine (2007) contends that language is intimately associated with "individuals' ability to claim and maintain their rights and in their affective connections with others and sense of identification" (122). Language is both a facilitator and a hindrance to community formation in Tamarindo. For many English-speaking expats whom I interviewed, the abundance of English-speaking foreign residents in Tamarindo was a positive aspect, allowing them a community and the ability to live in Tamarindo without knowing Spanish. Although all the respondents acknowledge that foreigners *should* learn Spanish, only one expat whom I interviewed had advanced language Spanish language skills. A few had intermediate skills, but most had only basic Spanish

language skills. As Julie states, "You can get by here without speaking Spanish, but you can't really do the things that you have to do without speaking Spanish," and a long-term resident, Karen, advised that "foreign residents have to remember that it is Costa Rica, it is a Spanish-speaking country, and you can't expect just to get by on English, but many people do." Still, there is a significant portion of the population who is drawn to Tamarindo precisely because they do not need to learn Spanish to get by. One young expat stated he moved to Costa Rica because it was a "safe" country and it was a good country for him since he didn't know Spanish (field notes, 8/11/06). Another recent arrival from the U.S., Rebecca, explained the attractiveness of Tamarindo as a destination by stating the following,

> *A lot of English-speaking people here and a lot of different nationalities which made it kind of attractive...We don't speak Spanish, so I don't think we could really be comfortable moving somewhere where there is not such an international presence.*

Worthy of note, "international" was often used as a proxy for English-speaking. Respondents would comment on how they enjoyed the international community of Tamarindo; nevertheless, the *de facto* language in Tamarindo is English even though there are also German, Italian, French, Argentinean, Colombian, and Nicaraguan immigrants as well. While I didn't formally interview other nationalities5, I heard complaints from French and Argentinean residents about the Americans not knowing Spanish. One French gentleman explained that the French residents felt that the

[5] While U.S. amenity migrants are now the majority, there have also been significant numbers of Italians, French and Germans who have settled in Tamarindo before the current wave of North Americans as well as Argentinians and Colombians who have been arriving in greater numbers in the past several years.

American community was taking over Tamarindo given the numbers in which they were arriving and their lack of Spanish skills. An Argentinean woman questioned why the two publications in town, both only printed in English, would not be printed in Spanish as well so that all community members could participate in the issues and debates that the magazines raised?

But gringos in town, given their privilege as the majority population, often unproblematically assumed that "community" meant the English-speaking, North American community. Christine, a U.S. expat, explains that "The *Flyswatter* has provided something that we didn't have, which is a way to talk about the things that concern you as a community." This quote is illustrative of how English has become the *de facto* language in town, thus the community refers only to English speakers. This naturalization of English as the mode of communication not only leaves out the Tico population but also the other immigrant populations in Tamarindo who may not speak English.

English as the *de facto* language in town further disenfranchises local Guanacastecans who often must know English in order to get a job. Paul, a business owner in town, had only recently realized this dilemma when a young woman came into his shop asking about employment,

> *Given that 90% of our clientele is American or at least English-speaking, the person would need to speak English. The woman asked where in town she could learn English and you know we have all these cottage businesses to teach English speakers Spanish but not the other way around.*

The fact that English has become so pervasive and many foreigners living in Tamarindo do not know English was a major point of frustration for many of the Ticos whom I interviewed. When I inquired into the ways that Ticos and Gringos interact given the lack of Spanish language skills of many expats, Alfredo explained, "the majority of our interactions are doing things for them (as their employees) the interactions that we (ticos) have with them is an unequal relationship that is created." Eugenio offered his thoughts on this when I was talking with him one evening. He seemed surprised at my Spanish language skills, and I mentioned that I had lived in Latin American countries for a few years and had studied the language in college. However, he didn't seem to understand why I could speak it when there are people who have lived for years in Tamarindo and don't speak any Spanish.

The lack of communication between foreigners and ticos can often lead to misunderstandings as well as feelings of rejection. As an employee who caretakes various properties, Eugenio has had many miscommunications with English-speaking foreigners given the language barrier. He further elaborated that,

> *"They (foreigners) get mad when we don't speak English...If you all are going to come to Central America you have to remember that we speak Spanish here. You have to study and learn it. And we have to learn English...with just that I think we wouldn't have any more problems"*

Similar to sentiments expressed in the U.S. about immigrants who don't learn English, many Ticos feel slighted when foreigners don't learn Spanish. When chatting about community involvement with Magdalena, I asked her, "How does a community function

when many Ticos don't speak English and many gringos don't speak Spanish?" She exclaimed,

> *They don't even care to (learn Spanish)! This is a shameful aspect of the United States culture, to think they are superior, to think they don't need to learn Spanish because everyone else should learn English. And there are cases here of people who've been here ten years and don't speak Spanish and don't care to*

As Christine Geoffroy (2007) found in her research with English migrants into the Chamonix region of France, the French residents felt not only helpless "to stop the transfer of their properties into foreign hands" but also that their "auditory and visual space was affected by the English language heard in the streets or invading posters in shops and menus in bars and restaurants (286). I also encountered these same sentiments among Ticos and other non-English speakers in Tamarindo.

Most troubling for Tamarindo's development, however, might be the implications the growing use of English in the area has for community involvement and democracy. For as Valentine (2007) argues "a common language is essential to democracy – in the sense that democracy not only involves the formal process of voting but also informal activities such as debating and exchanging political views" (126). In Tamarindo the local forums for discussion are almost primarily in English – the *Flyswatter* and *The Howler* publications, both printed only in English, the local coffee shop, a popular gathering spot for expats in town to chat about the going-ons in the community, and the Association Pro Mejoras, directed by a Tica, but primarily made up of U.S. American members.

