Paradise Found? Local Cosmopolitanism, Lifestyle Migrant Emplacement, and Imaginaries of Sustainable Development in La Manzanilla del Mar, Mexico

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Paradise Found? Local Cosmopolitanism, Lifestyle Migrant Emplacement, and Imaginaries of Sustainable Development in La Manzanilla del Mar, Mexico

by

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PARADISE FOUND?
LOCAL COSMOPOLITANISM, LIFESTYLE MIGRANT EMPLACEMENT,
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ABSTRACT

The southern Jalisco, Mexico coast is experiencing a transition as much of the beach-front land is being privatized for luxury resort development. In this dissertation I consider sustainable development in the coastal community of La Manzanilla del Mar in the context of this shifting social and material landscape. La Manzanilla is a tourism destination of approximately 1,700 residents, including an estimated 300 foreign residents. These foreign residents have been categorized as lifestyle migrants by social scientists, and lifestyle migration is distinguished from labor and forced migration as the consumption-based form of migration practiced primarily by the middle and upper classes of the Global North. What researchers have given little attention to, however, is that the lifestyle at the core of lifestyle migration extends beyond the migrants themselves. I investigate the material and sociocultural development of La Manzanilla through the interrelated practices of various groups of residents who are not easily categorized but rather overlap and intertwine, including local youth entrepreneurs, lifestyle migrants, artist entrepreneurs, conservationists, and nonprofit founders and participants. Whether considered local or foreign, mobile or immobile, mono or
multilingual, I suggest that these La Manzanilla residents may all be described as cosmopolitan, and that the developing cosmopolitan identity of these residents, and the place itself, is inextricably linked to imaginaries of sustainable tourism development. I present a range of discourses about sustainability and sites of community development in this coastal Mexican destination, and discuss the implications of the connection between local understandings and manifestations of cosmopolitanism and global patterns of mobility, consumption, and development. In order to investigate the multiple, conflicting, and concurrent visions of sustainable development in La Manzanilla and the neighboring coast, I examine the relationship between cosmopolitanism, local youth entrepreneurialism, lifestyle migrant emplacement, and tourism imaginaries. I argue that La Manzanilla residents are challenging ideas of environmental, economic, and sociocultural sustainability with interrelated initiatives that comprise a competing model of tourism development distinct from large scale resort development and elite enclave ecotourism characteristic of the surrounding coastal region.
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INTRODUCTION: THE HIDDEN GEM

Las Joyas is literally and figuratively a hidden gem in La Manzanilla del Mar, a small town and tourist destination on the southern Jalisco, Mexico coast. Las joyas translates as the gems or jewels, and in La Manzanilla it is the name of a small and pristine waterfall and pool in the jungle. I was introduced to Las Joyas during preliminary fieldwork in 2011 when I was renting a room from the family of María and Roberto. Roberto offered to take me there with the family and described the place as a hidden local treasure - a secret that an outsider would need a local guide to find. I visited Las Joyas many times between 2011 and the conclusion of my field research in 2013, at first tagging along with local Mexican friends, and later when I knew the way, introducing newcomers to this hidden treasure. The hike to the falls took less than an hour (depending on if the group included small children, and how much time we had to spend), and followed the arroyo southeast from town into the jungle that separates La Manzanilla from El Tamarindo, the exclusive resort to the south.

Most often my husband and I went with groups comprised of adults and kids, local Mexican and lifestyle migrant residents. On one particular Las Joyas outing on a Wednesday in October, just before the start of the “high season” for international seasonal residents, we headed out with a group of eleven. Our group included Alicia, her husband Arturo and their two young daughters, Antonio, Gloria, Emma and Ethan, and Mateo. Alicia and her family came to La Manzanilla from Monterrey and after selling hand-made jewelry in markets and on the street, eventually opened a store selling hand-crafted recycled art and hosting recycled art classes. Our friend Antonio had lived in La Manzanilla off and on for most of his life, and ran a thriving taco truck that had
transitioned into a full-scale beach-front restaurant. His grown kids lived in San Diego, and his mother in Tijuana, and his father had a ranch just a short drive to the north east of La Manzanilla. Gloria was the first friend I made in La Manzanilla, and aside from the young adult years she spent working in Las Vegas, had lived in La Manzanilla all her life. Her parents still lived in town, and she lived with her kids and partner, a Canadian lifestyle migrant. Ethan and Emma were a young couple from Arkansas who had moved to La Manzanilla, started a bakery business and eventually opened a restaurant in the center of town. Our friend Mateo was a Mexican-American resident of Portland, Oregon. He had purchased a vacation home in La Manzanilla with his partner, and while he was not a seasonal lifestyle migrant resident, he visited frequently for varying durations of time.

Depending on the season the arroyo might be dry and act as a trail for the first section of the hike, or it might be running and we would walk along the rocky banks or wade through the middle if it was particularly hot (as it usually was). On this particular October day we walked along the banks. The next section of the hike to Las Joyas involved crossing through barbwire fenced land where cattle sometimes grazed. On one occasion we encountered a man with his horse and the colt she had given birth to that same morning. He opened the fence for us and told us the story of the birth. On another occasion we had to cautiously maneuver through a grazing herd of horned cattle. On this trip we were greeted by a group of teenagers who were returning from the falls.

The last section of the hike follows a trail through jungle. In the late summer rainy season the jungle growth would be thick, and the trees would host a variety of elaborate spider webs. Just before arriving at the waterfall the trail becomes steep and eventually
meets up with a series of interconnected pools. After scrambling over a section of boulders we would carry our supplies (lunch, water bottles, beers, sometimes a towel) above our heads and wade through a pool of water that was separated from the main pool by a wall of boulders. Climbing over the last stretch of boulders we arrived at a relatively small but beautiful waterfall and usually clear pool of cold, fresh water. Groups and couples would picnic and relax by the water, swim and sunbathe, and sometimes climb the rocks to the top of the waterfall and dive into the pool below. I kept my flip-flops on this particular day because of the dead scorpion I noticed on the rocks that had likely fallen from the treetops above. We shared spicy peanuts, starfruit, and beer. We swam and relaxed on the rocks and watched as some of the group climbed to the top of the waterfall and jumped off into the pool below. As we were leaving for the day a few young guys showed up and went diving into the pool and collecting crayfish. While perhaps the most obvious tourist draws of the town were the centrally visible and advertised beach and crocodile-filled mangrove lagoon, the fresh waters of Las Joyas always seemed to be more of a local draw.

There have been steps toward ecotourism development focused on Las Joyas over the years, but residents informed me that these efforts have waxed and waned along with support and funding. Still, ecotourism development of this site is visible in the landscape. By the time I concluded dissertation research in 2013 there were a series of vinyl signs hanging from trees and marking the way. The signs hung periodically along the way through fields of grazing cattle and jungle forests read (translated here from Spanish), “Bienvenidos, Las Joyas are a natural gift, caring for them is everyone’s responsibility.

Recommendations: In this place observe the flora and fauna in their natural environment,
help prevent illegal logging and hunting. Deposit garbage in containers.

contacto@ejidolamanzanilla.mx”.

Though I knew the way by heart by then, despite the helpful signs and active promotion of Las Joyas as a tourist attraction, a tourist would still need a guide to find the way.

I introduce Las Joyas here to bring into relief the questions that emerged to assemble my ethnographic research in the town of La Manzanilla. I offer these experiential recollections of the material site of this “hidden gem” as a metaphor for the community which surrounds it. This site encapsulates some of the tensions surrounding imaginaries of sustainability and tourism development in La Manzanilla, including a mix of residents who advocate that future economic sustainability is dependent on development, and those who want La Manzanilla, like Las Joyas, to remain their hidden paradise.

SCOPE OF INQUIRY

The southern Jalisco, Mexico coast is experiencing a transition as much of the beach-front land is being privatized for luxury resort development. In this dissertation I consider sustainable development in the coastal community of La Manzanilla del Mar in the context of this shifting social and material landscape. La Manzanilla is a tourism destination of approximately 1,700 residents including an estimated 300 resident lifestyle migrants. Lifestyle migration is distinguished from labor and forced migration as the

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consumption-based form of migration practiced primarily by the middle and upper classes of the Global North (Benson and O’Reilly 2009).²

I investigate the material and sociocultural development of La Manzanilla through the interrelated practices of various groups of residents. The groups invested in the development of this place are not easily categorized but rather overlap and intertwine, including local youth entrepreneurs, lifestyle migrants, artist entrepreneurs, conservationists, and nonprofit founders and participants. Whether considered local or foreign, mobile or immobile, mono or multilingual, I suggest that these La Manzanilla residents may all be described as cosmopolitan, and that the developing cosmopolitan identity of these residents, and the place itself, is inextricably linked to imaginaries of sustainability and tourism development. I present a range of discourses about sustainability and sites of community development in this small coastal Mexican destination, and discuss the implications of the connection between local understandings and manifestations of cosmopolitanism and sustainability, and global patterns of mobility, consumption, and development. In order to investigate the multiple, conflicting, and concurrent visions and manifestations of development and sustainability in La Manzanilla and the neighboring coast, I examine the relationship between cosmopolitanism, local youth entrepreneurialism, lifestyle migrant emplacement practices, and tourism imaginaries. While tourism scholars have long been dismantling the distinctions between “hosts” and “guests”, in both public and academic discourse these distinct and separate categories continue to hold prominence. The concept of

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² A more detailed discussion of lifestyle migration is included in a later section of the introduction.
emplacement allows for a deeper understanding of ethnographic data comprised of
dynamic lived experience, interactions, practices, and relationships that disrupt and
complicate these distinctions in a site of uncharacteristic tourism development. I argue
that La Manzanilla residents are challenging ideas of environmental, economic, and
sociocultural sustainability with interrelated practices that comprise a competing model
of tourism development distinct from large scale resort development and elite enclave
ecotourism characteristic of the surrounding coastal region.

IMAGINARIES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Anna Tsing (2001) suggests that in engaging with discourses and practices about
“the environment” we transform the natural and social world. She argues that competing
and intersecting understandings about sustainable development are significant because of
the ways they may shape and reshape local places (Tsing 2001, 4). In my research the
focus on the relationship between residents and the imagined and material environment of
La Manzanilla brings the theoretical concerns of the anthropology of place and tourism
studies into conversation with research focused on discourses and practices associated
with development, lifestyle migration scholarship, and the diverse and growing field of
mobilities studies. This local case offers a deeper understanding about the meanings,
practices, and relationships conflicting and intersecting around imaginaries of
sustainability in a community characterized variously as a lifestyle migrant and tourism
destination, “authentic Mexican community”, and “natural paradise”.

Tourism imaginaries of coastal Mexico as paradise, and of La Manzanilla as an
authentic Mexican community participate in drawing tourists and lifestyle migrants to
visit and stay. Interviews and casual conversations in La Manzanilla reveal the extent to
which tourism imaginaries of places and people are internalized and immediately evoked. This internalization is significant because people are still moved by tourism imaginaries and mobilize around them. But beneath the surface of these gut responses lies more complexity. I refer to Naomi Leite’s (2014) discussion of the value of this particular concept, as she compares imaginaries to related terms including ideology, discourse, and worldview, and concludes that the concept of imaginaries “allows simultaneous attention to process and product, the act of imagining and that which is imagined, commercial imagery and collective self-image, shared values and momentary transgressions” (Leite 2014, 274). While earlier concepts in the study of tourism, such as “the gaze” (Urry 1990) are static and unidirectional, imaginaries are dynamic, involving the process and the product. Both concepts are socially organized and work to organize society, but imaginaries do not start and end with an image or idea, they are flexible and adaptive, and they incite us to action. Regarding tourism imaginaries in particular, Leite expounds,

At its best the anthropological study of tourism imaginaries combines processual analysis of the relationship between representation, practice, and experience with careful attention to political-economic conditions and effects. Fundamentally grounded in ethnographic practice, this approach traces images, ideas, and individuals through diverse social fields that overlap and interpenetrate. Above all, it recognizes the centrality of the human capacity for imagination, both individually and collectively, in even the most disparate domains of life (Leite 2014, 274).

Imaginaries work to produce and reinforce existing global power hierarchies. However, ethnographic evidence suggests imaginaries may also be adapted to reinterpret dominant power structures, or more directly, the way we see the world and our place in it. In La Manzanilla I investigate these processes by asking: Who is laying claim to this place, and how are they shaping the representation and material development of this environment? I
use imaginaries to describe the process and the product, including ideas, institutions that circulate and support the ideas, and the social consequences of these ideas. Tourism imaginaries hold fast and lodge deep, but they are also complicated by daily experience and new understandings acquired and accumulated over time. Ethnography reveals this complexity in the practices and social relationships connecting imaginaries of sustainability and tourism imaginaries to deeper understandings and experiences of La Manzanilla.

Global imaginaries of sustainability are boundless. “Sustainability” is often defined as interconnected environmental, sociocultural, and economic practices that support the present generation without compromising future generations. In September 2015 the United Nations put forward an agenda for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encompasses a range of goals, from sustainable economic growth and the end of poverty, to the sustainable management of natural resources (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs). This global agenda for sustainable development is immense, encompassing almost every realm of life. But what do sustainability and sustainable development mean in the local case of La Manzanilla? How do the global patterns of mobility and consumption associated with lifestyle migration interact with local understandings and practices attendant to sustainability? I explore these understandings and interactions, and compare them to imaginaries of sustainability elsewhere on the southern Jalisco coast (often called the Costa Alegre, or

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3 This definition is traced back to a 1987 report by the World Commission on Environment and Development including a definition of sustainable development that has been critiqued as vague and consequently opening the door to the misuse of the word sustainable by corporate interests (Carrigan 2011, 6; McCright & Clark 2006, 87; Fricker 2006 [1998], 191).
Costalegre in tourism promotion media). I examine how local understandings differ from and converge with common and well-circulated uses and understandings of sustainability.

In their recent work on sustainability García Maldonado, García Meza, and Yates-Doerr (2016) discuss the gap between translations of “sustainability” in discourse and practice, and advocate ethnography that attends to both dominant and fringe understandings and practices associated with sustainability. This discussion opens up the idea of sustainability as a question of sometimes conflicting practices rather than a universally understood outcome. There is a pronounced distinction between maintaining a place or way of life versus changing a place or way of life to create economic and environmental viability, yet both ideas and associated practices may be understood as achieving “sustainability”. I explore imaginaries of sustainable development in La Manzanilla as directed toward maintaining the sociocultural and natural environment, and toward creating economic viability for local residents. How do localized discourses and practices reveal understandings about what needs to be maintained and what needs to be developed to sustain various imaginaries this place?

Development that coincides with imaginaries of sustainability depends on perspective. In practice, individuals may prioritize what they consider to be environmental sustainability over economic sustainability. In the case of Las Joyas, this perspective may argue that the financial gain from increased tourism to the site, and La Manzanilla more broadly, does not outweigh the environmental impact of increased human traffic which may result in litter, destruction of natural habitats and biodiversity. A perspective which prioritizes sociocultural over environmental sustainability may argue that the future viability of La Manzanilla depends on locally directed tourism
development, which outweighs the potential environmental cost of increased tourist presence at a site like Las Joyas. Another take on this perspective is that sociocultural sustainability can be measured in terms of local agency. This perspective suggests economic viability is dependent on the environmental sustainability of natural resources like Las Joyas which act as draws for the tourist market. Another perspective may point out the environmental cost of increased tourism development and construction to accommodate lifestyle migrant homes, such as straining resources like fresh water and creating waste and pollution, which La Manzanilla is infrastructurally ill-equipped to manage. And yet another perspective might point out the economic and environmental benefits of increased lifestyle migrant presence, as evidenced by the environmentally and educationally-focused nonprofit projects lifestyle migrants have initiated and to which they have contributed.

Different imaginaries of sustainable development come from elite developers, conservationists, lifestyle migrants, tourists, and locals, and there are conflicting foci of practical efforts within these categories. Imaginaries of economic, environmental, and sociocultural sustainability interact with tourism imaginaries of La Manzanilla as a secluded tropical paradise, a natural oasis, and an authentic Mexican community. I investigate how these imaginaries are made visible and complicated in discourse and practice. While interpretations of sustainable development may conflict in priority and practice, ultimately, like La Manzanilla residents themselves, they are interdependent. I focus on how people mobilize around different imaginaries of sustainability. Ethnographic research in La Manzanilla suggests that sustainability can be concurrently theoretical, conceptual, and experiential. This research examines the intersection of
multiple visions of development and sustainability in the interconnected practices and complex relationships among tourists, lifestyle migrants, conservationists, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs in La Manzanilla and the surrounding coastal environment.

**PLACE, EМPLACEMENT, & COSMOPOLITANISM**

To dig into these deeper experiences, I employ the concept of emplacement to describe both the practices of lifestyle migrants learning the culturally inscribed, embodied place of their adopted town, and also as practices of inscription. This understanding of lifestyle migrant practices as emplacement includes initiating changes in the community as well as participating in already existing frameworks of community development. I contend that these multiple aspects of emplacement should be understood as moving beyond the superficial, and may be visualized as lifestyle migrants putting down roots in place. Emplacement in this case includes founding and participating in educational and environmental nonprofit projects. These emplacement practices have altered the social and material landscape in some intentional and some unexpected ways.

While this research contributes to a growing interdisciplinary conversation about lifestyle migration, the focus is on the relationships between residents and the place. The place of La Manzanilla is ultimately the subject of the story, inspiring action in multiple forms of imagining, moving, maintaining, developing, and protecting. I find Arturo Escobar’s definition of place to be particularly useful as I describe the practices and relationships informing the place of La Manzanilla. Escobar understands “place” as “the experience of a particular location with some measure of groundedness (however,

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4 “Emplacement” has been conceptualized most closely to my application of the term in works in the anthropology of space and place, see for example the work of philosopher Edward S. Casey (1996).
unstable), sense of boundaries (however, permeable), and connection to everyday life, even if its identity is constructed, traversed by power, and never fixed” (2001, 140).

The anthropology of space and place often focuses on the inscription of space. That is, the ways spaces are imbued with meaning and transformed into places. Setha Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga explain this scholarship as focused on “how people form meaningful relationships with the locales they occupy, how they attach meaning to space, and transform ‘space’ into ‘place’” (2003, 13). Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson bring power into the relationship between space and place, suggesting, “by always foregrounding the spatial distribution of hierarchical power relations, we can better understand the process whereby a space achieves a distinctive identity as a place” (1992, 8). They also point out that “notions of locality or community refer both to a demarcated physical space and the clusters of interaction” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 8). I examine both the physical space and its various meanings, as well as the clusters of interaction that comprise the place of La Manzanilla. Keith Basso suggests, “geographical landscapes are never culturally vacant,” and, “the ethnographic challenge is to fathom what it is that a particular landscape, filled to brimming with past and present significance, can be called upon to ‘say,’ and what, through the saying, it can be called upon to ‘do’” (1996, 75).

Thinking in terms of lifestyle migrant emplacement practices further opens a space to reimagine the categories, “host” and “guest,” and to investigate the relationships between the residents of this community and the place they are creating. Connecting lifestyle migrant emplacement practices to the current generation of local youth reveals a generation of entrepreneurs utilizing lifestyle migrant privilege to expand their
community’s tourism economy. The generation of local Mexican youth\(^5\) who have grown up in a community shared by lifestyle migrants and have been directly influenced by their emplacement. Many of this generation express aspirations that take a cosmopolitan entrepreneurial form and are now developing ecotourism and businesses geared toward the lifestyle migrant market. They are building on traditional tourism imaginaries, and at the same time crafting the social and material landscape of La Manzanilla in a way that suits their own aspirations. It is, in some ways, exactly the focus of local nonprofit projects- to arm this generation with the skills to successfully enter the work force in the area. However, in claiming agency to direct tourism development in the community these young residents are not initiating plans with the idea of protecting and maintaining this hidden “paradise” in mind, but rather to attract as many more lifestyle migrants and tourists as possible.

Local youth practices complicate lifestyle migrant imaginaries of authenticity and sustainability in La Manzanilla. I apply Bourdieu’s (1986) discussion of the forms of capital to illuminate the relationship between lifestyle migrant imaginaries and emplacement practices, and youth entrepreneurialism, and the reconfiguration privilege and power. Transforming lifestyle migrant economic and cultural capital into their own cultural, social, and economic capital, this generation is reconfiguring lifestyle migrant privilege and claiming the power to determine what kind of place La Manzanilla is, and what roles they will play there. I argue that local entrepreneurial and developmental

\(^5\) In this case I use “youth” broadly to describe the generation of La Manzanilla residents aged approximately 12-32 who grew up in the community shared by lifestyle migrants. More specifically the examples of entrepreneurial youth I focus on are members of this generation who were primarily in their twenties during my field research (2012-2013).
initiatives in La Manzanilla compete with discourses of social and environmental sustainability that propose halting development and closing the door to more lifestyle migrants and tourists, and to discourses of economic sustainability that propose large scale tourism development.

There is an extensive history of discussion surrounding various ideas and incarnations of “cosmopolitanism,” from philosophical discussions of universal ethics and hospitality (Kant 1784), to postcolonial perspectives (Chakrabarty 2002). My discussion builds most directly on the work of Noel Salazar (2010) as I focus on the ways in which La Manzanilla residents describe and enact their understandings of cosmopolitanism. I also build on Salazar’s argument that cosmopolitanism as a form of capital is acquired not only by those who travel, but those who remain in travelled destinations. This understanding of cosmopolitan capital is divorced from the determining condition of mobility, and is not a global political or philosophical project, but rather a project of self-making. This cosmopolitan self-making in La Manzanilla happens in the interaction between traveler, resident, and place.

MOBILITY & PRIVILEGE

To theoretically situate the complex practices and relationships informing the natural and sociocultural environment of La Manzanilla, I turn to the mobilities paradigm, which emerged to challenge sedentarist theories (Sheller and Urry 2006). Anthropology in particular has moved beyond sedentarist conceptualizations of people and culture, and studies of up-rootedness are now common. The mobilities paradigm

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6 For more discussion on cosmopolitanism see also Harvey (2009); Breckenridge, Pollock, Bhabha, and Chakrabarty (2002).
highlights networks of people, things, and ideas that refocus investigations from isolated places to connecting them in complex webs of power. This direction is productive, argues Tim Cresswell, because, among other things, it addresses mobilities of ideas, things, and people across multiple scales; and considers mobility in relation to immobility (2010, 552). Studies in mobility necessarily interface with issues of power, privilege, and access. Mimi Sheller and John Urry point out that “mobility and control over mobility both reflect and reinforce power. Mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship” (2006, 211). Mobility is dependent upon a socioeconomic position that allows access to certain identities and networks that facilitate movement (across borders for example). Bringing power into conversation with mobilities is indeed the focus of recent critical mobilities scholarship (Soderstrom et al. 2013). Following critical mobilities scholars, Cresswell advocates for future research that attends to the mobility of ideas and investigates “how the movement of ideas is linked to their transformation as they ‘arrive at’ new destinations and become connected to new actors and things” (2014, 2). These ideas, he offers, take shape (and I would suggest, are emplaced) in novel ways, such as the ideas transported with lifestyle migrants to the community of La Manzanilla.

In a recent article Duncan and Thulemark (2015) bring lifestyle migration into conversation with the theoretical concerns of the mobilities paradigm. Using the lens of “lifestyle mobilities” they interrogate the possibility that physical mobility is an ongoing lifestyle choice. They discuss how “voluntary ongoing mobile lifestyles”: 1) blur leisure, travel, and migration boundaries, 2) disrupt the binary between work and leisure, 3) disrupt the binary between “home” and “away”, and 4) discuss “complexities of belonging and identity associated with sustained mobility” (2015, 156). Following
mobilities scholars, Cohen and his colleagues insist the lines between tourism and migration are more blurred than we have conceptualized them. Lifestyle mobility, they argue, “offers a lens into the more complex forms of corporeal mobility that may involve multiple ‘homes’, ‘belongings’ and sustained mobility throughout the life course” (Cohen et al. 2015, 158). This lens may be used to productively understand notions of identity, belonging, routes and roots, in relation to place and mobility. The ideas and practices of lifestyle choices are necessarily linked to privilege. Unpacking the privilege of mobility as a lifestyle choice opens the conversation to include realities of unequal access to physical and social mobility, which reflect power asymmetries attached to race, class, gender, and age.

In a widely circulated article titled with the question, “Why are white people expats when the rest of us are immigrants?” Mawuna Remarque Koutonin argues that “expat” is a remnant of white dominance in the hierarchy of migration (2015). Europeans are labeled as expats, he contends, while Africans, Arabs, and Asians are considered immigrants, even if they are highly skilled professionals working for multinational corporations. He suggest that we must acknowledge and strip away this privileged language, and that “the political deconstruction of this outdated worldview must continue” (Koutonin 2015, 1). While Koutonin only accounts for a limited example of the meaning and use of “immigrant” from a particular vantage point, he does raise a significant issue. When a person crosses a nationally regulated border, they may be understood from a number of perspectives through a range of titles, including expatriate, immigrant, emigrant, migrant, refugee, traveler, or tourist. While many of the foreign residents I encountered in La Manzanilla understand themselves in the terms of “expat,”
or sometimes even “gringo,” I use the term lifestyle migrant both to account for their multiple and varied motivations, and to call attention to the distinction between their relocation motivations and experiences from those experiencing labor migration or forced migration/displacement. Lifestyle migrants crossing the U.S./Mexico border from the north to the south, for example, have a markedly different experience than labor migrants crossing the same border in the opposite direction.

Lifestyle migration scholarship grapples with some of the issues introduced by tourism scholars, but addresses a significant dynamic shift; what happens when tourists remain in destinations and negotiate transition into community membership. This shift in engagement may result in a range of outcomes, from significant cultural shifts, to the displacement of local residents. Lifestyle migrants integrate and invest in, as well as change and disrupt community dynamics. In a recent article lifestyle migration scholar Michaela Benson addresses the relationship between lifestyle migrants, postcoloniality and “privilege” (2013). While she is not the first to discuss privilege in the context of lifestyle migration (for example Sheila Croucher (2009) uses the term “migrants of privilege” rather than lifestyle migrants), she describes the ways sociopolitical residue of colonial relations has positioned lifestyle migrants in Latin America within structures and systems of privilege, and how these migrants are both resisting and utilizing this privilege. This concept is particularly useful for addressing power dynamics in La Manzanilla, because while individual lifestyle migrant socioeconomic positions vary considerably, they are united in their membership in historically dominant nation-states.

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7 Understood in Benson’s use to move beyond formal colonial relations, recognizing that the reach of colonialism extends into contexts that were not directly colonized (2013).
Benson’s recent contribution addresses some of the critical theoretical vacancies of earlier lifestyle migration scholarship. I further interrogate the utility of this concept of privilege by extending it to the relationships between tourism imaginaries, lifestyle migrant practices of emplacement, and the agentive practices of La Manzanilla youth engaged in entrepreneurial development initiatives. I argue that local youth agency transforms lifestyle migrant privilege and capital in ways that may ultimately contribute to their visions of economic, environmental, and sociocultural sustainability in La Manzanilla.

I draw attention to lifestyle migrant structures and systems of privilege first because they are one of few things that unites lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla. While lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla are racially predominantly white, they come from a range of socioeconomic positions, different nation-states (U.S. and Canada mostly, though some are from European countries), a variety of age cohorts, and employment statuses (some retired, some still working, for themselves, or for others—some in Mexico, and some abroad). They are not united by gender or family statuses (some single, some in partnerships, some married, some with partnerships or marriages with Mexican nationals, some with young children, some with grown children, living in La Manzanilla, some in various nations of origin). They have a variety of motivations for living in La Manzanilla, they have different statuses as home owners, or renters, or multiple home owners, they live in La Manzanilla for various periods of time (seasonally, full time), they have lived in La Manzanilla for various lengths of time, and finally, they participate in “community life” to various degrees.
Lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla share similar privilege and this privilege materializes in a number of ways. One experiential expression of this privilege is the shared ability to cross the border (and borders more generally) with relative ease. Another expression of this privilege comes in the form of the American dream imaginary. They have experienced a pervasive imaginary which, regardless of how they may have, as individuals, enacted it, has surrounded them in various forms in their countries of origin - an imaginary that may be essentialized as “the American dream” - an imaginary that says you have choices about how you live your life - that it is up to the individual rather than societal structures (like family and gender expectations), historical, political context (like colonialism), and global economic structures (like capitalism), to determine each unique route through life to optimal fulfillment. Lifestyle migrants have been transmitting this imaginary to youth in La Manzanilla through discourse, practice, and example, a message that says if one sets their sights on something (like a lifestyle) and works hard, one’s ideal may be achieved.

LIFESTYLE MIGRATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Lifestyle migration scholarship logically falls into conversation with the mobilities paradigm, which explores the movement of people, ideas, and things, as well as the broader social implications of those movements (Sheller and Urry 2006, Cresswell 2010). Lifestyle migration is the consumption-based form of migration practiced primarily by the middle and upper classes of the Global North, and it is becoming an increasingly popular extension of tourism around the world (Benson and O’Reilly 2009, 8 See also Spalding (2013b) for lifestyle migration research in Panama exploring “the exportation of the American Dream” (2013b, 69).
Matthew Hayes describes the lifestyle migrant as “a restless wanderer across the increasingly manufactured landscapes of leisure and cultural consumption” (2015a, 279). Scholars have conceived of tourism as a practice perpetuated by the desire to escape modernity to a place deemed “more authentic” (MacCannell 1976, Urry 1990, Löfgren 1999, Bruner 2005). Lifestyle migration is motivated by these desires as well, and these migrants often first experience their new homes as tourists, making their vacation transition permanent (Holder 1976, Kiy and McEnany 2011).

Michael Janoschka and Heiko Haas define lifestyle migration as “a temporary or permanent spatial movement of relatively affluent persons of all ages that travel and move between meaningful places with an individually imagined and collectively perceived potential to provide a better quality of life” (Janoschka and Haas 2014, 1). They highlight the privileged nature of this form of mobility, and point out that this mobility involves not only the migrants themselves, “but also involve capital, objects, information, knowledge, and cultures” (Janoschka and Haas 2014, 2). To “information, knowledge, and cultures,” I would also specify the significance of ideologies and imaginaries. This mobility often distributes and leaves traces of privilege in unexpected ways. Sheller and Urry argue that “as richer people move around developing their individual life projects they extend their personal networks and appear to exert increased

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9 I have chosen the term lifestyle migrant out of a range of terms describing individuals embarking on similar relocations, including residential tourist, international retirement migrant, and amenity migrant, and drawing primarily from the work of Benson and O’Reilly (2009). Though lifestyle migrant research participants living in La Manzanilla have various motivations, they share some sense of investment in a move to what might be described as a new lifestyle that they find appealing (for various reasons). The other terms available in this body of scholarship emphasize alternate factors, such as retirement status and financial considerations. This form of migration is consumption-based migration, not labor migration (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003).
‘agency’” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 222). I suggest that in lifestyle migrant destinations such as La Manzanilla, these mobile individuals are not the only residents demonstrating an increase in agency.

Much of the work on the lifestyle migration phenomenon comes out of Europe, however a small but growing body of scholarship looks to Latin America. Work in Latin America, like work in Europe, focuses on north-south consumption-based migrations (Benson and O’Reilly 2009b). Notably, several key lifestyle migrant destinations in Latin America (e.g. Boquete, Panama, and Cuenca, Ecuador) have developed rapidly due to the promotion of lifestyle and retirement migration marketer *International Living Magazine*. Research in Boquete, Panama focuses on the impact of lifestyle migrants on the local community (McWatters 2009, Myers 2009). It also reveals tension between two groups of foreign residents distinguished as “residential tourists” and “international retirement migrants,” in which residential tourists have driven up the cost of living, effecting not only local residents, but international retirement migrants who were drawn to Panama principally out of economic concerns (Myers 2009). Matthew Hayes (2015a, 2015b) found a community of lifestyle migrants in Cuenca, Ecuador to be economically motivated by the 2008 recession. He argues that while lifestyle migrants in Cuenca may be motivated to move out of some sense of economic necessity and social class status shift in their home country, their presence and purchasing power in Cuenca is contributing to a form of transnational gentrification (2015a, 278). La Manzanilla differs from these sites in terms of scale and the scope of virtual presence, however many of the issues and tensions examined in this research resonate with my research findings.
Several Latin American studies particularly support the conflicting notions of sustainability at the core of my own project, including Michael Janoschka’s (2009) work in Costa Rica. Janoschka investigates the tensions between lifestyle migrants and mass tourism development, and concludes that these migrants are invested in preserving their adopted communities and use the powerful tools at their disposal to actively oppose the negative effects of mass tourism development (2009). Lifestyle migrants found mass development intended to attract tourists, as well as more residential tourists such as themselves, unsavory because construction obscured the landscape and strained resources (ibid). Janoschka investigates coalitions promoting and contesting different forms of development, focusing on the ways in which lifestyle migrants participate in developing local agendas and strategies to combat development (ibid.). Another notable study by Ana K. Spalding address the social and environmental impacts of lifestyle migrants in Bocas del Toro, Panama (2011, 2013a, b). She finds that the community encompasses a range of local residents, as well as first and second wave lifestyle migrants, with conflicting conceptions about proper land use. She determines that an increased sensitivity to the link between culture and landscape, in addition to improved communication between residents and infrastructural support from the government, will better equip the community for future sustainability (2011). She also explores the impacts of idealized notions of paradise on lifestyle migrant consumption patterns, and their environmental, economic, and sociocultural impact on destination communities (2013a, b).