The Asociacion Pro Mejoras (Pro Mejoras Association) is a non-profit community organization made up of Tamarindo residents. According to the Association's website, it "came into being when a group of concerned citizens realized that independent overdevelopment might give rise to unwelcome results. Rather than take advantage of the lack of regulations, they chose to take responsibility for their community" (http://www.tamarindobeach.net/promejoras/index.html). Since foreign amenity migrants cannot formally participate in the political process because they are not citizens, the Association Pro Mejoras is the closest they can get to formal representation. Its leadership advocates for issues important to the Tamarindo community but has no formal political power. The ways in which foreign amenity migrants understand their roles as citizens in Tamarindo and some of the ways that they are circumventing the formal political process are described in the next section.

Political Agency without Citizenship

Traditionally the rights and responsibilities of citizenship have included acts such as voting, property ownership, military service, and payment of taxes to the national polity. However, as explained in Chapter II, these traditional understandings are being challenged by new types of migrants, both undocumented marginalized migrants and elite entrepreneurial migrants, who disrupt citizenship processes that have traditionally been embedded in the nation state scale.

For example, proposed legislation that may affect a community is usually brought to a vote. However, amenity migrants in Tamarindo complicate this traditional practice. In order to vote in Costa Rica one must be a citizen. So, voting on proposed legislation that may affect the area where they live is not possible for most foreigners. In *The Beach Times* publication's February 2, 2007 edition, a politician was quoted explaining the predicament for voting on a referendum that would have affected Tamarindo

> *"In Tamarindo it will be complicated because there's a great floating population," said Mr. Villalobos. "Most of the resident population is foreign and is greater than those in the district who are registered to vote."*

Since Tamarindo does not have official city status and no city government, all of the formal political decisions, public works and services come from Santa Cruz, more than twenty-five miles inland.

Given this situation, many U.S. expats mentioned that incorporating Tamarindo as a city would be the best way for them to gain more control over the town's development. This would allow them to keep the tax revenue in Tamarindo (rather than it going directly to Santa Cruz) and make decisions about green spaces and development themselves. But Tamarindo's own popularity as a foreign amenity migrant destination is a barrier to this initiative: there are not enough Costa Rican citizens in Tamarindo to vote to become incorporated as a city. Mel, a long-time resident, explains during an interview exchange his thoughts on incorporation of Tamarindo and why it has not been possible.

> Mel: *Oh, I've been saying that ever since I've been here…that's the only way Tamarindo will ever be anything…is to divorce itself from Santa Cruz, but the tough thing with doing that is that there's really not enough Costa Ricans to do it.*
>
> Researcher (Lee): *You need a minimum number?*
>
> Mel: *No, no you don't need a number, but it has to go to a vote you know and none of us can vote.*

Many expats with whom I spoke, therefore, talked about alternative ways to influence local formal politics since they themselves cannot vote. Some have started supporting their favored candidates with campaign money; some have been involved in organizing recent protests to development in green zones; some have talked about educating their employees, who can vote, on environmental issues important to the area; and, most disturbingly, others have taken part in vigilante justice acts against criminals who are not apprehended by the police.

Tico residents, while seemingly less interested in organizing community members to take a stand against development and problems in the area, had their own ideas as to what would benefit Tamarindo, including more government-subsidized affordable housing projects, more control from the Santa Cruz municipal government (albeit without the corruption), and national immigration restrictions. Ana, a young Tica, commented that "our government prioritizes foreigners over us" and suggested that what ticos need are more affordable, government-subsidized housing projects in the Tamarindo area. At the time of our interview, she had two applications in for affordable housing, but both units (the closest projects) were two hours away from Tamarindo. Another young Tico employee with whom I chatted about my research told me that Costa Rica has been too

generous with its immigration policy and needs to close its borders. He didn't feel that communities could afford the impacts of immigration any longer.

Unfortunately, given the current demographics of the coast there is not much incentive for politicians to heed community members' concerns. According to many residents, a common thought among politicians and the Santa Cruz government is that foreigners with money got themselves into this mess so why should the government, who is financially strapped, and politicians, whom have a low number of constituents in coastal communities, be helping these communities solve their problems? As Alfredo stated when I asked him about his thoughts on Tamarindo incorporating as a town to be able to control their own tax base and advocate for issues important to them, "they (the foreigners) don't deserve that here…they don't deserve to get to make those decisions or deserve government money." At the municipal level this thought was prominent as well with one of the candidates in the mayoral race in Santa Cruz running on an anti-coastal, anti-tourism platform appealing to those who live inland and do not want to see their resources (primarily hydrologic resources) diverted to the coast for the benefit of the majority foreigners who live there and the tourism companies.

So, how are foreign expats responding to the lack of attention by the municipal government to address their concerns? Upon asking David if people just feel there is nothing they can do about the overdevelopment, he stated, "Well, no, we are going to do something about it soon. Change of government, somebody that is progressive…" I wondered how that was going to happen since most expats do not have the right to vote. But, Marsha, another U.S. expat explained to me that she thinks an organized community

through which Tamarindo residents are able to advocate for issues important to them is beginning to form. She stated,

> *No, but it's...I think it's in the making right now. So the new plan now is to find a politician who might care a little about the environment and give them financial support...that's our new plan because we can't vote...*

In my interview with many expats we talked about the possibility of Tamarindo becoming an incorporated city. In addition to having enough native-born citizens to vote on incorporation, each city has to have a soccer field, a church, and a public school. So David explained,

> *We've got the room, build them all and be our own town and then Santa Cruz can quit stealing our money and it can stay where it belongs...We'd be making our own decisions and putting our tax money where we thought it belonged...*

Yet who would vote on any legislation and make decisions? There are only a couple foreign residents in Tamarindo who have Costa Rican citizenship. One day while out with a group of expat women they were explaining to me the new strategy of supporting political candidates monetarily and deciding who would be the best mayor for Santa Cruz

> Well, we have a lot of people who work for us here so we can educate them. *You know, most of the people that work for us care about, and they're sad as well to see all the things that are being destroyed,* not as much as we are really because they're just so easygoing about change, *culture here is laidback. But anyways, so that's the new plan and we'll see how that goes.*