In addition to a geographic expansion from Europe to the Americas, lifestyle migration scholarship has begun to move away from primarily descriptive community
studies and delve into more theoretically nuanced terrain. Lifestyle migration research in Latin America is predominantly focused on destinations with large and relatively new lifestyle migrant populations (with notable exceptions such as the Mexican cases of long-established expatriate communities in San Miguel de Allende and Lake Chapala; see, for example, Truly 2006, Croucher 2009). My research interrogates sustainable community development in the context of a relatively small community that has been influenced by lifestyle migrants for an entire generation of young adult residents. Lifestyle migrant processes of emplacement in this Mexican community articulate patterns of global mobility and consumption with localized responses and strategies.

LIFESTYLE MIGRATION & LIFESTYLE MIGRANTS

In a presentation at the 2015 American Anthropological Association meetings anthropologist Ann Miles candidly discussed the “uncomfortable sentiments” lifestyle migrants evoke in anthropologists (2015). She reflected on the uneasy relationship between the anthropologist and expat in the field through a series of probing questions;

So, I wonder, do we dislike the ex-pats mostly because we think they are neocolonialists who knowingly or unknowingly exploit Ecuador, exerting a kind of invisible white privilege and living the good life in a poor country while romanticizing the locals who hang on to values we no longer have or frankly want--or do we dislike them so much because they destabilize our images of ourselves? In other words, are ex-pats insufferable because their foibles and successes hit too close to home? Is studying them ‘not anthropology’ because it is too much like studying ourselves? How can we claim the authority of ‘Being There’, when everyone is being ‘There’ (Geertz 1988)? And, is there much distance on the ground between wishing to be a moral ex-pat and striving to be an ethical anthropologist? Do ex-pats, I wonder, function too effectively to reflect back to us our follies, reminding us of our own weaknesses, failings and pretensions? (Miles 2015, 8-9).

She posited that anthropologists need to reflect on why some are exempt from our interest and empathy, and that when it comes to lifestyle migrants, “homogenizing them as all of
the same kind ultimately impoverishes our abilities to see the way privilege operates, even when on a downhill slope, how global economics reverberate through places in different ways,” and, “how places seemingly unconnected become linked through transnational flows, how cross cultural interactions are enacted ‘on the ground’ between people operating on multiple tiered planes, how communities are formed and ‘policed,’ how local wealth is promoted and exploited globally” (Miles 2015, 9).

I work to eschew static, homogenized categories of “the lifestyle migrant” and “the local” in favor of a more nuanced understanding of how mobility and privilege operate. I distinguish between the phenomenon of lifestyle migration, and individual lifestyle migrants, their intentions, practices, and experiences. I critique the global capitalist systems of power and privilege that structure the phenomenon of lifestyle migration, as well as the imaginaries that contribute to propelling North Americans into Latin America. However, I also discuss the ways that lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla may outgrow or complicate those imaginaries in daily life. In conversations during field research many of the research participants I identify as lifestyle migrants themselves offered thoughtful critiques about their positions and the systems that have enabled the relative ease of their transnational relocations.

Both the academic and casual reader might assume power lies with lifestyle migrants, but I am going to push back on that assumption to reveal a more complicated picture. The story of lifestyle migration in La Manzanilla reads very differently depending on where you start and end the story. Ending the story with lifestyle migrant power and privilege eliminates our ability to see the creative agency of the local generation of youth raised in a community shared by these foreign residents.
METHODS

When I tell people what I do (“not exactly, no, I don’t dig up bones”) and what my dissertation research is about (“no, it wasn’t a year-long vacation at the beach”) they often ask me how I found out about La Manzanilla. Prior to my first field research trip in 2009 I had been to Mexico for only one day, having crossed the border into Nogales as an undergrad visiting Tucson with friends. As a graduate student honing in on a research topic (I had taken the Anthropology of Place, Tourism, and an environmentally focused topics course, and was framing my research agenda in this general topical and theoretical vicinity) in the summer of 2008 I registered for Spanish 101. One day after class I was speaking with the instructor about my inchoate research topic- something about globalization and tourism and places changing- and he suggested I visit La Manzanilla. His wife was from the town, and during extended visits there over the years they had noticed major changes in the town associated with a growing expatriate population. She described her view of the changes to me in an interview before my first visit;

The town for me has changed so much from when I knew it before, the earthquake or tidal wave, it’s kind of a drastic change that’s come about. And I understand it from different angles. I can see it from the way the people there have benefitted from it, and …my uncle who’s been one of the ones who’s very involved in that whole process…we used to talk about it a lot, and he’s always, he saw it when it was a virgin beach. When they came in, they came in from the higher elevation and a different town, and it was a group of them, a small group of them, and they came in, and he described when they arrived to the town, and his description is just, it blows me away, you know. He’s aware of the impact it’s had, not only on the community, and the human economy, but also on the impact of nature (Interview 4/10/09).

This perspective on changes in La Manzanilla raised a series of questions for me about how these changes are being negotiated by residents, and what the future of the town might look like. I conducted principally qualitative ethnographic research over a
total of 17 months between 2009-2013, with a follow-up visit in June 2014. After preliminary field research during the summers of 2009 and 2011, I returned for an extended field research period of 13 months beginning in October 2012 with a series of research questions centered around the basic questions: Why and to what extent have local Mexican residents and foreign resident lifestyle migrants come together around issues of development in La Manzanilla? What are the mechanisms, intentions, and outcomes of this effort? I intended to investigate the possibility that this combined effort was directed toward protecting the community of La Manzanilla as imagined and experienced by residents. I had witnessed the growth of elite resort development (and contested land claims) encroaching toward La Manzanilla during preliminary research, and discussed strategies to combat what community members described as “this threat” with both local Mexican and foreign residents. When I returned in 2012 I found that the focus of these discussions had shifted toward ways members of the community were working to develop both community facilities and the tourism industry locally, rather than staving off “this threat” from outside.

I collected data from sixty-two research participants in open-ended and semistructured interviews- and a questionnaire. Research participants included a purposefully broad spectrum of community members, including diversity in age, gender, employment, and involvement with community and tourism development. After receiving their consent to participate in this IRB approved research, I informed research

10 Complete original research objectives and questions listed in Appendix I.
11 Including (self-identified) 24 Mexican nationals, 25 U.S. nationals, 8 Canadian nationals, and 5 Europeans.
12 Questionnaire in English and Spanish included in Appendix II.
participants that they may select an alternate name which I would use to refer to them in
published research materials. If participants did not select a pseudonym I have selected
one for them, and for all individuals I reference in this document. I have not changed the
names of places, businesses, or nonprofit organizations. Interview durations ranged from
25 minutes to 3 hours, and interviews were conducted in various locations of the research
participants choosing (most often in homes, sometimes in public locations such as
restaurants). Many interviews were one on one, but I also interviewed couples, groups of
several family members, or small groups of friends. To prepare for this research I had
taken introductory Spanish classes at the University of New Mexico and a summer
Spanish immersion program at CEPE in Taxco, Mexico. I was still developing my
Spanish conversation abilities throughout my fieldwork, and while I conducted
interviews with 19 research participants in Spanish I employed help on several occasions
to ensure the accurate recording of data. On occasions I required assistance (for example
when I had an interview scheduled with a research participant that had speech patterns or
tempos that were difficult for me to follow) I would enlist the assistance of a bilingual
local resident who was mutually acquainted with me and the interviewee. I conducted the
majority of Spanish interviews beginning in the summer after seven months of field
research when my language fluency was more functional. Language dynamics in the
town are interesting, if not entirely surprising. While language was not the focus of my
research, after more than a year of daily participant observation I would suggest that
more native Spanish speakers are fluent in English than native English speakers are fluent
in Spanish. Perhaps not surprisingly, the predominance of local Spanish-speaking
residents fluent in English were often youth (teens-twenties) and/or involved in the service industry.

Aside from interviews, the majority of my time in the field was spent conducting daily participant observation including informal and formal activities. Much of this was focused on attempting to understanding lifestyle migrant and local experiences of place, moments of encounter between these groups of residents, and the implementation of development initiatives. I volunteered with several local nonprofit organizations. Volunteering activities included a weekly shift at the nonprofit bookstore, two days assisting in the dog recovery area of the annual four-day Cisco’s Amigos spay and neuter clinic, and consulting and assisting with the initial Tierralegre educational garden and documenting the fundraising garden party. Along with my husband, I tended a plot at the lifestyle migrant-organized community garden. I attended fundraising events for each of the active nonprofit organizations in town. I attended the La Catalina afternoon scholarship classes and participated in the evening Adult English classes. I participated in a weekly conversation exchanges organized through La Catalina. I attended community events, such as the annual August and February fiestas, holidays, parades, birthday parties, baby showers, and community meetings. I frequented local establishments (shops, restaurants, cafes, bars). I visited the surrounding towns via bus, bike, or hitching rides with friends. I spent time in the primary tourist attractions (the crocodile sanctuary and the beach) and the jardín (town square). I took Spanish classes at the La Catalina natural language school. I spent time in the homes of local Mexican and lifestyle migrant residents (as well as many residents who do not fit neatly into either category).
I have endeavored to quote and tell the stories of interview participants and community members in a contextual and respectful manner. I offer a depiction of residents, the place, and the relationships between residents and the place of La Manzanilla based on my experiences and observations, and the focus of my anthropological inquiry and data collection. Another anthropologist focused on a different set of questions and issues might depict the town and its residents differently. While I took efforts to select research participants from a broad spectrum of community experiences, community members on the periphery of community development efforts and who do not participate in the tourism and lifestyle migrant economy might not see their experiences equally represented here. Because my research agenda focused on moments of encounter and community development efforts of “local” and “foreign” residents, this ethnographic dissertation reflects that focus.

As I analyzed the data I had collected during field research, I found that not only the nonprofit organizations, but the growing presence of lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla since the 1990s had impacted the local Mexican youth that were raised among the influence of these foreign residents. Based on insights from this data, and daily experiences and interactions recorded in fieldnotes, I refocused my investigation on the relationships between lifestyle migrant practices of emplacement, and the agentive practices of young Mexican residents, illustrating the ways in which young Mexican residents and entrepreneurs are positioning themselves as agents of tourism and community development in La Manzanilla.
CHAPTER OUTLINE

To contextualize this research I begin with a chapter briefly tracing the history of U.S. involvement in Mexico with a focus on the development of Mexico’s tourism industry, and a history of U.S. Americans going to Mexico to tour and live. I also discuss the history of La Manzanilla, describe contemporary community life, and provide brief sketches of the surrounding communities. La Manzanilla is in some ways representative and in some ways divergent from the history of tourism development in Mexico. In some ways it follows the pattern of foreign influence and capital playing a privileged role in development. It also both benefits from and is beholden to some key tourism imaginaries about Mexico, particularly coastal Mexico, and the idea of “tropical paradise”. A combination of historical circumstances, geographic situation, and imaginaries about authenticity and the environment have so far prevented the development of the town as a large-scale tourist resort destination.

Chapter 2 introduces a series of residents and projects involved with community development. I discuss various meanings of cosmopolitanism, and the relationship between understandings of cosmopolitanism and entrepreneurial initiatives in La Manzanilla. I also discuss the relationship between nonprofit projects and youth participation in community development. I suggest that these La Manzanilla residents may all be described as cosmopolitan, and that the developing cosmopolitan identity of the place is intertwined with the cosmopolitan identity of the residents.

In Chapter 3 I consider development theories, critiques, and alternatives to situate the range of perspectives on sustainability and tourism development in La Manzanilla. I present environmental perspectives on sustainable development on the southern Jalisco
coast, and discuss the relationship between these perspectives, popular tourism imaginaries of Mexico, and materializations of elite enclave ecotourism on the Costalegre. I suggest that while there is not a consensus on what development should look like in La Manzanilla, the intersection of influences and initiatives is producing locally directed development that contrasts significantly with the erasure of local agency in tourism development in nearby coastal destinations.

Chapter 4 focuses on a discussion of the concept of emplacement, and the ways this concept may be applied to the study of lifestyle migration to allow an understanding of often contradictory sentiments and practices. From a broader view, emplacement allows for a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic relationship between lifestyle migrant and local youth practices that are coproducing the cosmopolitan development of La Manzanilla. I continue an examination of the interaction between lifestyle migrant emplacement practices and local youth practices through the transformation of capital, lifestyle migrant motivations, consumption practices, nonprofit initiatives and development.

In Chapter 5 I discuss the significance of tourism imaginaries to community development in La Manzanilla, and argue that local entrepreneurs are incorporating these popular imaginaries into their own vision of La Manzanilla as a cosmopolitan destination, capitalizing on the interplay of the authentic local and the cosmopolitan global. I begin by using popular travel writings and online media to examine the discursive production of La Manzanilla as an authentic tropical Mexican paradise. I then discuss how these imaginaries draw lifestyle migrants to La Manzanilla, and are then challenged by daily
experience in the community. Finally I discuss the emerging cosmopolitan imaginary of La Manzanilla that both incorporates and contests traditional imaginaries.

Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion about the potential for locally directed development in La Manzanilla. The relationship between tourism imaginaries, lifestyle migrant emplacement, and youth entrepreneurialism in this place have created conditions which may produce an alternative future for La Manzanilla outside of large scale resort development. In La Manzanilla, lifestyle migrants, local youth, conservationists, artists, and those that fall in between multiple categories of resident, are enacting a range of intersecting and conflicting sustainability imaginaries. The relationships between residents and the environment in this coastal Mexican community articulate patterns of global mobility and consumption alongside local initiatives and development. This ethnographic study contributes a detailed analysis of these practices from the perspective of the lived experiences of community members negotiating these dynamic global processes. This local case may contribute to an understanding of the practices and relationships that connect potentially incompatible understandings of place such as “economic opportunity,” “paradise,” and “home”.
CHAPTER 1 Introduction to La Manzanilla del Mar, Jalisco, Costa Alegre, Mexico

There were no mail-order catalogues in 1492. Marco Polo’s journal was the wish book of Renaissance Europe. Then, Columbus sailed the ocean blue and landed in Sears’ basement. Despite all the Indians on the escalator, Columbus’ visit came to be known as a ‘discovery’ (Tom Robbins 1971, 227).

LA MANZANILLA DEL MAR

The first time I visited I arrived on a north-bound bus from the terminal in Manzanillo. After an overnight bus trip from Mexico City, I caught the bus that I eventually determined was headed in the direction of La Manzanilla. I didn’t know then that if I stopped in San Patricio Melaque I could grab a local bus right into the center of La Manzanilla, so I got on the bus headed to Puerto Vallarta and asked the driver to stop at La Manzanilla and I would walk in from the highway. The heat was thick and humid—particularly so because it was the middle of the summer rainy season. At the cross roads where I exited the bus there is a triangle of land with a large sculpture of crocodiles in the middle announcing the entrance of La Manzanilla. A bench across the highway on the east side sits in front of the road to Los Ingenios (or Los Hingenios, depending on the official highway sign seen from southbound or northbound). Farther down the highway to the north would be the entrance to Los Angeles Locos or Blue Bay resort, which is the road you take to Boca de Iguanas. On the way in from the south amid thick green jungle lining the road we passed the sign for Tamarindo, the exclusive resort frequented by international political and corporate elite.

A series of signs of varying shape and quality introduced me to La Manzanilla as I turned west and headed into town. The main road into town (east-west) connects to the
main road that runs through town parallel to the beach (north-south). It seemed fairly flat (until much later when I rode a bike to visit friends in Los Ingenios and realized there is in fact a subtle but substantial incline headed east), with jungle hills rising up to the right and the left and behind in the direction of the smaller rancho of Los Ingenios. The road was loosely paved, but I walked on the side in the dirt. Depending on the season and time of day the dirt may be loose and dusty, or packed and wet. I passed several small bodegas on the right, and some concrete and brick houses being constructed on the left. Small dirt roads shoot off from the main thoroughfare, leading to small clusters of homes. As I neared the ocean the sound of waves rolling onto the beach added to the sound-pastiche of banda and pop music coming from passing cars, dogs barking, families and friends calling out to each other, and the little tunes that I would eventually learn signify the gas, water, pastry, and produce vendors. A wealthy American tourist might be struck by the trash along the side of the road, and the in-process status of the homes and buildings- a level of concrete and brick with rebar covered with upended plastic Fresca and Coke bottles sticking out of the roofs. They might find the signs advertising beach restaurants featuring illustrated palm trees and the word “paradise” misleading given what they’ve seen so far. But then again, they probably wouldn’t be walking into town. If they came to La Manzanilla at all, rather than the well-known Puerto Vallarta or the luxury resort in the exclusive Careyes, they would cruise by in a taxi or rental car. They might be intrigued by the brief glimpse of La Manzanilla life peripheral to the tourist focus of town, and quickly faced with the main road paralleling the beach.

At the crossroads of the main road leading into town and the beach road they would see a series of small open-air restaurants to the left, and Yola’s on the right. Yola’s
is a drink stand, and if you take a right at Yola’s you will find yourself immediately faced with the mangrove lagoon, home to a variety of birds (63 species) that are interesting enough to attract “birder” tourists and the huge protected crocodiles who hang out by what may be loosely described as a fence, waiting for tourists who have purchased fish from Yola’s to feed them. Yola’s is also the usual place for grabbing a lunch time, break time, or post-work beer and hearing the local news (or chisme/gossip as it is often qualified). The smell of the ocean is offset by the smell of the mangrove in the rainy season- a deep swamp smell. It feels like the place the jungle meets the ocean.

The beach road headed south is lined with shops featuring inflatable ocean toys, an outdoor *pollo asada* stand where chicken is grilled daily on a grill made out of a split 50 gallon drum, “gringo” bars advertising live music and ice-cold beer in English, real estate offices, and small shops selling groceries and other staples. The church is separated from the beach by the plaza (often referred to as the *zócalo* elsewhere in Mexico, but in La Manzanilla it is called the *jardín*) with a central gazebo featuring entwined sea creature sculptures climbing up the pillars. This gazebo, I eventually found out, was designed by an early lifestyle migrant architect. Beyond the *jardín* to the south is a neighborhood that stretches across the arroyo to the south, and up to the primary school, *fútbol* and baseball fields, and La Catalina nonprofit educational foundation classrooms and computer lab to the east. From here heading south and following the arroyo you could make your way to Las Joyas, a small but beautiful waterfall and natural swimming pool.

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13 Mangroves may be described as “a type of coastal vegetation composed of mangrove trees that tolerate saltwater. They occupy intertidal zones close to sources of fresh water” (Spalding 2013a, 188).
The view into town from the beach reveals small tropical dry forest mountains covered with primarily large, white or pastel-colored lifestyle migrant homes, staggered to ensure ocean views. Immediately lining the beach are palapa-roofed restaurants with plastic tables and multicolored umbrellas interspersed among vacation rentals and homes. Small *lanchas*-boats used for small-scale fishing in Tenacatita bay- are tied up along the beach, and vendors walk up and down the main drag of the beach carrying food and souvenirs-children and adults sell sticks filled with grilled shrimp and peeled mangoes, women and girls sell costume jewelry and small wooden toys and kitchen utensils, teenage boys sell temporary tattoos, and several older men sell hand-made hammocks. Depending on the season (winter high season or summer low season) and national holidays (*semana santa*/Easter week or summer holidays), the beach may be filled with Mexican tourist families visiting for the day, a small number of international tourists, and seasonal or full-time lifestyle migrants.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEXICO/U.S. RELATIONS VIA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

Mexico has been socially, politically, and economically entwined with the United States since before its inception as a nation. Following Mexico’s independence from Spain in 1821, the Mexican-American War, or U.S. invasion of Mexico, ended in the secession of roughly half of Mexico’s territory to the United States in 1848. During the Porfirian period, the 34-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910), Mexico experienced economic growth and development that was heavily tied to the United States. Díaz advocated a dramatic modernization program and secured and maintained power with the assistance of wealthy U.S. investors and politicians (Hart 2002, 60-68).
Historian John Mason Hart expounds that “from the beginnings of the nineteenth century until the present era, the citizens of the United States attempted to export their unique ‘American Dream’ to Mexico,” and this vision incorporated social mobility, a capitalist free market, and a consumer culture, among other things (2002, 2 and 43). He suggests that U.S. involvement in Mexico, including the investment of capital, development of infrastructure, securing ownership of natural resources, and colonial settlement, set the stage for a pattern of imperial involvement in developing nation states that continues into the present (Hart 2002). These interventions were achieved in part because of the need of the Mexican government to maintain sovereignty from invading European nations, like France, and to develop the national economy. This modernization project was heavily tied to privatization of previously communal land and resources. In rural areas this meant a transition from small scale subsistence communities, to a limited number of wealthy land owners (hacendados) and a majority of disenfranchised agricultural workers. During the Porfirian period much of Mexico’s Pacific coastline fell under American ownership through a series of exemptions to the law of no foreign ownership within 50 miles of Mexican shoreline (Hart 2002, 172 and 188).

Mexican nationalism was always a project pursued next door to the United States, not in isolation, resulting in “peripheral cosmopolitanism, of an acute conscience of wanting to catch up, to reach ‘the level’ of the great world powers” (Lomnitz 2001, 81; Krauze 1997). Mexican intellectuals have written extensively on how this project has been received by other nations and experienced by Mexican citizens. Octavio Paz postulates that “the whole history of Mexico, from the conquest to the revolution, can be
regarded as a search for our own selves, which have been deformed or disguised by alien institutions, and for a form that will express them” (1985, 166).

The ideology of the revolution culminated in a constitution pushing for less foreign influence in the economy and more national solidarity. A series of iterations of the post-Revolutionary government, in an attempt to satisfy revolutionary sentiment and enter the global economic playing field as a unified, developed nation, turned to tourism as a strategy for economic development (Berger 2006, Clancy 2001, Krauze 1997). This process entailed not only the development of tourist destinations, but also reworking Mexico’s image for the American public.

Tourism development in Mexico is intimately intertwined with the post-revolutionary Mexican national project (Clancy 2001, Lomnitz 2001, Berger 2006, Berger & Wood 2010). Tourism was lionized as a panacea that would simultaneously build the economy and solidify a modern national identity. The Mexican government fostered tourism development with infrastructural support, focusing on transportation and easy access to beaches (Clancy 2001, Schreiber 2006). This infrastructural development eased access from heavily visited colonial centers to budding coastal destinations.

1928 saw the first tourism-focused institution, the Pro-Tourism Commission, followed by a series of adaptations: the joint public-private commission in 1929, and in 1930 the National Tourism Commission (Berger 2006, Clancy 2001). Construction of the Pan-American Highway linking the United States and Mexico in 1936 was another turning point in tourism development, facilitating an influx of travel to Mexico (Berger and Grant Wood 2010, 96). A nation-state with infrastructure equipped to accommodate tourists and the desire to host international visitors was a sign of its progress and
modernity (Berger 2006, 2010). Beyond the display of modernity it offered, tourism promotion was a vehicle to continue the revolutionary project of national solidarity in which Mexico paved its own way in the international playing field: it was “an industry made by and for Mexicans” (Berger 2006, 2).

Through these tourism development efforts, Mexico had begun working to shift its image in the American imagination from a violent, isolated, and feared land south of the border to a progressive and welcoming neighbor. State-led tourism development, along with a positive shift in U.S. perceptions about Mexico drew throngs of international tourists to Mexico, and in the five years after WWII, foreign arrivals to Mexico more than doubled (Berger 2006). Through tourism, Mexico and the United States fostered economic and cultural ties as well as closer political ties. The U.S. Government played a role in Mexico’s reimagining, encouraging Americans to visit their newly refashioned neighbor. The war in Europe facilitated this process, as American travelers were forced to find new vacation destinations. By the 1950s tourism was big business in Mexico, and in 1958 the Department of Tourism was raised to the level of an autonomous government agency (Clancy 2001, 46). As a result of efforts on both sides of the border, by 1956 “Mexico became one of the premiere playgrounds for American tourists” advertised as the “Faraway Land Nearby” (Berger 2006, 5 and 14). Mexico was promoted as “a safe yet unspoiled destination for travelers who would enjoy its quaintness, natural beauty, and artistic treasures” (Delpar 1992, 58).

Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood describe tourism promotion in general, noting that it “necessitates a marked national identity that is sold, consumed, and negotiated” and in this process of commodifying national identity, “industry marketers
draw on the uniqueness and the sameness of particular destinations…to meet the multitude of tourists’ expectations from comfortable, familiar accommodations to exotic, awe-inspiring sights” (2010, 6). Mexico offers tourists a range of experiences, from cultural tourism, to a resort getaway; tourists can tour Mayan ruins in the Yucatan, visit museums and monuments in Mexico City, attend a festival and purchase authentic crafts in any number of villages, or lounge on the beaches of either coast. Institutional support and marketing have both enabled these practices and inscribed them with meaning.

State and private agents invested in, and to a large extent created, the idea of coastal Mexico as a “tropical paradise” (Clancy 2001, Sackett 2010). Coastal destinations were imagined and developed to be lucrative features of the tourism economy, and towns like Acapulco, Cancun and Puerto Vallarta were made accessible to masses of tourists with roads linking them to major cities, ports suitable to host passenger ships, and eventually airports (Buchenau 2005, Clancy 2001). This infrastructural support “shifted the center of Mexican tourism from Mexico City, with its museums, to the Pacific coast, with its beaches” (Schreiber 2006, 45).

Acapulco is the first example of “the sun and sea segment of the tourism market,” which “promised to draw throngs of foreigners deep into Mexico in what would hopefully be long, free spending vacations” (Clancy 2001, 58 and 52). The town of Acapulco had been redefined by state tourism promoters “as a tropical seaside resort” by 1940 (Sackett 2010, 164). Acapulco has since been immortalized in such films as Elvis’s Fun in Acapulco (1963) as what Barbara Kastelein calls “a full-fledged tourism legend” (2010, 320). Puerto Vallarta experienced a similar tourist boom in the sixties and remains a popular travel destination for Americans (Schreiber 2006, 45). The town became an
international destination aided by development which followed similar infrastructural plans creating access to the town, including paved highways, an international airport and a marina (Clancy 2001, 61).

Where these west coast destinations developed somewhat organically, aided by an infrastructural push, Cancún’s development was decidedly more calculated. In an effort to draw more tourists to the Caribbean coast, state tourism developers researched popular Caribbean destinations to inform plans to create a tourism destination in the ideal location. Analysts spent years researching potential sites for development, “calculating such factors as average weekly hours of sunshine, soil types, and tidal patterns” (Alarcón 1997, 163). By 1968 researchers had vetted Cancún as Mexico’s next coastal destination (Ward 2008, 112). Masses of tourists would visit Cancún from the 1970s on, intensely impacting a region of Mexico that had previously remained relatively isolated (Torres and Momsen 2006). It was no longer the isolated region that John Stephens encountered during his travels logged in *Incidents of Travel in the Yucatan* (1843). Cancún “has become a place of escape, leisure, consumption, and retirement… ‘redefined as a tropical paradise’” and today this tourist mecca receives over three million visitors a year (Torres and Momsen 2006, 59).

Even with the shared post WWII effort to promote U.S. tourism in Mexico, bilateral relations may not be characterized as cooperative until the Salinas-Bush negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Preston and Dillon 2004, Domínguez and Ferndez de Castro 2009, Edmonds-Poli and Shirk 2009). For the largest portion of Mexico’s relationship with the United States, the nation has fostered a protectivist stance and foreign policy (Domínguez and Ferndez de Castro 2001). NAFTA
coincides with a major transition in bilateral relations, as the Mexican political view of their northern neighbor shifts from imperial strong-arm to partner and ally (Preston and Dillon 2004, 226). This was a moment of “institutional thrust” that impelled neoliberalism\(^\text{14}\) through unhindered flows of capital (Harvey 2005, 93). NAFTA inaugurated an era of “expanding opportunities for new investments, acquiring property, and opening services to competition by private corporations” (Shaffer et al. 2005, 27). Neoliberal policies such as increased privatization in Mexico during the end of the twentieth century have led to increased socioeconomic inequalities. David Harvey notes that “in 2005 Mexico, with its very high rate of poverty, claimed more billionaires than Saudi Arabia” (2009, 60). This neoliberalization, as Harvey characterizes it, “creates a flat world for multinational corporations and for the billionaire entrepreneur and investor class, but a rough, jagged, and uneven world for everyone else” (2009, 58). Some of the consequences of this unevenness can be witnessed in the extensive media coverage of ongoing violence and political and social unrest south of the border. Still a popular tourist destination and site of North American expatriate relocations, with regular headlines of violence and civil unrest south of the border, perceptions of Mexico in the U.S. walk the line between vacation paradise and violent wasteland.

North Americans from the U.S. and Canada not only have a long history of vacationing in, but also migrating to Mexico. After Mexican independence from Spain in 1821 there were significant North American migrations south to Mexico. An economic

\(^{14}\) Neoliberal ideology proposes that “human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (Harvey 2007, 2).
development plan in 1824 promoted these migrations with land and tax exemptions to foreign settlers. In the 1830s Mexico took in 35,000 immigrants from the US (including some Europeans) (Christensen and Christensen 1998, 9). Following the US Civil war thousands of confederates fled the southern US states to form expatriate colonies throughout Mexico (Hart 2002, Harmon 1937). The first Mexican national census in 1895 revealed 12,108 US citizens residing in Mexico (Salazar Anaya 1996).

The Mexican Revolution produced the constitution of 1917, solidifying national control by limiting private property and establishing labor and agrarian reforms (Delpar 1992, Knight 1986). From north of the border, the view of Mexico on the heels of the Revolution was ambiguous. Still seen by some as a violent radical nation, others were drawn by the political climate, “escaping the materialism, inequality, and conflict they associated with capitalism” (Delpar 1992, 15). Intrigued by the political and artistic projects in Mexico, writers and artists flocked across the border to witness and sometimes participate in the excitement firsthand. Among these were writers, including D.H. Lawrence and Katherine Anne Porter who penned their impressions of Mexico in popular literature for American audiences. These works are part of a tradition of American travel writers in Mexico, including Charles Lummis (1898), Aldous Huxley (1934) and John Stephens (1943).

Katherine Anne Porter was one of a series of disenchanted Americans, not only drawn by Mexico’s progressive politics, but by the hope of personal (even spiritual) rejuvenation (Limón 1998, Walsh 1992). Her experiences in Mexico inspired a collection of short stories that were critically acclaimed and widely read in the U.S. Hacienda (1930) in particular reveals Porter’s astute observations about the lack of progress
portions of the country were experiencing (Porter 1930). In contrast to her earlier stories, in which she picturesquely portrays Indigenous Mexicans, *Hacienda* represents a form of social protest, and betrays her “disillusionment with what initially had seemed a very promising nationalist movement” (Alarcón 1997, 63).

In contrast to Porter’s later work, D.H. Lawrence’s *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) reduces Mexico to exotic scenery for the author/protagonist’s adventure (Lawrence 1926, Alarcón 1997). Lawrence’s distillation of Mexico down to merely an exotic landscape existing in some mythical time does violence to Mexicans. As Alarcón argues, “in trying to preserve some imagined remnant of the premodern, these writers condemn Mexicans to a past without the benefits and amenities that they take for granted. Like the tourist, they want a nostalgic, backward Mexico to be available to them at all times” (1997, 70). As problematic as their depictions of the picturesque Indian may be, these writers contributed to a greater appreciation of Mexican culture (though reduced to descriptors such as “simple”, “aesthetically rich” and “traditional”) in the American public (Delpar 1992). Travelers who followed these writings “wished to peer at ancient monuments and the works of contemporary muralists and to imbibe the atmosphere of authenticity and harmony that pervaded Mexico’s Indian communities” (Delpar 1992, 56).

These early visitors to the post-Revolutionary nation were propelled by a disenchantment with their own country, which led them to seek out “authenticity” south of the border. They coveted what they viewed as Mexico’s “authentically national mode of art” (Delpar 1992, 125). From folk art, “the product of humble hands and not of machines [which] reflected the heritage and genius of an artistically gifted people,” or “Mexico’s modern masters, whether painting walls or canvases,” they drew on
“preconquest and traditional sources to create works that proclaimed their Mexicanness with an immediacy and authenticity that excited critics and viewers alike” (Delpar 1992, 164).

In the anti-communist era of the late 1940s and 1950s a wave of blacklisted U.S. writers, artists, and, filmmakers, along with others in the entertainment industry expatriated to Mexico (Schreiber 2008). Again during the Vietnam War of the 1970s large numbers of U.S. citizens relocated to Mexico. These expatriates included U.S. academics, hippies, and missionaries (Palma Mora 2010, Rodríguez 2010).

Though foreigners have been making homes in Mexico since before the revolution (Delpar 1992, Hart 2002), NAFTA coincides with a dramatic increase in North Americans moving to Mexico. The total U.S. born population in Mexico in 1990 was 198,240 (24,140 in Jalisco), while in 2000 there were 358,614 U.S. born residents, 41,764 of which reside in Jalisco (Dixon, Murray, and Gelatt 2006, 29).

Today U.S. and Canadian residents migrate to Mexico for a variety of reasons, most of which link to the motivations of their historical counterparts. The migrations south of the border are motivated by political disenchantment (Croucher 2009), economics (Kiy and McEnany 2010), and desire for adventure (Bloom 2006). Bloom contends that Mexico is a prime destination for Americans, whom he observes, “are particularly susceptible to exotic longings” due to an increasingly homogenous national culture (2006, 6). These longings manifest not only in vacations across the border, but relocations as well. Pulls across the border have ranged from politically interested writers and artists (Alarcón 1997, Bloom 2006, Schrieber 2008, Walsh 1992), to beatniks searching for a more bohemian lifestyle (Gunn 2006), to retirees who see Mexico as a
way to live out their days in luxury (Croucher 2009, Cohan 2001, Golson 2008, Nelson 2005). Sheila Croucher labels this last group “migrants of privilege” (2009). These migrants of privilege include lifestyle migrants, and are part of an increasingly popular movement in Latin America, and Mexico in particular. In Mexico, Jalisco has a particularly prominent concentration of North American migrants. David Truly notes “the state of Jalisco is reportedly home to the greatest concentration of North American retirees living outside their home country” (2006, 169). North American lifestyle migrants describe “leaving a culture of stress and consumption in the United States for one that is more laid-back and loving, and less materialistic” (Croucher 2009, 63).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LA MANZANILLA

Within the larger history of tourism development in Mexico, La Manzanilla has a relatively brief history that includes a particular set of circumstances that have shaped its development. That history of circumstances includes a range of different influences that have directed infrastructural development as well as the development of what we may call the character of the town. La Manzanilla has developed, for instance, in ways that have brought tourists and lifestyle migrants, but have kept it from becoming a large scale tourist resort town.

La Manzanilla is a coastal Mexican town in the state of Jalisco. The ecosystem is designated as tropical dry forest, which is characterized by more than 50% deciduous trees, an average annual temperature greater than 25 degrees Celsius, and annual precipitation (falling predominantly in the summer months May-October) of between 200 and 700 mm (Sánchez-Azofeifa et al. 2008). In Mexico, tropical dry forests predominate
in the Yucatan peninsula and are diffusely distributed along the Pacific coast where La Manzanilla is located (ibid.).

The community originated when on April 10, 1936 the group of campesinos who lived and worked in the area requested the land, and the formation of the ejido from the government.\footnote{15 (Doc.#1887 Registro Agrario Nacional) The hacienda had 9450 hectares at that time.} The community was established when the ejido was officially founded in February 1938 during the Cárdenas administration, a time in which 18,352,275 hectares of land were nationally distributed among 1,020,594 citizens (Krauze 1997, 469). Fifty-four original ejidatarios established the community of La Manzanilla del Mar according to the 1936 census.

Many residents, including one of the original surviving ejidatarios, told me their version of the history of the founding of the ejido. En route to a meeting to establish the legal rights of the ejido to the land, the former hacienda owner orchestrated an ambush and the campesinos were massacred, leaving only a few survivors.\footnote{16 It reads, “El 6 de Febrero de 1938, por decreto presidencial, quedo legalmente constituido el ejido La Manzanilla, fruto de la sangre derramada de los compañeros” (On the 6th of February 1938, by presidential decree, the ejido of La Manzanilla was legally formed, fruit of the blood shed by our companions) & lists the names of the 7 people killed on June 7, 1937.} The survivors went on to establish the ejido, and this history is memorialized on a plaque in front of the ejido office,\footnote{17} and has been mythologized by both local and foreign community residents, referenced as a source of pride.

Infrastructural development and services materialized gradually in La Manzanilla. After the ejido was established the initial population of La Manzanilla was 121
community members. At that time the local economy consisted primarily of coconut oil harvesting and fishing. Transportation was limited at that time, however when travel to neighboring communities was necessary, transportation was possible by foot, horse, or by boat. In 1946 The Catholic church was established and a priest came from the neighboring inland community of Cihuatlán to reside in La Manzanilla. 1946 also saw the establishment of the primaria which was constructed for the elementary education of local children. In 1952 the Centro de Salud was erected and staffed by a recent medical school graduate fulfilling rural community service obligations. In 1967 electricity was made available in the community. Almost twenty-five years later, in 1975, telephone service arrived in La Manzanilla. In 1989 the telesecundaria (a distance learning type of secondary school) was established. This was a valuable resource for families that could not afford to send their children to larger neighboring communities for secondary school. By 2014, work on a fully functioning secondary school was underway in La Manzanilla, including instructors (rather than the distance learning operating in the telesecundaria since 1989).

The population of 1,305 swells to an estimated 1,700 residents during the high season in the winter months from November to May when U.S. and Canadian seasonal residents flood the town (INEGI Censo 2010). Many residents in La Manzanilla today correlate the rise in the presence of these lifestyle migrants with a natural disaster that struck the town in the mid-nineties. In 1995 a tsunami devastated the community. On October 9, 1995 an 8.0 earthquake hit offshore of the Pacific coasts of Jalisco and Colima. It caused extensive damage, 40 deaths, and over 100 injuries surrounding the

18 (Doc.#1887 Registro Agrario Nacional)
community of La Manzanilla. It was felt strongly as far as Mexico City. The earthquake caused a tsunami affecting approximately 200 meters of coastline in and surrounding La Manzanilla (1997, 85). La Manzanilla, on the southern end of Tenacatita Bay, was flooded over 2 meters in most areas (1997, 87). The main street that runs parallel to the beach, and the town square, or jardín, were all submerged, as the water did not stop until it hit the steep upward incline 200 meters inland.

Local residents and family members who were living in the U.S. at the time describe the tsunami as a turning point in the community. They say after the tsunami, foreigners started buying land and moving in. Local Mexican resident Miguel recalled that “the tsunami in 1995 marks the beginning of the development in La Manzanilla, when people started buying land and took a look at us. It’s when TV came and people saw us for the first time and were interested” (Interview 7/15/13). “After the tsunami you have the second wave of gringo development,” a lifestyle migrant resident explained to me, “that’s when things changed, from that point on” (Interview 7/30/13). I spoke with several residents who were in La Manzanilla during the tsunami about their experiences during and after the event.

Residents described a common response pattern among community members after the devastating event, recalling that people didn’t want to return to town for fear of another tsunami. The tsunami and the community reaction to the event were significant, because they opened the door to foreign investors and residents, and ultimately shifted

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the sociogeographical residential pattern in the community to the current layout. The current layout locates foreign home “owners” on the beach and on the hills to the east and south of town, with a predominantly local Mexican residence pattern among the flatland neighborhoods in the center, to the south, and to the east of town. After the tsunami, many people sold their beach-front lots because they no longer felt safe living there. Foreign residents and investors took advantage of the opportunity to acquire beach-front property, even though they were not able to purchase titles to the land (this issue is discussed in greater detail later in this section).

When asking around town about tsunami stories, I was referred to two specific residents, Hannah and Carlos, time after time. They were suggested to speak about the tsunami not only because of their unique vantage points of the event, but also because when geologists came to research the tsunami they spoke with Carlos and Hannah, and their experiences are referenced in an academic publication on the event (see footnote 19). This “expert testimony” to the scientific community has imbued Carlos and Hannah with an official tsunami witness status and residents have come to refer to these two individuals as experts on the tsunami.

Foreign resident Hannah watched the tsunami from her balcony on the south end of the bay. She explained to me that she was hosting guests in her home, which includes her house and several apartments that she rents to vacationers (Interview 3/19/13). As they took in the view and ate breakfast on the balcony they watched as the water

20 There are of course exceptions to this pattern.
dramatically receded and then flooded the town. Her perspective on the tsunami is continually referenced due to her unique vantage point for the event.

Local *ejidatario* and environmentalist Carlos also had a unique view of the tsunami, and was even remarkably able to capture photos of the event. He describes seeing the ocean water recede, and quickly grabbing his camera to document the event. His home was and is still on the south side of the *jardín* (the center of town) by the church. He stepped out of his house and looked to the left where he saw the ocean waters dramatically recede, and then surge back into the town. He photographed the event as residents ran for higher ground, and as trucks and debris were pushed up to 200 meters inland.

One of the first stories I heard about the tsunami during my first preliminary field research trip was from Sophia, a resident who has since passed away. At the time the tsunami hit, foreign resident Sophia had just moved to La Manzanilla from Germany. She had moved with her two young daughters and her French partner. She and her partner split soon after relocating to the community, and Sophia found herself living in La Manzanilla as a single mother that, at that time, did not speak Spanish. When the tsunami hit, her daughters were at school, so when the shaking stopped, in the midst of flooding and chaos, she made her way to the school to find them. She was eventually reunited with her kids, and they made their way with the rest of the town to the *fútbol* fields, where the majority of community members lived for the next several months while the damage in town was repaired. The community received food and supply aid, and eventually people were able to return to their homes.
The 1995 tsunami marks a dramatic shift in the development of La Manzanilla. Beachfront land that was desirable to foreign lifestyle migrants was now available. However, because La Manzanilla lies in the federal restricted zone—within 31 miles (50 kilometers) of the coast line—foreigners are not allowed to purchase Mexican property there. Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 declared all land, mineral, and water rights as the right of Mexican citizens, and bestowed authority to the Mexican government to expropriate land from large landholders and redistribute it to agrarian communities (Kelly 1994, 542). The 1992 amendments to Article 27 of the Mexican constitution opened the door to private corporate development of previously state-owned, ejido land (Preston and Dillon 2004, Harvey 2005, Gerritsen 2008). While independent lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla are not able to circumvent this constitutional article, foreign residents may purchase land and build homes with an intermediary prestanombre (Kelley 2009). Prestanombre refers to both the person and practice lifestyle migrants commonly use to build homes in La Manzanilla. This practice begins by connecting with a local Mexican resident who may sell the prospective home builder a lot while still retaining the ownership papers. This may be a simple business transaction, but many of the lifestyle migrants I spoke with described their prestanombre as their initial connection to local community life, as a friend, and even as an extended family member. Another land purchase option for foreigners is a fideicomiso, a bank trust in which a Mexican bank holds the title as the trustee and the foreign buyer is the beneficiary with all the rights and privileges of ownership. This involves a legal process to convert ejido land into titled land. Titled land is worth more and can be taxed, which makes it appealing to
the municipal government (Kelley 2009). Some residents have begun the long process of titling land, however it is not yet widespread in the community.

A lifestyle migrant described the distinction between *prestanombre* and *fideicomiso* to me one night in terms of trust. He explained that he saw the distinction as a question of who he trusted more, a local community member, or the bank. The choice for him was a local community member without hesitation. This practice complicates power dynamics in town. On the one hand, the lifestyle migrant typically arrives with more financial capital than their local Mexican counterpart. On the other hand, the *prestanombre* is the legal owner of the property. Recent developments have demonstrated the law is beholden to economic power. A significant practical outcome of “selling” land to lifestyle migrants is that land, as a resource for the next generation, is considerably diminished. This significant shift will re-enter the conversation in discussions of youth economic strategies and sustainability in the following chapters.

Several noteworthy infrastructural developments occurred in the years following the tsunami and influx of lifestyle migrants. In 1997 a regular trash collection service was established in La Manzanilla, which began when the community acquired their first garbage truck. From an environmental standpoint this is significant because it is the first substantial step toward ending the common practice of trash burning- which continues today on a much smaller scale, despite daily garbage collection, and the efforts of environmental educators. Just over ten years later, in 2008, the cellular tower was erected. Today it is rare to encounter a La Manzanilla resident that does not have a cellular phone.
Though the town is still referred to as a fishing village in tourism literature, and there is an active fishing cooperative, fishing no longer plays a key role in the community’s economy. Community members fish primarily for their own use, or sell fish only to local restaurants. Beachfront restaurants and shops remain viable sources of employment from a steady stream of national tourists, who bolster the economy during the winter and spring holidays. This national tourism contributes to the local economy; however employment of many Mexican residents (both in the formal and informal sectors), particularly in construction and service positions, is tied to foreign residents. Some construction work is sustained outside of the lifestyle migrant dependent economy, such as in the case of a research participant who runs a business constructing palapa roofs, which need to be replaced every several years. However, even his business is significantly bolstered by lifestyle migrants, as more houses mean more palapa roofs. Many residents are employed in both the formal and informal sectors of the local economy. There is also a notable gendered division of labor. While many women in La Manzanilla are employed, they generally work in the service industry or cleaning houses, while men dominate the construction industry. Men are also often employed as gardeners, and will supplement their income with fishing and small-scale farming and fruit tree harvests. Women often supplement their household income selling desserts and tamales evenings in the jardín. While this economic shift was described favorably among some of the local residents I spoke with, many complain of struggling through the low season without employment opportunities tied to the influx of winter residents and tourists. Studies of lifestyle migration destinations, including my own findings, have shown that these new sources of employment are not always sustainable, and this type of shift can
ultimately have devastating consequences such as the displacement of local residents (McWatters 2009, Myers 2009, Hayes 2015a). The exodus of foreign residents has also led to economic devastation in these destinations (McWatters 2009, Myers 2009). The majority of businesses in town are owned by Mexican locals, but there are a growing number of lifestyle migrant-owned establishments. Lifestyle migrant-owned businesses predominantly cater to lifestyle migrant tastes, including a few restaurants offering Italian, American bar & grill, and casual fine dining. There are also a few lifestyle migrant-operated small businesses producing and selling luxury items such as local organic coconut oil and related products, and roasting and selling organic coffee, and teaching yoga classes.

La Manzanilla, unlike Melaque and Barra de Navidad to the south, is part of La Huerta municipality. This municipality includes La Manzanilla and the stretch of coast to the north, as well as a substantial section of interior land where a variety of crops are cultivated and cattle are raised. Principle economic activities in the area include the cultivation of corn, rice, chile, and avocados, as well as watermelon, papaya, mango, and tamarind (Consejo Estatal de Población). Beaches from El Tamarindo in the south to Careyes in the north bring tourism to the municipality, and fishing and diving for shrimp, octopus, Red Snapper, Dorado, Barred Pargo, lobster, oysters and Sea Urchin is a significant economic activity within the coastal areas of the municipality (ibid). While economic activities in the surrounding area include banana and mango production, cattle and pig raising/farming, and fishing- in La Manzanilla these activities are not practiced on a large scale, and primarily supplement family, extended family, and sometimes community subsistence.
COSTA ALEGRE

While Jalisco is home to Lake Chapala, one of the most densely populated lifestyle migrant areas, smaller coastal communities like La Manzanilla are becoming increasingly populated by such migrants. The southern Jalisco coast, called the Costa Alegre (sometimes spelled Costalegre) is experiencing a transition as much of the beach-front land is being privatized for luxury resort development (El Tamarindo, Tenacatita, Los Angeles Locos [Blue Bay resort], Careyes and Chamela are now all privatized). The LA Times reports that this area is on the verge of major changes, both from transnational migrations, and internal policy changes happening from within the Mexican government. This stretch of coast, Richard Fausset writes, is “bracing for more than $1 billion in new resort projects, including residential subdivisions and condo towers” (October 7, 2013). The Costa Alegre stretches between Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, and Manzanillo, Colima. It has been described by travel writers alternately as “blissfully underdeveloped” and with words like “luxury” and “decadence” (Chaplin 2016).

Immediately to the south of La Manzanilla is El Tamarindo, an exclusive resort including a golf course, a private dock, and vacation homes of the rich and famous. El Tamarindo has changed hands over the past several years, most recent owned by an investment group, Grupo Plan, which claims to cater to the “international traveler seeking uncommon destinations, extraordinary accommodation, and attention to the social and environmental needs of the region”. This statement does not merely serve as

21 The 1992 amendments to Article 27 of the Mexican constitution opened the door to private corporate development of previously state-owned, collective plots of farmland, or ejidos (Preston and Dillon 2004, Harvey 2005, Gerritsen 2008).
22 Grupo Plan was started by ex-Banamex president Roberto Hernandez (#828 on forbes.com list of the world’s billionaires, March 2010) in 1992.
appealing marketing, but responds to the particular environmental concerns about
development in this area.

Farther south are the coastal communities San Patricio Melaque and Barra de
Navidad. These communities are characterized by La Manzanilla residents as “different”
and having qualities that attract different foreign residents. Seasonal Canadian lifestyle
migrants Betty and Walter, for example, who spent 10 years as winter residents of
Melaque and Barra de Navidad before moving to La Manzanilla, describe the differences
in terms of the “feel” of each town. In La Manzanilla, Betty explains, it “feels different-
the people are different, it’s sort of artsy, I like the beach, it’s cleaner. It’s just a feeling. I
just like it better” (Interview 3/4/13). Walter adds that there is “too much hustle and
bustle in Melaque” (Interview 3/4/13). Melaque is slightly larger than La Manzanilla with
over 7000 residents, and has a bank and ATM, which makes it a location that residents of
the smaller community frequent for the necessity of retrieving cash. They also have a
slightly larger selection of consumer goods, attracting local and foreign La Manzanilla
residents who don’t have vehicles (the local bus runs throughout the day, every day) and
memberships to bulk stores like Sam’s Club (in Manzanillo) and Costco (in Puerto
Vallarta). Residents of Melaque have described the foreign community in La Manzanilla
as sometimes pretentious, Americans and Canadians who spend the time attending art
gallery openings, while foreign residents of La Manzanilla have described those of
Melaque as being primarily Canadians, who most often pass the time imbibing. Melaque
also attracts young Mexican La Manzanilla residents, due to the option of clubs that play
dance music and are open until the early morning hours. Barra de Navidad is also slightly
larger than La Manzanilla with approximately 5000 residents, and has historically
attracted more tourists than La Manzanilla or Melaque, until a storm several years ago destroyed the beach. While the tourism economy has declined in the last several years, there is still a notable lifestyle migrant presence in the community. This group of lifestyle migrants can be characterized as younger, and are often attracted to the community because of the surfing opportunities generally not afforded in La Manzanilla because of the calm waters in the Tenacatita Bay.

To the north of La Manzanilla is Tenacatita, which was subjected to a hostile takeover by elite resort developers in August, 2010. Tenacatita is the name of both the bay and the beach town where many residents of the community of Rebalsito, immediately inland from Tenacatita, ran businesses, and where some also lived. On August 4, 2010 state auxiliary police carried out the eviction of Tenacatita residents and business owners under the orders of a Guadalajara developer who claims to be the legal owner of this strip of beach, and whose goal is to develop Tenacatita into a luxury tourism destination on the Costalegre. During my fieldwork lifestyle migrant and Mexican residents of La Manzanilla referred me to an activist named Dora, a lifestyle migrant and now Mexican citizen who was organizing the community effort to retake their beach. She immediately responded to the takeover by organizing monetary donations to buy food and supplies for evicted residents and business owners, and later participated in the legal efforts to reclaim the land. She described what took place in the early morning hours of August 4, 2010. At around 4 a.m. armed men arrived and went door to door evicting people, they “had guns and gave people five minutes to get their stuff and go” (Interview 7/11/13). She described the violence and destruction of property.

23 42 acres (16.99 hectares), included in the Rebalse de Apazulco ejido
that took place during the eviction, resulting in “everybody losing everything- their livelihood, their homes. And that was it. And then they put up these fences and gate” (Interview 7/11/13). The beach was re-opened to the public in June 2013, but businesses and home owners were not allowed to return and rebuild, “so it’s like the beach is open,” Dora explained, “but it’s not really open” (Interview 7/11/13). Tenacatita is currently uninhabited and hosting two separate sets of guards; one set to ensure the public has daily access to the beach, the other to ensure that the public stay within a strictly delineated area of the beach, and that no businesses return to the locations they previously occupied on the beach. While the governor intervened to open the beach to public use, residents and business owners are still prohibited from reconstructing and returning to the beach. The court case with Guadalajara businessman, José María Andrés Villalobos, continues.24 Villalobos claims that his corporation is “going to make this a place that the country deserves,” and “elevate the name of Jalisco” by developing luxury tourism destinations using Careyes as a model (Guadalajara Reporter Aug. 27, 2010, La Jornada June 21, 2011). He has argued that the development would create jobs for locals and enhance quality of life with improvements such as a water treatment plant (ibid). Meanwhile, former Tenacatita business owners have set up shop in La Manzanilla.25

Careyes, north of Tenacatita and south of Puerto Vallarta, was established as a luxury destination by Gian Franco Brignone, an Italian oil mogul and artist who built his mansion-sized vacation home in 1973 when the Manzanillo international airport opened.

24 On cars and trucks in La Manzanilla in the summer of 2011 I saw for the first time the yellow bumper sticker, “NO a la privatización de Tenacatita”.

25 Including fishermen, divers, restaurant owners, tour guides, and shop owners.
and in 1976 built the luxury El Careyes beach resort. He started selling land to other mostly European elites for their own vacation homes in an area that offered a secluded paradisiacal setting. Careyes, like Acapulco in its heyday, continues to cater to the international jet set with Brignone’s son, Giorgio, now running the Careyes real estate operation and polo club (NY Times March 11, 2005). Nearby in Chamela, an airstrip and the beginnings of an international airport lie in limbo. Their completion would facilitate the arrival of elite tourists Chamela developers hope to attract, as well as ease transportation for the jetsetters with vacation homes in nearby Careyes.

Neighboring these development sites, the Chamela-Cuixmala Biosphere Reserve is a tropical dry forest reserve that protects 13,142 hectares of forests and marshes in the La Huerta Municipality (Sánchez-Azofeifa et al. 2009).26 The reserve is privately owned and includes a UNAM biological research station, established in 1971. In 1988 the Ecological Foundation of Cuixmala was established, and in 2006 the reserve was designated an UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (www.unesco.org). Environmental scholars have determined that the efforts at the reserve have effectively protected the area thus far, but have been less successful at promoting regional conservation and sustainable development (Sánchez-Azofeifa et al. 2009). They suggest training residents of surrounding ejidos in alternative ecosystem management strategies to conserve resources rather than use land for agriculture or pasture, or selling properties for tourism development.27

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26 La Manzanilla is also is the La Huerta municipality.
27 Twenty-seven ejidos border the reserve, comprising 70% of the proximate area, and the remaining land is divided between tourist developments and private properties (Sánchez-
Two luxury tourism development projects, Tambora and Careyitos, are described by developers as luxury “eco-resorts”. Developers claim they will engage in conservation practices that will offset negative environmental impacts, but despite these environment-friendly claims, the development projects have met with protest by those who consider this “eco-development” a threat to the reserve. Protesters include the Goldsmith family and the scholars and researchers that comprise the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation. Sir James Goldsmith, who purchased land from his then friend Gian Franco Brignone, donated much of the land that comprises the reserve, and his heirs are some of the harshest critics of proposed development. More than 700 members of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation appealed to the Mexican government to halt tourism development in the area. The Association released the Morelia Declaration in July 2007 advocating for the protection of the tropical dry forests in Jalisco. The deputy director for environmental protection at SEMARNAT (Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales) has evaluated the new development impact information offered by scientists (Barclay 2007). Environmental group Greenvest.org is advocating a coalition of government authorities, academic institutions and civil

Azofeifa et al. 2009). This cooperative project would be called “Red de Areas Ejidales Protegidas” (Ejidos’ protected area network) (ibid.).

Tambora would include a hotel, residential lots and golf course encompassing 1,684 acres. The 634 acre Careyitos would begin less than a mile from the reserve, and would include a hotel, villas and residential properties.

In the declaration they argue that “a technical panel of scientific researchers from four institutes of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the Instituto de Biología, Instituto de Ecología, Centro de Investigaciones en Ecosistemas, and Instituto de Geografía, conducted a detailed analysis of the Environmental Impact Assessment reports (EIAs) of these two tourist developments, and concluded that they lacked scientific and technical rigor” (www.tropicalbio.org).
organizations to battle this tourism development (www.greenvest.org). I discuss the development of Careyes and Chamela in more detail in Chapter 3.

**LA MANZANILLA IN THE BIG PICTURE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

La Manzanilla is in some ways representative and in some ways divergent from the history of tourism development in Mexico. In some ways it follows the pattern of foreign influence and capital playing a privileged role in development. It also both benefits from and is beholden to some key tourism imaginaries about Mexico, particularly coastal Mexico, and the idea of “tropical paradise”. Characterization as both a quiet little Mexican beach town, and an enclave of artists and expats distinguishes La Manzanilla from neighboring communities. A combination of historical circumstances, geographic situation, variety of residents, and imaginaries about authenticity and the environment have so far prevented the development of the town as a large-scale tourist resort destination. The tsunami in 1995 was a natural disaster that disrupted the residential patterns of the community, and combined with transnational political and economic transformations, opened the door to a wave of foreign property investment. Unlike in neighboring areas of the Costalegre, this property investment was made by primarily Americans and Canadians looking to build homes to live in the community. This combination of circumstance, environment, and influence have produced a unique form of tourism development, and fostered conflicting ideas about how to best ensure the town’s future sustainability.
CHAPTER 2 The Next Generation: Cosmopolitan Spaces, Places, and Identities

What people make of their places is closely connected to what they make of themselves as members of society and inhabitants of the earth, and while the two activities may be separable in principle, they are deeply joined in practice (Keith Basso 1996, 7).

In the late mornings after the yoga classes let out I would often encounter lifestyle migrants in an open air café situated on the jardín across from the church. They referred to Caffé del Mar as the La Manzanilla Starbucks, and would sit and drink cappuccinos and lattes and socialize at length, while groups of café goers would grow and shift as friends filtered in. The proprietor, local Mexican resident David, exemplifies the successful youth entrepreneur capitalizing on lifestyle migrant and local imaginaries in La Manzanilla. David’s family runs one of the hardware shops in town. He opened the café after returning from Guadalajara where he attended school and was trained in the culinary arts. When the café opened, David offered a full breakfast menu in addition to pastries he ordered from young lifestyle migrant, baker, and entrepreneur, Emma (who now co-runs a restaurant popular among lifestyle migrants). Emma made the kind of pastries lifestyle migrants would be accustomed to seeing in U.S. coffee shops; huge cinnamon rolls, blueberry and bran muffins. The café was also open in the evenings as a bar, and David had a newly invented cocktail menu at the time of my fieldwork. On the occasion of a big fútbol game or boxing match, he would bring in a big screen television and the café would transform dramatically. On these evenings the café was predominantly filled with local Mexican men, crowded around the small tables, at the bar, and standing, drinking Coronas or Estrellas.

The way I’ve described it here, the café has two faces- as a daytime Starbucks and an evening botanaro or sports bar; as a place frequented by foreign (predominantly older)
lifestyle migrants during the day, and local Mexican (predominantly) men at night. The reality of the café, and the habits and patterns of its clientele, like much of the daily patterns of life in La Manzanilla, cannot be broken down into such easy binaries. But this daytime/nighttime picture of café activities does shed some light onto the spectrum of practices and tastes that are increasingly blurred to contribute to the always emerging character of the town, including imaginaries of cosmopolitanism and sustainability.

The residents invested in La Manzanilla’s development are not easily placed in separate categories. Classifications such as local youth entrepreneurs, lifestyle migrants, artist entrepreneurs, and nonprofit founders and participants do not contain the experience and aspirations of many residents. Whether considered local or foreign, mobile or immobile, mono or multilingual, I suggest that these La Manzanilla residents may all be described as cosmopolitan, and that the developing cosmopolitan identity of the place is intertwined with the cosmopolitan identity of the residents. The presence of lifestyle migrants has provided the younger generation new opportunities through nonprofit educational projects and a new consumer market, and they have also provided new challenges, such as a rise in the cost of living. In this chapter I introduce a series of residents and projects involved with community development. I discuss various meanings of cosmopolitanism, and the relationship between understandings of cosmopolitanism and entrepreneurial initiatives in La Manzanilla. I also discuss the relationship between nonprofit projects and youth participation in community development.

“LOCALS”, NONPROFITS, AND THE ARTIST COMMUNITY

Late one morning at Caffé del Mar I met with Mia for an interview. For the first nine months of fieldwork, Mia was my landlord. I was renting the house that she grew up
in with her mother and sister. Mia was born in Germany and grew up in La Manzanilla. Her mother moved her and her sister to the town just two months before the ’95 tsunami when she was six years old. Mia now speaks German, Spanish, and English fluently, but when she arrived and entered primary school she only spoke German. She remembers that there were not as many foreigners in town then, tourists came primarily during *semana santa*, and most of the buildings and houses had palapa roofs. By the time she started *preparatoria* (high school) (commuting to another town because La Manzanilla does not have a high school), Mia, like many teenagers, felt the constraints of living in a very small town. She described feeling a, “lack of culture, lack of options, and lack of whatever there was” (Interview 7/26/13). Mia started taking dance lessons in the nearby, slightly bigger, and more tourist town of Barra de Navidad, which she felt “opened up a little bit my world” (Interview 7/26/13).

I questioned her about what it meant to be identified as a local. My assumption was that even though she had foreign parentage and had been born in another country, growing up from the age of six, attending school, speaking fluent Spanish, and having formative social networks exclusive to La Manzanilla would qualify her as a local. She corrected me, and defined being accepted as truly local in terms of tracing family roots back to the original founding families of the town. She said even her son, being born and raised in town and having a Mexican national father, would not be accepted as entirely “local”. She used another member of her age group as an example, a young woman with a U.S. lifestyle migrant father and a Mexican mother. In this example she elaborated on what identified her as outside the definition of “local,” venturing beyond familial ties to include behavior. “She’s a part of the community but she’s not of them,” she explained,
“people don’t see her as a local, she doesn’t act like a local” (Interview 7/26/13). This idea of being in the community but not of it echoes lifestyle migrant Mazzie’s sentiment (in Chapter 5) about her own history of rootlessness and position on the fringe of the community.

As a teenager Mia left to attend university in Guadalajara. One semester away from graduating with a degree in dance she returned to La Manzanilla, after her mother’s untimely death, to run Sophia’s property management and rental business. This return also coincided with the birth of her first child with her partner Rafael, who she met at school in Guadalajara. Although running a realty/property management business in the small beach town where she grew up was an unexpected turn of events, Mia and Rafael are making an impact in La Manzanilla in a number of realms of community life. Mia has been a teacher at the nonprofit gym, offering children’s dance classes. Rafael has applied his art degree to both creating and teaching art in La Manzanilla. He taught an art history class for scholarship students at La Catalina Educational Foundation, and guided them in designing and creating a mural on the new building set to house a computer lab and library. I attended an exhibition of Rafael’s art at Artis Lounge in February 2013, and in January 2016 he had an exhibition at the other local art gallery, Galeria La Manzanilla.

Throughout this interview and more generally in my time living in La Manzanilla, Mia expressed mixed feelings about the changes to the town since she was a kid. With her understanding of the strict parameters of locality, I wanted to find out how she saw lifestyle migrants fitting into the community. Mia offered a comparison with tourists, describing lifestyle migrants generally as more a part of the community than tourists, “because they are known, and they are doing stuff for and with the community”
(Interview 7/26/13). She added, “many people appreciate it. Some don’t” (Interview 7/26/13). Her elaboration on this point highlighted the economic opportunities and inequalities associated with the lifestyle migrant population.

Although I had not identified the pattern yet myself at this point in field research, she pointed to her own experience and that of the scholarship students Rafael worked with as examples of the benefits of leaving and returning with broader education and skills. “My generation,” she explained, “they have all come back. They go study, or go work, and come back” (Interview 7/26/13). She saw La Catalina scholarship recipients as hopefully contributing to the sustainability of the community, contending, “if they’re getting away, they’re probably going to come back with more knowledge” (Interview 7/26/13).