Another expat couple had a discussion on this during our interview,

> David: *Yes, we could have our own elections, but the problem is nobody has the vote....So whose gonna control our town? Our employees, hopefully.*
>
> Researcher (Lee): *well, if they don't live here, can they vote here (referring to employees)*
>
> David: *Yeah, that's a good question.*
>
> *Elise: yeah, because the employees don't live here.*
>
> David: *You see the complication?*
>
> Elise: *Is Villareal a town?*
>
> David: *No, they are under Santa Cruz.*
>
> Elise: *But they have everything...a field, a church, a school.*
>
> David: *Well, I don't know why they aren't their own town then.*
>
> Elise: *They don't give a shit. They probably can't be bothered.*
>
> David: *If we did this, it would probably be part of Villarreal. How could you help it?*
>
> Elise: *Makes sense with all the development going on.*
>
> David: *Yeah, and just hope our employees get...we'd have to convince them how to vote.*
>
> Elise: *That's right.*
>
> David: *I think you could do that, it would probably be a good thing, you know.*
>
> Elise: *to incorporate them, I think so.*
>
> David: *Anyways, that's something we're going to talk about. Right now, somebody's got to take the bull by the horns so to speak and make something happen. I'm too frustrated.*
>
> Elise: *I get so frustrated every time we talk about it, I'd rather not.*

These conversations highlight the nature by which gringo residents distance themselves from ticos through processes of "othering" and do not necessarily see ticos as being "full citizens" of Tamarindo (Silvey and Lawson 1999; Kofman 1995). Ticos are differentiated from foreigners by their "laid-back" nature, their lack of political involvement, and their supposed ignorance of political processes. The idea that

foreigners would need to educate employees about how to vote points to the ways in which foreigners understand citizenship as a hierarchical process in Tamarindo. Drawing on Kofman's argument again, gringos do not necessarily see Ticos as "legitimate members" of Tamarindo society in the sense that they would need to be "taught" how to participate as citizens from the foreign residents in the community.

Discussion

> *"To act as a citizen requires: first a sense of agency, the belief that one can act; acting as a citizen, especially collectively, in turn fosters that sense of agency. Thus agency is not simply about the capacity to choose and act but also about a conscious capacity which is important to the individual's self-identity" (Lister 2003, 38).*

Even though U.S. citizens residing in Tamarindo are disenfranchised from the formal political process, I argue that they by no means lack a sense of agency that Lister contends is essential for citizenship enactment. While most acknowledge that Costa Rica is not their country and they must respect local norms and rules, as property and business owners they also feel entitled to have their voices heard in matters related to Tamarindo's development. This idea of property ownership entitling foreigners to political representation was a common one with all of the North American expat subjects. This speaks to their conceptualizations of citizenship: that property ownership and residence in a place is as important if not more important than formal citizenship in the nation state. This focus on their citizenship status as derived through ownership of property also

points to a neoliberal understanding of citizenship as tied up with investment. Private ownership, rather than a public right to space (or the commons as is the case with coastal beaches) becomes the measure by which ones' rights should be conferred.

Foreign amenity migrants feel entitled to rights that will allow them to have a say in issues affecting Tamarindo. And, if their voices are ignored, they take matters into their own hands through acts of protest, using their economic power to provide services they need/want, or vigilante justice. As Marsha, a U.S. expat who commented on the preliminary organization of foreigners advocating for their rights, explained, "we can't give up, we have got to rally again and try and figure out what we can do to save this, the integrity of our homes, you know, our safety is in danger now."

North American migrants are caught in this contradictory situation: they were drawn to Costa Rica for its lack of regulations and structure, yet they want the government to step in and take control of the overdevelopment that has been allowed to happen precisely because of the lack of regulations. Understandably, they do not have much trust in the Costa Rican government given its corruption, yet they want representation in the government to advocate for their concerns. Even though they do not necessarily see Ticos in and around Tamarindo as full members of the community, they acknowledge that they need Costa Rican citizens if they ever hope to gain political status as a city for Tamarindo. All of these contradictory issues complicate our understandings of citizenship practices in the context of transnational amenity migration as I will describe in more detail in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE LARGER PICTURE: MOBILITY, NEOLIBERALISM, AND CITIZENSHIP

Transnational amenity migration is occurring around the world, not just in Costa Rica. As a New York Times journalist explains,

> *Savvy second-home hunters are packing their passports, pouring through foreign classified ads and snapping up homes in far-flung countries from Argentina and Bulgaria to Nicaragua and Turkey...places not overrun by Americans...and (where) there are still bargains to be found.....*
> *We're seeing this happening around the world. It's identical to global trade. In fact, they're tied together (Lee 2005).*

And, while Costa Rica has become overpriced in comparison to places like Nicaragua, investment in Costa Rica by North Americans and other foreign amenity migrants is not slowing[6] and migration by the economically-privileged from the Global North to the Global South is predicted to continue to increase as more baby boomers retire and more professionals have flexible work options (Moss 2006a; Dixon et al. 2006; O'Reilly 2007). Unfortunately, as mentioned in Chapter I, little is known about this type of migration on a global scale or about its impacts for communities that have become hotspot destinations for real estate investment (Moss 2006; O'Reilly 2007; Truly 2002).

[6] According to an article written by Patricia Leiton on July 6, 2007 in *Nacion,* foreign investment in real estate in Costa Rica tripled in the first third of 2007 compared to the same time period in 2006.

Like Costa Rica, other countries such as Nicaragua, Panama, Malaysia, and Dubai have promoted foreign investment in real estate through tax and residency incentives as a way to increase overall investment in their countries (Lee 2005; Dixon et al. 2006). Promotion of real estate is seen as a "clean" development alternative to industries like petroleum and mining, much like tourism development has been viewed and marketed in the past two decades as the "industry without smokestacks" (McLaren 1998). But, just what kind of development is taking place and for whom? While these foreign migrants have been a revenue source for Costa Rica, the cultural and social fabric of society can be negatively impacted as I demonstrated in Chapter IV.

Impacts of Global Amenity Migration on Citizenship

Traditional conceptions of citizenship have been rooted in a fixed scale of the nation state: individuals' political identities have historically been based on the nation state and it has been assumed that rights were to be conferred by and obligations be fulfilled to the national community (Castles 2000). However, the mobility of capital and people and various types of emerging transnational flows and linkages are challenging this traditional citizenship formation. Migration by the elite to relatively less-economically developed areas has significant implications for the enactment of citizenship and as theorized by scholars researching elite entrepreneurial migrants (Ong 1999; Mitchell 2004).

Aiwha Ong (2005) suggests that "rights and entitlements once associated with all citizens are becoming linked to neoliberal criteria, so that some entitlements may be withdrawn from some citizens and given to non-citizens" (Ong 2005). This shift is evident in Costa Rica on a national scale by the government's slow withdrawal of funding of social services, often to adhere to the stipulations of the multilateral bank loans which they have taken on in the past twenty years, and of its tax and residency incentives given to foreign investors. These transfers of "rights" are of concern for the future of Costa Rican citizens who are being forced to adhere to neoliberal definitions of citizenship which emphasize individual initiative and withdrawal of state support for social services, housing, training, and education.

Katharyne Mitchell (2004) calls attention to the change from social liberalism to neoliberalism and its impacts on citizenship,

> *The discourse of social liberalism, as manifested in philosophies such as multiculturalism, rests on both the formation of the nation and the policies of the state. The discourse of neoliberalism, by contrast, depicts a warm, planetary embrace of global humanity, existing and interacting across national borders in a friendly, historically void, and geographically featureless abstract space…In this context, citizenship, multiculturalism, and numerous other liberal narratives of national belonging are slowly morphing into new formations (218).*

Elite migrants' mobility, their disconnection from solely one nation state, their ability to hold "flexible" citizenship (Ong 1999), responding opportunistically to capitalist forces makes citizenship for them quite different than citizenship for a service industry worker in a Central American tourist community. As development springs up around Tamarindo it has become much more costly to live there. Thus, a wealthier population is moving in,

and as more foreign, English-speaking residents arrive, differences between the foreign amenity migrants and the local Tico residents become greater. Mitchell (2004) further contends that,

> *citizenship and liberalism historically have been shown to foster not equality and inclusivity but internal differentiation and hierarchy. They do not progressively include, but rather produce otherness as part of the process of defining what counts as political (219).*

Ticos are "othered" by amenity migrants through various means. Drawing again on Kofman's (1995) argument, Ticos are often not seen by U.S. amenity migrants as "legitimate members" of Tamarindo society, which impacts their enactment of citizenship. North American amenity migrants' comments about educating Ticos on voting, about Ticos' lack of settlement ties to Tamarindo, and about Ticos' laid back nature and *lassiez faire* attitude towards the issues that bother the North Americans all point to the "othering" of Ticos by gringos. Similarly, Ticos lump the gringos together as well as "others." Tico respondents often made overarching claims about gringos, their wealth, and their disrespect for Tico culture even though not all gringos in Tamarindo are wealthy or disrespectful. For example, Mariana acknowledged this negative feeling she has towards gringos,

> *I know that not all gringos are like that, that they're not all the same, but right now I have a very negative perception of gringos, and there are just few that I actually like. It's the minority who act respectfully.*

Unfortunately, this process of "othering," especially when imbued with race and class as it is in Tamarindo, causes misunderstandings and can lead to a breakdown in

community formation as described by the editor of the *Flyswatter* in the August 2006 issue,

> *A race riot is not entirely out of the question here, where the racial lines are already divided along economic status. Because there has been a complete breakdown in the social fabric of our town, nobody is protected from anyone*

Tamarindo is in danger of becoming, if it has not already, a community with a "two-tiered system of citizenship" (Kofman 2005, 135) one for the cosmopolitan elite and one for the 'poor.'

Costa Rica – U.S. Relations

Can these unequal relationships that exist between Tico residents and North American amenity migrants provide a window into a finer-scale analysis of North-South relations as I questioned in Chapter I? I argue that they can and that amenity migration by U.S. citizens to Costa Rica needs to be examined within this larger context of unequal relationships between the Global North and South.

Amenity migration and real estate development on the coast is tied to larger political-economic forces between Costa Rica and the U.S. as described in Chapter I. As the coast becomes more developed, anti-gringo feelings develop among many Ticos, and they increasingly feel pushed out. As Teresa, a young Tica, commented "Guanacaste is no longer for Ticos." Costa Ricans have had to grapple with rapid changes in their society like increasing polarization among social classes and the onset of neoliberal

policies like the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This focus on market-based solutions to social problems along with an influx of foreign residents from the "Global North" alters the landscape of belonging in many Costa Rican communities. As Costa Ricans are increasingly subject to neoliberal policies from the Global North, it becomes easy to view North Americans whom are arriving in ever greater numbers as affiliated with those neoliberal policies.

These neoliberal policies are often imbued with neocolonial traits. As one long-time U.S. expat commented, the amenity migrants arriving in Tamarindo recently are just "colonialists" who "want to be like the British in the jungle, you know, and be able to afford to have all the help and the house" (Christine). Unfortunately, many of the marketing campaigns to sell real estate to amenity migrants play upon these neocolonial ideas. One of the largest new developments, Tamarindo Heights, has a slogan of "Get ready for the next conquest." Magdalena, a long-time Tica resident, brought this up in response to a question I asked her about the changes she's seen in the types of foreign residents moving to Tamarindo.

> *I don't like that, the conquering slogan, I don't like it at all, it is a very offensive message. I feel disrespected, I feel like I'm in the colonial period, there are still many colonial traits here, it's just that the colonizer looks different today.*

The "colonizer", who in this case is the real estate developer, plays upon foreigners' ideals. This image of an unexplored and undeveloped region has serious implications for citizenship formation and enactment by foreigners. The country is neither undeveloped nor unexplored, but in presenting it as such, foreign residents are led to believe that they

have the "rights" and entitlements through their property investment and settlement to play an important role in "developing" the region to their ideals.