La Catalina Foundation is a Mexican nonprofit started by a couple who, while visiting from Mexico City in 2003, envisioned La Manzanilla as potentially the first truly bilingual town in Mexico. During my fieldwork in 2013 the foundation provided free English classes in all levels of public school, as well as free evening adult English classes. Today La Catalina offers a range of free programs including English classes for kids and adults, art classes for kids, weekly afterschool classes for scholarship recipients, community computer classes, and a Rural Literacy Program library. Classes are often taught by lifestyle migrants, like Mary, an early retiree lifestyle migrant from British Columbia, who has a background in education and volunteers as a teacher at the local primary and secondary schools through the foundation. Her partner Martin described volunteering as the duty of lifestyle migrants, explaining, “If you’re going to come here
and be given this gift, you have to share, you have to give back, you have to help the community, you have to help these people” (Interview 2/28/13).

The foundation describes their mission to “offer educational and professional development programs aimed at raising the overall literacy level of this Mexican community, so that they may have a more prosperous future in a changing time and economy” (lacatalinafoundation.com). They proceed to describe their rationale for this mission; “tourism is increasingly economic base of the Costa Alegre region and this has led community members to search out improved educational opportunities (especially for learning English) so they are better able to take advantage of the tourist economy” (ibid.). They also provide scholarships funding educational expenses for the equivalent of middle school (secundaria), high school (preparatoria, in a nearby town), and university education. They have granted over 130 scholarships to date.

La Catalina Educational Foundation, describes what they view as the interdependence between sociocultural and economic sustainability on their webpage:

LCEF empowers the local people of La Manzanilla and Ingenios by providing educational and professional development programs. This is a vital component to the further development of the area as the majority of residents live in poor conditions and have little to no formal education; 90% of the area’s population works in service industries, such as house cleaning and construction; only 1/3 of the youth that start middle school go on to high school; and 1 in 20 children from the community receives a college degree. As the cost of living has drastically increased over the years, the community has increasingly sought out training and education that presents the opportunity for economic stability (lacatalinafoundation.com/who-are-we/).

The foundation, whose founders still visit La Manzanilla seasonally, acknowledges the economic significance of tourism and the economic impact of lifestyle migration in terms of increased cost of living. The focus on English language education reinforces the
foundation’s goal of equipping La Manzanilla youth with the skills they deem necessary to “take advantage of the tourist economy” (ibid.).

One humid afternoon in May 2013 I sat in on a Friday afternoon English class for the scholarship recipients in a small concrete building with a palapa roof next to the newly constructed computer lab, between the school and the arroyo. There was a 45 minute class for secundaria students, comprised of 7 boys and 2 girls (with 2 missing class), followed by a 45 minute class for preparatoria students, comprised of 6 boys and 6 girls (with 5 missing class that day). The secundaria class reflected the evening adult English classes I had attended, in the sense that the students seemed to be at various levels of English proficiency and generally less material was covered during the course of a class to accommodate this discrepancy. In contrast, the preparatoria students seemed to share a high level of English proficiency and were therefore able to cover a large amount of material in the short after-school class period. They started the class by introducing themselves and what they wanted to study at the university level, which included medicine and veterinary medicine in addition to tourism and hospitality. While the foundation expresses a goal of equipping La Manzanilla youth with English language skills in order to succeed in the tourist economy, scholarship recipients are envisioning economic futures both within and beyond those bounds.

Profits from the Helping Hands nonprofit bookstore contribute to the La Catalina Foundation Scholarship Fund. The bookstore is comprised entirely of donated books mostly in English, brought down in suitcases by seasonal lifestyle migrants. This nonprofit bookstore was founded in 2004 by a lifestyle migrant who retired from a retail business in California prior to moving to La Manzanilla. She envisioned the absence of a
local bookstore and the need to improve local educational opportunities would converge perfectly in the Helping Hands nonprofit bookstore. “I knew I was going to run out of books too quickly to be happy living here,” she told me, “and there were many other people in the same boat…and the money apart from the electricity and the rent could go to fund things in the community” (Interview 1/14/13).

During the high season I volunteered at the bookstore during the weekly Sunday evening shift. Fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, and some local art and crafts filled the shelves and tables in the small store front. Photos and bios of the current year’s scholarship recipients were displayed on the wall, and a small bulletin board advertised local services and a weekly themed cooking class taught by a lifestyle migrant resident chef. Local Mexican residents I knew would occasionally stop in to chat, but the majority of transactions I handled were purchases and donations from lifestyle migrants or international tourists. At the start and end of the high season the bookstore was inundated with new book and magazine donations seasonal lifestyle migrants had brought with them, or read during their stay and donated before their return north. I would also frequently observe a tourists (from the U.S. or Canada) browse and select a book at the beginning of their trip, and then donate it back to the store at the end of their stay.

The bookstore also raises money informally (via donation) for family and community needs that arise periodically. For example, when a local resident falls seriously ill and their family cannot afford the transportation and overnight stay in the Manzanillo hospital, located an hour south of La Manzanilla. Another example of informal community fundraising began when a coalition of local Mexican residents and lifestyle migrants started working toward acquiring a community ambulance. A lifestyle
migrant resident (who is technically a return migrant- born in Mexico and moved to California with her family as a child, and has now returned in her retirement years), participated in the ambulance initiative as well as the initiation of the community gym and wellness center.

After my weekly volunteer shifts at the bookstore I would often stop by the *Artis Lounge* bar and art gallery for a drink and chat with Sani. The Lounge is small, and Sani acted as owner and sole employee, serving beers and mixing cocktails like chocolate martinis and interesting drinks with fruit juice and Raicilla behind the short bar. During my field work in La Manzanilla I attended several gallery openings and a dance performance with live music at *The Artis Lounge*, which now also offers sushi. At a dance performance at the venue one February evening local resident Mia and a fellow dancer from Guadalajara performed an interpretive dance piece the two had composed. The performance was accompanied by a Saxophonist, originally from New Orleans, who had come for the night from his home in Colima (the city of the same name as the state immediately to the south of La Manzanilla).

The *Artis Lounge* was established by Sani, who inhabits another flexible category of resident with a particular vison of sustainability for the town. La Manzanilla has attracted a wave of people with particular utopic visions of the town as the potential site of artistic, ecological, and spiritual community. Those individuals I am categorizing within these parameters of visionary artist entrepreneurs are attracted to La Manzanilla in part because of what it is, and in part because of what it could be. There is some overlap with both lifestyle migrants and the Careyes/Chamela elites in this sense- that this place exists in some sense as a blank slate awaiting artistic direction to become animated in a
particular ideal vision. Like lifestyle migrants, these artists are enacting their visions slowly and from the ground up, more as grassroots initiatives than top-down exclusive development efforts.

Sani grew up in Mexico in the Lake Chapala area and lived as an adult in Chicago. During my fieldwork he lived in La Manzanilla during the high season and spent the low season summer months in Poland with his Polish wife and son. Sani is an artist and his work deals with themes of indigeneity, colonialism, and capitalism. I would also characterize Sani as an entrepreneur and visionary who has created several unique spaces in town that blur the boundaries between art, community, and business. He has a house in town next to a “treehouse” he has used as a studio space and rented to tourists. He rents the space that houses the *Artis Lounge*, where in addition to regular bar business and art exhibitions, he organizes and hosts events like the contemporary arts festival, incorporating dance and music performance, art, and food. One Saturday afternoon in May we found our way over to Sani’s land across the highway in Los Ingenios where he had invited us for a cookout. Los Ingenios is east of La Manzanilla, so the terrain is what I would describe as jungle (though it is technically tropical dry forest). Sani’s land has a small stream running through it that we easily crossed on foot as we made our way to the makeshift picnic/barbeque area that was quickly assembled for the cookout. There were several plastic and wooden tables, a few plastic chairs, and a circle of tree stumps serving as seats. Sani had a charcoal grill loaded with cooking meat, and people arranged their contributions of sides (salads, dips, ceviches, tostadas) on the tables and on coolers full of beer. Discarded coconut husks surrounded the area from where Sani and the workers and friends that helped with his building had taken breaks near the base structure of the
environmentally conscious clay house he was erecting. A neighbor’s cattle rested nearby
the picnic area where the small group of mostly younger couples and families assembled
for the cookout. Guests included the lifestyle migrant founder of environmental nonprofit
Tierralegre and his wife (originally from Mexico City) and toddler, the young Mexican
couple who ran an ecofriendly boutique hotel in Barra de Navidad, a local Los Ingenios
neighbor, several more young Mexican families, and a few other older lifestyle migrants.

Sani’s vision for this five hectares of land in Los Ingenios is an environmentally
focused art community. He is creating the place one step at a time, but eventually
envisions the space being used for artist residencies attracting artists and creators from all
over the world. The project blog, *La Semilla de Los Ingenios*, describes the vision Sani is
working to materialize:

Our Philosophy is to create an artistic community with a Cultural Center, a school
of knowledge temple, where religions and science become one. A place in which
technology and nature become one for all walks of life, for people to come to
learn or teach all the arts of the soul and nature (the ‘OM-KIN’)
(www.ingenios.mx/about/).

The blog describes the proposed layout of the “eco-community,” centered around a
cultural center, which, “will be built on the top hill with three step terraces forming a
natural architectural pyramid. The step terraces will be used as gardens for the
community” (www.ingenios.mx/about/). The project blog also includes a list of potential
benefits this artistic community would provide, including eco-tourism, workshops, events
and exhibitions, an organic food market, and “home shares with people from around the
world” (www.ingenios.mx/about/). There is a “donations” subheading where interested
participants and supporters of the proposed eco-community can provide financial
assistance, and an “opportunities” sub-heading, which includes possibilities for
individuals “passionate about science, the arts, sustainability and living off the grid,” to contribute ideas, plans, and money, or to gain experience through apprenticeships (ibid.). Sani’s vision involves the merging of certain imaginaries about the natural, spiritual, and sustainable relationship between humans and the environment, in which a community of diverse but equal members enact their creative visions in a lifestyle that fluidly merges with, supports, and is supported by the natural and cultural landscape. In some ways this vision complements youth initiatives attracting tourists and more cosmopolitan character to the area. In other ways this vision pre-supposes a blank slate on which, like the proposed cultural center, an entirely new idea of community may be constructed.

Alicia is another resident I consider an artist entrepreneur for the purposes of this discussion. Alicia and her family moved from Monterrey to the Costalegre to raise her two young daughters and make a living off of her art. They lived first in Melaque (the slightly larger town south of La Manzanilla) where she sold handmade jewelry and art in the jardín. They moved to La Manzanilla during the year of my fieldwork and I would see her selling her jewelry in the jardín and in front of the lifestyle migrant-run and patronized Café de Flore. The café was situated in what is referred to by English speakers as “the triangle” which directs traffic one way headed south around the jardín and north back onto the main road that parallels the beach. During my fieldwork the triangle housed a few shops, restaurants, the ejido office and public space, the Tierralegre office, the Helping Hands nonprofit bookstore, the Artis Lounge, and a property and rental management business. The outdoor space is manicured, includes two fountains, a memorial plaque to the founding ejido members, a temporary evening taco stand, and a temporary morning juice stand and sometimes used clothing vendor. Eventually Alicia
and her partner opened a shop in the triangle selling experimental recycled art and crafts, including clothing. The space is also a venue for (mostly art) classes. The classes are open to everyone, and depending on the class, may attract local kids and lifestyle migrants. A recent YouTube video made by a U.S. based tourist features a recycled paper making class, and shows Alicia demonstrating and assisting kids in turning discarded paper into new creations (2016). She explained her move to town was motivated by “a good lifestyle” and community in La Manzanilla, as well as a safer environment with more economic opportunities than in Monterrey (Interview translation from Spanish 9/25/13).

Sani and Alicia inhabit positions which resonate alternately with the categories of lifestyle migrant and local, while they do not entirely fit into either category. Their visions of La Manzanilla and the places and practices they have established coincide with lifestyle migrants who see the town as an artist community, and local conservationists and entrepreneurial youth who identify a link between cosmopolitan ideas and sustainability. Like many residents, they defy neat categorization into any of the categories readily available in tourism imaginaries. They challenge assumptions about distinctions between local and foreign, and the image and experience of the desired authentic provincial Mexican community. Their presence, practices, and plans contribute to a vision of the community as cosmopolitan.

A COSMOPOLITAN COMMUNITY

A variety of experiences, tastes, and ideologies which may be characterized as cosmopolitan are being identified by residents and visitors as a part of the community fabric in La Manzanilla. Residents from the younger generation see these cosmopolitan

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representations as favorable on a number of levels— from personal to professional— from, for example, youth feeling more accepted identifying as homo/bi/trans-sexual/gendered, to understanding that there is now a market of consumers for anything from art and espresso to holistic healing and ecoadventure. This developing cosmopolitanism is encouraging them to stay in town and build their futures around attracting and profiting from more “cosmopolitan” lifestyle migrants. Local youth Rosa comments,

I really think it’s becoming a community…Because of the difference of culture we’re having more progressive things now, like a community garden…it’s such a small town, yet we have 3 galleries, things like that. We have a language school, we have a multicultural center- things that in Melaque [a neighboring town] don’t exist (Interview 3/6/13).

The academic discussions surrounding cosmopolitanism seem to track the globalization debates. Scholars have argued for understanding cosmopolitanism as some sort of “global citizenship” (Beck 2006), indicating that nation states and borders are dissolving and no longer matter. This line of thinking echoes Thomas Friedman’s “flat world” globalization (2005). Sure it is flat and porous for the privileged, but borders, categories of identity and access, and mobility are strictly guarded, enforced, hard realities for much of the world. Stuart Hall points out the deficiencies in this reading of cosmopolitanism, stating “the reality of contemporary globalisation— interconnectedness— must be seen as, in fact, a structure of power, a structure of global power, and therefore of global or transnational inequalities and conflicts rather than the basis of a benign cosmopolitanism. The differences of power and resources override the interconnectedness” (2008, 346). He describes cosmopolitanism as “the latest phase capitalist modernity” and explains,
There is a ‘cosmopolitanism from the above’- global entrepreneurs following the pathways of global corporate power and the circuits of global investment and capital, who can’t tell which airport they’re in, because they all look the same, and who have apartments in three continents. This is a global cosmopolitanism of a very limited kind but it is very different from ‘cosmopolitanism from below’- people driven across borders, obliged to uproot themselves from home, place, and family... both of them are forms of globalisation and, in so far as they both interact within the same global sphere, are deeply interconnected with one another (Hall 2008, 346).

While I think Hall’s statements are incredibly valuable to combat flat readings of cosmopolitanism as global citizenship or empty readings of cosmopolitanism as business class traveler or jet setter- grounded interpretations of the meaning(s) of cosmopolitanism in daily experiences and practices in La Manzanilla complicate these two understandings. These readings of cosmopolitanism may interact and act as experiential nodes in the spectrum of lived experience for the diverse group of people that reside in La Manzanilla. In other words, these understandings as well as a range of variations on these understandings hit home for many of my research participants. However when both Mexican and lifestyle migrant research participants used the term “cosmopolitan” it was typically to describe a melding of various international, intercultural influences on the place. Their use reflected what Appadurai and Breckenridge describe as “cosmopolitan cultural forms” (1988). “As vehicles for cultural significance and the creation of group identities,” they suggest, “every society appears to bring to these forms their own special history and traditions, its own cultural stamp, its own quirks and idiosyncrasies” (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 5). Peggy Levitt breaks cosmopolitanism down into three primary conceptual and experiential realms; 1) ideas and values, 2) skills & practice, and 3) cosmopolitics (in other words, what would a cosmopolitan world actually look like?) (Levitt 2016). The first two realms are useful for considering meanings and
experiences associated with cosmopolitanism in La Manzanilla, and how, for example, ideas and values relate to skills and practices.

Tourism scholars have pointed out the romantic promise of mass tourism to break down national, class, and generational boundaries, and create “global communities” (Löfgren 1999, 269). This idealistic understanding of the potential of travel and tourism does not speak to the lived experience of individuals for which these boundaries and distinctions are significant limitations to mobility. Orvar Löfgren briefly notes the potential of tourism “turning locals into cosmopolitans” (ibid) which Noel Salazar explores more deeply in his ethnography of tour guides in Tanzania and Indonesia (2010).

Salazar acknowledges cosmopolitanism as a desirable form of cultural capital most notably acquired through the practice of international travel (2010, 79). He expands grounded, experiential understandings about how this “cosmopolitan capital” is achieved, noting that “physical mobility alone is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for cosmopolitanism” (Salazar 2010, 106 and 108). Those who most successfully acquire cosmopolitan capital are often those who “belong to more than one world, speak more than one language (literally and metaphorically), inhabit more than one identity, have more than one home” (Hall 1995, 206 in Salazar 2010, 108). For lifestyle migrants, cosmopolitanism may be seen as a commodity purchasable with residence in La Manzanilla. This cosmopolitanism may become a marker of status both among La Manzanilla residents (like themselves, or more locally established) as well as “back home” among those in the places they came from.
This type of cosmopolitanism may describe lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla (though not always), but it may be more aptly applied to the generation of youth that have grown up among them—a generation comprised of multiple national, ethnic, and familial affiliations. Examples range from resident youth with Mexican and U.S. or Canadian national parentage; who are bilingual; who may seamlessly navigate transition between various cultural groups—to those who may be seen as more traditionally local with Mexican national parentage and deep family roots in La Manzanilla; who are also bilingual; who may also navigate with ease between various cultural groups. These residents complicate traditional static understandings of locals and cosmopolitans. Rosa, who was raised in La Manzanilla by a Mexican mother and lifestyle migrant father, troubles static binary distinctions between host and guest. Many members of her extended family on her father’s side live or have lived in La Manzanilla. She received her primary schooling and foundational education in La Manzanilla, she frequently visited the U.S., she is bilingual, and in my experiences with her, seems to seamlessly navigate the various cultural realms in La Manzanilla that exist along spectrums of class and nationality. Now in her late twenties, Rosa reflected on growing up among other kids with parents from outside of Mexico, and on the changes in the town since her childhood, remarking,

Now all of that stuff is a part of the town. There’s a baseball team for crying out loud. Which is cool because then that means that people are actually integrating and communicating and doing things together as opposed to just, ‘Oh hi’ to my gardener (Interview 3/6/13).

ENTREPRENERIAL PLANS & PRACTICES

While entrepreneurial aspirations and practices are not new in even the smallest tourist destinations in Mexico, a confluence of factors align to situate the dynamics and
practices in this site within a different realm of significance. These factors include the
duration of lifestyle migrant presence, the socioeconomic impact of the ’95 tsunami, the
particular nature of lifestyle migration emplacement practices and nonprofit projects, and
the current climate of development along the Costalegre.

Based on her work on entrepreneurialism in Barbados, Carla Freeman addresses
capitalism’s “affective turn” and what she identifies as “the crux of neoliberal
entrepreneurialism,” which lies “between social relations of business and intimate
economies of love and support” (2014, 208). She argues that entrepreneurialism is not
merely an economic project, but an ongoing project of self-making, a process of “action
and imagination, an ongoing process of envisioning and becoming” (Freeman 2014, 2). I
include this discussion of entrepreneurialism to highlight the significance not only of
youth in La Manzanilla that have started and are in the process of starting businesses, but
also of those imagining possibilities and daydreaming about their futures. This aspect of
self-making Freeman includes in the entrepreneurial process, “is always a work in
formation” (2014, 2). This process of envisioning and becoming extends beyond youth
entrepreneurs in La Manzanilla to the place itself, as community development takes
shape in an increasingly cosmopolitan landscape.

In the currently dominant neoliberal capitalist global economy “the onus is
increasingly placed upon the individual to take charge of his own economic, social, and
personal fate” (Freeman 2014, 20), and this ideological shift is being nurtured by lifestyle
migrants in La Manzanilla.
Freeman highlights the relationship between contemporary neoliberal ideology and the entrepreneur’s personal project of self-making. “By broadening the purview of class to include labor in all its guises,” she explains,

We will see that middle-classness is not reducible to consumption and lifestyle alone, and that lifestyle itself entails subtle forms of labor especially of an affective form. Put simply, middle-class entrepreneurialism entails a confluence of practices that meld production, consumption, symbolic meaning making, emotional engagement, and feeling that highlight some of the signatures of neoliberalism today. These contain the flexible labor of imagining, creating, and marketing goods, relationships, and selves, the expectations of having certain material things, enacting certain modes of leisure, and embodying certain ways of being in the world (Freeman 2014, 36).

The idea that La Manzanilla youth poised to become entrepreneurs and agents of tourism development are invested in projects of self-making as well as economic sustainability help to elucidate the ways in which these projects may contribute to a future that aligns with youth imaginaries of cosmopolitanism and sustainability. Although leaving town in pursuit of economic opportunities is certainly not a novel practice in small towns across the globe, the increasingly prevalent pattern among this generation of returning to La Manzanilla after leaving to acquire broader skills and education sheds light on local youth imaginaries of interconnected sociocultural, economic, and environmental sustainability. The desire and planning to return to this small town and create positions for themselves is significant because while their entrepreneurial initiatives are dependent to a large extent on the tourist and lifestyle migrant market, taken as a whole, this generation’s plans and practices weave together the cosmopolitan influence they have been raised amid with their own cosmopolitan aspirations into a new community tapestry. This pattern is exemplified a series of residents I introduce in this chapter, beginning here with Ana.
Ana was my Spanish teacher at La Catalina Natural Language School when I was doing preliminary field research in La Manzanilla. The Language School is the for-profit affiliate of the nonprofit foundation and offers Spanish language courses and home stays to tourists and lifestyle migrants. Ana was an excellent and strict teacher, and while she only spoke Spanish in our lessons (for the sake of my improvement in the language), she speaks English fluently. When I inquired about how she mastered another language so well (hoping to get some tips about how to advance my Spanish) I was surprised to find that she attributes her mastery of English not to classes, but to watching English language movies and continuing to practice with English speaking residents in town. She lives with her family in La Manzanilla, and during my field work she taught Spanish at La Catalina part time and worked at a lifestyle migrant-run restaurant. Previously Ana had worked at the spa in El Tamarindo, the exclusive resort immediately south of La Manzanilla. At El Tamarindo she made good money as a massage therapist, and wanted to get more training so she could open her own business and offer a range of services she thought would be in high demand in La Manzanilla. Ana went to Guadalajara to attend cosmetology school, and then returned to La Manzanilla with her new training and skills. In 2013 in addition to her part-time employment, she ran a spa business offering manicures, pedicures, facials, and massages to La Manzanilla residents and visitors. Ana’s spa business exemplified her hopes of a self-directed sustainable economic future that incorporates her skills and entrepreneurial agency with a desirable commodity/service for lifestyle migrants. From a broad view Ana’s entrepreneurial role complicates tourism imaginaries about La Manzanilla as an “authentic Mexican community” as well as Mexican residents’ traditional roles within that imaginary. Owning and operating her own spa business is
significantly different than working at a spa owned by someone else. On an individual level, lifestyle migrants are supportive of Ana’s entrepreneurial efforts, and pleased at having spa services in town.

Gloria is my age- mid-thirties- and her plans and practices intersect with my discussion about the relationship between entrepreneurialism and sustainability via her children. Although her age places her just beyond the scope of the generation that grew up among lifestyle migrants, she offers an interesting perspective of both a return migrant and mother. Partly because her English is excellent and I was still learning Spanish, and partly because she was bartending at what I had been told was “the gringo bar” I visited to find lifestyle migrants when I first arrived in town, Gloria was one of the first friends I made in La Manzanilla. That we remain friends today has everything to do with her warm and generous character.

Gloria is from in Los Ingenios (the extremely small community directly east of La Manzanilla- a thirty minute bike ride across the highway) where her family raised animals. They relocated to La Manzanilla when she was young, and her mother, father, and sisters still live in town. Like Miguel (discussed in Chapter 3), Gloria went north to work. Unlike Miguel, she stayed for an extended period of time. She worked in the service industry in Las Vegas, Nevada for twelve years. Gloria prefers life in La Manzanilla to life in Las Vegas. In La Manzanilla she feels that people are less preoccupied with making money, and they know and care about one another. This does not mean that people in La Manzanilla are not concerned with making money, rather that personal relationships take precedent, whereas in Las Vegas it seemed to be the opposite. Despite this experience of life in the U.S., Gloria didn’t characterize Americans and
Canadians in a negative light. “They don’t just come to sunbathe on the beach,” she says, “they come as friends” (Interview translation from Spanish 6/10/13). She explained that the influx of lifestyle migrants (extranjeros) is not only good for generating jobs and income, but beyond that, “in La Manzanilla everyone is like a family, Mexicans, Americans, and Canadians” (Interview 6/10/13). This may sound like an overly sunny view of life in La Manzanilla, and it is surely inflected with Gloria’s ability to navigate among various circles easily because of her experience living in the U.S. and fluently speaking English and Spanish. However, this characterization of residents of La Manzanilla as a family is significant in two ways. First, it reflects the imaginary of community being consumed and produced alongside imaginaries La Manzanilla as a cosmopolitan paradise. Second, it points to the investment many lifestyle migrants have in “the community” including development initiatives.

The decisions Gloria is making about her children’s education stem in part from her experience leaving La Manzanilla for employment opportunities, and in part from the lifestyle migrant emphasis on the importance of education, and critiques of the locally available educational institution. During the year I conducted the bulk of research in La Manzanilla, Gloria had sent her primary and secondary school-aged children to live with family in Las Vegas and attend school. Her original plan was to have them stay and attend school in the U.S. for several years before returning, but she found being separated from them more difficult than she expected. Gloria said she sent them north for school because they had the opportunity, because they could receive what she considered to be a better education, and because she wanted them to understand and appreciate her years of hard work and experience living in the U.S. While nonprofit efforts aim to improve local
educational opportunities, Gloria’s decision to send her children away to school in the U.S. reflects the pattern among La Manzanilla youth of leaving and returning with new marketable skills.

José follows this pattern as well, having recently moved to Guadalajara to finish his education before returning to La Manzanilla. José was raised by his grandmother in town, and when I met him he was working at a restaurant and bar on the beach run by a Dutch couple who had traveled extensively from Europe to Asia before landing in La Manzanilla. The restaurant was one of the few spots in town to host live music, and was popular with a younger crowd in the evenings, including locals and often the dismissed European contestants of the nearby Paradise Hotel reality show. Between the time of my first preliminary fieldwork trip and the end of my year-long field research, José’s English had far surpassed my Spanish. His work schedule did not permit him to regularly attend La Catalina English classes, but he learned from, and practiced with, friends, co-workers, and patrons of the restaurant. In 2013 he was making periodic trips to Guadalajara to take the exams (similar to the GED) necessary to attend university. He expressed interest in getting a degree in education and returning to La Manzanilla to be a teacher. He had also been building his portfolio as a photographer. José’s cousin Gabriela worked at the same restaurant for a while, and shared plans with me of leaving La Manzanilla for training as a professional bartender before returning and possibly opening her own place. At this time her plans were only in the formative stages - they may even be characterized as daydreams - but they are a significant departure from the daydreams of the previous generation, and they follow the pattern in which the end goal is entrepreneurship and economic sustainability in La Manzanilla.
THE COST OF LIVING IN PARADISE

Economic sustainability is a crucial consideration for the generation of youth that are taking the reins of tourism and community development in La Manzanilla. Lifestyle migration research has found that in some notable cases this form of migration works counter to economic sustainability of local residents. This impact has been particularly notable in cases where particular locations are targeted by retirement migration marketers such as *International Living Magazine* (McWatters 2009, Myers 2009, Hayes 2015a). In Cuenca, Ecuador, Matthew Hayes found “this migration is leading to a kind of transnational gentrification, whereby economic amenity migrants relocate to lower latitudes of the global division of labour to take advantage of higher levels of material consumption afforded by low cost locations, yet at the same time create higher costs of living in receiving communities, potentially displacing Ecuadorian workers and less well-off North American migrants” (Hayes 2015a, 278).

In La Manzanilla a growing lifestyle migrant population has contributed to a higher cost of living, and an uneven increase in income for some local residents. Mexican resident Antonio observed a significant difference in the changes initiated by lifestyle migration and community-led tourism development, versus large-scale corporate development. Antonio has lived and worked in both Puerto Vallarta and Tijuana. When I asked him what he thought about the changes in the town over the last 15-20 years he reflected, “I’m honestly more scared of big corporations coming in than a few gringos coming in. I’m more afraid of the ones who want to privatize every waterfall and make it inaccessible to us Mexicans” (Interview 6/12/13). Antonio runs a restaurant on the beach, and interacts with tourists and lifestyle migrants daily. He believes La Manzanilla has had
a combination of relatively protected environmental and sociocultural conditions that draw lifestyle migrants. “Many places are really beautiful,” he explained, “but I don’t think any of them have the sense, the feeling of community that for good or bad La Manzanilla has” (Interview 6/12/13). “We were not really shown on maps for a really long time,” he added, “so we’re like a hidden community” (Interview 6/12/13).

While Antonio spoke favorably about some of the changes initiated by the influx of lifestyle migrants, including nonprofit projects and community development initiatives, he also described the process of displacement that has been shown to accompany lifestyle migration (see for example Hayes 2015a). “The last 18 years everything changed,” he explained,

If you are in the younger generation trying to make a family, you’ll have a really hard time trying to buy a piece of property because prices have skyrocketed…Every piece of property has become so valuable that many people will not be able in the near future to buy property and stay within the community. They’ll have to move more towards the mountain or more on the outskirts of town…15 years ago you could have bought a lot for $2,000, but now everything has changed (Interview 6/12/13).

The cost of land and houses listed for sale online support Antonio’s observations. The websites of local Mexican and lifestyle migrant relators I interviewed list village lots from US$16,000, ocean view lots for US$100,000, ocean view and beach homes averaging US$350,000 (though as high as 1.9 million), and in-town and jungle view homes averaging US$100,000-$200,000 (lamanzanillarealty.com, costaalegreproperties.com, accessed 7/25/16).

LOCAL ASPIRATIONS & AGENCY

Tourism imaginaries of La Manzanilla as a tropical paradise and an authentic fishing village draw tourists and lifestyle migrants, are materialized in the physical place
of La Manzanilla, and infuse understandings about what La Manzanilla means. Inhabitants which might be characterized as “locals” are positioned within the bounds of these imaginaries in limited roles. In this chapter I have introduced a selection of residents who are complicating these limiting imaginaries through initiatives discernable in discourse, practice, and material manifestations. These inhabitants are reconfiguring lifestyle migrant privilege which infuses the community in a number of ways, including economic capital, ideology about education and the environment, consumer practices and desires, and the transmission of features like language that may translate as skills. The interplay between foreign residents, visitors, artists, and youth is transforming the town with a cosmopolitan character. The generation of youth who grew up in a town shared by lifestyle migrants are now participating in the direction of tourism development in La Manzanilla as entrepreneurs. The increasingly prevalent pattern among this generation of returning to La Manzanilla after leaving to acquire broader skills and education sheds light on local youth imaginaries of cosmopolitanism lifestyle and economic opportunities. This cosmopolitan identity may now be equally claimed by resident youth who leave and return, and by those who stay. While their entrepreneurial initiatives are dependent to a large extent on the tourist and lifestyle migrant market, taken as a whole, this generation’s plans and practices weave together the cosmopolitan influence they have been raised amid with their own cosmopolitan aspirations into a new community tapestry.
CHAPTER 3 Competing Imaginaries of Sustainable Tourism Development

The touristic value of a modern community lies in the way it organizes social, historical, cultural and natural elements into a stream of impressions (Dean MacCannell 1976, 48).

Local twentysomething Miguel is a resident youth who sees environmental awareness as an integral component of tourism development in the town. Miguel is working with his uncle, Carlos, to develop an ecotourism business in La Manzanilla while he works toward a biology degree through a satellite campus of the University of Guadalajara. Carlos, an ejidatario (member of the agrarian collective) manages the crocodile preserve in the mangrove wetlands. Miguel describes his ecotourism initiative as modeled after places like Costa Rica, explaining,

Right now we have an ecotourism project with people from the community. We are ten people in a small company, and our idea is to do ecotourism, but in a sustainable way, protecting our nature. It's not about doing large things like hotels and that – it's about sustainability, like Costa Rica (Interview translation from Spanish 7/15/2013).

He stresses the importance of sustainability, and offers the example of large hotels as counter to sustainable development initiatives. He describes past tourism development efforts and impacts, highlighting the 1995 tsunami as a significant moment;

People have tried to make projects in La Manzanilla many times, like many tourist developments related to ecotourism. But they haven’t been successful in the end. For example, the tsunami in 1995 marks the beginning of the development in La Manzanilla, when people started buying land and took a look at us. It’s when TV came and people saw us for the first time and were interested. But I know there have been foreigners living here much before that. There have been foreigners living here for more than 40 years (Interview 7/15/2013).

This history of development in La Manzanilla led him to acquire the skills and education he saw necessary to develop ecotourism in town. After completing high school in 2007, he crossed two borders to work in Canada. While there he developed his English
language fluency. When he returned he began teaching the evening adult English classes through La Catalina Foundation. “For me,” he says, “La Catalina is something very very good, because, first of all, it's free... They have a plan for the future. It's not only that they want to do something. And in the end it is only assistance. There are many interesting projects in La Manzanilla, as a community, like the gym, that is new, La Catalina, too” (Interview 7/15/2013).