Neoliberal economic policies are one of the other ways in which Ticos feel these neocolonial traits. From 2004 through 2006 there were widespread protests in Costa Rica against the implementation of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) during which Costa Ricans often shouted the following chant, "We do not want, nor do we desire, to be a North American colony."[7] Given widespread opposition to the plan, Costa Rica was the only country in the region to hold a national referendum on the plan. In October 2007, 52% of the voters who turned out supported the country joining CAFTA. It was a close vote and the country was deeply divided over the issue. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, Guanacaste and Puntarenas (the two provinces with the fastest growth in real estate in the country and popular amenity migrant destinations) were the only two provinces to vote against CAFTA. As Mr. Ulibarri, a politician, explains in a newspaper interview in the October 12, 2007 edition of *The Beach Times,*

> *Puntarenas and Guanacaste joined Alajuela as the only provinces to reject CAFTA. There is a sector of the population that is marginalized from the development that is so visible — the big hotels, the condominiums, the Liberia airport. There, it is a matter of contrast.*

Costa Rican citizens in these coastal provinces have not benefitted from foreign investment as was promised with the implementation of incentives geared to spur tourism and amenity migration. One Tica employee of the Association of Residents of Costa

[7] In Spanish, "No queremos, y no nos da la gana, ser una colonia Norteamericana"

Rica mentioned that the policies put in place to attract foreign amenity migrants were done so with the hopes that foreigners would open businesses and provide jobs for Ticos, which many have done. However, she commented that the newer wave of migrants moving down from the U.S. are younger and more often telecommuting than moving here permanently to open businesses and employ Costa Ricans. In addition to the fact that they can often make more money telecommuting, to employ Costa Ricans requires paying them insurance and benefits. She believes that Costa Rica cannot afford to welcome these newer migrants as they are not contributing to the development of the country (field notes, 8/4/2006).

The sentiment that Costa Rica cannot afford to continue courting foreign residents at the expense of its own citizenry is a common one among Ticos. I have shown with examples from my research that many Costa Ricans feel increasingly "left out." Their government does not offer adequate affordable housing programs or job training programs which may help them deal more effectively with the rapid changes on the coast. New amenity migrants build houses, often in gated communities, and the cost of living increases for all. Many young Costa Ricans feel they will never be able to afford land in Guanacaste near their homes or places of employment. Costa Ricans need to know English in order to participate in the tourist economy of the coast, yet the educational system in Guanacaste is not prepared to provide the training needed for locals to enter this new economy.

Thus, a backlash is occurring in Costa Rica against neoliberal policies and immigration from the Global North according to sentiments expressed by Tico

respondents and the widespread protests against CAFTA. As Painter and Philo (1995) argue with the reworkings of citizenship in the context of globalization, citizenship for certain groups of individuals is becoming increasingly divorced from the nation state scale. These citizens often describe themselves as "citizen pilgrims," affiliating with a mobile, cosmopolitan class around the world. On the other hand, those citizens who are increasingly negatively affected by neoliberal policies and the mobility of others, react defensively and may cling to national identities in an attempt to feel secure in the face of globalization.

Tamarindo as a Model (Not to Follow)?

What can the case of Tamarindo teach us about citizenship formation and enactment in a global community with great inequity? Even though Tamarindo has been seen as the "disaster case" of development in Costa Rica[8], communities experiencing similar waves of amenity migrants and real estate development can learn from its example. Moreover, Tamarindo's own disastrous development path may in fact be the impetus for new collaborations of community members leading to unique formations of citizenship practices.

While environmental and social issues were deteriorating during my fieldwork in 2006 and some residents were organizing to confront them, there was still not a critical

[8] In the May 16, 2008 edition of the Tico Times, the headline article was "It's Official: West Coast a Mess" citing Tamarindo as an example of rampant, uncontrolled development with disastrous environmental and social consequences.

mass of people from all sectors of the community standing up to the developers and the municipality who was being bribed by the developers. Most residents, both foreign and Tico, in Tamarindo felt there was little they could do. Unfortunately, things became even worse over the past two years since my fieldwork with several sewage leakage problems, the revocation of the beach's blue flag status[9], the closure of several development projects, and serious robberies and crimes.

It seems that these environmental and social problems reached a critical point in Tamarindo that forced residents to finally take action. Very recently a new organization was started which seems to incorporate many organized community members from the entire area to address these problems and take a stand against the development that is not in accordance with Tamarindo's recently enacted regulatory plan. I do not want to place too much hope on this new development as the only insight I have into it is through this new group's website (www.savetamarindo.com) and the pictures and accounts I have seen and read from recent protests. However, the fact that Tico residents from neighboring the communities of Santa Rosa, Villarreal, and Junquiall have joined in with this group of foreign residents from Tamarindo seems quite promising for future community development and citizenship enactment in the Tamarindo area.

The role that the Tico residents play versus the foreign residents is unclear, but it is doubtful that Tico residents would come out in numbers if they felt their voices were not being heard. From the photos and the comments online it does not seem as though Tico residents are reluctant to voice their concerns or comments with signs and

[9] Blue flags are given to beaches in Costa Rica that meet environmental quality standards.

comments like "Respect Ticos, Respect Costa Rica," "Let the god earth in peace, get out yankees, Costa Rica is not California, stop selling the land of my grandparents," "There are many foreigners (especially gringos) that should not be in my country," "Costa Rica not for sale," and "It is now time to return our focus to the *pueblo* and not the foreigners in their penthouses" being some of those I found online and in photos from the protests (www.savetamarindo.com). It could be that Tico residents in the area are gaining the sense of agency that Lister (2003) argues is essential for citizenship enactment (see Chapter IV) and that they are being regarded as "legitimate members of society" (Kofman 1995, 122) by the foreign residents in Tamarindo.

Ideally, Tamarindo's development could be the impetus for possibilities for new collaboration between amenity migrants and Costa Ricans in the coastal area, and powerful spaces for new enactments of citizenship could form if power differentials can be appropriately negotiated. While amenity migrants have the economic power to make changes in the communities they reside and have done so already by privately financing road development or the entrance of electrical and phone lines, for example, many do not want to live some isolated existence in which they are left to fend for themselves by the state. The liberal citizenship ideals which many adhere to given their background growing up in the United States makes them eager to participate in the formal political process, have their "voice" acknowledged, decide where their tax money goes, and make government accountable to them. Yet, this is not possible for foreign amenity migrants in Costa Rica given their legal status. Developers and wealthy individuals have been able to

attain this accountability and attention through underhanded ways by bribing government officials, but ordinary amenity migrants do not have this power.

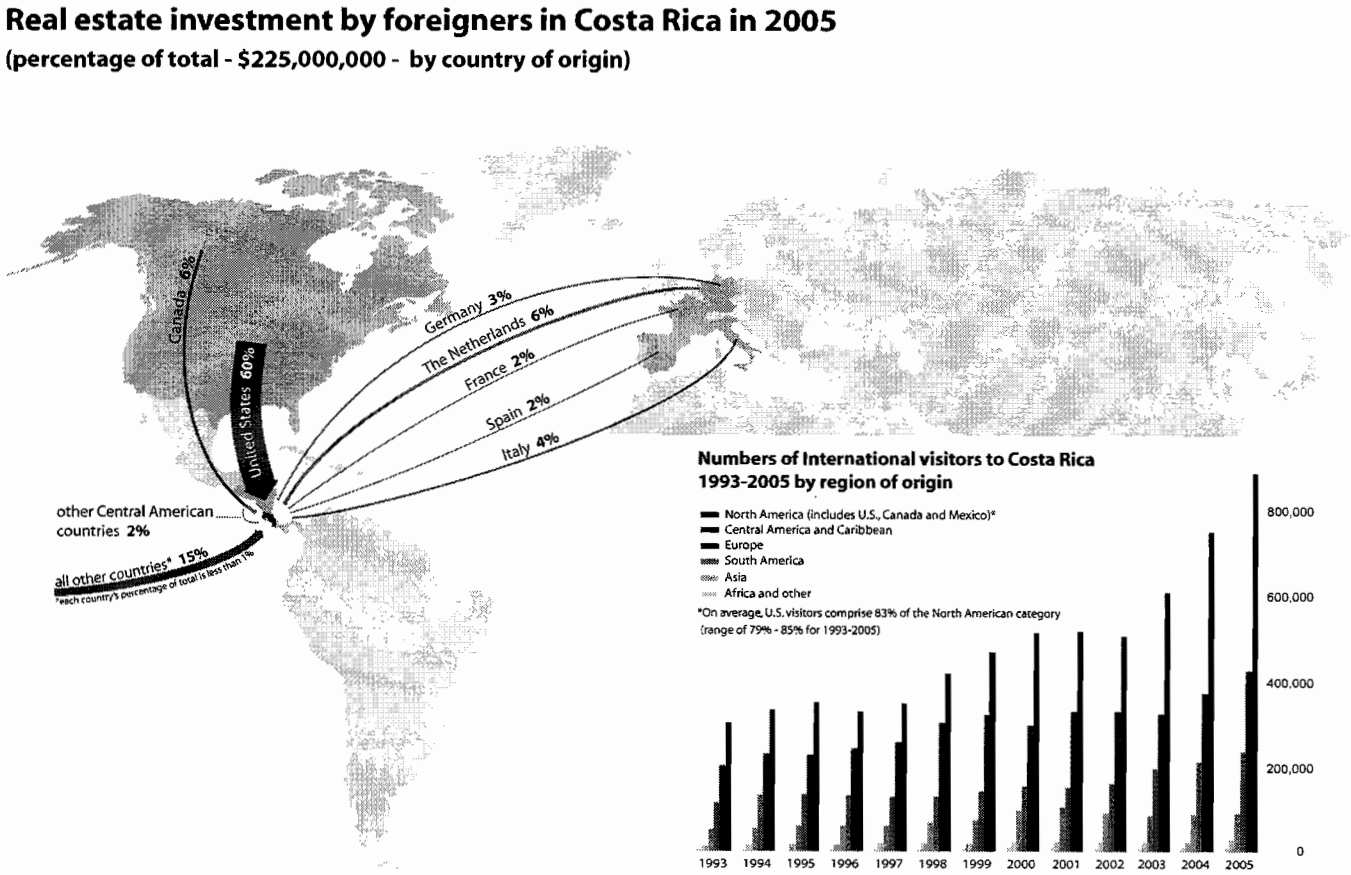
Because Tamarindo's development has begun to spread inland, increasingly more Ticos are being affected by the real estate development geared towards amenity migrants. The municipal government has thus far been able to ignore the coastal residents whom are very small in number. But as development moves further inland, they will eventually be held accountable by Costa Rican citizens upset with the unchecked development and increasing cost of living. The beginnings of this seem to be currently unfolding with the recent protests and community group formation. An equitable collaboration between local Tico residents and foreign amenity migrants would be a powerful resistance to developers and corrupt government policies. However, whether or not this is achievable remains to be seen. Indeed, given the resentment already built up in many Ticos towards their government's prioritization of these global economic actors and given the foreign amenity migrants' distrust of Costa Rican government and feelings of entitlement and ownership over Tamarindo, collaboration will not be an easy achievement.

To close, although Tamarindo's development has unfolded in messy and disastrous ways, it can serve as an example to highlight the problems that may unfold in other locations experiencing an influx of amenity migrants. However, given the fact that this was a qualitative research project, the goal was not to provide a generalizable study but rather a case study which can help to interrogate the ways in which traditional notions of citizenship formation and enactment are challenged by a new migration stream of privileged Global Northerners to the Global South.