Miguel believes lifestyle migrant residents impact community development positively for the most part, due to a generally shared environmental awareness. He describes the influx of foreigners as part of the town’s development:

It's development even now. And personally, I think it makes me feel good because many cultures come and, sometimes, okay – You will find good and bad people all over the world, you know? The country you are from does not determine – In the end, we're talking about stereotypes. But normally, I like the ideas of foreigners who are buying because they try to preserve nature. They make very large houses and – If you see the center of La Manzanilla you'll get a very clear picture of what are our ideas. Like houses very close to each other, no trees, nothing like that. And what's the use of that? You need a tree (Interview 7/15/2013).

He agrees that development is inevitable in the town, and adds, “but well, in the end, for me the idea behind any development is that you have to achieve it in the most sustainable way” (Interview 7/15/2013). He sees that there are a range of impacts of foreign residents in La Manzanilla, but highlights what he describes as a cultural influence;

It's a change. But I think there are more good things than bad...for example, I studied in Miguel Hidalgo High School, and the building is there [in the neighboring town], but people come from several towns. And we go from here, from La Manzanilla, and we're not smarter or richer or anything, but we do have another mindset, another view of the world. Why? Because, personally, you speak with foreigners and you start thinking and ... My plans of going to the north are not because of money, or houses, but I have other ideas to grow. And usually, my high school friends from other towns without this mindset think about going to the States, to the north, so they can buy a big truck... It's a personal difference, I think. You gain other ideas from other cultures, and it's good in the end. It's like a
little cosmopolitan area because it's not just Americans and Canadians, you have Europeans, and people from other places. Many perspectives and cultures (Interview 7/15/2013).

This cosmopolitan influence Miguel identified has attracted new residents with visions of creating and participating in environmentally and artistically focused communities. It is also in part the result of a generation of lifestyle migrant presence in the town. The many perspectives and cultures he identifies are creating competing imaginaries of sustainable development, and the potential for a localized development agenda that offers a middle path to tourism development.

The idea of sustainability is widely understood as desirable in La Manzanilla. But the meaning and significance of sustainability differs among the range of perspectives and levels of engagement residents have with the material and sociocultural environment. Notions about nature, ecology, and sustainability hold various discursive and practical meanings from different vantage points. I investigate how imaginaries of sustainability and tourism imaginaries are made visible and complicated in discourse and practice.

Ecotourism is seen as an example of a viable sustainable development project on the Costalegre by many of the local La Manzanilla youth I interviewed, by elite, exclusive resort developers, and by conservationists. Ecotourism may variously be understood as a means of economic, environmental, or sociocultural sustainability, or at an intersection of these imaginaries of sustainability. In this chapter I begin with a brief discussion of development theories, critiques, and alternatives to situate the range of imaginaries of sustainability and tourism development in La Manzanilla. I present environmental perspectives on sustainable development on the southern Jalisco coast, and discuss the relationship between these perspectives, popular tourism imaginaries of
Mexico, and materializations of elite enclave ecotourism on the Costalegre. I suggest that while there is not a consensus on what development should look like in La Manzanilla, the intersection of influences and initiatives is producing locally directed development that contrasts significantly with the erasure of local agency in tourism development in nearby costal destinations.

**BUT WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?**

Arturo Escobar argues for the relevance of ethnography that focuses on “documenting for diverse groups the ensembles of meanings-uses that characterize their engagement with the natural world” (1998, 62). Lifestyle migrants, local youth, conservationists, cosmopolitan visionaries, and those that fall in between multiple categories of resident have a range of conflicting ideas about sustainable development in La Manzanilla. Depending on multiple vectors of position, and material and social engagement with the landscape and community, they prioritize imaginaries of economic, environmental, and sociocultural sustainability with conflicting attention and significance.

Historically, theories of development have not been put into action as simply as following a recipe for successful economic viability. In the mid twentieth century modernization theories of development were popular, claiming a universal recipe for economic success to be implemented in formerly colonized nation states. This approach viewed capitalism as the pinnacle of economic systems. In response, dependency theory argued that capitalism could not be the solution, because it was in fact the cause of poverty and “underdevelopment,” as the development of wealthy nation states depended on the impoverishment of others. Dependency theory asserted that formerly colonized
nation states had thriving social and economic systems established prior to colonial intervention rather than economic systems that were inferior to capitalism. In Encountering Development (1995) Escobar’s postdevelopment discussion breaks away from dependency or modernization theories of development and analyzes the intersection of discourse, power, and practice.

At the end of the twentieth century the United Nations Commission on the Environment and Development introduced sustainable development. Escobar describes the discourse of sustainable development as development which “would make possible the eradication of poverty and the protection of the environment in one single feat of Western rationality” (1995, 192). While the ideology of sustainable development acknowledges and attempts to modify the pitfalls of earlier theories of development, Escobar suggests that it is ultimately no more than an extension of earlier paradigms. Much like critiques of the concept of the Anthropocene today, critics suggest sustainable development presents an equally shared responsibility for planetary degradation when in fact the institutions and practices associated with global capitalism are most responsible for this environmental destruction. Escobar contends that discourses of sustainable development transform “nature” into “the environment” which can be managed in terms of resources, but which do not place limits on production, material growth, and capital accumulation (1995, 196-197).

In a later discussion, Escobar (1998) explores biodiversity as discourse and highlights the ways dominant discourse(s) about biodiversity are being resisted, reappropriated, and reconfigured by subaltern actors such as “local” communities and

30 For more Anthropocene discussion see Latour (2014), Moore (2015) for example.
social movements. While I would not describe the local residents I am discussing as a social movement, I would argue that they are similarly reconfiguring dominant discourses, models, and imaginaries of sustainability in La Manzanilla to “serve other ends” (Escobar 1998, 56). Escobar argues that by placing debates about biodiversity within the political ecology of social movements, “marginal sites, such as local communities and social movements, come to be seen as emergent centers of innovation and alternative worlds” (Escobar 1998, 54). Similarly, I argue that local entrepreneurial initiatives in La Manzanilla may be seen as part of an alternative locally-directed development to imaginaries of economic sustainability that propose large scale tourism development implemented by transnational corporations, or elite enclave ecotourism that erases local sociocultural presence to satisfy desires for the unspoiled environment. As with the social movement of Afro-Colombian communities in the Pacific coast rainforests Escobar discusses, the alternate imaginaries and initiatives I encountered constitute a vision of a future in which, “social life, work, nature, and culture can be organized differently than dominant models of culture and the economy mandate” (Escobar 1998, 76).

**COMPETING SUSTAINABILITY IMAGINARIES**

I encountered a range of discourses about sustainability during my field research in La Manzanilla. I also encountered a variety of ideas about how environmental, economic, and sociocultural sustainability might be best achieved. I use the concept of imaginaries here because it brings the process and product into a related dynamic, not as separate, distinct phenomena, but as part of a related bundle of practices and actors, including ideas, institutions that circulate and support the ideas, and the social and
material consequences of these ideas. In the conceptual frame of sustainability imaginaries, discourse and physical markers associated with sustainable development interact in a malleable tension.

Discourses about sustainability intersect with discourses about the environment, community, and the human, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism. Among these competing discourses about sustainability was the sentiment frequently voiced by lifestyle migrant residents that sociocultural and environmental sustainability could only be accomplished by closing the door to any future development intended to attract more tourists and lifestyle migrants. They feared the community would become an overblown resort destination like Puerto Vallarta and the character of the place would be erased. They also lamented the strain that already existed on the natural resources, such as fresh water, and expressed concern about preserving the quality of the natural environment. Lifestyle migrants often expressed mixed feelings about the impact of their own presence and the prospect of more lifestyle migrants coming to La Manzanilla. Many voiced concerns over the lifestyle migrant or North American influence becoming too strong and changing the community too much. They didn’t want to see the elements of the imaginary that attracted them to La Manzanilla displaced. Others were concerned about too many changes to the town, but also enjoyed some aspects of lifestyle migrant influence in terms of amenities and social activities.

After ten winter seasons in nearby Barra de Navidad, Walter and Betty visited La Manzanilla and had spent the last three winters there at the time of our interview. They explained how life in La Manzanilla appealed to them because “it was relaxed, it wasn’t like home where you couldn’t do this and you couldn’t do that” (Interview 3/4/13). They
also noted the changes in the area as a consequence of the influence of lifestyle migrant residents. Walter stressed his concern that “you don’t come to this country to turn it into the U.S. or Canada. Leave it alone” (Interview 3/4/13). Betty added, “you don’t have to fix something when there’s nothing really wrong with it” and credited NAFTA with changes in the community in terms of credit debt visible in the recent proliferation of new cars, trucks, and motor bikes (Interview 3/4/13).

Another lifestyle migrant, Michael, had visited the area regularly since the 1970s and eventually built his house on the hill in 1995 (surprisingly the house was completed the week before the tsunami). He relayed his pleasure at the post 2008 recession halt in lifestyle migrant influx because of the decrease in construction noise. Although he also described enjoying living in a town in which travelers were always coming and going, with a constant stream of new faces and people to meet (Interview 8/6/11).

Lifestyle migrant, Brian, expressed nostalgia for the days before a strong lifestyle migrant presence in the town on the one hand, and enthusiasm for what he characterized as positive social and economic changes on the other hand. When some early lifestyle migrants started advertising their vacation rentals on the internet, Brian said he warned them it would change things, he explained, “and we told them at the time, that if you want this place to change, this is how it’s gonna change, because it’s gonna be discovered” (Interview 3/7/13). I spoke with one of the original lifestyle migrants he identified, who reminisced fondly about the early years where the town would be without electricity for extended periods, and the view of town would be lit with only candles and lanterns from her house on the hill.
Brian also described appreciating many of the changes initiated by the influx of lifestyle migrants. When he first arrived, aside from fiestas, he said, there was no music. “And now,” he explained, “it’s great—there’s so many things going on you can’t even keep track” (Interview 3/7/13). When he arrived, “there were gringos here, but low key. And then the people, the high end people with a lot of money came and started buying property” (ibid). As an artist, Brian also noted that along with wealthier lifestyle migrants came a market for art. Brian’s partner Donna, who started coming to La Manzanilla later, recalled that “there were already gallery openings by the time I got here” (Interview 3/7/13).

This mix of nostalgia for the past and excitement about changes in town was not only conveyed by lifestyle migrants who arrived prior to the ’95 rush, but by local residents as well. Gloria (introduced in the previous chapter) reminisced about the meals her family would prepare when she was a kid in Los Ingenios, using ingredients they grew or raised themselves. But she is also enthusiastic about some of the changes associated with an increased lifestyle migrant presence.

Maryanne, one of the lifestyle migrant volunteers at the bookstore, described changes in the community and considered, “when you have that little out-of-the-way village you also don’t have a bookstore, or internet, or gasoline, or any of that” (Interview 2/23/13). She said change in the community is inevitable—

It’s not that it’s going to change. It’s how is it going to change. How can we help it change in greener ways. Let’s just call it greener. Let’s make it happen in a nicer way, where people are more respectful and don’t tromp. There’s been a lot of tromping going on on that hill and that distresses me. But I think that there’s still a chance to make things a little bit nicer here (Interview 2/23/13).
Local imaginaries encompass all realms of sustainability, but highlight economic sustainability as a necessary precursor for sociocultural and environmental sustainability. While I was aware that local residents struggled to make ends meet during the summer low season, on two separate occasions during a week in the month of September near the end of my year in La Manzanilla local Mexican residents told me they called September (septiembre) “siete hambre”. They explained that in La Manzanilla the locals are seven times as hungry this month because seasonal lifestyle migrants have not yet returned, and national tourists are no longer visiting because school has started and because the extremely humid rainy season makes conditions on the beach and in town less desirable for tourists.

Local Mexican residents who were critical of the tourism and lifestyle migration driven economy, and opposed to further development to support an increase in this sector were typically older and among the minority who were able to support themselves and their families outside of this sector of the local economy. Many of this elder generation were reluctant to discuss their views of the socioeconomic changes associated with the influx of lifestyle migrants. In one particular interview with a friend’s grandmother I learned more about her opinions from dismissive shoulder shrugs and glances down at the floor than anything she was willing to share verbally. To her I was a stranger, hard to place perhaps because of my age and economic status, but still largely associated, I imagine, as a lifestyle migrant.

More often the elder generation voiced concerns about the increased presence and impact of tourists and lifestyle migrants, but saw them as a now necessary component of what they considered economic sustainability. Local resident conservationists also
cautiously voiced sentiments about how the increased flow of tourists and lifestyle migrants might offer an opportunity for increased economic and environmental sustainability. The generation of youth that have grown up among lifestyle migrants generally expressed the most enthusiasm for lifestyle migration and tourism development in their imaginaries of economic, environmental, and sociocultural sustainability.

**NONPROFITS & LOCAL PROJECTS**

Two of the local nonprofit organizations in La Manzanilla are focused on youth-targeted education. La Catalina Educational Foundation, for instance, focuses on English language education which they see as integral to the economic security of local residents. With the Youth Ecology and Sustainability (YES) initiative, environmental nonprofit Tierralegre highlights a sustainability imaginary that involves the interdependence of environmental, sociocultural, and economic sustainability. The YES project integrated educational gardens as part of the secondary school curriculum in La Manzanilla. During my fieldwork I saw this educational student garden project highlight the connection between environmental and economic sustainability by having students both consume the produce they grew in the garden, and also sell it at the weekly market and to local restaurants. At the end of the rainy season (and beginning of optimal planting season) in October 2012 I accompanied lifestyle migrant and founder of Tierralegre to the ejido-donated lot which would become the educational garden and Agro-Ecology Center. He stressed that the goals of the project were focused on youth education about permaculture and to instill a sense of the economic value in producing your own food. A few weeks later the first day of class at the newly cleared garden site he described the goals of the project to approximately 30 secondary school students. They discussed the meanings and
importance of *orgánico* and *agricultura biointesivo*. Locally grown, organic produce had an additional consumer value to the lifestyle migrant patrons of the weekly high season market where students sold what they grew at the garden. The value of local, organic produce and the types of produce being grown and sold, including greens such as kale and arugula, was appealing to lifestyle migrant consumers because it reflected their tastes in current food and health trends, and was not typically available at the small stores in town.

I spoke with many lifestyle migrants who were enthusiastic about changes in the community in a direction that coincided with their imaginaries of environmental and sociocultural sustainability by attracting a younger crowd. European lifestyle migrant Mazzie and I discussed Sani’s environmentally focused artist community project and she wondered, “whether that would bring in a whole new, different crowd” (Interview 7/30/13). We also discussed how the environmental nonprofit Tierralegre was also bringing in new people, as new interns would come and work for the nonprofit each year. “That’s what I’m hoping for, that change,” Mazzie said of the influence of these socioenvironmental projects, “people with ideas, doing things. A slightly younger crowd” (Interview 7/30/13). She also pointed out that a major obstacle to both current residents and attracting newcomers to the town was the seasonally dependent economy, which is a problem for younger people who need to make a living. Nonprofit organizations such as La Catalina can play a role in attracting a younger generation of lifestyle migrant than lifestyle migration research in Mexico typically reflects. Intern and annual positions attract recent college graduates from Canada and the U.S. who want international experience working with nonprofits, as well as the opportunity to live in a desirable
beach locale. There is frequent turn-over of these temporary residents, but in some cases they make a more permanent move to La Manzanilla. Lori, for example, came from Canada to work with La Catalina for one year in December 2010. She met her partner, started a family, stayed in La Manzanilla and in the subsequent years has also worked for Tierralegre, the community gym, and a property management business.

ECOTOURISM & ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE COSTALEGRE

In 2008 Estero La Manzanilla was officially designated a Ramsar site. Ramsar is an international environmental agreement which became active in the 1970s focused on concern with wetland habitat loss (www.ramsar.org). Sites are designated based on a criteria intended to identify areas of “international importance” including rare wetland types and biological diversity (ibid.). Mexico has 142 Ramsar sites totaling 8,643,579 hectares (ibid.). The wetland site in La Manzanilla includes 264 hectares, and is described as:

An estuarine system located in Tenacatita Bay, one of the five most important bays of Mexico's Pacific coast, surrounded by large clusters of mangrove in good condition, including Rhizophora mangle, Laguncularia racemosa, and Conocarpus erectus. A variety of flora and fauna species are also found, e.g., the site is one of the three areas with large populations of the American crocodile (Crocodylus acutus). The estuary is essential for the reproduction of several species of aquatic animals and holds the largest reproductive colony of Boat-billed Heron (Cochlearius cochlearius) in the area. 55 different species of aquatic birds have been identified, and 42 different species of fish, of 10 different orders and 21 families, use this area as feeding ground (Ramsar Sites Information Service 2016).

Ramsar also identifies threats to this site of environmental significance:

Since 1970, human activities such as urban growth and deforestation have caused a negative impact on the estuary, including the construction of a paved coastal road which has had negative impacts to the mangroves and limited the flow of water to the estuary (Ramsar Sites Information Service 2016).
For environmental conservationists, such as those associated with Ramsar, biodiversity is a valuable resource worthy of protective efforts. Institutions like Ramsar circulate imaginaries of sustainability that focus on the preservation and protection of environments they consider valuable. Valuable environments, such as the mangrove lagoon in La Manzanilla, are determined to be negatively impacted by infrastructural development such as a nearby paved highway connecting La Manzanilla and small neighboring towns with destinations and ports like Puerto Vallarta (to the north) and Manzanillo (to the south).

Carlos and Miguel advocate developing ecotourism as the healthier means of economic development not just for La Manzanilla, but around the world (Interview 9/23/13). They identify three primary sites with environmental significance and tourism appeal in La Manzanilla, including the ocean, the mangrove lagoon, and the jungle waterfall, Las Joyas. Ecotourism activities at these sites include whale watching, snorkeling, hiking, swimming, birding, and boating. At the time of our interview, their business, Eco-aventuras La Manzanilla was comprised of five *ejidatarios* and five family members of *ejidatarios*. As Carlos explained it, I understood the relationship between the *ejido* and ecotourism development in La Manzanilla had not always been optimally productive. There had been fluctuating support for ecotourism development that increased and decreased with the coincidence of government support (Interview 9/23/13). Still, members of the *ejido* were influential and significant figures when it came to development decisions in the community, and integral to ecotourism development. Outside entities, such as Ramsar, as well as lifestyle migrants and locally-based
nonprofits such as Tierralegre also have a significant role to play in imagining and materializing sustainable tourism development in La Manzanilla.

Ecotourism has been suggested by biologists and conservationists working in the tropical dry forests that dominate the coastal landscape in their plan for sustainable development. In *Ecosystem Services of Tropical Dry Forests: Insights from Long-term Ecological and Social Research on the Pacific Coast of Mexico* (2005), researchers suggest a shared vision and implementation of sustainable development in the area is possible only with collaboration among local residents, *ejidatarios*, and officials in the municipal, state, and national government. Focusing on the Chamela region (in the same municipality as La Manzanilla) they propose three possible scenarios for the region’s future. The first scenario posits increased deforestation for agricultural and ranching activities, which are not ideally suited to the environment in terms of land and weather patterns, and would not increase economic benefits while drastically decreasing ecological benefits. The second scenario ventures a future of massive tourism development following the model of Puerto Vallarta. They propose that while this scenario might increase economic opportunities to the area, these opportunities would not likely go to current residents but rather service workers migrating in from other areas. The fresh water consumption necessitated by this scenario would also be unsustainable. The third scenario proposes sustainable management of the area. The implementation of the Ecological Land Use Plan in cooperation with local residents, government officials, and scientists would involve sustainable agricultural and ranching activities in combination with “the development of a low-impact tourist industry,” and suggest, “activities of *ejidatarios*, currently centered in agriculture and cattle ranching, may
expand to a wide range of alternatives including forestry management and ecotourism” (Maass et al. 2005, 15).

Definitions of ecotourism range from highlighting the environment tourists engage with- undisturbed, protected natural locations and wildlife, to the impact this type of tourism generates- low impact on the natural environment paired with improved economic impact for local residents (Honey 2006, 450-451). Ecotourism has been hailed as a locally directed, environmentally sustainable development tool. In practice, the label “ecotourism” has been applied in projects that resonate with these elements, but it has also been used to describe tourism development implemented from transnational corporations with little attention to local needs, or even environmental sustainability (Honey 2006).

**ELITE UTOPIAS**

The powerful ecotourism imaginary of exotic remote natural landscape paired with comfortable amenities is reproduced in current development projects on the Costalegre. In a March, 2015 article, “Costalegre’s New Airport Set to Boost Jet Set Destination,” a spokesperson for the Cuixmala resort projects that within the next several years the completion of a new airport will boost tourism to the Costalegre (Figueroa 2015). The article claims the “distinct crowd” the Costalegre attracts is drawn to the natural landscape, amenities, and the “exotic, bohemian, remote, off the beaten path” character of the area (Figueroa 2015, 2). The article ensures that, “the added airlift will bring more visitors, but it won’t change the feel of Costalegre. Nor will other new developments in the pipeline” (Figueroa 2015, 4). The Cuixmala spokesperson explains, Luckily, the master plan for the Costalegre area calls for low density eco-oriented tourism. That has remained in place and authorities have been very stringent
about approving new projects. It’s great to have some positive things happening with the infrastructure. The developments are of a very high quality. It will maintain what’s already there (Figueroa 2015, 4).

The stretch of coast just north of La Manzanilla has a unique history that sets the stage for the exclusive luxury resort development for which it is now known. Careyes, north of La Manzanilla and south of Puerto Vallarta, was “discovered” by Gian Franco Brignone, an Italian oil mogul and artist who built his mansion-sized vacation home in 1973 when the Manzanillo international airport opened. In 1976 he proceeded to build the luxury El Careyes beach resort. He started selling land to other mostly European elites for their own vacation homes in an area that offered a secluded paradiesiacal setting. In “Mexico’s Hedonistic Paradise” travel writer Si Si Penaloza cites a Goldsmith quote recalling, “It was love at first sight. An unconditional love, one that continues to this day” (Penaloza 2010, 2). The love at first sight discovery narrative is common not only among primarily upper middle class lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla, but also European jet set billionaires.

Today, Penaloza writes, the Careyes resort serves a vital function for the jet set, as,

An antidote to the overkill of St. Tropez, there are no magnums of Moët at the marina, no tongues wagging with yacht envy and zero glitzy nightclubs. Conspicuous consumption is considered mortifyingly déclassé: European royalty and Hollywood starlets hit the beach wearing whatever they woke up in, basking in the sunshine of leaving the paparazzi far, far behind (Penaloza 2010, 2).

This description elicits the familiar story of tourism as a necessary rejuvenative escape, but the object of escape is familiar only to a class of tourists accustomed to partaking in magnums of champagne and dodging the paparazzi. This destination is elevated as one in which the elite tourist will not have to labor at displaying wealth and status- it is a
privileged escape from the burdens of privilege. Similar to travel articles on La Manzanilla, with very little understanding of daily local life, this travel writer describes slipping into “the local fiesta-siesta lifestyle” (Penaloza 2010, 2). This gap in understanding real local life depends of course on her definition of local. If by local, she means the wealthy descendants of Goldsmith and Brignone and their visitors, then perhaps hers is an apt description of daily local rhythms. If she is referring to local Mexican inhabitants of the area, “fiesta-siesta lifestyle” is not only inaccurate, it is the literary equivalent of the souvenir sombrero-clad figure sleeping under the cactus. This negation of the significant labor aspect inherent in daily local life is highlighted by this travel writer’s description of Irma, who she characterizes as her “den mother” and describes as “an exemplary personal chef, housekeeper, margarita-maker and social secretary” (Penaloza 2010, 2). Daniel Cooper Alarcón probes the literary construction of Mexico as “infernal paradise” and the enduring consequences of such representations (1997). Alarcón argues that the infernal paradise myth has roots in narratives of the conquest and that Western genres like travel narratives follow a tradition in which the author is counterposed to a racist production of Mexicanness (1997). He believes the infernal paradise myth to be central to tourism promotion in Mexico and observes that “tourism production in Mexico relies on the controlled production and manipulation of Mexicanness” (Alarcón 1997, 152). In these displays of “Mexicanness” tourists commonly encounter “ornaments for sale to decorate their apartments; ‘savage’ ceremonies, testimonies to the superiority of their own society; and symbols of assorted and remote travels, and therefore of their own purchasing power” (García Canclini 1993, vii).
In a Wall Street Journal article travel writer Tony Perrottet describes Careyes as a utopian community (2014). He traces the history of its development into an elite oasis, from “a wild expanse of Mexican coastline that emerged over the last 45 years as one of the world's most eccentric and glamorous refuges. Luxury outposts in remote locations are now a staple of five-star travel, but Careyes was a pioneer in the field, conceived on a scale impossible to imagine today” (Perrottet 2014, 2). He relays the Brignone family’s nostalgia for a time they could take advantage of local fishermen with their cosmopolitan capital;

The Brignone family fondly remembers the days when pages of Playboy magazine served as currency. Back in the 1970s, local fishermen would row from their trawlers to the beach with a crate full of live shrimp and proceed to barter for erotica with the Italian family, who were then living in rustic isolation by the sands. ‘Three pages of Playboy was the going rate for an entire crate,’ explains Filippo Brignone, now in his early fifties. ‘And a few coconuts.’ (Perrottet 2014, 2).

This fond recollection reads as unabashed colonial exploitation- buying fish with playboy like buying land with beads- the idea that the cosmopolitan goods they had were worth more than money and even though they could certainly afford to purchase fish in a way that would contribute to the local economy, they did not.

Nearby, Chamela is the site of Brignone’s friend, Sir James Goldsmith’s “dream home” in what is described in his biography as “a virgin jungle on the west coast of Mexico” (Fallon 1991, 439). Goldsmith’s biographer describes the creation of the dream home:

It would not, however, be just another home- he had three already- but his dream home, the first which would entirely reflect his own interests and personality, which would be built from scratch and which would have all the room his restless nature craved. Unlike the great English and French barons who built their houses in other countries, Goldsmith, as the most international (the most fashionable word is ‘global’) of international businessmen, could choose anywhere in the
world within reasonable range of his private jet. He chose Mexico because of the climate, the wildness, and the extraordinary beauty of the land on the coast (Fallon 1991, 439).

The above quote is meant to suggest more about Sir James Goldsmith than the stretch of land on the west coast of Mexico where he had his dream home erected. It is interesting though, to read the relationship between sense of self and sense of place- or perhaps more aptly, representation of self as it relates to representation of place. This “dream home” of Goldsmith’s would be unlike his other three- it would be his own personal paradise, an unconstrained expanse to support his “restless nature”. This passage describes Goldsmith as the epitome of “cosmopolitan” subject, using “international” and the more fashionable “global”, to distinguish Goldsmith as having the cosmopolitan taste to select this coastal Mexican locale because of its “wildness” and “extraordinary beauty” as well as desirable climate. What is left unsaid, but hinted, is that it is in part this location’s distance from Goldsmith’s European homes that adds to its potency as a fantasy land or paradise. That he is limited only by the “range of his private jet” says that he is not, in fact, limited by distance at all. The farther away this paradise exists from his other homes, the more it adds to his cosmopolitan status. Beyond cosmopolitan status among other elites, it connects Goldsmith with a long tradition of colonial visionaries- seemingly unchecked by economic, political, or social restrictions- able not only to select a private paradise from anywhere in the world, but possessing the discriminating taste and bold sense of adventure to select this unheard of location described as “wild” and “virgin”. Virgin jungle denotes an untouched landscape, and hints at the moment the natural landscape will succumb to be molded into Goldsmith’s ideal image. The value of the place as
landscape here is in large part its “natural” blank canvas- its seeming availability to be
turned into this rich man’s fantasy home- his personal paradise.

A biography of the architect, *Robert Couturier: Designing Paradieses (2014)*, describes the creation of the estate, highlighting the magnitude of the dream house.

Robert Couturier,

Landed a job of unimaginable proportions- the complete design of Cuixmala, financier Sir James Goldsmith’s twenty-thousand-acre Mexican vacation estate, from the monumental architecture to the smallest of decorative details. Goldsmith had already hired one team of architects and builders in Mexico, but was disappointed by their proposals. ‘Jimmy had told them he wanted palaces,’ says Couturier: ‘But for a normal person, a palace is difficult to translate into reality- it’s a fairy tale.’ For a designer who had spent his childhood touring France’s most fabulous residences, however, it was almost second nature (Couturier and McKeough 2014, 120).

Couturier explained,

‘We had two years and a thousand workers to build it all,’ says Couturier, noting that it was a colossal task. ‘It was like building a whole town.’ The job included guest houses scattered across the area’s hilltops; a village for workers; and two notable palatial homes- La Loma, Goldsmith’s sixty-thousand-square-foot mountaintop residence, which was topped by a cupola tiled with a cold blue-and-yellow herringbone pattern; and a separate seaside residence for his ex-wife, which was formed by interlocking circular rooms. ‘It was an incredible, all-consuming experience,’ says Couturier, who would go on to design other residences for Goldsmith, along with a private jet (Couturier and McKeough 2014, 120).

Elaborate transformations of the landscape were imposed in Careyes on a similar scale. The transformation of the landscape precedes the elite cosmopolitan community. One notable feature is the polo field. In “Mexico’s Hedonistic Haven” Penaloza describes the “impressive horticultural miracle of Bermuda-grass polo fields in the heart of the Jalisco jungle” as a draw for “elite athletes and their beautiful followers to tournaments sponsored by Cartier and Moët & Chandon” (2010, 3). This literal rewriting of the landscape to suit the fantasy culminates in the establishment of a utopian community.
(transient though it may be) of global elites. Elite cosmopolitanism is celebrated here-
“cocktail hour is a romance linguist's dream - caftan-clad doyennes slip between French,
Spanish and Italian, often in the same sentence. Legendary house parties attract guests
like Giorgio Armani, Francis Ford Coppola, Cindy Crawford and Bill Gates” (Penaloza
2010, 3). In Brignone and Goldsmith’s personal narratives and contemporary travel
writing, the idea of these places collectively as an utopian community of elites congeals.
Giorgio Brignone describes this vision alternately as “lifestyle” and “community”:
“‘Careyes is not for everyone…Yes, this is geared to the luxury market, but with an edge.
We developed this international haven to embrace, not conquer, the jungle. Living the
Careyes lifestyle requires an improvisational spirit - and an adventurous heart.’”
(Penaloza 2010, 3). His description of community is not of local Mexican inhabitants, but
of elite vacationers- “There are not many places that offer polo and the chance to spend
time on the beach with the family. And here, the community invites players into their
homes and has parties and dinners for them—you become a part of the place."
(Middleton 2010, 5). Clientele that compose this fluid cosmopolitan community are
described as European aristocrats, British billionaires, South American playboys, and

ELITE ENVIRONMENTALY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The wealth that claimed these elite spaces and transformed them into private
paradises is also being invested in ecological concerns. Since the 1970’s the Brignone
Foundation has released more than 200,000 turtles as part of the foundation’s Sea Turtle
Protection Program (Penaloza 2010). In 2013 the Careyes Foundation began to focus on
providing environmental, arts, and educational programs for the local community
(although one wonders which local community the foundation is benefitting) (Perrottet 2014). Environmental concerns align closely with aesthetic and privacy concerns for the elite families and guests of Careyes and Chamela. Giorgio Brignone complains that “the problem with many places in Mexico is that a beautiful place has something horrible just on the other side,” and explains why that is not a problem in Careyes; “the quality of architecture at Careyes is consistent over a very extended area. We're also surrounded by an enormous nature reserve, which helps give it a magic that doesn't exist anywhere else.” (Middleton 2010, 5).