APPENDIX A

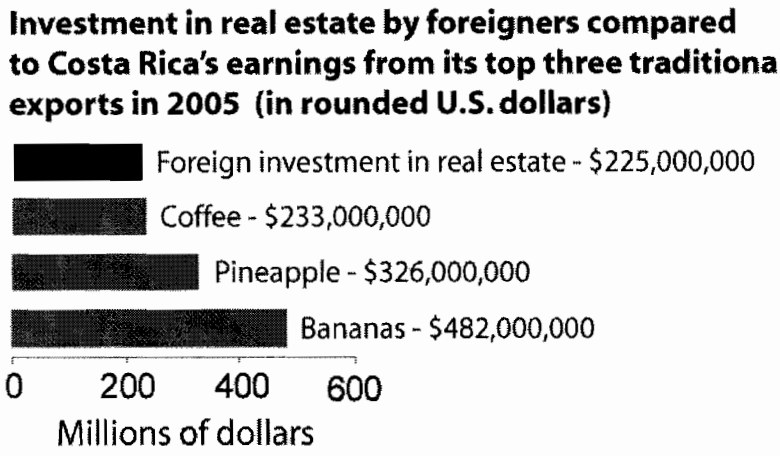
FIGURES AND GRAPHS

Figure 1. Foreign investment in real estate in Costa Rica



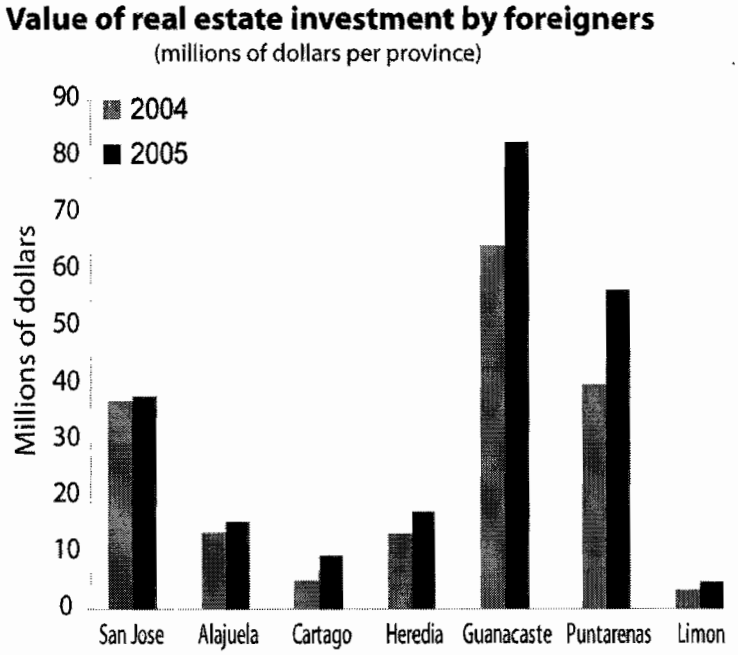
Data sources: Banco Central de Costa Rica, 2006 (investment data) and Instituto Costarricense de Turismo, 2006 (visitors data)
Base map data source: ESRI, 2006

Graph 1. Costa Rica's export earnings



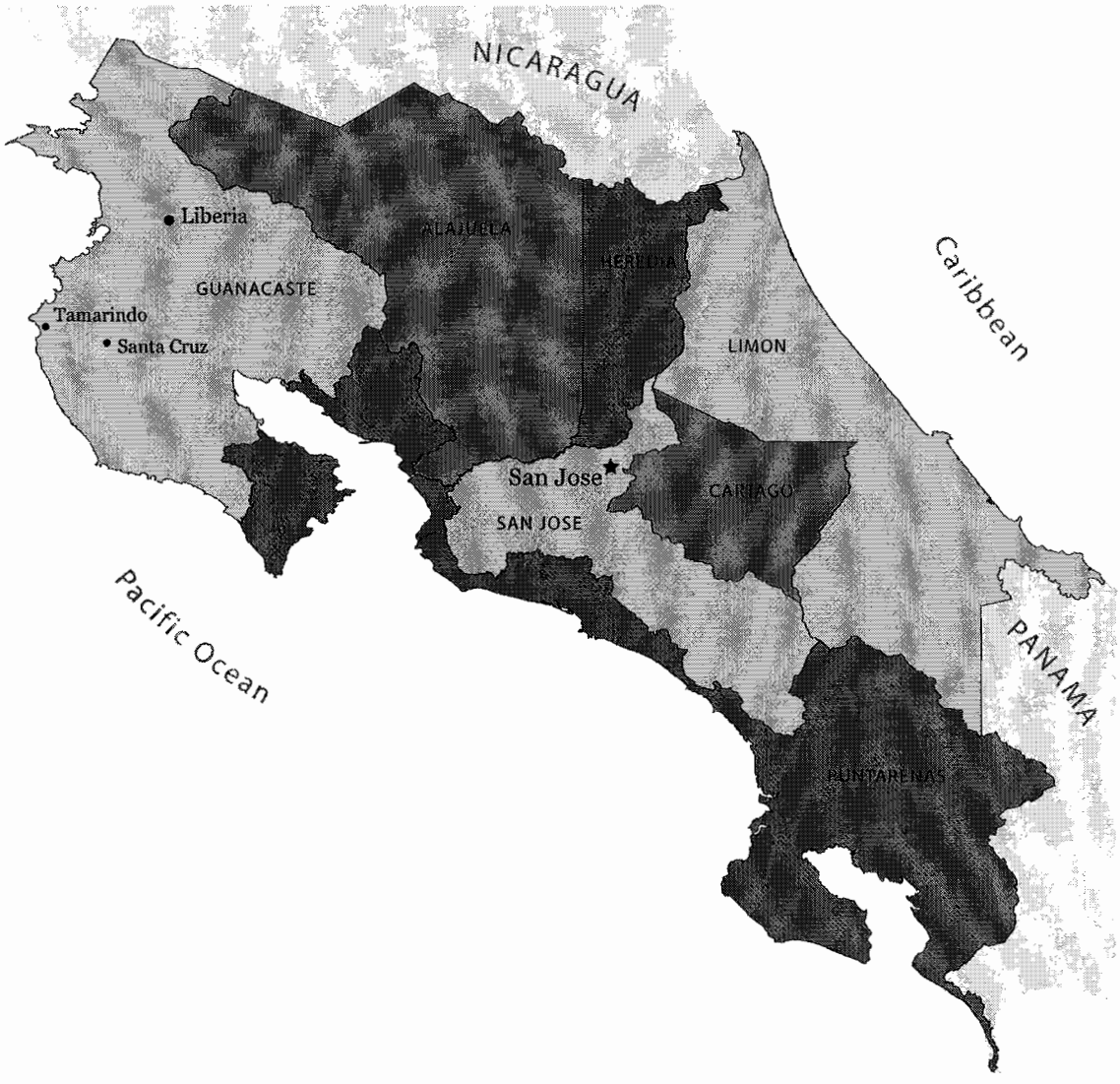
Data sources: Banco Central de Costa Rica, 2006 (investment in real estate data) and Instituto Costarricense de Turismo, 2006 (export data)

Graph 2. Value of real estate investment by foreigners



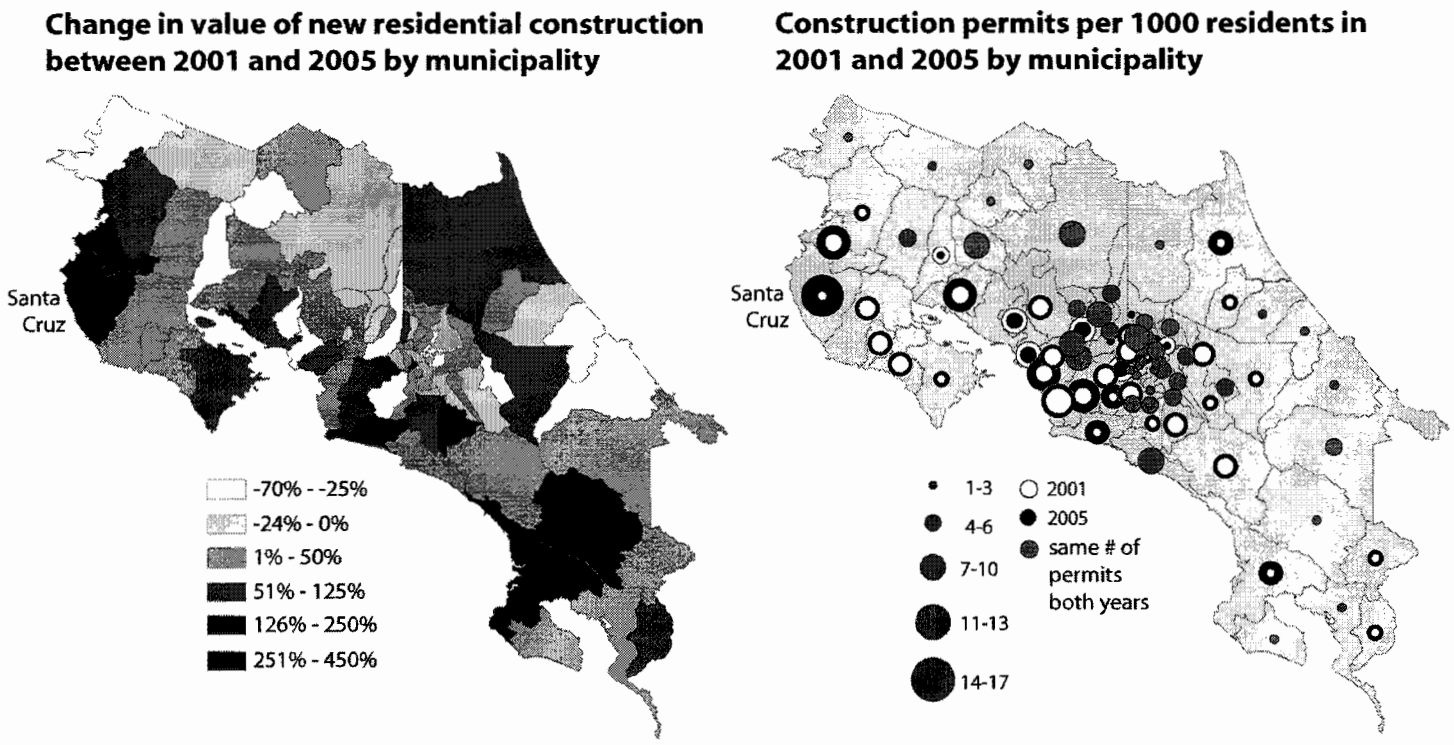
Data source: Banco Central 2006

Figure 2. Map of Costa Rica



Base map data source: ESRI and Instituto Geografico Nacional de Costa Rica (National Geographic Institute of Costa Rica)

Figure 3. Growth in value of new residential construction and construction permits



Data source: Insituto Nacional de Estadistica y Censos (INEC), 2006

Base map data source: ESRI and Instituto Geografico Nacional de Costa Rica (National Geographic Institute of Costa Rica)

APPENDIX B

LIST OF QUOTED RESPONDENTS

Alfredo, Tico business owner, 08/11/06 and 08/20/06

Alice and John, Canadian expat couple, 08/20/06

Ana, young Tica employee, 08/08/06

Andrew, real estate agent, 08/08/06

Brenda and Michael, U.S. expat couple, 08/15/06

Calvin, U.S. expat, 08/17/06

Carlos, Tico employee, 08/11/06

Christine, U.S. expat, 08/22/08

David and Elise, U.S. expats, 08/20/06

Eduardo, Tico employee, 08/13/06 and 08/22/06

Eugenio, Tico employee, 08/09/06

Jolene, U.S. expat, 08/18/06

Julie, U.S. expat, 08/22/06

Karen, U.S. expat, 08/16/06

Magdalena, Tica business owner, 08/08/06 and 08/11/06

Mariana, Tica, 08/06/06

Marsha, U.S. expat, 08/19/06

Mel, U.S. expat, 08/21/06

Michelle, U.S. expat, 08/07/06

Neil, U.S. expat, 08/08/06 and 08/14/06

Paul, U.S. expat, 08/10/06

Rebecca, U.S. expat, 08/10/06 and 08/18/06

Rosa, Tica employee, 08/23/06

Steve, U.S. expat, 08/17/06 and 08/18/06

Teresa, Tica employee, 08/13/06

Theo, U.S. expat, 08/09/06 and 08/11/06

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