Goldsmith ultimately donated much of the land that comprises the Chamela-Cuixmala Biosphere Reserve, and his heirs are some of the harshest critics of currently proposed luxury tourism development neighboring the reserve.\footnote{The Chamela-Cuixmala Biosphere Reserve is a tropical dry forest reserve that protects 13,142 hectares of forests and marshes in the La Huerta Municipality (Sánchez-Azofeifa et al. 2009). The reserve is privately owned and includes a UNAM biological research station, established in 1971. In 1988 the Ecological Foundation of Cuixmala was established, and in 2006 the reserve was designated an UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (www.unesco.org).} While a concern for the preservation of the natural environment undoubtedly influenced the decision to donate land to create the Biosphere Reserve, it is also notable that the Goldsmith dream estate still exists, now protected from infringing development. In a recent Travel and Leisure article, travel writer Tom Austin “steps inside the fantasy” and visits with Goldsmith’s daughter, Alix Goldsmith Marcaccini, who assures Austin that, "Daddy would not have wanted Cuixmala to become one of those dead places, where rich people go only to drink cocktails" (Austin 2016, 1). She explains that “Daddy loved the idea of having his family around him in the jungle, where we could be surrounded by beauty," and how “it took
forever to buy the land from different owners—and then two years and two thousand workers to build all the houses” (Austin 2016, 1). Not all the land was successfully acquired, however, and the author describes the juxtaposition of real and fantasy life:

On the grounds of Cuixmala, within sight of the casitas' swimming pool, is an almost too real village surrounded by luxury. An abandoned car engine and collapsed tin-roof shack are juxtaposed with flowers in plastic buckets, Mickey Mouse towels, and the inevitable satellite dish. Inside a tiny convenience store, workers are chomping on Doritos, falling silent in the presence of a stray gringo. The owner of the village refused to sell the land to Goldsmith, although the residents now have free access to Cuixmala-monitored water and security (Austin 2016, 4).

Locals are mentioned only as an odd foil to the fantasy Goldsmith constructed, or described in the context of friendly service providers, such as Austin’s mention of “the resolutely helpful maids…given to spreading flowers and good cheer throughout every room” (2016, 5). As a travel writer, Austin describes the appeal of this combination of natural beauty, decadence, and glimpses of real life, commenting, “to my taste, the eternal strangeness of Cuixmala, the raw strength, quiet, and breathing room, is what makes it interesting and authentic” (2016, 4). He describes the coast as a series of neighboring resorts, leaving out the towns, like La Manzanilla, in between:

On the opposite side of Cuixmala is another Starwood property, El Tamarindo. As neighbors, the three resorts have an uneasy symbiotic connection: some Cuixmala guests play golf at Tamarindo, and the Goldsmith brigade stayed at Careyes before Cuixmala was built. One international sort describes the scene then as ‘a leftover sixties set, going from pleasure to pleasure’ (Austin 2016, 5).

Goldsmith’s daughter, Marcaccini, who the author describes as “a devout environmentalist who loves Mexico” has transformed the estate into “a combination working farm, relentlessly hip eco-resort, colossal bed-and-breakfast, and politically correct watering hole for the neo-glitterati,” including guests like Madonna, Mick Jaggar, and Quentin Tarantino (a slightly different crowd of celebrities than the likes of Ronald
Regan and Richard Nixon, who visited the estate when her father was alive) (Austin 2016, 2). The idea of environmental consciousness and preserving the natural beauty of the area along with the privacy sought by elites and celebrities, dovetails with the tourism trope of the inevitability of more tourists discovering and ruining the destination.

Middleton notes that “over the past four decades, Gian Franco has maintained an iron grip on Careyes, limiting growth to one beachside hotel with 48 rooms, 36 casitas on a hill above a cove, and some 50 villas with sweeping views out over the bay” (2010, 3). He describes the “little patch of paradise” connecting the Careyes and Chamela properties as “a playground for heiresses, dignitaries, and royalty,” and most recently, “Hollywood and its orbit have descended on this remote land, along with ordinary millionaires looking for a little pedigree and a way into an often sealed-off world” (Middleton 2010, 3–4).

Simultaneously invoking the trope of the tourist threat, and the absolute uniqueness and sameness of the undiscovered destination, this travel writer questions, “As the glare of the spotlight inches closer, how do you protect this sequestered world of private villas and hidden bungalows, this luxe and aesthetically consistent Mexico that is almost impossible to find elsewhere?” (Middleton 2010, 4).

Although geographically very near to these sites of decadent escape, La Manzanilla’s discursive and material production as a tourism and lifestyle migrant destination contrasts significantly with the imaginaries of secluded luxury destinations on the Costalegre.

DESTINATION MEXICO

“Mexico” is produced to draw tourists into a variety of tourism experiences. The state of Jalisco has tourist destinations offering large-scale beach resort tourism (Puerto
small-scale exclusive coastal tourism (sections of the Costalegre, including Careyes), “artist communities” (such as Lake Chapala, which also hosts a large concentration of lifestyle migrants), historical urban centers like Guadalajara, and heritage tourism in colonial towns, including seven *Pueblos Mágicos* (Tequila, Tapalpa, Mazamitla, San Sebastian del Oeste, Lagos de Moreno, Talpa de Allende, and Mascota). *Pueblos Mágicos* are federally designated through the Secretaría del Turismo (SECTUR) and the program supplies financial support to develop and maintain the tourism economy. Tequila, for instance, is a cultural heritage and identity producing destination that manufactures (produces and distributes) a product that represents not only Jalisco, but Mexico as a whole.

In his work on Zapotec weavers William Warner Wood writes that by the 1960s, Mexican tourism officials had “succeeded in blending the resort and indigenous heritage branches of its program under advertising phrases such as ‘so modern yet so foreign’ and ‘so foreign…yet so near’” (Wood 2008, 69). In this discursive framework, “Mexico and its indigenous populace could be both exotic (or otherworldly) and, at the same time, safe (not roving *banditos* but quaint potters) and comfortable (a hotel room with all the amenities of home)” (Warner Wood 2008, 69).

Tourism and lifestyle migration can contribute to the economy in ways that benefit some at the expense of others. Lifestyle migration has been found to have negative long term economic consequences in Mexico in areas that become overly popular or saturated with lifestyle migrants. A recent study in the Lake Chapala area of Jalisco explores recent community tourism development efforts to combat the historically negative impact of residential tourism and lifestyle migration (Bastos 2014). The Lake
Chapala area is comprised of lifestyle migrant-saturated Ajijic and Chapala, and the real estate development target site, Mezcala. Santiago Bastos explains that “what we have seen in the Chapala Lakeshore is how a flourishing residential tourist business is based in part on the great benefits obtained in spaces where structural poverty and peasant culture lead to those peasants selling properties at prices far lower than those obtained by the real estate market” (Bastos 2014, 55). Bastos explains that despite community claims of indigenous identity “Mezcala has not been recognized as an ‘indigenous community’ by the authorities because of the lack of certain traits like an indigenous language” (Bastos 2014, 50-51). He argues that there significant differences in valuations of place for indigenous inhabitants and capitalist-oriented developers in Mezcala. Capitalist development actions are, “based on a vision of space as a product” while for *comuneros* (*pueblo originario*) “it is a source of identity and their very existence” (Bastos 2014, 56). While his absolute distinction between capitalist and indigenous identities obscure the complexity of contemporary Mezcala residents, this case offers an example of community-directed tourism development in Jalisco that may be compared to development efforts in La Manzanilla.

Bastos contends that the Mezcala community transformed the way it was recognized and represented as an act of resistance and means of survival. This transformation from agrarian to indigenous community was initiated “when the institutions and the legitimacy of the post-revolutionary state are no longer useful for maintaining the territory’s integrity, the ‘community’ can no longer be understood as an agrarian authority, but rather as part of an indigenous people” (Bastos 2014, 55). As an indigenous community, “they defend their rights in the name of the rights of the Coca
People of Mezcala and supported by the international treaties that defend those rights” (ibid.). An imaginary of economic, social, and cultural sustainability that involves a community-directed tourism economy has shifted development practices from selling land to real estate developers, to “preparing a proposal for ‘communal tourism’ that would benefit Mezcalenses in a process of autonomous construction” (Bastos 2014, 54).

While La Manzanilla residents are more likely to claim a historically agrarian community identity, this tourism development from within resonates with youth entrepreneurial efforts in La Manzanilla. And in fact, youth discourse on tourism development and community identity indicates a strategic claim on a new cosmopolitan identity which incorporates lifestyle migrant presence and influence. The generation of La Manzanilla youth currently undertaking entrepreneurial and developmental initiatives, and those who are poised to take a leading role in the future development of the community, are producing a tourism imaginary that allows a balance and interdependence between imaginaries of authenticity and modernity, community and cosmopolitanism. This reworking of the tourism imaginary involves entrepreneurial youth and lifestyle migrants in both re-inscribing the place with classic tourism tropes, and redefining La Manzanilla with reworked imaginaries of sustainability and cosmopolitanism that contribute to the economic, material, and sociocultural vitality of the local community.

AN IMAGINARY OF COSMOPOLITAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Rosa is a prime example of young entrepreneur raised in La Manzanilla who is working toward an imaginary of sustainable development in ways that sometime coincide and sometime challenge lifestyle migrant imaginaries of an “authentic Mexican beach community”. Now in her twenties, Rosa grew up in La Manzanilla with regular trips to
the U.S. to visit family. Her mother is Mexican and owns a local specialty shop featuring art, jewelry, and clothing. Her father was one of the original U.S. lifestyle migrants. She received her primary schooling and foundational education in La Manzanilla, and attended the nearby University of Guadalajara satellite campus (Departamento de Estudios para el Desarrollo Sustentable de Zonas Costeras) for a time before moving to the U.S. for several years. She returned to Mexico to travel and learn about sustainable farming and traditional cooking techniques before returning to La Manzanilla and using this hands-on education to start a Pop-up Supper Club business. The Supper Club catered La Manzanilla’s second Contemporary Arts Festival.

Prior to her Pop-up Supper Club, Rosa studied biology, focusing on ethnobotany and ecology. After returning to La Manzanilla she worked on environmental education projects in the community. Rosa described the difficulty of being a young female working with the ejido. She said difficulties eased when the ejido saw the value of university-educated young people intervening to secure government funds for projects in La Manzanilla, such as an ecotourism training program. When they saw they could use her assistance she says, “then it was more of an inclusive effort” (Interview 3/6/13). She also worked with the founder of Tierralegre (prior to the nonprofit’s founding) on environmental education, starting an ethnobotanical garden in the elementary school. She used her environmental education and design skills to design the information boards describing indigenous wildlife, and also assisted in creating the interpretive trail through the mangrove.

On the subject of sustainability, Rosa stresses that local efforts will determine the future of the town, suggesting, “I think it’s up to us to decide what kind of town and what
kind of development we want. If we want to go the sustainable way and keep it ecofriendly…or if we want to just sell out” (Interview 3/6/13). Selling out in this context references several directions that contrast with Rosa’s views of sustainability, including prioritizing short-term financial gain above environmental concerns, and giving up local control of development to outside entities such as transnational corporations. Tempering the general trend among La Manzanilla youth, she did not see tourism as the exclusive future economic solution for the town. She cautioned that tourism comes and goes, and that the community should not exclusively depend on it.

**LOCALLY DIRECTED DEVELOPMENT**

Ecotourism seems to present a viable sustainable alternative to future large scale development efforts that may further compromise the natural environment. However, scholars of tourism and development point out the apparent contradictions in pairing “sustainable” with “development” (Carrigan 2011, 6). Development is linked to the ideology of progress, which Anthony Oliver-Smith argues, “is intimately woven into the cultural fabric of the West, providing a major ideological justification of colonialism and other forms of economic expansion” (Oliver-Smith 2010, 4). In La Manzanilla, as elsewhere, understandings of the world, of progress, of nature, and even of race and class, lie beneath the concept of development (Escobar 1995, Oliver-Smith 2010). On the Costalgre elite developers, lifestyle migrants, local youth, conservationists, ejidatarios, cosmopolitan visionaries, and those that fall in between multiple categories have a range of conflicting imaginaries of sustainability and development. While there is not a firm consensus on sustainable development in La Manzanilla, development is being shaped by
interrelated locally determined initiatives that are taking the form of a community many residents are describing as cosmopolitan.
CHAPTER 4 Emplacement: The Global and the Local in La Manzanilla

Important tensions may arise when places that have been imagined at a distance must become lived spaces (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 11).

In the summer of 2013 a new gym opened in La Manzanilla. It is the first gym in the town, and since its establishment, residents have regularly participated in and taught classes, organized community wellness initiatives like family fun runs, and fundraisers to maintain affordable fees for local residents. I attended the gym opening during the summer low season, in June. It seemed like everyone in town was in attendance, and a series of organizers, community members, and officials (including the president of La Huerta municipality) gave speeches on a temporary stage in front of the gym, where the two main roads in town meet before the intersection of the beach and the mangrove crocodile preserve. The newly acquired town ambulance had also arrived from Guadalajara at last (after years of fundraising, paperwork, training, and logistics) and was on display next to the stage. The opening lasted hours, and included short class demos on the stage from local instructors and select students teaching classes like spinning and elderly women’s aerobics. The wellness center and gym (Activios: Estilo de Vida) is a nonprofit venture started with the cooperation and financial support of a lifestyle migrant family, the La Manzanilla ejido, and the municipal government. In an interview the initiators of this project stressed that it was for local community members, not tourists. They organized an advisory board composed of local Mexican residents with deep community roots to ensure that the center was designed and run in a manner that suited the needs of local community members. The building itself is comprised of a downstairs with weight lifting equipment, and a large upstairs studio covered by a palapa roof where
classes that have included Insanity, Zumba, dance, elderly aerobics, children’s dance, yoga, and spinning are held.

Local youth resident Miguel (discussed in Chapter 3) served on the gym advisory board. During my time in La Manzanilla he was also employed by La Catalina Foundation as one of the teachers for the free adult English classes. Miguel inhabits a unique position connecting several community organizations and entrepreneurial initiatives. Another position he holds, in addition to being a student and working on his own ecotourism business, is as a mangrove tour guide for the lifestyle migrant founder of local environmental nonprofit Tierralegre.

There is a dynamic relationship between youth entrepreneurialism and lifestyle migrant emplacement practices, which is creating the conditions for a locally-directed middle path to tourism development. La Manzanilla youth are taking English and environmental education and pairing it with learned cultural understandings about what is desirable in terms of lifestyle and consumption practices and based on these transmitted imaginaries, are developing businesses in that image-designed to attract more lifestyle migrants and tourists. The idea that lifestyle migrant presence in the community means money and a potentially viable source of income as these youth imagine, talk about, and shape their futures, is definitely a significant factor in entrepreneurial initiatives. But there is also a desire for what they have described as a cosmopolitan influence that (possibly for obvious generational and experiential reasons) is not shared by the elder generation. To address the question of how local youth are redefining La Manzanilla in ways that complicate the imaginaries of authenticity which fuel the dominantly tourism-
driven economy- I suggest this process of redefinition is observable in discourse, practice, and material manifestations in the landscape.

This process is perceptible in discourse, for example when resident youth talk about their experiences, expectations, and plans for the future. New skills and experience are evident in practice and material manifestations. Participation among youth is high in new fitness trends like Zumba and the Insanity workout at the new community gym. The English language is heard with regularity among the younger generation, and is visible in Facebook posts promoting events and businesses in town. Environmental education is manifested visibly in the landscape, in signs marking the ecotourism trail through in the mangrove and the through the jungle to the “hidden” waterfall, Las Joyas. These discourses, practices, and markings on the landscape coalesce in glimpses of potential economic viability, environmental sustainability, and developing cosmopolitanism among the population which now includes local Mexican and foreign lifestyle migrant residents.

In this chapter I discuss the concept of emplacement, and the ways this concept may be applied to the study of lifestyle migration to allow an understanding of often contradictory sentiments and practices. From a broader view, emplacement allows for a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic relationship between lifestyle migrant and local youth practices that are coproducing the cosmopolitan development of La Manzanilla. I continue an examination of the interaction between lifestyle migrant emplacement practices and local youth practices through the transformation of capital, lifestyle migrant motivations, consumption practices, nonprofit initiatives and development.
EMPLACEMENT & “COMMUNITY” DEVELOPMENT

In his work on lifestyle migrants in the Lake Chapala area of Jalisco, David Truly found a shift in the type of migrants coming to the community after the enactment of NAFTA (2006). After 1994, what he described as historically adventurous migrants were faced with a new group of migrants “more prone to ‘importing a lifestyle’ than to adapting to their host community’s established culture” (Truly 2006, 168). Truly credited this shift in the migrant population to a series of factors, including, “the government’s proactive stance toward this type of economic development, the effects of NAFTA, and the increasing presence of multinational corporations and franchises in the region, along with relaxed immigration controls” which all point to a different style of development in the area than in previous eras (2006, 187). Following Stokes (1990), he suggests that these later migrants strived to reproduce their pre-migration lifestyles, including the amenities and conveniences available in Mexico since the enactment of NAFTA. These new migrants were also less inclined to participate in charitable organizations historically run by resident lifestyle migrants (Truly 2006, 170). He argued that this pattern was becoming common in other destinations as well, and that it “may threaten the future of their communities” (ibid.). I suggest that lifestyle migrants are not easily subdivided into “adventurous adapters” and “importers,” and that the concept of emplacement may be useful for addressing the complexity of community dynamics in lifestyle migrant destinations.

In order to make sense of the practices and discourses I encountered in La Manzanilla, and to delve beyond the surface of post-migration practices and relationships both to the environment and to residents, I employ the concept of “emplacement”. I adapt
this concept to describe lifestyle migrant processes not only of “knowing” place and of making home, or finding a niche within an adopted community, but also of importing ideas about “ideal community” to adopted homes. This includes, in the case of lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla, initiating changes as well as participating in already existing frameworks of community development. This multi-faceted conceptualization of emplacement understands lifestyle migrant practices in La Manzanilla as complex and dynamic, moving beyond the superficial engagements with destinations often experienced by tourists.

“Emplacement” has been conceptualized most closely to my application of the term in works in the anthropology of space and place. In the volume *Senses of Place* (1996), philosopher Edward S. Casey describes emplacement as related to embodiment— we are always bodies in place, we experience and know the world around us through our emplaced bodies. Casey describes how, “as places gather bodies in their midst in deeply enculturated ways, so cultures conjoin bodies in concrete circumstances of emplacement” (Casey 1996, 46). I want to extend this body-place dynamic to include imagination-body-place.32 Like globalization scholars such as Appadurai (1990), scholars of critical mobilities (Soderstrom et al. 2013) and lifestyle mobilities (Cohen et al. 2015) highlight the movement of ideas as well as the flows of people and things. Emplacement, as I am using it, describes not only knowing and understanding (culturally inscribed, embodied) places- but also describes emplacement as processes of inscription. This includes, in the case of lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla, initiating changes in the community as well as participating in already existing frameworks of community development. It involves

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32 As suggested by scholars such as Ward (2003).
importing uprooted ideas about “community” and “paradise” and inscribing the place with new meaning(s), as well as materially manifesting those ideas.

These dual aspects of emplacement include practices that involve learning a place- the process of becoming situated and integrating; learning, for instance, that in La Manzanilla most everything closes for a few hours in the afternoon during the peak heat of the day. It may also involve learning to speak Spanish, and of participating in community events and celebrations. Emplacement also describes the practice of transporting uprooted ideas about “community” and “paradise” and virtually and materially inscribing the place with new meanings. Examples of this aspect of emplacement may include organizing an art walk, organizing a 5 K fun run, or opening a gourmet deli. It may also mean building a large house on the beach. It is the process of learning a place on the one hand- of fitting into a chosen, adopted community and lifestyle. And on the other hand, of co-constructing and shaping that place.

These emplacement practices result in both intentional and unintentional consequences. Lifestyle migrant emplacement is visible for example in locally-conceived nonprofit projects. Though often initiated by people not considered “local” these projects are conceived of and organized locally in La Manzanilla. Nonprofit organization Tierralegre has initiated several community projects, including the Y.E.S. Initiative (Youth, Ecology, and Sustainability) and Agro-Ecology Center. The Tierralegre Agro-Ecology Center has grown on 2,500 square meters donated by the ejido. I saw the space transform from an unused lot to a thriving garden and educational space between fall 2012 and summer 2013, and now in addition to garden beds, it includes a shade greenhouse, an irrigation system, a worm composting system, composting toilets, and a
kitchen with a grey-water bio-filter system. The center is primarily constructed out of bamboo and recycled materials. Tierralegre has now expanded the initiative to other schools in the La Huerta municipality.

Nonprofit projects such as this educational garden and ecology center exemplify emplacement as both a process of knowing and inscribing. Here we see nonprofit projects assemble lifestyle migrant and local Mexican residents around community development initiatives largely focused on particular visions of environmental and sociocultural sustainability. These projects primarily target the current generation of school-aged La Manzanilla youth, and their success is largely dependent on the positive response and participation of this generation. We also see emplacement practiced as inscription—importing ideas and practices that change a place. This practice among lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla involves both “improving” the place through philanthropy (be it time or money) associated with education and environmentalism. It also involves importing imaginaries of community that include things like a bookstore. Miranda Joseph describes these aspects of the community imaginary, noting,

To participate in a community in the United States is to participate in a group with certain standardized features, such as businesses (bars, bookstores, restaurants and foodshops, small-scale manufacturing) and often more importantly, civil voluntary organizations (churches, schools, arts organizations, lobbying groups, employees associations) that are frequently organized as governmentally regulated and state-sanctioned non-for-profit corporations. If the group does not operate in this way…it is not given the status of a ‘community’ (Joseph 2002, 28).

The nonprofit projects in La Manzanilla are largely independent from governmental involvement, but Joseph’s list touches on a number of “standardized features” of community emplaced by lifestyle migrants. Miranda Joseph argues that community in the U.S. is supplementary to capitalism. She writes that claiming
community, “one inscribes oneself into the machinery that turns the raw material of community into subjects of the nation-state and capital. That machinery is the bureaucratic and capitalist apparatus that community must inhabit in the United States,” and, “It is precisely in generating and legitimating social hierarchy,” she explains, “that ‘community’ supplements (enables, fills a void in) capitalism” (Joseph 2002, 9). I use community not to erase hierarchical differences of power, but to describe the relationships between people, environment, and imaginaries in a particular locale or settlement.

“Community” is one of these concepts (similar to authenticity) that exists only in relation to its lack or negation- it is linked to a disenchantment or perceived failure of modernity and progress. What Joseph calls “the discourse of community,”

Positions community as the defining other of modernity, of capitalism. This discourse includes a Romantic narrative of community as prior in time to ‘society,’ locating community in a long-lost past for which we yearn nostalgically from our current fallen state of alienation, bureaucratization, rationality. It distinguishes community from society spatially, as local (2002, 1).

As community is idealized it is detached from social, economic, political, historical conditions, and “the Romantic discourse of community does this precisely by placing community in an idealized past, disconnected from the present” (Joseph 2002, 9). The idealization of community is part of both 1) the nostalgic longing for authenticity propelling lifestyle migrants to La Manzanilla (similar to that which generates tourism according to scholars like MacCannell (1976)), and 2) the pervasive imaginary being emplaced in La Manzanilla by lifestyle migrants.

It is ironic that community is often invoked in neoliberal development and tourism projects because, as João Afonso Baptista notes, “the concept of community is
situated, from the seventeenth century onward, in critiques of modernity…Community became entrenched in the modern moral order as nostalgia about an imaginary past but also as a contemporary moral solution to problems caused by those same conditions brought about by modernity” (Baptista 2014, 135). He cautions,

We should be more suspicious about community as an axiomatic term and treat it instead as an ideology of interests. The imaginary of community in tourism is a “Northern” response to the disappointment with progress. But community must be understood as being more than in tension with modern society. It is also an expression of modernity that has become central to some peoples’ lives (Baptista 2014, 142).

Baptista’s discussion of community comes from the recent volume, *Tourism Imaginaries (2014)*. In the introduction Noel B. Salazar and Nelson H. H. Graburn define imaginaries as “socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people’s personal imaginings and that are used as meaning-making and world-shaping devices” (2014, 1). I am particularly interested in the “world-shaping” capacity of imaginaries in this discussion, and the ways in which imaginaries interact with the ways a variety of residents are shaping the material and sociocultural landscape of La Manzanilla. In the same volume Baptista discusses the implications of the community imaginary in a developing “community tourism” destination. John and Jean Comaroff (2009) describe a similar relationship between tourism, capitalism, and (identity) community. The question of control over development and representation is precarious in the relationship between localities and tourism. Through consumption practices encouraged by discourses of tourism and development, community is produced to “match the imaginaries that constitute the modern moral order of the tourist-consumers” (Baptista 2014, 136).

“Moreover,” Baptista explains,
The underlying force that leads to such a capitalization on moral imaginaries is highly driven by nongovernmental regimes. ...In this sense, the use of discourses of community in development and, in turn, by the community members themselves helps constitute a space of inter/invention, in which the revenues generated (e.g., deriving from funds, donations, or tourism consumption) are morally justified through, and for, the imaginary of community. Consequently, those who constitute the imaginary—the community members—become locked into the regime of power and knowledge that the imaginary of community produces (Baptista 2014, 136-137).

Lifestyle migration in La Manzanilla shares similarities with “community tourism” most notably through the presence and practices of nonprofit organizations. This overlap between lifestyle migrant nonprofit projects and community tourism benefits from the discussions of power in both Joseph and Baptista’s work, because, as Baptista writes, “the concept of community entails the moral imaginary through which ‘neoliberal’ and nongovernmental institutions can best exercise their intentions. For that reason, the constitution of communities is an act of power” (Baptista 2014, 139). While my work builds on Joseph and Baptista’s description of the way power works with the imaginary of community, ultimately the local youth I spoke with and observed in La Manzanilla challenge Baptista’s assertion that community members are “locked into the regime of power and knowledge that the imaginary of community produces” (2014, 137). These entrepreneurs are working with a range of local residents to guide community development, building on and complicating imaginaries of authenticity, cosmopolitanism, and community in La Manzanilla. The dialogic relationship between lifestyle migrant emplacement practices and youth entrepreneurial initiatives demonstrates the potential for sustainable or viable community-directed development.
EMPLACEMENT & CAPITAL: FORMS AND TRANSFORMATIONS

In *The Forms of Capital* (1986) Bourdieu describes the relationship between economic, cultural, and social capital in terms of conversions or transformations of one sort of capital to another. I apply Bourdieu’s discussion of the forms of capital to illuminate the relationship between lifestyle migrant imaginaries and emplacement practices and youth entrepreneurialism which reconfigures privilege and power. Bourdieu describes cultural capital in institutionalized (e.g. educational qualifications), embodied (e.g. bodily dispositions), and objectified forms (e.g. cultural goods) (1986, 17). If in the institutionalized form it may be discerned through educational qualifications, in the embodied form I would extend cultural capital to other forms of learning and knowledge production. For lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla cultural capital presupposes economic capital. Cultural capital in the embodied state is discernable in ways of being in place- of speaking, of moving, etc. that signal localness. The cost of cultivating this cultural capital is time, which, as Bourdieu describes, “like the acquisition of a muscular physique or a suntan, it cannot be done at second hand” (1986, 18). By this understanding, those lifestyle migrants who have lived in La Manzanilla longer may have more cultural capital. However, more time does not necessarily equate to more cultural capital.

The first aspect of emplacement, which involves practices associated with getting to know and fit into the daily rhythms of a new place, articulates with a particular understanding about how to acquire cultural capital. In this sense we may understand the process through a hypothetical lifestyle migrant who has the economic capital to relocate to La Manzanilla, and has the time to learn the local “ways of life” in this new place.
They acquire embodied cultural capital, discernable perhaps in language fluency, in mannerisms, and ways of interacting with residents which marks them over time as more and more (although never entirely) “local”. This cultural capital marks this hypothetical lifestyle migrant from other, possibly newer lifestyle migrants. It also converts into social capital, as their social network expands beyond a circle of familiar lifestyle migrants.

Lifestyle migrant economic capital enables their acquisition of other forms of capital. Economic capital can transform into cultural capital (as in the case of lifestyle migrants who have the means to move and time to spend) and cultural capital can transform into social capital (as in the case of lifestyle migrants who put in the time and acquire cultural capital, therefore expanding their local network).

Pairing cultural capital with the concept of emplacment allows us to see how lifestyle migrants gain embodied cultural capital through learning how to fit in to the place as it exists, but emplacement practices also add another layer to the ways cultural capital works in the social space of La Manzanilla. Bourdieu explains that “the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e., the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which governs its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices” (Bourdieu 1986, 15).

The successful acquisition of cultural capital over time is accomplished through emplacement practices involving education about how to be in the place, but as I argue here, emplacement practices among lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla are never one-sided. In other words, they are never about total immersion, but also involve consciously and unconsciously initiating changes in their adopted community. This transformative
aspect of emplacement then changes the place and therefore the process of acquiring cultural capital. This inevitably results in their participation in frameworks of knowledge production which sets the terms of what is considered or may be cultural capital.

This positions resident youth at a potential advantage in terms of locally recognized cultural capital. Initial accumulation begins at birth for those born into families with strong cultural capital, because they are socialized into it they have the opportunity to put the maximum amount of time in (without necessarily realizing it)-youth who come from families which successfully navigate the confluence of local/lifestyle migrant influence potentially have the strongest cultural capital. This cultural capital translates easily into social capital, which in the case of La Manzanilla may extend beyond local spheres to include a transnational social network.

It is through this cultural capital that resident youth are reconfiguring lifestyle migrant economic capital. This generation of community members are appropriating this changed cultural capital through learning the language, ideologies, behaviors, and consumption habits of lifestyle migrants. It is in some sense the flip side of the process in which lifestyle migrants learn to acquire their situated [local] cultural capital. Resident youth reconfigure this transmitted double helix cultural capital. Transforming lifestyle migrant economic and cultural capital into their own cultural, social, and economic capital, this generation is reconfiguring lifestyle migrant privilege and claiming the power to determine what kind of place La Manzanilla is, and what roles they will play there.
LIFESTYLE MIGRATION IN MEXICO

The conceptualization of “emplacement” I suggest here has the potential to bring ethnography to bear on the complex dynamics unfolding in places that are becoming infused with lifestyle migrants. The majority of work on lifestyle migration in the western hemisphere is focused on Mexico.\(^{33}\) Mexico’s proximity to the U.S. and Canada has facilitated the growing trend of lifestyle migration with relative ease. There is currently an initiative to extend Medicare to U.S. citizens residing in Mexico (Haims and Dick 2010, Ibarra 2012, Ibarra and Cardinal ND), and should this policy be implemented there will likely be an increase in U.S. retirees relocating to Mexico. Developers are keen to capitalize on this trend, and have begun to invest in private research on the phenomenon, which comprises some of the most recent knowledge in the area of lifestyle migration. This research indicates that lifestyle migration is not limited to retirees, and is an increasingly popular trend, not merely a passing fad (Dixon et al. 2006, Adams\(^{34}\) 2007). They determine a general profile for lifestyle migrants as young, active, well-educated, well-traveled, a group that maintains strong ties to the U.S. (Kiy\(^{35}\) and McEnany 2010). In contrast to earlier studies (Swenson 1974, Holder 1976) this recent work points to a class shift among lifestyle migrants, indicating that economic concerns are among the

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\(^{33}\) Much of the work on the lifestyle migration phenomenon comes out of Europe, however a small but growing body of scholarship concentrates on north-south consumption-based migrations in the Americas (Benson and O’Reilly 2009b, McWatters 2009, Myers 2009, Janoschka 2009, Spalding 2013). This scholarship addresses development conflicts and tensions between tourists and lifestyle migrants, as well as different types of lifestyle migrants (ibid.).

\(^{34}\) Robert Adams is president and CEO of New Global Initiatives, a global marketing firm.

\(^{35}\) Richard Kiy is the president and CEO of the International Community Foundation.
primary considerations in relocation decisions. Recent lifestyle migrants, they find, contribute resources (intellectual and economic) and are committed to their adopted communities, provided they maintain their “authenticity,” and suggest Mexican policy makers and developers “capitalize on growing consumer interest in ‘greener’ living” (Kiy and McEnany 2011).

Early academic studies of North American lifestyle migrants in Mexico are limited to dissertations addressing Jalisco in particular, generally focus on retirees, and foreshadow the potential future impact of mass baby boomer retirement occurring now (Ball 1972, Swenson 1974, Holder 1976). Connecting early migration studies to contemporary lifestyle migration research in Mexico, Eleanore Stokes found Lake Chapala & Ajijic lifestyle migrants to be a transnational community still heavily tied to their country of origin and engaging in paternalistic philanthropic practices (1990). She revealed a community of foreign residents balancing an ideology in which the United States is superior to Mexico, and a reality in which they have no political power in their adopted homes (Stokes 1990).

Contemporary research on lifestyle migration in Mexico tends to fall into two general categories. The first category analyzes lifestyle migration trends and finds lifestyle migrants are drawn to scenic towns and willing to invest in both property and community relationships, and could therefore be utilized as a source of profit with proper infrastructure development (Otero 1997, Sunil et al. 2007). The second category explores lifestyle migrant processes of transnational identity negotiation, and the impact of lifestyle migration on host communities (Banks 2004, Bloom 2006, Truly 2006, Clausen 2008, Croucher 2009, Morales 2010).
Lifestyle migrants maintain strong transnational ties, negotiate multiple nodes of identity, and transplant North American practices and ideology. Often these “migrants of privilege” remain strongly tethered to their country of origin through communication technology, bank accounts, and even continued participation in U.S. politics (Croucher 2009, 2012). Increasingly these migrants of privilege are flocking to Mexico in search of lives they deem “more authentic”. Lifestyle migrants express an admiration for the slower rhythms of life and strong sense of community as well as unique natural landscapes that surround them south of the border. Their mobility is made possible in part by a low cost of living compared to the U.S., and facilitated by contemporary technologies. They maintain close ties to family north of the border, manage their finances online, and participate in U.S. popular culture through technology, and this technological mobility is for many a key factor in the decision to relocate (Croucher 2009).

Philanthropy emerges as a focal point in much of this lifestyle migration research, and researchers describe the contradictions in the foreign populations’ presence and practices, between decadence and charity, and argue that philanthropy acts to compensate lifestyle migrant guilt at living luxuriously while much of the local population struggles (Banks 2004, Bloom 2006, Clausen 2008). Stephen Banks, for example, reveals a pattern of reflexive narrative positioning in which adjusting to life in a new culture results in a neocolonial role of self-described “tolerance” and “charity” among a host population painted as “untrustworthy” and “lazy”, while simultaneously “welcoming” and “dependent” (2004). David Truly’s research is particularly relevant in my discussion of lifestyle migrant emplacement, as he identifies the trend of foreigners importing the
“American way of life” to their adopted communities and credits NAFTA as a factor in attracting this new brand of “importer” lifestyle migrant to the area (Truly 2006, 177).

**MOBILITY, COSMOPOLITAN TASTES & CONSUMPTION PRACTICES**

A significant cultural shift occurred in Post-war U.S. society as Americans transitioned from rooted communities to suburban living and “tried to make a life out of the ever-growing gamut of new goods and services on offer, from washing machines to packaged holidays, and the freer individual life-styles they facilitated” (Taylor 2007, 474). This shift provided an alternative to “more traditional fixed forms of collective and personal identity, thus allowing people to define themselves not only by who they were, or who they knew, but by what they owned and how they displayed it” (Lindholm 2008, 54). In this context, the newly prevalent middle class consumer culture encouraged the individual to develop their taste to suit their personality and preferences (Taylor 2007).

Consumption in these discussions is not limited to the material domain. Holidays and vacationing offer a rich arena to explore consumption-as-identity-building practice. Löfgren describes vacationing as a consumer “laboratory” for exploring and trying on new lifestyles (1999, 281). Leisure as a form of conspicuous consumption operates as a symbol of social status (Veblen 1899, MacCannell 1976). “Even consumption is a production,” argues Kathleen Stewart, “a production of class, privilege, the power to model reality, or a production of relationships or the carnivalesque, spectacle atmosphere of the country auction where the objects are laid out for collective display and their value marked as a social construction in a fast bid between characters” (1988, 234).

In an early (1988) discussion about cosmopolitanism and public culture, Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge describe cosmopolitan cultural forms in terms of
consumer taste in leisure activities. They argue that as cosmopolitan cultural forms, they “seem to be drawing the world into a disturbing cultural sameness. But as vehicles for cultural significance and the creation of group identities, every society appears to bring to these forms its own special history and traditions, its own cultural stamp, its own quirks and idiosyncrasies” (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 5). The significance of cosmopolitanism in La Manzanilla lies in the cultural productions in the social and material interactions of those who reside there. The relationships I focus on in this discussion- between youth entrepreneurs and lifestyle migrants- are producing a unique cosmopolitan group identity and influencing the identity of the place. This public culture is visible in discourse and on the landscape.

Like consumers of Tuscan olive oil or artisanal Basque cheese for example, we may read lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla as similarly consuming a product deriving unique value and status from place. In Contested Spatialities, Lifestyle Migration and Residential Tourism (2014), Michael Janoschka and Heiko Haas explain how neoliberal doctrine relates consumption, lifestyle, and place;

The individual construction of identity is commonly related to consumption habits which embody and express the individualization of lifestyles. But within late capitalism, consumption does not exclusively mean the purchase of manufactured goods. It is also related to rather intangible services and, particularly in our case, to the consumption of produced places and natural landscapes (2014, 3).

In the case of La Manzanilla the place becomes the commodity- but the place as commodity is not merely geographical- it functions as both the symbol and setting for “lifestyle” including imaginaries about cosmopolitanism, authenticity, paradise, and “the simple life”. These imaginaries (addressed repeatedly in tourism scholarship) are wrapped up in the lifestyle commodity package. Consuming this place-and-lifestyle-as-
product reflects the taste of the lifestyle migrants-as-consumers. But it also reflects the cosmopolitan tastes of local youth who are directing tourism and community development in La Manzanilla.

While a prestige product like olive oil may cross borders into expanding markets, in La Manzanilla it is the lifestyle migrants as consumers who are mobile, while the product (the place) remains immobile, as is the case generally in tourist consumption practices. Imaginaries about place and lifestyle are also mobile, and may travel with lifestyle migrants as cosmopolitan capital. The concept of imaginaries is particularly useful for approaching this idea of La Manzanilla as both process and product. The relationship between mobility and cosmopolitanism is multidirectional. For physically mobile lifestyle migrants cosmopolitanism may become a marker of status in their various homes, but it may more aptly describe the generation of youth that have grown up among them. This generation exemplifies Salazar’s (2010) contention that mobility is not a necessary condition for cosmopolitanism.

LEARNING TO “BE LOCAL” IN LA MANZANILLA

Many tourism scholars have described the distinction between different class perceptions of “vulgar tourism” and sophisticated tourists, with vulgar tourists depicted as caricatures in socks and sandals photographing everything they encounter, and sophisticated tourists as somehow more adept and blending in with the locals. Löfgren, for example, highlights the complexities of taxonomies and hierarchies of residents and visitors, and suggestively asks, “who is a local, who is a regular” (1999, 198). In La Manzanilla, the distinctions residents and visitors make between us and them, local and

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foreign, are fluid and contextual rather than firm and fixed. Rather than defining the
different groups in La Manzanilla, or laying out some type of continuum of locality, I set
out to describe some of the distinctions residents and visitors ascribe to various groups
usually positioned as distinct from themselves. In this section I will discuss the ways that
“local” is defined, and describe some of the distinctions lifestyle migrant residents make
among themselves, and how they recognize and position themselves in relation to their
idea of “localness”.

Identifying in terms of nationality, as Mexican, does not translate directly into a
“local” identity in La Manzanilla. While some consider those residents born and raised in
town (including the children of lifestyle migrants) to be local, some residents deem local
to signify only La Manzanilla residents with familial ties to the original founding
ejidatarios. Mexican residents who move to La Manzanilla from neighboring
communities may be considered locals by lifestyle migrants, but many (including these
transplants themselves) will continue to consider these residents as somewhat outsiders
despite (often) many years of residence, local business ownership, and/or deep
community participation. Lifestyle migrants themselves are often the most stringent in
their definitions of local and outsider. There is a range of criteria on which they evaluate
relative localness- from the lifestyle migrant “founding families,” to home and business
ownership, to Spanish language fluency and community involvement. Anthropologist
Karen Stocker found a similar pattern among expats in a coastal Costa Rican town
(2013).

Year-round lifestyle migrants often position themselves in opposition to seasonal
lifestyle migrants. Seasonal lifestyle migrants, often called snowbirds, primarily flock to
town in the winter high season, which peaks between November and March. Lifestyle migrants from the U.S. describe the season as typically lasting from around Thanksgiving to Easter, and seasonal lifestyle migrants often head north before the heavy influx of national tourists during *semana santa*. Year-round or permanent lifestyle migrants are in the minority compared to seasonal migrants, and generally relate their distinction from seasonal residents with pride. They exchange knowing glances among themselves if a seasonal resident should comment on the heat or humidity-a glance which says “you don’t know heat until you live through a summer season here”.

After two summers conducting preliminary field research during the low season I got to know primarily Mexican residents and full-time lifestyle migrants. During my thirteen month dissertation fieldwork period in La Manzanilla I experienced my first high season in town, and became acquainted with many of the seasonal lifestyle migrants through an exhausting circuit of fundraising events, art openings, performances, and dinner parties. I noticed the first seasonal residents arriving on October 27th, which I noted in field notes as “the first unfamiliar gringos bench pressing outside of Melinda’s liquor store” (*Licorería Costalinda*). (Bench pressing is what some lifestyle migrants have labeled the practice of purchasing beers from Melinda and drinking them on the bench immediately outside the shop facing the *jardín*, or town plaza). Seasonal residents are often characterized by year-round lifestyle migrants by the surge of activities that inundate the high season- the openings at the art galleries which are closed during the summer months, the full-service extended hours at many restaurants, both foreign and locally operated, the annual series of fundraising events organized by the community nonprofits, etc. It is a season of much activity, and one can quickly become overwhelmed
trying to attend everything. In terms of recreational activities, it is a stark contrast to the idle summer low season which is characterized by a general sense of spontaneity and more relaxed leisure time. The low season is also characterized by a notable decrease in employment for many local residents.

While collecting comprehensive demographic information on foreign residents in La Manzanilla was not feasible, I can comment on some general patterns among foreign residents. There are more seasonal than full-time lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla; full-time residents are more likely to own a home, while seasonal residents are equally likely to own or rent; seasonal residents are more likely to be upper class, while full time residents are more likely to be middle class. This pattern makes sense when the cost of travel, and multi-sited residence, and employment are taken into consideration. To live in La Manzanilla seasonally means that you most likely maintain a residence elsewhere, you can afford the transportation costs associated with seasonal residence, and you don’t have to consider employment (which could be because of independent wealth, retirement, or the ability to work remotely). Among full time residents I knew in La Manzanilla, many maintained only their Mexican residence, and many worked or owned businesses in town. Retired full-time residents were more likely to own a home, while younger working residents and older residents living off a VA pension were more likely to rent.

While seasonal residents were united in a class position that allowed them a mobile residence pattern, their housing varied considerably. Seasonal lifestyle migrants may own property in town or on the geographic fringes of town. They may rent their property out during the months they live elsewhere (usually in the U.S. or Canada). Or they may return each winter and rent a place to stay, from another lifestyle migrant, or
from a local Mexican resident. Owning property alone did not seem to accord full or seasonal lifestyle migrants much in the way of cultural capital.\(^\text{37}\)

There is a widespread sense among both year-round and seasonal lifestyle migrants that full-time lifestyle migrants have more successfully adopted, appropriated, and integrated elements of “local culture” into their lifestyles. “Local knowledge turns into cultural capital” among lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla as among Löfgren’s summer cottage vacationers (Löfgren 1999, 139). Seasonal lifestyle migrant Donna, who works as a chef in Taos, New Mexico part of the year, commented on the impact of longer stays in La Manzanilla. “It makes all the difference when you can stay longer,” she reflected, “I started appreciating the town more” (Interview 3/7/13). There is also a common self-positioning in which high value is attributed to the extent to which they have been able to integrate into the local community scene. The longer one has been in the community, the more “local capital” they are awarded by other lifestyle migrants. Lifestyle migrant couple Mary and Martin describe what they see as the distinction between lifestyle migrants and tourists, relating that “the people that are building here are becoming part of the community,” whereas tourists are, “just coming and going” (Interview 2/28/13).

**BEYOND BRIE: INTENTIONAL AND UNINTENTIONAL EMPLACEMENT**

From a broad view, there is a widespread lifestyle migrant imaginary of La Manzanilla as “authentic Mexican community”. However, in interpersonal relationships

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\(^{37}\) Bourdieu defines capital as “accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its “incorporated,” embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (1986, 15).
and interactions with youth through nonprofit projects, lifestyle migrants promote and encourage the changes that are ultimately leading to this place becoming more like the places they left behind. Lifestyle migrants are not superficial characters in La Manzanilla. The motivations of most of my research participants for moving to a new community in a new country share some of the historically nobler motivations for travel—attempt to experience and understand life from another cultural perspective. Their emplacement practices often reveal this desire for cultural understanding. Emplacement practices also reveal a significant investment in their adopted community. This investment has resulted in intentional and unintentional changes in the town.

The post 1995 residential shift identified by research participants as the influx of lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla also coincide with economic and sociocultural shifts associated with globalization, including transnational trade agreements (NAFTA) and the emergence of the internet. These developments have all contributed to cultural change in La Manzanilla. The sociocultural changes connected to lifestyle migrant emplacement involve the long-term maintenance of relationships that have a lasting influence on the generation of local youth that have been raised in this climate. As Miguel observed, in the high school he attended with students from several neighboring communities, the kids from La Manzanilla stood out with “another mindset, another view of the world” (Interview 7/15/2013). Miguel describes this difference as a cultural influence, and characterizes it as cosmopolitan, noting, “you gain other ideas from other cultures, and it's good in the end. It's like a little cosmopolitan area because it's not just Americans and Canadians, you have Europeans, and people from other places. Many perspectives and cultures.” (Interview 7/15/2013).
In addition to intentional emplacement practices, lifestyle migrants also emplace the residual, ingrained, subconscious baggage of their previous homes, lives, and countries. Along with their quest for the simple life in this tropical paradise, they bring the taste for wine and sharp cheddar, and the desire to fill some empty time with an art gallery opening or an evening at the pop-up Supper Club. The founder of the nonprofit bookstore uses imported cheese to make a point about the subtle but pervasive impact of lifestyle migrant taste and consumer culture, noting, “If you lived in a town more remote in the mountains or the interior, without the expat community, you wouldn’t have brie cheese, you wouldn’t have all those choices” (Interview 1/14/13).

Through their creative reconfiguring of privilege these residents are transforming lifestyle migrant capital into their own, developing businesses to attract more tourists and lifestyle migrants which disrupt the (already unrealistic) imaginary of quaint “authentic paradise”. While this locally directed development may disrupt some elements of the “authentic Mexican community” imaginary, it demonstrates the potential to attract and maintain a type of lifestyle migrant who reveals more long-term investment in an alternative cosmopolitan imaginary that coincides more closely to the aspirations of this generation of entrepreneurs.
CHAPTER 5 The Authentic Global and the Cosmopolitan Local

Because ironically, nowadays the authentic coastal Mexican experience is development and tourism from the United States. But we have this tendency as Americans to think that the authentic experience doesn’t include Americans (Andrew Interview 3/13/09).

During my fieldwork in La Manzanilla I took several Spanish classes at La Catalina Natural Language School. The language school is the for-profit affiliate of La Catalina Foundation. A section of the school’s website subtitled “Why La Manzanilla” answers; “La Catalina Natural Language School is located in the charming village of La Manzanilla, Jalisco, Mexico…The warm climate, beautiful beaches and friendly Mexican people make La Manzanilla a real tropical paradise” (www.lacatalinaschool.com). The website also explains that, “the town has managed to preserve its authentic appeal while also welcoming visitors from other countries” (ibid.). Spanish classes were held in a three-story building with a large palapa roof that was once intended to be a multicultural center. My first class was held on the top floor, where the open-air floorplan featured incredible views of the ocean. Aside from the view, the space was ordinary and largely underutilized. There was a foldout table and plastic chairs in the middle of the room where we had our lessons, and a countertop, small row of shelves, a stand-up oscillating fan, and five gallon water dispenser in the corner.

The building was constructed along with the small Montaña del Mar development which includes a series of matching multi-storied homes with a shared pool and gardens. These are primarily vacation rentals now, and were built after the ’95 land rush by a developer I heard many stories about who no longer resides in La Manzanilla. The stories people told me indicated he was forced out of town by the disapproval of both local Mexican and lifestyle migrant residents. He was described as a small-scale version of
international retirement lifestyle marketers, *International Living Magazine*, moving to an “undiscovered” destination, securing investments, initiating developments, and then moving on to the next location to begin again.³⁸ Lifestyle migrants who knew him in La Manzanilla explained that he moved from Lake Chapala and enticed other lifestyle migrants and seasonal residents to follow with the promise that he would build them stunning, affordable homes on the hill with breathtaking ocean views. Most of this crowd left within a few years and returned to Lake Chapala or San Miguel de Allende because they were accustomed to more developed infrastructure (paved roads, more regular access to water and electricity) and more “culture,” like the ballet, for example. La Manzanilla, I was told, was too rustic for them.

Many lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla voiced disapproval of the uniformly obtrusive style of homes this developer built, and the type of lifestyle migrant that accompanied him. Lifestyle migrants I spent time with reflected that this crowd was more insular and spent their time with one another, at dinner parties and events, rather than integrating into the broader community. The architectural complaints mirrored these social patterns— the new development marred the otherwise unique landscape because of the way the matching homes stuck out rather than integrating with the landscape. I was also told the story of a dispute between this developer and some local construction workers over payment for construction labor. According to local Mexican and lifestyle migrant residents who were around at the time, he was forced to move when things were made too uncomfortable for him in La Manzanilla, including threats and slashed tires. A

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³⁸ See research on the negative impact of *International Living Magazine* McWatters (2009), Myers (2009), for example.
lifestyle migrant resident I spoke with used this as an example to demonstrate that if
foreigners behave badly, they can be forced out of town with indirect forms of resistance.

The story of this expelled foreign developer exemplifies emplacement practices
on the extreme change end of the spectrum between integration and change. This story
demonstrates local reactions to development that is not perceived as beneficial to the
community. It also illustrates lifestyle migrant policing of development to conform to
imaginaries of authenticity in their adopted communities. In the last chapter I broke the
concept of emplacement down into practices characterized by adaption and those
characterized by change. Within the transformational aspect of emplacement there are
practices that are generally accepted by the group (of lifestyle migrants) and those that
are criticized. Practices that are not accepted reflect a moral objection to those who are
not trying to fit in, not just to “the community” but also to an imaginary of La Manzanilla
as an authentic coastal Mexican paradise. While lifestyle migrant emplacement practices
in La Manzanilla demonstrate this imaginary is flexible enough to include community
“improvement” projects initiated via nonprofit organizations, as well as some consumer
comforts, it does not allow for large scale development that conflicts with the “small
town, Mexico” character of the place they find desirable.

The generation of local entrepreneurs shaping the direction of community
development are not unaware of the tourism imaginaries of authenticity and paradise that
draw tourists and lifestyle migrants to La Manzanilla. In this chapter I discuss the
significance of tourism imaginaries to community development in La Manzanilla, and
argue that local entrepreneurs are incorporating these popular imaginaries into their own
vision of La Manzanilla as a cosmopolitan destination, capitalizing on the interplay of the
authentic local and the cosmopolitan global. I begin by using popular travel writings and online media to examine the discursive production of La Manzanilla as an authentic tropical Mexican paradise. I then discuss how these imaginaries draw lifestyle migrants to La Manzanilla, and are then challenged by daily experience in the community. Finally I discuss the emerging cosmopolitan imaginary of La Manzanilla that both incorporates and contests traditional imaginaries.

**PLAYA LA MANZANILLA**

La Manzanilla’s virtual production includes tourism tropes of the naturally picturesque hidden gem, as demonstrated in travel writing about luxury Costa Alegre destinations. It also includes, however, imaginaries of “the timeless authentic Mexican community,” depicting a family-friendly, cultural immersion in paradise. In contrast to travel writing about nearby luxury tourism destinations portraying elites escaping the burdens of privilege, tourists and lifestyle migrants in representations of La Manzanilla are depicted as average middle-class North American vacationers.

A limited story about La Manzanilla starts to emerge in online travel guides, travel articles, and business oriented informative websites. In classic print travel guide *Fodor’s Mexico (2007)* the town is mentioned as a beach, Playa La Manzanilla, and placed, “a little more than a kilometer in from the highway, on the southern edge of Bahia de Tenacatita, 193 km (120 mi) south of Puerto Vallarta” (Johansen 2007, 604). It is presented as a natural paradise. Fodor’s Travel Guide explains that Playa La Manzanilla is “a crescent of soft, gold sand where kids play in the shallow water while their parents sip cold drinks at one of several seafood shacks” in the bay “somewhat protected by the Piedra Blanca headland to the north” (Johansen 2007, 600). The guide describes the safe
boundaries of the beach, assuring tourists that “the bay is calm” and “at the beach road’s north end, gigantic, rubbery-looking crocodiles lie heaped together just out of harm’s way in a mangrove swamp” (Johansen 2007, 604). This is an almost fairy-tale image of the ideal family vacation, with parents so secure in this “safe” beach paradise that they can relax and imbibe without a care as their children roam in the “gentle surf” of the ocean, near benign, cartoon-like versions of wild crocodiles. This sentiment is echoed by a couple from Los Angeles that own a vacation home in La Manzanilla. The website they host to rent their house depicts the place as naturally idyllic; “Families find it a safe environment for children, as well as an idyllic retreat from everyday stress. They come for a variety of reasons, but mostly because La Manzanilla is as naturally tranquil as it is beautiful” (casa-carmen.net 2016).

Seeking natural beauty has been a central focus for tourists since the earliest forms of tourism. Tourists often desire to “leave the world of fast time and spend a significant period in a wilderness, in the slow time of nature” (Franklin 2003, 230). Travel writing about La Manzanilla clearly appeals to this desire; “Nestled between the beautiful blue Pacific and lush jungle-covered mountains, La Manzanilla draws discerning travelers from all over the world. A tropical paradise blending old world-charm with modern conveniences, this tranquil fishing village offers something for everyone” (santanarentals.com 2016). Nature’s splendor is on display here, as “you may see the whales from La Manzanilla’s shore or you can take a boat tour to get up close and personal. La Manzanilla also hosts a species rich mangrove were you can see birds, iguanas, crocodiles and much more” (VisitLaManzanilla.com 2016).

VisitLaManzanilla.com places La Manzanilla “nestled against the southern edge of Bahia
de Tenacatita” making it “the ideal location for enjoying the simple pleasures of a seaside vacation – basking in the sun and breathing in the fresh sea air; going for a dip in the calm, clear waters of the bay; working your toes into the soft, honey-colored sand while strolling down the beach; and relaxing to the soothing sounds of waves” (2015). A travel article in the Washington Post similarly highlights the naturally protective geographic features, noting that La Manzanilla “lies cupped in the protected southeastern reach of the Bay of Tenacatita” (Lyke 2006, 1).

Depictions of La Manzanilla as a natural paradise go hand in hand with another travel writing trope- that of timelessness. Bruner explains that “the language of the tourist text, as manifested most explicitly in tourist brochures, tour advertising, and travel writings serves to fix the Other in a timeless present” (1991, 240). The Lonely Planet guidebook represents La Manzanilla as “a drowsy town” that “is known for its long, gently sloping beach, friendly palapa restaurants, exceptional fishing and sizeable population of crocodiles lazing away in the lagoon” (2006, 149). In this image, time is so slow the town threatens to actually fall asleep, and even the wildlife moves at a “lazy” pace.

In now defunct online travel magazine, SoGoNow.com, a travel writer presented “a day in La Manzanilla as a language-school tourist” (Roth 2007). She explained that in her quest to learn Spanish, she “stumbled upon one of the most remarkable places on earth: an undiscovered Mexican beach paradise” and proceeded to depict La Manzanilla as, “a secluded and authentic slice of the Mexican tropics” (Roth 2007). Roth claimed the “Manana syndrome” was not only very real, but that it was likely “invented in La Manzanilla, where time hardly exists for the locals” (2007). She grounded this claim in a
challenge, “to find a town in the Western Hemisphere with less working clocks,” and described the “monotonously peaceful routine” of the locals: “work, eat, siesta, work, eat, sleep, rise, repeat” (Roth 2007). She distinguished the schedule of visitors: “Spanish classes, eat, siesta, beach, margaritas, margaritas, margaritas” (Roth 2007). In this highly troubling picture, Roth implies that locals inhabit a slower, less productive, premodern world that modern tourists may temporarily enter and consume. Contrary to the troubling distinction this writer imposes, a glaring truth emerges in this depiction. This glaring reality can be seen in the distinct schedules of locals and tourists- the spaces of time filled by the locals at work are filled by tourists with the beach and margaritas. While Roth attempts to paint a town of locals in perpetual siesta, she highlights the reality of ordinary daily life spent in perpetual labor.

A 2006 Washington Post travel article paints a picture of the “dusty little Mexican fishing village” as a relic of the past, where time and history seemingly have no effect (Lyke 2006, 1). Travel writer Lyke describes images of “campsites with embedded hippie buses, a sand cemetery with plastic-flower wreaths on gravestones, and the crumbling remains of a luxury hotel, never completed” (2006, 3). The town is reduced to “a dreamy sweep of beach backed up to a tropical jungle” (Lyke 2006, 1). These images give the effect of a place removed from time, perhaps even part of a dreamscape. The geographic placement of La Manzanilla in a protected bay flows nicely into a logical (if only implied) explanation of how this paradise has remained relatively untouched by time and history.

In this travel article locals are reduced to limited categorization as objects for tourists to gaze upon. They are depicted as service providers or scenery available for
touristic consumption. This hollow depiction reflects Urry’s contention that “the mobile tourist gaze presupposes immobile bodies (normally female) servicing and displaying their bodies for those who are mobile and passing by” (2005, 160). Lyke describes a scene “down the street from the local mom-and-pop groceries, past the new gallerias,” where, “a white-haired woman falls asleep in her plastic chair at noon, her big legs held in the timeless spread of a flowered housedress” (Lyke 2006, 3). The tourist seems to greedily consume such picturesquely authentic scenes. The tourist gaze is clearly articulated by Lyke as she consumes and produces postcard images of authentic Mexican villagers from her beach chair and in the town plaza, she watches as “fishermen waded chest-deep into the water with their nets, teens rolled soccer balls up their legs and off their heads,” and, “at the village plaza, giggling Mexican girls stroll arm in arm past awkward town boys, while gringos watch from an outdoor bistro, sipping shade-grown organic coffee” (Lyke 2006, 3). These productions of La Manzanilla and its inhabitants recall Jane Desmond’s work on Hawaiian tourism, in which locals were depicted alongside nature, “conceived of as timeless and unchanging,” as “a necessary counterpoint to the modernity of the tourists’ lives” (Desmond 1999, 8).

In Lyke’s idyllic scene locals, resident gringos, and slow stream of tourists coexist peacefully in a natural utopia. She distinguishes categories of residents and visitors: “Little ‘La Manz’ may have 3,500 in peak season, including winter residents, native locals and the Mexicans who come from inland, their trucks packed with inflatable water toys, kids and grandparents riding overstuffed chairs in the pickup bed” (Lyke 2006, 1).
CONSUMING AUTHENTICITY

Applying Susan Stewart’s reading of antique, collectable, and souvenir objects to a real life-sized place and the people who inhabit it, we may view the consumption of La Manzanilla (by lifestyle migrants, but also tourists) as “the objectification of the peasant classes, the aestheticization of rural life which makes that life ‘quaint,’ a survival of an elusive and purer, yet diminished, past” (Stewart 1993, 143). Provinciality is a key aspect of authenticity in foreign imaginaries of La Manzanilla. The town’s geographical situation and topographical features make access relatively challenging, reinforcing imaginaries of “the secluded tropical paradise” and the unchanged, authentic “small town”.

Dean MacCannell argues that “for moderns, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere,” and so the impulse to, and practice of travel is not insignificant or trivial (1976, 3). He contends that tourism is a lens with which to analyze modernity more generally. Central to MacCannell’s observations of modernity are the distinction between the everyday experience, and the out of the ordinary “authentic” experience. This authentic elsewhereness may exist at a distance in space or time. Temporal distance is a key feature of nostalgia, which Kathleen Stewart defines as a cultural practice, “not a given content; its forms, meanings, and effects shift with the context- it depends where the speaker stands in the landscape of the present” (Stewart 1988, 227). Linking nostalgia to capitalism, she describes a postmodern condition where “we are ‘baby boomers’ searching for a place and a past in Norman Rockwell’s paintings and Walt Disney’s main street and carried along the wave of Wall Street” (Stewart 1988, 232). Nostalgia intersects with the concept of community in La Manzanilla as evidenced by discourse and
practice suggesting lifestyle migrants longingly equate the community with imaginaries of authenticity that suggest a suspension of time.

Particularly appealing for the disenchanted modern is “tourism that promises to take the traveler ‘back in time’ to places ‘untouched by the outside world’” (Lindholm 2008, 39). In this way, “tourism is an immensely popular way for ordinary people to escape from the everyday, manufacture meaning in their lives, and pursue a more intense reality ‘elsewhere’” (Lindholm 2008, 47). Susan Stewart writes that the antiquarian (and I would argue the lifestyle migrant), searches in “an attempt to erase the actual past in order to create an imagined past which is available for consumption” (Stewart 1993, 143). In this process, La Manzanilla (and similar towns) may, as Stewart describes the antique souvenir, “bear the burden of nostalgia for experience impossibly distant in time: the experience of the family, the village, the firsthand community” (Stewart 1993, 140). I would extend this reading to lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla, and argue that this type of temporal conflation, or nostalgic longing is visible in their discovery and relocation narratives.

DISCOVERING PARADISE

Lifestyle migration scholars Michaela Benson and Karen O’Reilly emphasize that, “the material and social construction of particular places offering an alternative way of living is crucial; this is what explains why exact destinations are chosen, revealing the role of imagination, myth and landscape within the decision to migrate” (2009, 3). To a great extent lifestyle migration flows into La Manzanilla are propelled by word of mouth. Although a number of research participants credit media coverage of the devastation caused by the 1995 tsunami with attracting a wave of lifestyle migrants to the town, most
lifestyle migrants I interviewed revealed personal relocation narratives that began with hearing about La Manzanilla through word of mouth. Just as residents told me about the founding families that survived the *ejido* massacre, they also described lifestyle migrant founding families. These families arrived well before the post-95 land rush, and through marriages and children, have blurred the boundaries separating local and outsider. More recent arrivals (in the last twenty years) predominantly credit their discovery of the town to hearing about it from family, friends, or friends of friends. For young lifestyle migrant couple Emma and Ethan for example, the decision to relocate to La Manzanilla was influenced by familiarity with the place through Ethan’s grandmother. They knew they “always wanted to go somewhere new and different” (Interview 9/14/13). His grandmother had moved from Texas to San Miguel de Allende, and eventually to coastal La Manzanilla. They wanted to move somewhere in Mexico to learn Spanish, and so the presence of a Spanish language school was also an impelling factor in their decision.

This word of mouth pattern is discernable in the regional clumping of migrants, and in the dominance of west coast full-time and seasonal transplants from the U.S. and Canada. There is a group from Fairbanks, Alaska, several groups from several communities in British Columbia, Bend and Portland, Oregon, and areas such as Nevada City, California. There are also groups from beyond the west coast, including a few Texans, New Mexicans, and Coloradans, a small cluster from the Yukon, and a sizable seasonal group from Quebec. In addition to North Americans, there are small groups of German, Dutch, Italian, and British lifestyle migrants.

In both interviews and casual conversations with lifestyle migrants I repeatedly heard their “discovery” narratives, told almost like a love-at-first-sight story; they came,
they fell in love, they bought property or made immediate plans to relocate to La Manzanilla. These stories were conveyed as more profound than simply discovery narratives. They went beyond relating the things they found desirable about the town, or the factors that contributed to their decisions to move, and described being “enchanted” (Interview 1/14/13). Often there were deep pauses as they struggled to find the words to describe the moments they decided to relocate, and these visible struggles to find language to convey the magnitude of feeling about this particular place is significant. So while they may not have found La Manzanilla primarily through travel writing, their initial expectations resonate strongly with tourism imaginaries and travel writing tropes. These familiar imaginaries of “tropical Mexican paradise” are well circulated and have contributed to La Manzanilla’s creation in virtual space. Furthermore, much of the travel information that is available about La Manzanilla today is generated by lifestyle migrants, either as a part of business promotion or in the form of travel blogs.

Whether by travel writing, online media, or word of mouth, lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla often expressed concern about more people “discovering” their “hidden paradise”. Many of the research participants I categorize as lifestyle migrants described the changes to the town since they’ve lived there, and cringed at the prospect of others like themselves “discovering” La Manzanilla and initiating further changes. They would lament the prospect that their “authentic” little Mexican community might become corrupted with tourists, like Puerto Vallarta. They felt that Puerto Vallarta was overrun with tourists and resorts, and no longer had the local Mexican community feel of La Manzanilla. They feared the community might not only lose its “off the beaten path”
status, but that the “authentic community” might erode in the face of further tourism development.

LIFE IN PARADISE

In their explanations of the attraction of La Manzanilla, lifestyle migrant research participants draw on imaginaries of “natural paradise” and “authentic Mexican community” when they describe their motivations for moving to La Manzanilla, even when deeper experiences complicate these flat representational schemes. Research participants identified a combination of several elements in their imaginaries of paradise including natural beauty, climate, cost of living, and the “undiscovered, off the beaten path” status. The factors described by research participants in La Manzanilla reflect the primary migration motivators identified by Sunil, Rojas, and Bradley (2007) among retirement migrants, including economic concerns, climate and landscape factors, community factors, and “quality of life” factors. In the descriptions of paradise some lifestyle migrant research participants offered, it seemed their paradise could be located virtually anywhere. They were pleased at what they commonly described as a combination of luck, adventurousness, travel savvy, and often social networks that landed them in this small beach community that is so far untouched by major resort development, and that has not yet attracted the concentration of lifestyle migrants that nearby Lake Chapala or San Miguel de Allende host.

Mary, who came to the town in 2006 and built a house on the beach with her partner Martin, said La Manzanilla is “like going back in time” (Interview 2/28/13). She compared it to her home in a small British Columbia town, recalling how they don’t lock their doors in either home. Mary believes this safe, small, community of the past feeling
attracts small town Canadians. Both Mary and Martin had substantial travel experience before moving to La Manzanilla, and said that as they travelled together in later years they were on the lookout for a place to retire. “There’s something about it,” Martin said of La Manzanilla, “we’ve been to a lot of countries and I haven’t seen anything quite like this” (Interview 2/28/13). They conveyed surprise that La Manzanilla isn’t “overbuilt” and speculated that it may be just far enough away from major cities and airports. They first visited La Manzanilla in 1996 and agree that it has changed, “but not excessively so” (ibid.). They described being drawn to “the lifestyle”. “It’s the community-you’re in nature, and yet you have some town, but it’s not too much town. It’s a lot of beach everywhere. It’s kind of an amazing little combination. It’s very rare” (Interview 2/28/13). So on the one hand, they described a unique community, complimented by a beautiful natural landscape, and kept from being “overbuilt” by its distance from major airports. Then Martin immediately followed this statement with the reverse logic, commenting, “It’s a blank slate almost. It’s amazing that there’s a place like this only an hour from an airport” (Interview 2/28/13). In many ways these descriptions mimic the travel literature about southern Jalisco coastal destinations.

Emma and Ethan also began by describing being drawn to the beauty of the natural landscape, immediately followed by the lifestyle. Their reasons for moving were motivated as much by being dissatisfied with life in the states as much as being drawn down to La Manzanilla. Ethan described it as “the rat race” explaining, “It just feels like you’re spinning your wheels. Everything’s going fast, but you’re not going anywhere” (Interview 9/14/13). In contrast they both commented on enjoying the slow pace in La Manzanilla. Emma noted, “everything seems more about relationships than trying to get
ahead,” and Ethan added that “there’s a lot less stress” (Interview 9/14/13). Lifestyle migrants frequently point to “authenticity” as a desirable element, although not always directly. This can be seen in narrative descriptions not only of their adopted paradise, but also what they left behind and their motivations for leaving. These factors are what Sheila Croucher identifies as “push” and “pull” motivations (2009, 2012). When Ethan and Emma moved to La Manzanilla in 2012 they started by running a bakery out of their house, and later opened a restaurant with a lifestyle migrant chef from Alaska. Unlike retired lifestyle migrants, their livelihood is a constant consideration. While they still work to make a living, they describe their lives in La Manzanilla as generally more fulfilling. “When I start thinking I don’t like something,” Ethan says of life in Mexico, “all I have to do is think back to two years ago living in Arkansas and doing what I was doing, and then look out the window and see the bay and it’s beautiful, and then…[shrugs]” (Interview 9/14/13).

Lifestyle migrant research participants almost always described initially seeking a location with an amenable climate- of particular importance for those coming from the far north, in Canada and Alaska where the winters reach severe temperatures and residents negotiate brutal conditions. Sam, for instance, proclaimed that his paradise could be anywhere warm (Interview 2/23/13). He then proceeded, however, to describe the relationships that he has developed with the local kids through baseball as an umpire and coach. He described, along with his partner, how excited they were after the first season, to return bearing gifts of baseball gloves they’d found at a good price. Because of their donations and the donations of other lifestyle migrants, they reported to me proudly, after two years, every kid on the baseball team had their own glove (Interview 2/23/13).
Acceptance into the local community was displayed proudly in lifestyle migrant narratives of life in La Manzanilla, like a badge of authenticity that distinguished them from other lifestyle migrants, or rather from the idea of lifestyle migrants that kept to themselves and didn’t care to incorporate or were not able to successfully integrate into the broader community.

I witnessed this pattern of narrative progression repeatedly in interviews, a pattern which involved initially dismissing La Manzanilla as transposable with any other tropical location followed by narratives of explicit community involvement and descriptions of the uniqueness of the place. This pattern revealed the power of imaginaries formed initially through the types of travel writing I analyze here. These tourism imaginaries take root and are not easily dislodged, even in the face of years of daily life that replaces the shell depictions of place with rich, complex, and often contradictory experience.

STILL SEARCHING FOR HOME

There is a widespread sentiment among lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla that they share the cosmopolitan experience and vision to have “discovered” La Manzanilla. They have spurned the global for the local, satisfying imaginaries of authenticity and provinciality. Many lifestyle migrants chose to settle here because they saw it as relatively untouched and untainted by the commercial, consumption-driven lifestyle dominating the north. Participants in my research call La Manzanilla home, though it may not be their permanent or even exclusive home. Often participants describe at least two primary dwellings as home. I present two cases of lifestyle migrant research participants who described the process of finding home as unfinished, and for a variety of reasons, not necessarily ending in La Manzanilla. These lifestyle migrants may have been
drawn to the imaginaries of the authentic Mexican beach town, but ultimately want more of the elements of cosmopolitan influence that youth and artist entrepreneurs are working to produce (as described in Chapter 2).

Mike and April offer an example of lifestyle migrants that may have been initially drawn to the authenticity imaginary, but ultimately find that in the long term, they are looking for something different. Mike and April moved to La Manzanilla in 2001 with their then three year old son. While the climate and proximity to the beach played a role in their decision to relocate to La Manzanilla, their primary motivation was their son, as they explain, they “wanted to come to an environment where he could become bilingual and more worldly” (Interview 5/6/13). They were drawn to the relaxed lifestyle in La Manzanilla, and “the simplicity of the place” (Interview 5/6/13). While they ultimately found public education in town to be lacking and later shifted to homeschooling, initially they found public schooling instrumental to their integration into the community. In primary school their son was able to integrate socially, and to learn “what the community is, and how it’s different from where we lived [in Denver, Colorado]” (ibid.). April and Mike wanted to integrate into the community too, and believe they were able to do so more easily because of their son. “Without having [Liam] sort of pull us into everything,” April stresses, “we’d be more isolated” (Interview 5/6/13). Running their own businesses (April in marketing and PR, and Mike as an independent structural engineer) allowed them to continue to work remotely. April also taught weekly Zumba classes, first in the ejido space, and later at the newly-opened community gym. She runs the VisitLaManzanilla.com website, and wrote a local column for the Guadalajara Reporter called “La Manzanilla Memo”.

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While they describe La Manzanilla as a home offering a lifestyle desirable because of its simplicity, they have found difficulty in cultivating local friendships. April explains:

We want to assimilate with the culture too [like Liam]. We really can’t assimilate with the culture because there’s nobody that has our- that we have anything in common with. A lot of these people haven’t been to Guadalajara, let alone been to college or travelled to the United States or travelled to Europe. But you go to a city like Colima and there’s lots of people like that (Interview 5/6/13).

What April describes as easier to find in a larger nearby city is a “middle class mentality or a middle class lifestyle that’s missing here” (Interview 5/6/13). I suggest that this mentality or lifestyle April describes in terms of class is precisely what is developing among the younger generation of entrepreneurs and residents invested in local development initiatives. In the years since I have completed field research April, Mike, and Liam have moved back to Colorado for the school year, returning to their home in La Manzanilla each summer.

European lifestyle migrant Mazzie describes a similar longing for companionship with like-minded people that might be identified in terms of education, experience, or culture. Mazzie has lived all over the world, and described allegiance to national identity in flexible terms, “I have allegiance to the country where I’m living at the time. That’s the only way I can cope with that” (Interview 7/30/13). She goes on to explain that “in some ways, you know, this sort of feeling of rootlessness gets to you sometimes. Sometimes I yearn to have roots somewhere like normal people” (ibid.). She started living seasonally in La Manzanilla with her now ex-husband in 1997 when they went to visit his son, one of the original lifestyle migrants in town, and they purchased land and had a house built. They were living in rural Spain at the time, and used the house in La
Manzanilla primarily for extended vacations. After the divorce Mazzie moved into the house full time primarily out of economic necessity. Trained in graphic design, she works now as an artist. After living in town full-time for five years (at the time of the interview) she describes the low season as a time of more community cohesion, when “you have more connection with the Mexicans. You’re suffering the same things…going through the hurricanes and storms, and the roads are washed up, and you’re together, you’re more one” (Interview 7/30/13). Despite the low season community comradery, she says, “I always feel I’ve sort of lived on the periphery of the community. Of it, but not in it” (Interview 7/30/13).

**A COSMOPOLITAN AUTHENTICITY**

There is an emerging pattern in La Manzanilla, of youth returning to the community after leaving to obtain higher education and training in urban centers like Guadalajara, or even in the U.S. They are returning with their new skill sets and applying them toward opening tourism-geared businesses in La Manzanilla. Miguel and his ecotourism business, and Rosa and her pop-up Supper Club are prime examples of this trend from the generation that are currently acting as agents of economic and community development. This generation of local Mexican youth are venturing viable future for themselves and their community by developing ecotourism and businesses geared toward the lifestyle migrant market. There is also a younger generation, the generation of kids learning English and receiving scholarships through La Catalina Foundation, learning about sustainability in the Tierralegre educational garden, interacting with and observing lifestyle migrants and their practices and ideas. They are growing up in a community

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39 Tourism-geared businesses here include the lifestyle migrant market.
shared by lifestyle migrants who express sentiments about wanting the town to remain hidden from more tourists and migrants like themselves. In some sense, lifestyle migrants come to an imaginary and learn that it’s a place, and La Manzanilla youth are born in a place and learn that it’s an imaginary.

Local youth learn the features of their home that are represented in the tourism imaginary of the authentic tropical Mexican paradise. Some of these features are reflected in their current projects, although not merely as means to a commercial end. In our discussions members of this generation conveyed an appreciation of their hometown— an appreciation for the beach, landscape, and climate that they recognize lifestyle migrants from north of the border may have saved money throughout their working lives to retire there, in “paradise”. José (introduced in Chapter 2) started a Facebook page to showcase his photography. The page invites others to contribute their pictures too, and contains a collection of photographs depicting the orange and blue hues of the sun setting over the ocean from the beach in La Manzanilla. The page is titled, “Me gusta sunset beach paradise La Manzanilla” and he describes the purpose as “a modest page for beautiful sunsets among other photographs, to capture and share the beauty of mother nature”. The visual representations on the page reflect the same tourism imaginaries that draw lifestyle migrants and tourists to La Manzanilla, but they also signify a shift in production. The page is a representation of the place generated by a local resident, as a photographer, on a social media site followed by people from all over the world.

40 English translated from original Spanish: “es una modesta pagina para las hermosas puestas de sol entre otras fotografias, captura y comparte la belleza de la madre natura” (accessed 1/11/17 https://www.facebook.com/paradise.la.manzanilla/).
THE AUTHENTIC COSMOPOLITAN

In La Manzanilla imaginaries of authenticity and community drive consumptive practices that indicate that a new lifestyle awaits in a new authentic community. These emerging patterns of consuming authenticity result in the production of cosmopolitanism, and ultimately create conditions resident youth are creatively utilizing. In the transformation of capital between lifestyle migrants and local youth, the place is being redefined in ways that complicate lifestyle migrant imaginaries of community and authenticity. A significant aspect of this imaginary precludes disrupting the status quo, and is discernable in a negative reaction to the idea of more tourists and lifestyle migrants disrupting the character of the community. This response has been noted in studies of lifestyle migrants in Lake Chapala, Jalisco, where Truly recorded, “the continued influx of new migrants continues to concern those who feel the area is changing for the worse…[where] the Lake Chapala Riviera is more American than it was in the past” (Truly 2006, 186). While many lifestyle migrants express similar concerns, in La Manzanilla there is a growing sense that change is taking the form of cosmopolitanism.

During interviews I was continually struck by the stark difference in responses between more experienced (older), and young community members with family roots in La Manzanilla on the subject of lifestyle migrants and tourism. When asked about the impact of lifestyle migrants and tourists in the town, older residents always responded with balanced consideration; they expressed a view that foreigners contributed both positively and negatively to the community. They acknowledged the boon to the economy, but also expressed concern over the instability of that economic boon, and some of the sociocultural baggage lifestyle migrants were bringing to the town.
Resident youth on the other hand, expressed an unabashed desire for more lifestyle migrants and tourists. They enthused at the potential to build more of a tourist economy- expressing pleasure at not only the possibility to make money from more tourists and lifestyle migrants, but also at enjoying the cosmopolitan influence on the town. Their sentiment reflects Noel Salazar’s argument that, “cosmopolitanism is sought after not only by those who travel or those who feel at home in several parts of the world but also by those who stay at home,” and, “physical mobility alone is neither sufficient nor a necessary condition for cosmopolitanism” (2010, 108). The majority of youth I spoke with did not share any concern over negative impacts of tourism development, or the prospect of more lifestyle migrants moving in, but rather expressed a “the more the merrier” attitude. Local entrepreneurs are incorporating popular tourism imaginaries into their own vision of La Manzanilla as a cosmopolitan destination, developing a community that satisfies their economic needs and lifestyle desires. This emerging cosmopolitan imaginary of La Manzanilla both incorporates and contests traditional imaginaries.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF TOURISM IMAGINARIES

The tourists’ expectations are formed from travel sites, guidebooks, and brochures, and when they arrive at their chosen destination they are on the lookout for markers of both the universal beach paradise, and the uniquely Mexican beach paradise. They seek the white sands and palm trees as well as the “friendly Mexican” selling coconuts on the beach and Mexican open-air markets laden with ripe mangos, papayas, and distinctly Mexican handcrafts. This is what they read about and imagine before leaving home, it is what they see while on vacation, and it is what they take photographs
Quetzil Castaneda describes how this process of signification, “understood as the intersection and divergence of textual, mental, discursive, and spatial trajectories in time, comprises a logic and practice by which cultures are invented, that is inscribed in the imagination and imagined through inscription on bodies and the multiple media of social life” (1996, 260).

Tourism imaginaries are discursively created and circulated, propelling a flow of people and expectations in La Manzanilla. These virtual stories inform imaginaries about “paradise,” “community,” “Mexico,” “local,” and “tourist”. The production of local Mexican residents in much of this virtual space is hollow and not representative of actual lived experience. This “authentic community” imaginary imbues touristic value on La Manzanilla as a Mexican community (albeit often as an offensive caricature), rather than the natural blank slate imaginary of paradise represented in travel writing about Careyes and Chamela. Surprisingly, the combined imaginary of La Manzanilla a “natural paradise” as well as an “authentic community” paired with the history of lifestyle migrant impact and local response to that impact has ultimately contributed to creating conditions of locally directed, potentially sustainable development. Youth entrepreneurial initiatives geared toward the ecotourism and lifestyle migrant market incorporate these imaginaries along with their own cosmopolitan aspirations as they direct the future development of the town and their roles there beyond the bounds of those traditionally ascribed in tourism destinations.
CHAPTER 6 Conclusion

Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten (Marc Augé 1995, 79).

THE INEVITABLE TOURISM BOOM WILL RUIN EVERYTHING

A common travel writing trope frames the Washington Post article about La Manzanilla I analyzed in Chapter 5- the inevitability of more tourists discovering and ruining the destination. According to Lyke, La Manzanilla is an ideal tourist destination where “friendly townsfolk used to mingling with gringos” offer “a hushed-up spot that’s still off the clock and, for a while yet, off the tourist track” (2006, 1). She contends that “the charm of this town is that it combines old Mexico with modern conveniences” (Lyke 2006, 2). These modern conveniences however, threaten to overtake “old Mexico” as more tourists come to visit. The charm of this place painted as frozen in time is subject to potentially slipping away as more tourists discover it as a vacation destination. Lyke warns that “regulars who’ve been snowbirding here for years,” and repeat visitors, “urge others to keep this pretty hideout secret” (2006, 1). These regulars lament that “it won’t last” and predict that, “within a decade, La Manzanilla will be another international tourist destination like Puerto Vallarta” (Lyke 2006, 2). They recognize that more tourists, and developers, are “moving in, importing the Norte Americano ideas that have transformed town after town” (Lyke 2006, 2). This is evident in the physical landscape, seen in “a growing number of handsome architect-designed rentals and a smattering of new gallerias,” as well as the relaxed feel of the place. The town’s authentic charm is reinforced by what is lacking in La Manzanilla as much by what is there. She urges
visitors to “pack pesos” as “there are no banks, no bank machines, no plastic, no traveler's checks” (Lyke 2006, 1).

The “laid-back La Manzanilla” tourists seek is transformed by their presence, and by the presence of lifestyle migrants, in development intended to accommodate them. Their increased presence is felt, as, “even at siesta, real estate offices are buzzing with gringos” (Lyke 2006, 2). Ironically, this travel article invites even more tourists to transform this idyllic tourist destination, even as it mostly laments the changes brought on by tourists. Resident lifestyle migrant, snowbird, and repeat visitor concerns reinforce Bruner’s observation that “tourists are willing to acknowledge change but want to be assured that they have come before it is too late” (1991, 243). The international tourists Julia Harrison worked with share this sentiment. She remarks that “they all implicitly knew…that their own world and those they were intent on exploring were on a collision course; they wanted to get there before the crash” (Harrison 2003, 211).

It has been more than ten years since this travel article appeared in the Washington Post, quoting visitors and residents that predicted that in ten years the town would have become the next Puerto Vallarta (Lyke 2006). It has not. I heard similar sentiments expressed by residents predicting a tourism boom when I began preliminary fieldwork in the town, in 2009. I continue to hear this prediction, and although it has not yet come to fruition, and may never, there have been significant changes in La Manzanilla. La Manzanilla’s presence on the strip of Pacific coast dubbed the Costalegre by tourism promoters may always be precarious.

The impending development of the Costa Alegre is detailed in several recent online articles. The development focuses on highway repairs, the completion of an airport
that has been partially completed during the last several years of halted construction, and a luxury resort project initiated by the Louis Vuitton Möet Hennessy LVMH conglomerate. With over $400 million planned investments to the Costa Alegre, Jalisco Secretary of Tourism Ramon Flores proclaims the Costa Alegre represents the future of beach destinations, not only for Jalisco, but for Mexico (Romo 2016). The luxury resort is scheduled to open in 2017 and includes a beachfront development in Chamela with a hotel (with rooms running up to $4000 a night), residential lots, a golf course, and a private airstrip (Richards 2016).

While the Costa Alegre has been getting increased attention from tourism developers and promoters, in the 2014 Lonely Planet Mexico travel guide La Manzanilla is still listed only as “Playa La Manzanilla” and described in one sentence: “Manzanilla’s calm water is ideal for swimming” (Noble 2014, 529). This is a decrease from the already scant mention in the 2008 edition, where La Manzanilla is also described as having restaurants and accommodations (Noble 2008, 468). One significant update in the 2014 edition is a mention of the Tenacatita land dispute, and the impact for tourists insofar as they can still visit the beach but no longer camp there. They mention the development group “fighting for their rights to build on an otherwise undeveloped beach” (Noble 2014, 529), while neglecting to acknowledge the rights of the residents whose livelihoods were destroyed when this development group had them evicted at gunpoint and destroyed the substantial number of restaurants and businesses that had been established on the beach prior to 2010.

The 2006 Washington Post article lamenting the inevitable looming tourism rush was written at the midpoint between the post-95 tsunami boom and another landscape-
changing natural disaster. For about 24 hours in October 2015 following news about a severe impending hurricane I was glued to the computer watching news updates and communicating with friends in La Manzanilla. Despite the loss of power in the town, the recent prevalence of smart phone and social media use allowed residents to be in almost constant communication during the storm. After the hurricane passed, and everyone in town was reported to be unharmed (although a significant portion of the landscape, homes, and businesses were destroyed), I thought perhaps the international media attention covering the devastation caused by Hurricane Patricia had produced the unintentional consequence of putting La Manzanilla on the map. While the storm and the impacted areas of Mexican coastline were big news (“Hurricane Patricia: Mexico Awaits ‘Strongest Ever’ Storm,” BBC News, “With 200 MPH Winds, Hurricane Patricia Closes in on Mexico,” NPR, “Monster Hurricane Patricia Makes Landfall in Mexico,” USA Today, October 23, 2015) media focus quickly shifted, and it seems the event has been all but forgotten beyond the impacted places and residents. The first post-Patricia high season unfolded more or less as usual after a period of rapid and intense recovery fundraising and rebuilding by residents.

**HIDDEN GEM IMAGINARIES & LIVED EXPERIENCE**

The discursive production of the Costalegre relies heavily on imaginaries of “undiscovered” “hidden gem” value of the destinations, accompanied by imaginaries of environmental and sociocultural sustainability that exclude the arrival of more tourists. Lifestyle migrants in La Manzanilla often express the sentiment of what Lofgren describes as the “anti-tourist” who, “have a more difficult position, because they belong to the category of tourists who crave a chance to experience the unspoiled, the
unexploited, and for them it is crucial to be off the beaten tourist track” (Löfgren 1999, 264). This type may see themselves as producers of experience rather than consumers, as tourists are typically described (Löfgren 1999, 265). Lifestyle migrants worry about “their” town- their authentic Mexican paradise- being invaded by others like themselves. La Manzanilla lifestyle migrants do not share the same type of privilege of exclusivity as “elite tourists” in this sense. As Lofgren explains, “elite tourists don’t have to worry about those other tourists. They have always been able to pay for privacy and exclusivity” (Lofgren 1999, 264).

Virtual stories contribute to imaginaries of paradise, Mexico, and community, and inform imaginaries about locals and localness- What does a local look like and how does one act? How is a local visually distinguished from a tourist or outsider? What is the definition of local, and how are locals characterized as separate from visitors and new residents? Virtual stories of La Manzanilla in online and print travel guides and articles create and reinforce a binary between local and outsider. Lifestyle migrants both reproduce and complicate these expectations and imaginaries via emplacement practices. Local youth and artist entrepreneurs also complicate these expectations. As Tsing suggests, “the features and boundaries of the local are continually reformulated in relation to particular landscape-and-community-making negotiations” (Tsing 2001, 12).

Provincial imaginaries of La Manzanilla as a quiet, quaint, authentic, fishing village, and also a secluded tropical paradise circulate in discourse and virtual space, are materialized in the physical place of La Manzanilla, and infuse understandings about what La Manzanilla means. Lifestyle migrants may police “authenticity” in La Manzanilla among themselves when change threatens to compromise the authentic
community imaginary, but the imaginary has proven flexible enough to accommodate “community improvement” projects, as well as some consumer comforts, in their adopted paradise.

Initially informed by virtually circulated tourism imaginaries and existing networks of friends and family, lifestyle migrants describe their experiences within the bounds of travel writing tropes. As narratives of lifestyle migrant experience unfold, however, they demonstrate a departure from tourism imaginaries (represented and circulated in travel writing) into a more complex understanding of their daily practices and relationships in La Manzanilla. This departure reveals a disjuncture between the flat virtual space and complex lived place of La Manzanilla. This narrative pattern reveals a distinction between what compels lifestyle migrants to move to La Manzanilla, and what keeps them there. Their initial lists of desirable elements, informed by travel writing (in other words, the virtual space of La Manzanilla created through travel writing) may have drawn them to La Manzanilla, but other factors (such as community involvement) are what keep them there.

EMPLACEMENT & AGENCY

A common focus of tourism and lifestyle migration studies is investigating the impact of “guests” on “host” communities. During field research in La Manzanilla I found relationships between residents, and between residents and landscape, that were much more complex and nuanced than could be accounted for in a straight forward impact study.

Lifestyle migrants, often described as “out of place”, are emplacing themselves in La Manzanilla. Approaching lifestyle migrant practices as emplacement allows for a
more nuanced understanding of changing community dynamics in La Manzanilla. I argue that there is a relationship between lifestyle migrant emplacement practices and youth agency in community and tourism development in La Manzanilla. At this point, twenty-somethings in La Manzanilla have lived their entire lives in a community shared by lifestyle migrants. These foreign residents are intentionally emplacing resources through nonprofits such as the Tierralegre educational garden. The intentions of this nonprofit are stated clearly on its website: “We are going directly to the root of our environmental problems, which are intrinsically social, by placing the necessary tools in the hands of youth, the future leaders of, and participants in, society”. Another intentionally emplaced resource is the English language training implemented by La Catalina Foundation.

Lifestyle migrants are also emplacing ideological and material manifestations of their privilege both intentionally and unintentionally. In interactions and relationships between lifestyle migrants and the generation of La Manzanilla youth that have been raised among them, this privilege has made an impact. Young cosmopolitan Mexican entrepreneurs are now positioning themselves as agents of tourism and community development, utilizing tourists and lifestyle migrants as potential markets. The agency of this generation in local development initiatives creates the potential for a future in the community that excludes externally directed large scale or exclusive elite resort development.

In the end it is not about the motivations of lifestyle migrants, but rather about the resulting impact from the relationship between their presence, nonprofit projects, and the generation of youth that have been raised in what many research participants characterized as an increasingly cosmopolitan community. It is about the entrepreneurial
initiatives of this generation, and their relationship to the broader development of the community.

**COSMOPOLITANISM & SUSTAINABLE FUTURES**

Discourses about sustainability in La Manzanilla do not necessarily bridge gaps in meaning, understanding, and experience. In practice, however, sustainability imaginaries seem to be at the fore of development initiatives coalescing from the ground up, unpredictably configuring the changes that have already occurred to the benefit of a wide range of residents. Among competing sustainability imaginaries in La Manzanilla there are those that want the place to change, and those who want it to remain the same; there are those who want it to change only in ways that minimize the negative human impacts on the environment, and those who want to bridge the perceived gap between the sociocultural and environmental ideas of sustainability.

Can the town thrive with this mix of development (and anti-development) imaginaries and practices? It seems so. Is closing the doors to this “hidden paradise” a solution, or even possible? No, probably not. Is tourism development necessary for a thriving and locally directed economy? Yes, tourism is likely inextricably linked the future economic vitality of La Manzanilla. But is it only a matter of economics? What else is at stake in youth imaginings and productions of La Manzanilla?

This ethnographic research introduces the complexities at play in a site of uncharacteristic tourism and community development. Within this story of development lies an expansive space for future research that may be addressed through a number of fields, or even better, perhaps through a collaborative, comparative research agenda.
The first point of comparative investigation might address the question of impact on the Costalegre. A comparative study would be a valuable continuation of this research, but would necessitate researchers who were able to gain access to elite resort patrons, developers, and government officials. This research might ask; How has the eco-oriented elite development on the Costalegre impacted development in La Manzanilla? Who is directing this coastal development, and who is benefitting from it? Who is approving of development plans as “sustainable” or not, and what are the criteria used to measure sustainable development? Future research might include official perspectives beyond those cited in popular media. What do tourism and government officials have to say about how development is unfolding in La Manzanilla? Does La Manzanilla fill a role as the “authentic Mexican community” for visiting elite resort patrons? Does the state play a role in maintaining local autonomy in La Manzanilla in an effort to present this “authenticity” for elite tourist consumption? Or does the sizeable lifestyle migrant presence prevent the type of hostile takeover that happened in Tenacatita?

The second point of comparative investigation might address the question of how unique this emerging development model is by looking beyond this stretch of Mexican coastline to other towns populated by similarly diverse groups of residents, including concentrations of lifestyle migrants. This research might focus on collecting geographic and population data as evidence to compare with locations experiencing comparable development patterns. Does the size and location (including proximity to other destinations, airports, major cities, etc.) of La Manzanilla select for lifestyle migrants that are more likely to support local entrepreneurial ventures? How does the population break down into different types of transplanted residents, including numbers of retirees from
Mexico City and Guadalajara, U.S. and Canadian economic refugees, lifestyle migrant landscape nomads, and return Mexican migrants?

The final point of comparative investigation might involve researchers from the field of economics. Researchers from this field would be able to assess the potential of this emerging form of local development as an economic model. This research perspective might investigate how many new businesses have been started by this generation of youth total, and what is the success/failure rate of these businesses? What kinds of training and degrees are being sought and achieved by those of the young generation still in school? This research might ask if this is a model of economic development that is representative of one stage in the development of a destination similarly populated by lifestyle migrants, and propose to investigate other stages in this type of development model in comparable locations.

What does La Manzanilla tell us about “sustainable development”? The relationships between residents and the environment in this coastal Mexican community articulate patterns of global mobility and consumption alongside local initiatives and development. Many residents believe the potential for future sustainability in La Manzanilla necessarily involves environmental sustainability that enhances economic and sociocultural sustainability. This means locally-directed development that reduces the negative impacts of tourism and lifestyle migration such as displacement and seasonal gaps in employment, and preserves the natural environment which draws tourists to the area. The relationship between tourism and sustainability imaginaries, lifestyle migrant emplacement practices, and cosmopolitan youth entrepreneurialism in this place have created conditions which may produce an alternative future outside of large scale resort
development or elite enclave ecotourism. Residents invested in the development of this place are not easily categorized but rather overlap and intertwine, including local youth entrepreneurs, lifestyle migrants, artist entrepreneurs, conservationists, and nonprofit founders and participants. Whether considered local or foreign, mobile or immobile, mono or multilingual, I suggest that these La Manzanilla residents may all be described as cosmopolitan, and that the developing cosmopolitan identity of these residents, and the place itself, is inextricably linked to notions of sustainability and tourism development. I suggest that youth entrepreneurial and developmental initiatives are integrating tourism imaginaries and imaginaries of sustainability with new cosmopolitan imaginaries. La Manzanilla residents are challenging ideas of environmental, economic, and sociocultural sustainability with interrelated practices that comprise a competing model of tourism development distinct from large scale resort development and elite enclave ecotourism characteristic of the surrounding coastal region.
APPENDIX I

Original research objectives and questions:

Objective 1: To ethnographically investigate the dynamic processes that are potentially creating a community of practice in La Manzanilla. Research Question 1: How are local and foreign residents utilizing different strategies to address the threat of elite development, and to what extent do lifestyle migrants and local Mexican residents actually organize and participate as a community of practice?

Objective 2: To identify how La Manzanilla residents define and give meaning to the social and geographical boundaries of their community, and what they perceive as threats to those boundaries. RQ2: How do residents conceptualize the best use of land in La Manzanilla and the surrounding coast, and can distinct conceptions be characterized as the views of specific groups such as “lifestyle migrant”, “local” and “elite developer”? RQ3: Do La Manzanilla residents discursively identify “elite forms of development”? If so, how do they characterize that form of development? And how has the development conflict at Tenacatita contributed to perceptions that this form of development is a threat to the community of La Manzanilla?

Objective 3: To explore nonprofit projects in La Manzanilla as a form of development that act both in favor of and against the expanding neoliberal forms of the global capitalist system, and to investigate the possibility that this development is a form of neocolonialism. RQ4: What are the aims of the nonprofits in La Manzanilla, and do nonprofit founders and residents perceive nonprofit projects as a form of development? RQ5: What are the local Mexican strategies for addressing community development issues, and what happens when imported ideologies inform identification of and response to local issues? RQ6: How much has participation in nonprofit development alleviated the perceived threat, consciously or subconsciously, symbolically or practically, of elite development?
APPENDIX II

Research Project Questionnaire:

Please circle the option for each question that most accurately describes you:

1. I am from_____  
- Mexico  
- Canada  
- The United States  
- A European country  
- A South American country  
- Other

2. I have lived in La Manzanilla_______  
- less than 1 year  
- 1-3 years  
- 3-18 years  
- more than 18 years

3. I reside in La Manzanilla_______  
- year-round  
- more than 9 months a year  
- more than 6 months a year  
- less than 3 months a year  
- Other

4. I______________  
- I own a home in La Manzanilla
- I rent a home in La Manzanilla
- I own/rent a home in another town in Mexico
- I own/rent a home in another country
- Other

Cuestionario Proyecto de Investigación:

Por favor marque la opción para cada pregunta de forma más precisa para su caso:

1. Yo soy de_____
   - México
   - Canadá
   - Los Estados Unidos
   - Un país europeo
   - Un país sudamericano
   - Otros

2. He vivido en La Manzanilla________
   - menos que 1 año
   - 1-3 años
   - 3-18 años
   - mas que 18 años

3. Yo resido en La Manzanilla________
   - todo el año
   - mas que 9 meses cada año
   - mas que 6 meses cada año
   - menos que 3 meses cada año
4. Yo________
- Soy dueño de una casa en La Manzanilla
- Puedo alquilar una casa en La Manzanilla
- Soy dueño/alquilar de una casa en otra ciudad en México
- Soy dueño/alquilar de una casa en otro país
- Otros
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